



The Muslim 500

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

2016



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❧ 2016 ❧

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Contents

- 5 Introduction
 - 7 *Foreword*
 - 9 *Introduction - A Regional Survey*
- 21 The House of Islam
- 33 The Top 50
- 101 Honourable Mentions
- 109 The Final 450
 - 111 *Scholarly*
 - 122 *Political*
 - 130 *Administration of Religious Affairs*
 - 137 *Preachers & Spiritual Guides*
 - 143 *Philanthropy, Charity & Development*
 - 146 *Social Issues*
 - 154 *Business*
 - 159 *Science & Technology*
 - 163 *Arts & Culture*
 - 169 *Qur'an Reciters*
 - 170 *Media*
 - 173 *Celebrities & Sports Stars*
 - 175 *Extremists*
- 177 Obituaries
- 181 Guest Contributions
 - 184 *Kurdistan: Pivot of West Asia?*
by Dr Robert D. Crane
 - 189 *Notes on Religion and Culture*
by Dr Caner K Dagli
 - 192 *In Search of the Right Synergy between Technology and the Sharia for the Sake of a Healthy Umma*
by Dr Osman Bakar
 - 195 *When Worldviews Collide: The Encounter of Traditional and Modern Worldviews*
by John Herlihy

200 *Science and religion: why setting new foundations for the dialogue should matter for Muslims.*

by Bruno Abd-al-Haqq Guiderdoni

204 *The Refugee Crisis: Europe's Humanitarian Imperative*

by Farah El-Sharif

206 *What is Islamic Music?*

by Sami Yusuf

209 *The Year of Living Dangerously: Canada's Conservative Government panders to fears by Targeting Muslims*

by Faisal Kutty

212 *America's Oldest Muslim community: exploring the contributions of African American Muslims*

by Muddassar Ahmed

214 *The Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC)*

by Maha Akeel

216 *British Muslim Stars Rising*

by Shenaz Bunglawala

218 *Getting Married: British Muslim Style*

by Dr Fauzia Ahmad, Mizan Raja, Dr Mustafa Omar

223 Issues of the Day

235 Major Events Timeline

241 Appendix I (Population Statistics)

249 Appendix II (Social Media Statistics)

255 Glossary

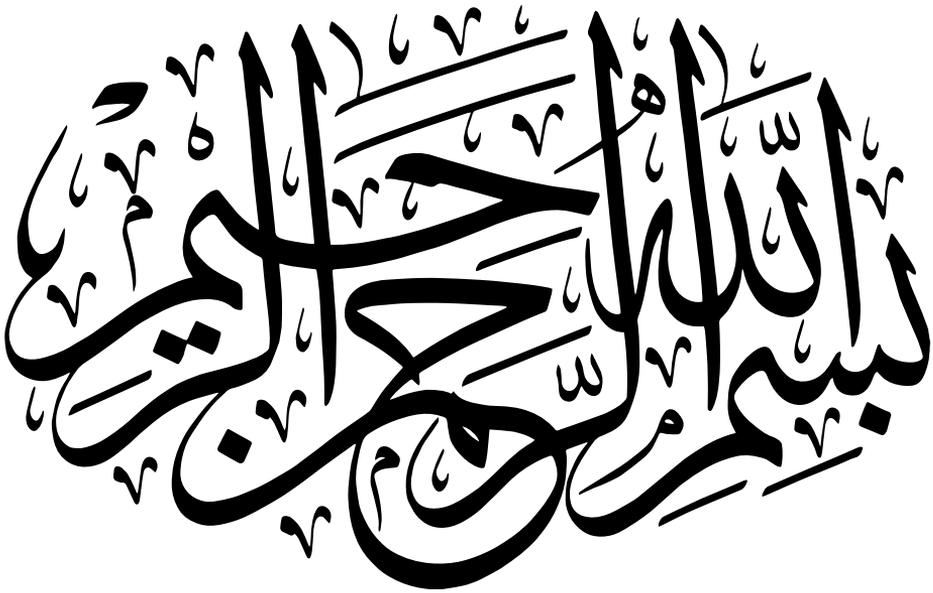
259 Index



The *Shahadatayn*
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INTRO- DUCTION



"In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful"
Calligraphy by Mothana Al-Obaidy

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Foreword

WELCOME TO THE SEVENTH annual issue of *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*.

There are 1.7 billion Muslims in the world today, making up approximately 23% of the world's population, or one-fifth of mankind. As well as being citizens of their respective countries, they also have a sense of belonging to the '*ummah*', the worldwide Muslim community.

This publication sets out to ascertain the influence some Muslims have on this community, or on behalf of the community. Influence is: any person who has the power (be it cultural, ideological, financial, political or otherwise) to make a change that will have a significant impact on the Muslim world. Note that the impact can be either positive or negative, depending on one's point of view of course. The selection of people for this publication in no way means that we endorse their views; rather we are simply trying to measure their influence. The influence can be of a religious scholar directly addressing Muslims and influencing their beliefs, ideas and behaviour, or it can be of a ruler shaping the socio-economic factors within which people live their lives, or of artists shaping popular culture. The first two examples also point to the fact that the lists, and especially the Top 50, are dominated by religious scholars and heads of state. Their dominant and lasting influence cannot be denied, especially the rulers, who in many cases also appoint religious scholars to their respective positions.

This doesn't discount the significant amount of influence from other sectors of society. The publication selects Muslim individuals from a range of categories of influence, 13 in total:

- Scholarly
- Political
- Administration of Religious Affairs
- Preachers and Spiritual Guides
- Philanthropy/Charity and Development
- Social Issues
- Business

- Science and Technology
- Arts and Culture
- Qur'an Reciters
- Media
- Celebrities and Sports Stars
- Extremists

How to measure this influence is of course the most challenging aspect of the publication, and the one where opinions diverge the most. Influence can sometimes be gauged on a quantitative basis, the number of people influenced, the number of books written, the amount of sales etc., but more often it is related to the qualitative and lasting effect of that influence. The achievements of a lifetime are given more weight than achievements within the current year. People who are trailblazers, or the lone voice in a remote area are also taken into account. This means that our list of names will change gradually, rather than dramatically, year-on-year. This list acts as an opportunity to shed some light on the many challenges and pioneering triumphs that are present at the very crux of shaping the Muslim community.

What's In This issue?

As well as the updated Top 50 and 450 lists, we have our regular House of Islam essay which gives an overview of Islam and its branches.

We have our distinguished chief editor sharing his annual regional survey of the major events in the Muslim world over the past twelve months. Our Guest Contributions section has twelve exclusive articles covering a wide range of issues from geopolitics, to Islamic music, to Islam and modern science, to issues concerning British, Canadian, and American Muslims.

The Issues of the Day section compiles short reports on some contemporary issues. The 'Major Events' section provides a timeline of the major events that have taken place over the past year. Our two Appendices provide us with lots of statistics. Appendix I shows total population and Muslim population by country, for all the countries in the world. Appendix II compiles a list of the highest

Muslim Facebook, Twitter and Instagram users, as well as the highest in the world.

To give a richer visual understanding of the Muslim world we have not only increased the number of photographs in the Top 25 section but have added some in other sections as well. We have also included several calligraphy pieces throughout the book, which we hope will serve as a beautiful reminder to pause and reflect as you go through the book. We

have also added write-ups within the main body of the text about major initiatives (see A Common Word on p. 114, Altafsir.com on p. 121, Free Islamic Calligraphy on p. 129).

Our website [www.TheMuslim500.com] is a popular destination. We welcome your feedback and will take nominations for the 2017 edition through it.



Al-Talaq 65, 12

Calligraphy by Hasan Kanan

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Introduction

A Regional Survey

Prof. S. Abdallah Schleifer

2015 could be called, among other things, The Year of Migrations. I have three in mind and all of them begin or end up in war-torn Syria.

The First and most startling Migration is the vast and illegal movement of migrants, mostly Muslim, attempting to reach EU countries – some from Afghanistan, some from Eritrea and sub-Saharan Africa and even from Egypt, but increasingly from Syria. In all cases the migrants are either attempting to cross the Mediterranean by boat from a number of ports along Libya’s coastline to make land in Italy or crossing from Syria to Turkey and then by boat across the Aegean Sea to Greece. This second wave is overwhelmingly Syrian. They are refugees, technically illegal because they lack visas, but their status is different unlike so many of the other migrants attempting to reach Europe who are “economic migrants” seeking a better life, and not directly threatened by either an oppressive government or by warfare. Both qualifying conditions are highly relevant to a Syrian civil war that has cost approximately 300,000 dead of which a high percentage are civilian. As such the Syrians cannot be deported back even if arriving in Europe without a visa as they all do, given that they are legitimate refugees, entitled by UN and other international standards to refuge.

For those Syrians who make their way to the Turkish coast and then across the Aegean Sea to those Greek islands not far from the Turkish coastline, it is a very much shorter distance than the

crossing of the Mediterranean. But it is still dangerous given the cheap rubber dinghies into which they are crammed by the Turkish traffickers, and the cheap, frequently useless life jackets the migrants purchase in Turkey prior to boarding. For most of the migrants, particularly the Syrians and others who can establish they have come from a turbulent battle zone—like parts of Afghanistan or Iraq or are in danger of arrest in Eritrea, a country with a particularly oppressive regime— and thus also qualify as legitimate refugees, Italy and even more so Greece are not intended final destinations. They are viewed as but passageways to the most prosperous parts of the EU.

The movement of economic migrants is illegal not just because no visas have been issued by any of the countries through which they pass enroute to the EU or by any EU countries, but because no country is obliged, unlike the case of refugees, to accept them. But at least until the Fall of 2015, upon reaching land in either Italy or Greece, and evading detainment in a migrant/refugee center upon arrival (which is not the case with those rescued at sea by the Italian Coast Guard) they could move freely within most of the EU—meaning those EU countries including Greece and Italy that had signed the Schengen Agreement. The Agreement allows, or perhaps soon, more correctly had allowed, free movement from within the Schengen Area of the EU which became virtually borderless. Border posts were closed down in the mid-90s, except for those posts bordering territories outside the Schengen Area. But given the impact of increasingly large numbers of illegal migrants moving across Europe, internal Schengen Area border posts are starting to go back up.

The UN refugee agency UNHCR released extraordinary statistics in mid-August of 2015 estimating that 310,000 illegal migrants had reached EU shores in comparison to 219,000 for all of last year. According to that same report 2,500 had died enroute in the first seven months of 2015 in comparison



to 3,500 for all of 2014. In both cases the figures are approximate for as the boats can reach landfall out of sight of the authorities, migrants so arriving will not necessarily ever be registered and added to UNHCR statistics. As long as they can avoid contact with local police, unregistered migrants can remain in the EU, as is the case of some 11 million illegal migrants in America almost all from Latin America and almost all crossing into America from Mexico. The UNHCR calculation for deaths while sea-borne to either Greece or Italy is even more approximate: consider boats that sink and no one survives to tell the story, and only a few bodies washed ashore.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has spoken about the problem in a humane and sympathetic voice and has talked about providing refuge in Germany to hundreds of thousands of Syrians, but Germany had been quietly deporting those registered migrants, presumably non-Syrians, who do not qualify as refugees. And it is Germany that is calling for EU reconsideration of Schengen and a related Dublin Agreement.

Meanwhile the number of attacks against migrant/refugee centers in Germany is rising. And right-wing movements across all of Europe are opposed to accepting more migrants whether legitimate refugees or not, and particularly if they are Muslim. In response to the proposed EU Relocation Plan (with quotas for each EU country based on size of population and state of economy) Slovakia and Cyprus have declared that they will only accept a very limited number of refugees, 200 in the case of Slovakia and 300 in the case of Cyprus – and only on condition in both cases that the refugees are Christian not Muslim, with Cyprus even specifying the denomination – Eastern Orthodox. Hungary has put up a fence to bar all migrants, even those, as is almost always the case, who want to simply transit Hungary for Austria and from Austria on to Germany. Hungary has already absorbed a number of Kosovo Muslims crossing over from Serbia, and has made it quite clear it doesn't want any more.

Both Slovakia and Cyprus say that Muslim refugees will not feel comfortable in their country. And according to the Slovak Interior Minister that is because there are no mosques in Slovakia. The phrasing is foolish for if that were the problem, then Slovakia could simply allow the Muslims to build a mosque. A more intelligent way would be for Slovakia to state that Muslims from the Middle East or Africa have difficulty in integrating into

European society and for a number of reasons there is some truth to that. This is what has been said off-record by Polish, Czech and Estonian officials when objecting to the EU Relocation Plan. But the Hungarian Prime Minister was most direct: "The addition of tens of thousands of Middle Eastern Muslims would greatly endanger Europe's Christian cultural identity." Of course his declaration could be taken more seriously if he had had more accurately declared – while exempting Russia and conceivably Poland – that a large number of Muslim migrants be they refugees or not – would endanger Europe's Post-Christian cultural identity.

A more pressing argument and it is being made in many European publications is why do not the wealthy Gulf countries open their doors to the flood of mostly Muslim migrants, particularly the refugees from Syria. Saudi Arabia, has said it has already admitted 100,000 Syrian refugees. Considering that Jordan, a poor country with a relatively small population is in one way or another hosting about two million Syrian refugees, the Saudi response and silence from the other Gulf countries loses quite a bit of its intended luster.

But by and large European leaders seem to be responding more to the popular impact of tragedies that make it into the media than by hard thinking. The major action taken in 2015 was the implementation of EU Search and Rescue Operations (SRO) which the UNHCR estimates has saved tens of thousands of lives and which made the EU look better than it did in 2014 when it did little or nothing; which had led to accusations of callousness. Yet Search and Rescue Operations particularly in the Mediterranean but also the Aegean Sea, has only deepened the crisis and the tragedies. Traffickers now cram migrants into ever cheaper boats powered by ever cheaper motors, crewed by a migrant who gets free passage, and is often provided with a phone capable of reaching SRO call centers that can direct SRO Coast Guard ships to the rescue, even if the boat has not capsized and the motor has not died. Every bit of screened television footage of a rescue is an incentive for more and more would-be migrants to make the attempt. It is widely believed that there are a few hundred thousand migrants in Libya alone standing by to undertake this dangerous voyage.

The UNHCR estimates that Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon are hosting 3.5 million Syrian refugees, but according to estimates from the three countries the figure is much higher. In Jordan in particular possi-

bly one million Syrian refugees – particularly those with money or at least family or friends willing to put them up – have avoided the camps (which hosts another one million Syrian refugees) and thereby are not on the UNHCR rosters. They live among the Jordanians and either seek employment among the Jordanians, or for those with money open up shops and restaurants. As is the case in many other countries hosting migrants, (or even workers from Eastern European countries in the EU, flooding the UK via the free movement of EU labour rule) but massively so in Jordan, those Syrians who avoid the camps but must inevitably enter the Jordanian labour market, and will be competing with semi-skilled or unskilled Jordanians also seeking work. And the Syrians, presumably more desperate living in a foreign land with little or no family circles to rely on, will be willing to work at salary levels below whatever is the ongoing market rates established by Jordanians. There has been an opposite effect for middle class or upper middle class housing with well-to-do Iraqi as well as well-to-do Syrians entering the housing market and driving the cost of rentals far higher, which has again generated, as in the case of employment, bad feelings about the Syrian refugees among many Jordanians.

Part of the alternative to the present and significantly deteriorating situation is for at least the EU states and hopefully others – in particular the wealthy Gulf States – to provide very significant funding to Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon to enlarge existing refugee camps; to build new ones; and to

dramatically improve the quality of the housing and food as well as medical and educational facilities and continue to keep their borders open for Syrian refugees or re-open them if they are closed. It also means significant increase in funding by all affluent countries to the UNHCR and other bodies actively involved in the funding, partially or in some cases totally, in the care and feeding of migrants in these camps.

Having undertaken that task, the EU can then insist that even legitimate refugees, in which case for Turkey and Jordan means overwhelmingly those coming from Syria – and who in any circumstance must enter Turkey or Jordan – must register and then be interviewed by EU/UNHCR officers to be established at the camps who would determine if they indeed are legitimate refugees. And if so, they would be authorized to issue visas to EU countries, based on the EU country-by-country ratios to establish how many legitimate refugees each EU country can handle, as well as those non-EU countries willing, like the United States, to commit to a number of Syrians they are prepared to issue visas to over a period of one or more years.

This is not only for the sake of European stability, not to mention the stability of Lebanon and Jordan, but also of great importance for the future of Syria. For when peace comes to Syria, those who have fled to neighboring countries are far more likely to return home than those who have made it to Europe. That would also hold true if Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf countries established comfort-



able and well serviced “refugee centers” (a more soothing description than camps) for Syrian, Iraqi, and Afghan refugees. Saudi Arabia shares a border with Iraq and indeed after the 1991 War did establish with the UNHCR a camp not far from that border for approximately 35,000 mostly Shia refugees from southern Iraq that poured across the border when Saddam Hussein crushed the Shia Uprising and eventually were either resettled in The Netherlands and other countries or eventually repatriated back to post-Saddam Iraq.

If an increasing number of EU countries decide they cannot absorb the ever increasing number of migrants reaching Europe then Greece and Italy must also be funded to provide viable refugee centers for legitimate refugees and to deport back to Turkey and Libya those who are economic migrants.

The very concept of SRO must be altered. Migrants rescued at sea, be they close to the Libyan coast or approaching Italian waters, must be returned to the ports along the Libyan coast line. Those rescued in the Aegean Sea must be returned to the Turkish ports where enlarged refugee camps can host – at the very least – registered, legitimate refugees.

Libya is another problem. There, the ports are either under the control of a Muslim Brotherhood dominated government in Tripoli which it seized with the help of militias from Misrata, or under the control of DA’ISH (ISIS in an Arabic acronym) for Islamic State) which holds the important city of Sirte on the Libyan coastline.

DA’ISH in Libya has been growing in strength as foreign volunteers are increasingly travelling to Libya to join DA’ISH forces there instead of in Syria, since Turkey no longer ignores the movement of would-be DA’ISH volunteers crossing Turkey enroute to Syria. Tunisian militants affiliated to DA’ISH and responsible for the killing of 22 people (nearly all tourists) at the National Museum in Tunis in March 2015 and 40 people, again nearly all tourists, at a Tunisian beach resort in June 2015, were trained by DA’ISH in Libya.

Local officials in ports controlled either by the Tripoli regime or by DA’ISH are on the traffickers’ payroll. So the only solution now as in 2014, is for the EU to put forth a motion with American, Russian, British, French and Chinese support at the UN Security Council revoking the UN ban on arms supplies to Libya (passed at the time of Qaddafi) and for the EU as well as Russia to quickly and seri-

ously arm the Libyan National Army which is loyal to the internationally-recognized government of Libya. That government is based in Tobruk, having abandoned Tripoli when the MB-dominated Libyan Dawn militias seized the capital in the summer of 2014 following parliamentary elections in which the MB and its allies did poorly.

With such assistance including Egyptian jet fighter air cover, the refurbished Libyan Army, which has been fighting DA’ISH for control of Benghazi (Libya’s second most important city), would be able to move with success against both DA’ISH and the Tripoli government, secure the ports as well as Tripoli, round up the traffickers, build refugee centers for the legitimate refugees, and deport those economic migrants that a legitimate government may not be willing or be able to absorb into the Libyan population.

A UN Representative has been attempting to forge a broader alliance that would bring Tripoli and Tobruk together in a new more truly national government. That has been the excuse for EU passivity. These negotiations have been going on for months, with the UN Representative declaring nearly every month or so that an agreement was imminent. What has been encouraging is that some of the Misrata political figures who were supportive of Tripoli, have now accepted a UN modeled reconciliation with Tobruk. But as of the Fall of 2015 the MB-dominated government in Tripoli had not. And with each passing week the Libyan DA’ISH has grown; to such a degree it now supports a unit operating in Egypt’s Western Desert adjacent to the Libyan frontier as well as in the Sinai.

DA’ISH has grown elsewhere – largely by affiliation. As of mid-2015 DA’ISH has reportedly received 21 pledges of allegiance from Salafi-Jihadi groups operating around the world. Some, like DA’ISH itself, breaking away as an affiliate of Al-Qaeda. Most significant among these affiliates are Boko Haram in Nigeria, the former Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis in the Sinai Peninsula, and Jund al-Khilafa in Algeria, as well as an underground operation in Saudi Arabia that has attacked Shia mosques in the Eastern province as well, more recently, a mosque largely patronized by members of Saudi security forces.

But the successes of DA’ISH aside, all of the measures mentioned, if applied together, would appear to ease the crisis. Already the UK Prime Minister David Cameron who has retreated from his initial position – viable as a EU member that is not part of

Schengen— that the UK was in no position to accept any more refugees, to saying it will accept 20,000 Syrian refugees over a five year period but they must be first registered and then interviewed at refugee camps in Jordan and Turkey, and there accredited as legitimate refugees. But the Syrian refugee crisis in itself will only be resolved when the Syrian civil war ends. Right now (Fall 2015) there are too many players with too many conflicting scenarios on how to end the crisis.

There was another crisis involving Muslim migrants in 2015 that had no connection with Syria; the Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar effectively stateless and subject to violent ethnic cleansing and massive detentions in horrendous camps, are the victims of a violent movement led by fundamentalist Buddhist monks. In 2015a report issued by The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC described conditions in Myanmar as “ripe for genocide” and a UN Report described the Rohingya as the most persecuted minority in the world. Thousands of Rohingya attempted to flee by boat to Malaysia after Thailand, which was the narrow land link between Myanmar and Malaysia, cracked down on the traffickers moving Rohingya by land. So the Rohingya took to boats most of which were abandoned by the traffickers in the Bay of Bengal when the Thai government also cracked down on Thai traffickers organizing the new migration route by sea.

Those abandoned boats which managed to enter Malaysian and Indonesian waters in May and June in early July 2015 were initially towed back to the middle of the Bay by both Malaysia and Indonesia’s navies. There the boats floated listlessly, in some cases for more than a month without food or drinking water. But sudden global coverage of the approaching mass tragedy at sea – death by starvation, and reporting on the treatment of the Rohingya



in Myanmar, encouraged Malaysia and Indonesia to reverse course and send out Search and Rescue ships to tow dozens of the drifting boats ashore where both countries pledged to provide shelter and care to the Rohingya for a year pending an international resolution of the problem. Gambia, a predominantly Muslim country declared in the summer of 2015 they were prepared to take all of the Rohingya refugees.

But as for the Syrian-related Second Migration, it has been moving in increasing numbers in the opposite direction – Salafi-Jihadi foreign volunteers from Europe, Chechnya, the UK and the USA as well as from Saudi Arabia and Tunisia flocking to Syria. They are believed to number more than 20,000 who have joined DA’ISH over the past few years. The global book market is now relatively flooded with the work of academics well as journalists focused on DA’ISH – its history, ideology and its ability to carve out a state in the territory it holds in Syria and Iraq and to hold onto most of that territory despite the US-led coalition bombing DA’ISH positions. This is not a guerrilla formation operating from some mountain range, or dense jungle It is a state that still governs large portions of Syria and Iraq, and in the words of the online news service Al-Monitor in the summer of 2015 “oversees an economy with large-scale revenues owing primarily to oil sales from captured Iraqi fields. Making inroads with the local tribes, shielding the residents of the cities it controls from criminality and paying salaries to its foot-soldiers.”

At best, the US led air raids have slowed down the advance of DA’ISH, enabled Kurdish forces in both Iraq and in Syria along the Turkish border to repel DA’ISH and recapture territory in both countries initially lost to DA’ISH and enable a large force of the Iraqi Army and Iranian-guided Iraqi Shia militias to drive DA’ISH out of Takrit in Iraq in 2015. That the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Shia militias outnumbered DA’ISH defenders by at least a ratio of 2-to-1 in the beginning of the battle for Takrit and after weeks of fighting by a rough ratio of 5-to-1, and still would have not been able to take all of the city but for the Coalition air strikes, suggests that the well-armed Iraqi Army remained nearly as ineffective in 2015 as it was in 2014 when it rapidly disintegrated in the face of an offensive launched by vastly inferior numbers of DA’ISH fighters pushing the army out of northern Iraq.

But it is the flow of volunteers, particularly from

the West that fascinates journalists, scholars and security agencies. While most are Europeans and Americans from Arab or Indo-Pakistani immigrant origin, some are young converts to Islam. In either case their life-style prior to recruitment is often typically hedonist – drinking, girlfriends, drugs, and for some, forays in petty crime before being recruited by DA'ISH. As for the converts, in almost all cases their knowledge about Islam came exclusively from DA'ISH so in either case the potential recruits had little to no background with which to challenge the dramatic but perverted version of Islam that DA'ISH presented to them: What one might even call a Heretical Neo-Islam acquired from DA'ISH recruiters either in the flesh – and at that, often in prisons – or, to a greater degree via internet where a combination of well-produced DA'ISH action videos on YouTube and long sessions of Internet emails and free voice chats with friendly internet recruiters did the trick. As in the case of Al-Qaeda's recruits, serious research indicates loneliness and/or comradeship – going along with a peer group of pals seeking adventure, has far more to do with it than any pre-recruitment intense ideological commitment. This has been a far more prevalent factor than the initial and conventional assumptions that poverty in the West or the Muslim world and the lack of democratic dissent in most of the Muslim world drives youth to become terrorists.

I follow most of the research (see M500 2014-15 Introduction: Regional Survey) but in the end it was an experience of my own more than 50 years ago, that came to mind when in Rome in November 2014 participating as a member of the Muslim delegation in the Third Catholic-Muslim Forum. (The Forum is an ongoing institution that has its origins in the very first years of the Common Word Initiative – see page 114 – and many of the Muslim delegates to the Vatican for the first Catholic-Muslim Forum in 2008, were back in Rome, six years later, for the third meeting). The Catholic delegation of theologians and scholars was led as usual by His Eminence Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran a high-ranking figure in the Curia, and the Muslim delegation led by the great scholar Prof. Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

Since the critical issues that inspired the Common Word Initiative were resolved at that very first meeting in Rome in 2008 and positively confirmed then and there by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, the theme for this, the third meeting – “Working

together to Serve Others” – was, relatively speaking, innocuous. This theme was so obvious that it might have led to a most listless Forum, but one of the three sub-topics – “to save the youth” – led Catholic delegates to ask the Muslim delegation why many young European and American Muslims were set on joining the ranks of DA'ISH. It was then that I recalled that “Carlos the Jackal” – a Venezuelan Marxist Leninist who took up a calling as a hit man for one of the more radical of the Palestinian Fedayeen movements, and by the mid-seventies through the mid-nineteen eighties had become the most notorious terrorist in the world – had converted to Islam. Carlos was eventually arrested in 1994 and is still serving out his life sentence in a French prison had converted to Islam in 2001 declaring that he was doing so because Revolutionary Socialism was no longer a relevant force against Imperialism – that role was now taken up he said by “Revolutionary Islam.” Now Carlos is not a youth and those flocking to Syria to join DA'ISH would find his reference to “Revolutionary Socialism” not just irrelevant but meaningless.

But the starting point for either revolutionary perspective is marginalization. In the case of Second-generation Franco-Algerians unable to identify as either French or Algerian (they rarely know Maghrebi or any other Arabic dialect) marginalization is to a great degree involuntary. They are made to feel they are not really French by among others, perspective employers who choose not to employ them, or by Imams brought over from the Maghreb and who assure them, but not at all phrasing it so directly. That is, the Imams imply that by virtue of being Muslim, they cannot be French. Without ignoring its doctrinal roots, that is why re-establishing the Caliphate is so important on a psychologic plane for radical Salafis, for the Caliphate as an abstraction with only the slightest connection to the real history of the Caliphate as a series of dynastic authorities, at times competitive dynastic authorities. After the Prophet and the first four Caliphs, there never was a Muslim World-wide Caliphate – even the Ottomans with their extensive empire had to share the stage of political authority with the Shia dynasties that ruled Persia, and the Mogul dynasty ruling much of India. But the vision of a universal Caliphate implies a universal Islam all of which is far from the actual *Umma* made up of people of many vividly different cultures sharing the same faith with its core of required practices.



To those culturally marginalized Franco-Algerian, or Dutch Moroccan or Anglo-Pakistani Muslim youth taking up arms not for another nationality's cause but for the projected vision of a universal Islamic State on its way to becoming the universal Caliphate, provides an identity that allows them to transcend this dilemma.

But what about the convert? I explained to the Catholic delegation that voluntary poverty was the governing style of the late nineteen fifties, early sixties Beat Generation – an American literary movement with social implications – i.e. a prideful rejection of then prevalent middle class values, appearance and lifestyle meant willed marginalization. In turn this literary movement which I caught the tail-end of, inspired the much larger phenomena of the hippy. For those with a spiritual core it led such persons to permanently – not touristically – enter a disciplined community such as a Catholic or Eastern Orthodox or Buddhist monastic order or an ashram, or a serious orthodox Sufi tariqa, and through that affiliation, marginalization was transcended. But for those without a disciplined spiritual core, voluntary marginalization bred an activist hostility to the rejected social order. For some, heroin provided an anesthesia that calmed this hostile soul, and the addiction with its nagging requirements lent a sort of weird discipline to their lives. They could not simply shrug off their addiction – it had to be tended to. Fortunately at the time I did not like either heroin or the idea of

addiction. I did write poems in honor of Billy the Kid, and the Mafia.

In the absence of spiritual commitment, the excitement of danger, adventure and implicitly of violence filled one's soul. For myself and others the images of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel and his band of bearded guerrillas was compelling – and upon taking power to continue to wear the uniform of the Rebel Army, to remain armed, to remain bearded as Fidel and Che Guevara did, implied a permanent revolution with its doctrine of armed struggle and the strong undertone of violence. As I explained in far briefer, less complicated terms to the Catholic delegates in Rome, Revolutionary Socialism (which meant communists more radical than the pro-Soviet parties) provided me in 1961 with an ersatz Transcendence in the absence of real spiritual transcendence and its accompanying sense of community implicit in religion. During one of my trips to Cuba I stayed on for a year and immediately joined the Cuban militia. In theory armed struggle was but the means, the vehicle to Socialist Revolution; but for me and I am sure for others it was reversed, Socialist Revolution was the Means to the Ends of armed struggle, of a glorification of violence.

But as Carlos the Jackal observed, Revolutionary Socialism – which in the 1960s and 70s was the option that a young man or woman could so-to-speak convert to, then travel to Cuba or join one of the guerilla movements in Latin America, or the

ultra – left-wing underground terrorist groups then operating in West Germany, Italy and in America – no longer exists as an option in any significant sense. For those self-marginalized youth of today, and an aging Carlos in his prison cell, the only available Cause that provides an ersatz transcendence that glorifies violence and provides the promise of community is DA'ISH, and before DA'ISH, Al-Qaida. In his book "Revolutionary Islam", Carlos the Jackal praised Bin Ladin and the 9/11 Operation and called upon Leftists in search of revolutionary action to rally to the Islamist cause.

As for the Third Migration connected to Syria – it is the clandestine transport of small, easily carried artifacts of the ancient civilizations of Syria, looted by DA'ISH and others from Museums or the many archaeological sites to be sold to dealers in Istanbul. For as US led Coalition air strikes bomb the oil installations DA'ISH has captured, and reduce DA'ISH's ability to truck out oil from Iraq to traders in Turkey, the sale of looted artifacts becomes increasingly important.

DA'ISH videos show their supporters smashing ancient statues in museums and blowing up the remains of ancient temples. (Far less reported are the mosques destroyed by DA'ISH that incorporate tombs of saints and even a Prophet.) But there is no video of the museums and to a lesser degree the archaeological sites as they are first pillaged by DA'ISH for small, most easily handled items such as ancient seals, tablets, jewelry and the occasional head sawed off a statue, all destined for sale outside of Syria. Four of Syria's six world heritage sites now lie in ruins. Then in May 2015, DA'ISH pushed Syrian government forces out of Palmyra, the fifth world heritage site, and beheaded the 82 year old Syrian head of antiquities (who had served in Palmyra for 50 years) after detaining and interrogating him for over a month. In June, two Muslim shrine-tombs in Palmyra were destroyed and then in August DA'ISH blew up two well-known Roman-era temples. The Salafi-Jihadis invariably wrap their claim to be returning the practice of Islam to the purity of the earliest followers of the Prophet around their theological perversions and their atrocities. But the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ in command of the Arabian army that conquered Egypt did not destroy the highly visible Pyramids which were royal tombs on the Giza plains overlooking the Nile Valley and that today are part of Greater Cairo, nor did they destroy the many Pharaonic tombs and temples far

to the south in Luxor; nor did the first Ummayyad ruler in Damascus, also a Companion, destroy the temples that have been blown up by DA'ISH.

An official spokesman on the 27th of June 2014 for what until then was known as ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) implied it was no longer, in strict terms, to be thought of as a movement, it was now an actual state: "The Islamic State", in other words, the acronym DA'ISH, with a universal mission far beyond the vanishing nation-state names and boundaries of Iraq and Syria under the leadership of "Caliph" Ibrahim Abu Bakr. A few days later the False Caliph al-Baghdadi revealed himself to the world in a video delivering a triumphant sermon from the largest mosque in Mosul (second largest city in Iraq) which his forces had captured in mid-June. And over the next year DA'ISH recruiters were no longer encouraging young Muslim men to come and fight in the ranks of DA'ISH but now inviting would be recruits, men and women, doctors, teachers, IT specialists to come and live in "The Islamic State."

One year later – June 2015 – as if in celebration of the first year of this monstrous "Caliphate", DA'ISH staged a far ranging flurry of terrorism, using three car bombs in a drive-in raid into Korbani, (a fiercely contested Syrian border city which Syrian Kurdish and FSA fighters had taken back from DA'ISH with the help of US airstrikes in 2014) and gunned down more than 200 Syrian Kurdish civilians in the streets of Korbani and in one of its suburbs. In the same month a DA'ISH suicide bomber attacked a Shia mosque in Kuwait City killing 27 people at prayer and wounding another 227. And a Tunisian gunman trained by DA'ISH in neighbouring Libya assaulted a Tunisian beach resort for tourists killing 40. One would think after two years of atrocities, and in armed conflict with nearly everyone operating in the region, even with Turkey (however haphazardly, but no longer displaying a passivity towards DA'ISH



that bordered on collaboration – at least against the Kurds), not to mention the United States and other NATO states, Iran and the Iraqi Shia militias it guides, the Lebanese Hizbollah, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, the Syrian Baathist regime, the rival Syrian rebel forces ranging from Al-Qaeda's affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra, the FSA, and “moderate” Islamist brigades – which generally means Islamist brigades which have not yet thrown in with DA'ISH – Syrian Kurds, and Iraqi Kurds that DA'ISH would be gone!

And now the Russians are coming in, at least with jet fighters and helicopters reinforcing the Alawite pro-Syrian regime stronghold of Latakia. The problem is DA'ISH has many enemies but none of them for various reasons – and that tells us much about the region and not just those parts of Syria and Iraq that now are the territory of “the Islamic State.” – are going after DA'ISH in an all-out manner. The US leads a broad but faint coalition of warplanes – which in itself raises some (but not too many) eyebrows—why is America leading a faint-hearted aerial coalition of NATO, Gulf Arab, Jordanian and now Turkish air forces, in what – until DA'ISH is so foolish as to send suicide bombers into New York and Washington DC – is not really an American fight. Rather it is a battle for the soul of the Muslim world and if there is to be a presence of armed forces beyond the Muslim world, helping out with logistics, why has not any Arab Armed Force taken the lead, particularly since the White House has made it abundantly clear it will not put boots on the ground. And that is because for every country or force in that Coalition, seriously fighting DA'ISH, at least right now is not the primary concern.

NATO is there in this Aerial Coalition because the US leads it and would be even more adverse to sending in ground forces. This is the same Europe which cannot even pitch-in in Libya where DA'ISH is only 200 miles away. And since the death of King Abdallah bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud in January 2015 and the succession of his half-brother King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud for whom DA'ISH is no longer the great scourge, the threatening heresy that must be confronted, but a secondary threat compared to Iran which indeed is a very strong rival for regional hegemony, particularly in the Gulf, but also in the Levant. As for the Muslim Brotherhood which the late King also treated as an enemy and went out of his way to demonstrate support for Egypt's President Al-Sisi, who is combatting both

DA'ISH and the Muslim Brotherhood, King Salman has rehabilitated the MB as an ally in Saudi Arabia's revision of priorities, funding with Qatar and Turkey moderate Islamist rebel forces in Syria that include Muslim Brotherhood formations – two countries that the late King Abdallah, in his last years had great reservations about.

Then, late in March 2015 Saudi Arabia led its own initial Aerial Coalition (the UAE, Qatar and very nominal Egyptian and Jordanian participation) in airstrikes against the Zaidi Shia northern Yemenis armed force that had taken not only the capital Sana'a and defeated a Muslim Brotherhood allied tribal force that had barred its way and gone on to take Taiz and the important quasi second-capital of Aden. The campaign is led by King Salman's 30 year old son Deputy Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman al-Saud, who is also head of the Royal Court. No one doubts that Iran has provided the Houthis with cash, but the Houthis are not an annex of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, nor have any advisers from the IRG Al-Quds unit, which works openly with the Iraqi Shia militias, been spotted with the Houthis, nor is their branch of the Shia the same branch that the Iranians share with Iraqi and Lebanese Shia. In fact one could argue that the Zaidi's mild version of Shia Islam is as close if not closer to Sunni Islam than to the Iranian-Iraqi Shi'ism.

One Zaidi dynasty or another has ruled what we think of as northern Yemen for a thousand years, and the late King Faisal, Saudi Arabia's very dynamic ruler and third in line in the Al-Saud dynasty, provided a haven and financial support for the Zaidi Imam who was overthrown by a Sunni-dominated military coup supported politically by Egypt's Gamal Abdul-Nasser and ultimately with a significant part of the Egyptian Army in the early 1960s. It had been a very painful experience for the Egyptian troops up against Zaidi tribal guerilla warriors, whether fighting for the Zaidi Imamate or for the Houthis Zaidi Revivalist movement.

But these are different times now. Saudi and UAE ground troops have committed to the battle for Yemen. The air campaign continues, the ground forces helped local southern Yemeni resistance groups force the Houthis out of Aden and then moved towards Sana'a, but aside from shelling and bombing Sana'a the intervention appears by the end of September 2015 to have stalled with high Yemeni civilian casualties from the bombing. Both

the stalled ground campaign and the high civilian casualties are drawing increasing critical concern both within the Kingdom and beyond.

The Syrian Kurds are the only anti-DA'ISH force in Syria that has, with American air support defeated DA'ISH as is the case in Iraq. But the Kurds can and will only fight to hold territory dominated by a Kurdish civilian population or, as in Iraq, expand it into areas which once were Kurdish until Saddam Hussein ethnically cleansed important parts of Iraqi Kurdistan. The Syrian Kurdish fighting force would like to do the same, to take over a critical stretch of Syrian Kurdish villages and towns that if recovered from DA'ISH would link up all of what could become Syrian Kurdistan. And that explains why Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan has nominally entered the air war against DA'ISH, for his objective would be in the name of fighting DA'ISH to move Turkish ground troops into that missing link and clear out whoever tries to get in their way – and that means the Syrian Kurdish fighting force.

Since the summer of 2015 it has become apparent that the Syrian Army is wobbling. Bashar al-Assad said as much in an extraordinary speech that was not behind closed doors in which he acknowledged that his Army was “tired” which is a curious but delicate way of putting it. What has become increasingly clear since last summer, and even more so now that the Russians have a military presence not just in Syria but in the Alawite heartland around Latakia, where they are expanding the Latakia Airport. The best assault forces Al-Assad has—the Hezbollah and elements of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, seem to be particularly reluctant in taking losses fighting for Syrian territory that is not vital to defending the Alawite coastal region and land linking both Latakia and Damascus to portions of the Syrian-Lebanese border which enables Iran to link the Damascus Airport to Hezbollah-controlled portions. This is Plan B in the event that the Syrian Army is unable to hold Damascus. The Syrian Army and Al-Assad and his government team can fall back to Latakia and the Alawite villages that surround it. Russia along with Iran is obviously committed to Plan B. But if it comes to Plan B, who will inherit Damascus? Judging by the effective fighting forces it will either be the Jabhat al-Nusra or DA'ISH, and if it's the Jabhat, it is quite likely judging by what has been happening on the Syrian battlefields that DA'ISH will take it from the Jabhat. Unless Jordan is ready to move first.

June 10th is Army Day in Jordan, a traditional and broadly celebrated day for a Jordan Arab Army that has an exceptional history in the modern Middle East. Not just because it was the only Arab Army in the 1948 War that actually defeated the Israeli Army in a number of encounters – holding the line in Latrun (and taking a young Israeli officer named Menahum Begin prisoner) and defeating the Israeli Army in the battle for the Old City of Jerusalem. In the 1967 War – a disaster for Jordan as well as for Egypt and Syria, one Jordanian Battalion, dug in just beyond the Old City's Damascus Gate and close right up to the armistice line that marked off the “New City” – what we used to call Israeli Jerusalem. Since the sector was too close to the New City and there were no precision bombs or artillery shells for that matter back in 1967, the Israelis had to assault the sector fighting with rifle fire and bayonet man-to-man. Half of all Israelis dead and wounded on all battle fronts of the 1967 War were lost fighting man-to-man with that one Jordanian battalion.

But there is more. One could say the Jordan Arab Army – Al-Jaish Al-Arab – existed before Jordan did. The first Ruler of Jordan, King Abdallah I (then Amir Abdallah) led his Hashemite Army fighting force, which was part of the armed force of the Great Arab Revolt, against the Ottomans in World War One, up from the Hejaz to Amman. He threatened to march on Damascus, where French colonial forces occupying Lebanon had recently occupied Syria ending the brief reign there by his brother King Faisal of what was supposed to have been the core of the one Arab state that the Great Arab Revolt was all about. Then that would have been most unrealistic. The British now nominally in control of what is now Jordan in a combination of Sykes-Picot and League of Nations Mandate persuaded him to stay put and become Amir, and eventually King of Jordan.

This bit of history tells us three things. The first, why Army Day on June 10, has always been such an important and widely celebrated holiday in which the Jordanian national flag is always on conspicuous display. The second is pure speculation: that there must be a bit of a Syrian element in the Jordanian Hashemite political DNA ever since World War One and it is reflected in the good relations Jordan has always enjoyed with the Sunni tribes of Syria. And thirdly, starting with the first King Abdallah, and then his grandson King Hussein, and now Hussein's

son, King Abdallah II, every Jordanian Ruler has also been deeply involved – in his own training and in active leadership of the Jordan Arab Army. King Abdallah II was head of Special Forces before and possibly during his brief tenure as Crown Prince. That is the real Islamic political tradition: when the ruler – call him and his dynasty by whatever name – Sultan, King, Amir – also serves as a real (not an honorary) Commander-in-Chief not a so-called Caliphate, a lumpen Caliph who rests on a curious authority that blends Salafi-Jihadi ideology with the organizational skills of former Iraqi Baathist officers.

This past year, on June 9, 2015, one day before Army Day there was another ceremony – a new ceremony – involving the King of Jordan and the Arab Army. This time the King presented to the Army another flag – with the Basmallah – the profession of faith, “In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful” and a seven-pointed star that stands for the seven verses of the opening of the Qur’an, the Surah Fatihah, all on a solid crimson background. This new flag is described as a 500 year old symbol of the Hashemites and the original flag of the Great Arab Revolt. It is the Hashemite flag and the Hashemites are in a direct line back to the Prophet and the flag reminds us of that as well as the Hashemite revival 100 years ago of an Arab Islam and an Islamic Arabism. It is opposed in spirit to the pathology that animates DA’ISH – that of the oldest heresy in Islam the Khawarij who sent the assassin who murdered Imam Ali and who were the

first Muslims to practice Takfir – a perverse justification for their putting the sword to any man, woman or child who did not acknowledge their authority. Just as the Salafi-Jihadis of DA’ISH do today.

It was presented to an Army that man-for-man is the best Army in the Arab world. But that is the problem. Man for man it is a small Army and Jordan a relatively poor country. But with a long border with Syria, Jordan has no other priority at this moment than readiness to meet the threat of DA’ISH to Jordan, to the Arab world and to the very soul of the modern Muslim world. The Saudis, and the UAE, no matter how involved they are now in what is basically a contest to determine who has hegemony in the Gulf must know that ultimately in far broader geographical scale and in strictly spiritual terms, DA’ISH is the greater threat. With significant funding to cover the costs of a rapidly expanded Jordan Arab Army, and more fighter planes for the Royal Jordanian Air Force, this would be the answer to a question I asked in a headline for a column published by Al Arabiya News in the summer of 2015, “Who can defeat ISIS (DA’ISH)?”

The crimson banner of the Hashemites is above all else a battle flag.

END



—S. Abdallah Schleifer
Distinguished Visiting Professor
Future University in Egypt



❧ The ❧
HOUSE
OF ISLAM

I. The House of Islam

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The religion of Islam is based on belief in the One God (who in Arabic is called Allah). It was founded by the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 CE) in the ancient cities of Makkah and Madinah, in the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula (known as the Hijaz). God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad the Holy Qur'an, the Sacred Book of Islam. The religion this created, however, was not a new message but simply a final restatement of God's messages to the Hebrew Prophets and to Jesus.

The Holy Qur'an says:

Say ye: we believe in God and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have submitted. (2:136)

Moreover, the Holy Qur'an did not exclude the possibility of revelations other than those that were given to the Prophets mentioned in the Bible (and thus did not exclude the possibility of other genuine ancient religions other than Judaism, Christianity and Islam). God says, in the Holy Qur'an:

Verily we have sent Messengers before thee [O Muhammad]. About some of them have we told thee, and about some have we not told thee... (40:78).

And verily we have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming]: serve God and shun false gods... (16:36).

The Essence of Islam

The essence and substance of Islam can be easily summed up by three major principles (which are also successive stages in the spiritual life): Islam (meaning 'submission to God's will'); Iman (meaning 'faith in

God'), and Ihsan (meaning 'virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God'). The second Caliph, the great 'Umar ibn al Khattab, related that:

One day when we were sitting [in Madinah] with the Messenger of God [the Prophet Muhammad] there came unto us a man whose clothes were of exceeding whiteness and whose hair was of exceeding blackness, nor were there any signs of travel upon him, although none of us knew him. He sat down knee upon knee opposite the Prophet, upon whose thighs he placed the palms of his hands, saying: 'O Muhammad; tell me what is the surrender (Islam)'. The Messenger of God answered him saying: 'The surrender is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger, to perform the prayer, bestow the alms, fast Ramadan and make if thou canst, the pilgrimage to the Holy House.' He said, 'Thou hast spoken truly,' and we were amazed that having questioned him he should corroborate him. Then he said: 'Tell me what is faith (Iman)'. He answered: 'To believe in God and His Angels and his Books and His Messengers and the Last Day [the Day of Judgement], and to believe that no good or evil cometh but by His Providence.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said, and then: 'Tell me what is excellence (Ihsan)'. He answered: 'To worship God as if thou sawest Him, for if Thou seest Him not, yet seest He thee.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' he said... Then the stranger went away, and I stayed a while after he had gone; and the Prophet said to me: 'O 'Umar, knowest thou the questioner, who he was?' I said, 'God and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'It was Gabriel [the Archangel]. He came unto you to teach you your religion.'¹

Thus Islam as such consists of 'five pillars': (1) the Shahadatayn or the 'two testimonies of faith' (whose inward meaning is the acknowledgement of God).

1 Sahih Muslim, 'Kitab al Iman', 1, N.I. (The Hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ, like all sacred texts, are written above in italics).

(2) The five daily prayers (whose inward meaning is the attachment to God). (3) Giving alms or Zakat—one-fortieth of one's income and savings annually to the poor and destitute (whose inward meaning is the detachment from the world). (4) Fasting the Holy month of Ramadan annually (whose inward meaning is detachment from the body and from the ego). (5) Making the Hajj (whose inner meaning is to return to one's true inner heart, the mysterious square, black-shrouded Ka'ba in Makkah being the outward symbol of this heart). Thus also Iman as such consists of belief in all the essential doctrines of religion (and the inner meaning of this is that one should not go through the motions of religion and of the five pillars of Islam blindly or robotically, but rather have real faith and certainty in one's heart). Thus, finally, *Ihsan* as such consists in believing that God always sees us, and therefore that one must be virtuous and sincere in all one's actions. In this connection the Prophet said: '*By Him in whose Hand is my Life, none of you believes till he loves for his neighbour what he loves for himself*'.² In summary, we could say that the essence of Islam is exactly the Two Commandments upon which Jesus said hangs all the Law and the Prophets:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all commandments is...the Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy understanding, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second commandment is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.³

The Canon of Islam

Islam does not, like Christianity, have a clergy. There is no temporal or even spiritual institute that holds it together or unifies it. So how has it held together—and indeed, flourished—for the last fourteen centuries approximately, when its scholars and temporal policymakers keep changing and dying out over time? How has it remained so homogeneous that the Islam of 1900 CE was doctrinally exactly the same as the Islam of 700 CE? Where have its internal checks and balances come from?

The answer is that Islam has a traditional canon:⁴ a

collection of sacred texts which everyone has agreed are authoritative and definitive, and which 'fix' the principles of belief, practice, law, theology and doctrine throughout the ages. All that Muslim scholars (called *ulema* and muftis or sheikhs and imams) have left to do is to interpret these texts and work out their practical applications and details (and the principles of interpretation and elaboration are themselves 'fixed' by these texts), so that in Islam a person is only considered learned to the extent that he can demonstrate his knowledge of these texts. This does not mean that Islam is a religion of limitations for these texts are a vast ocean and their principles can be inwardly worked out almost infinitely in practice. It does mean, however, that Islam is 'fixed' and has certain limits beyond which it will not go. This is an extremely important concept to understand, because misunderstanding it, and setting aside the traditional canon of Islam, leads to people killing and assassinating others in the name of religion. The traditional canon of Islam is what protects not just the religion of Islam itself, but the world (including Muslims themselves) from terrorism, murder and oppression in the name of



2 Sahih Muslim, 'Kitab al Iman', 18, n. 72.

3 The Gospel according to Mark 12:29–31. (See also Deuteronomy 6:5; and Matthew 22:37–40).

4 Even the English word 'canon' comes from the Arabic

Islam. The canon is Islam's internal check and balance system; it is what safeguards its moderation; it is 'self-censorship' and its ultimate safety feature.

To be more specific, the traditional Sunni Islamic Canon starts with the Qur'an itself; then the great traditional Commentaries upon it (e.g. Tabari; Razi; Zamakhshari/Baydawi; Qurtubi; Jalalayn; Ibn Kathir; Nasafi; and al Wahidi's *Asbab al Nuzul*); then the eight traditional collections of Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet, (e.g. Muslim; Bukhari; Tirmidhi; Ibn Hanbal, al Nasa'i; Al-Sijistani; Al-Darimi and Ibn Maja); the later Muhaddithin, or Traditionists (e.g. Bayhaqi; Baghawi; Nawawi and 'Asqalani); then the traditional biographical and historical works of Sira (Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd, Waqidi; Azraqi; Tabari; and Suhayli); the *Risala* of Al-Shafi'i: the *Muwatta'* of Imam Malik; the *Ihya' 'Ulum al Din* of Ghazali; Ash'arite and Maturidian theology; the (original) 'Aqida of Tahawi; Imam Jazuli's *Dala'il al-Khayrat*, and finally—albeit only extrinsically—Jahiliyya poetry (as a background reference for the semantic connotations of words in the Arabic language). We give a specific (but not exhaustive) list here in order to minimize the possibility of misunderstanding.

Islam in History

It is evidently not possible to do justice to the role of Islam in world history, thought and civilisation in a few words, but the following paragraph by Britain's



Prince Charles attempts it:

'The medieval Islamic world, from Central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, was a world where scholars and men of learning flourished. But because we have tended to see Islam as the enemy, as an alien culture, society, and system of belief, we have tended to ignore or erase its great relevance to our own history. For example, we have underestimated the importance of eight hundred years of Islamic

society and culture in Spain between the 8th and 15th centuries. The contribution of Muslim Spain to the preservation of classical learning during the Dark Ages, and to the first flowerings of the Renaissance, has long been recognised. But Islamic Spain was much more than a mere larder where Hellenistic knowledge was kept for later consumption by the emerging modern Western world. Not only did Muslim Spain gather and preserve the intellectual content of ancient Greek and Roman civilisation, it also interpreted and expanded upon that civilisation, and made a vital contribution of its own in so many fields of human endeavour—in science, astronomy, mathematics, algebra (itself an Arabic word), law, history, medicine, pharmacology, optics, agriculture, architecture, theology, music. Averroes [Ibn Rushd] and Avenzoar [Ibn Zuhr], like their counterparts Avicenna [Ibn



Sina] and Rhazes [Abu Bakr al Razi] in the East, contributed to the study and practice of medicine in ways from which Europe benefited for centuries afterwards.’⁵

On 4 June, 2009, US President Barack Obama said the following at Cairo University:

‘As a student of history, I also know civilisation’s debt to Islam. It was Islam—at places like Al-Azhar—that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe’s Renaissance and Enlightenment. It was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation. And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

I also know that Islam has always been a part of America’s story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, ‘The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims.’ And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they’ve excelled in our sports arenas, they’ve won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.’⁶

5 HRH the Prince of Wales, ‘Islam and the West’, a lecture given at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford on October 27th, 1993, pp.17–18.

6 Barack Obama’s speech in Cairo, ‘Remarks by the President on a New Beginning’ June 4, 2009.

II. Major Doctrinal Divisions Within Islam

Sunni Theology

1) Ash'ari and Maturidi Schools: Sunni Orthodoxy¹

These two schools of doctrine are followed by the bulk of Sunni Muslims and differ only in minor details.

Ash'ari School: This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Abu al Hasan al Ash'ari** (874–936 CE) and is widely accepted throughout the Sunni Muslim world. They believe that the characteristics of God are ultimately beyond human comprehension, and trust in the Revelation is essential, although the use of rationality is important.

Maturidi School: This school is named after the followers of the 9th century scholar **Muhammad Abu Mansur al Maturidi** (853–944 CE) and has a wide following in regions where Hanafi law is practiced. They have a slightly more pronounced reliance on human reason.

2) Salafi School

This school was developed around the doctrines of 18th century scholar **Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab** (1703–1792 CE). Salafis have specific doctrinal beliefs, owing to their particular interpretation of Islam, that differentiate them from the majority of Sunnis, such as a literal anthropomorphic interpretation of God. Salafis place a great emphasis on literal interpretation of the Qur'an and *Hadith*, with skepticism towards the role of human reason in theology.

3) Mu'tazili School

This school was developed between the 8th and 10th centuries. Although it is traced back to **Wasil ibn Ata** (d. 748 CE) in Basra, theologians **Abu al Hudhayl Al-'Allaf** (d. 849 CE) and **Bishr ibn al Mu'tamir** (d. 825 CE) are credited with formalizing its theological stance. Mu'tazili thought relies heavily on logic, including Greek philosophy. Although it no longer has a significant following, a small minority of contemporary intellectuals have sought to revive it. Mutazilites believe that the Qur'an was created as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated. Moreover they advocate using rationalism to understand allegorical readings of the Qur'an.

¹ Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message (see: the Amman Message at the end of this section):

Shi'a Theology

1) The Twelver School

The infallibility (*'Ismah*) of the Twelve Imams descended from the family of the Prophet (*Ahl al-Bayt*) who are believed to be the spiritual and rightful political authorities of the Muslim community (*Umma*). The twelfth Imam, the Mahdi, is believed to be in occultation to return in the future.

2) Isma'ili School

The Qur'an and *Hadith* are said to have truths lying with a single living Imam, descended directly from the Prophet. Also known as 'seveners' for their belief that Isma'il ibn Ja'far was the seventh and final leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

3) Zaidi School

The infallibility of the Twelve Imams and the notion of occultation are rejected in favour of accepting the leadership of a living Imam. The Imamate can be held by any descendant of the Prophet (*Sayyid*). Also known as 'fivers' by other Muslims for their belief that Zayd ibn Ali was the fifth leading-Imam of the Muslim community.

Ibadi Theology

Ibadi School

Ibadis believe that God created the Qur'an at a certain point in time, and that God will not be seen on the Day of Judgment. They also believe in the eternal nature of hell for all those who enter it.

III. Ideological Divisions

Traditional Islam

(90% of the world's Muslims)

Also known as Orthodox Islam, this ideology is not politicized and largely based on consensus of correct opinion—thus including the Sunni, Shi'a, and Ibadi branches of practice (and their subgroups) within the fold of Islam, and not groups such as the Druze or the Ahmadiyya, among others.

Islamic Fundamentalism

(9% of the world's Muslims)
(8% Salafi; 1% Ikhwan);

This is a highly politicized religious ideology popularised in the 20th century through movements within both the Shi'a and Sunni branches of Islam—characterised by aggressiveness and a reformist attitude toward traditional Islam.

Islamic Modernism

(1% of the world's Muslims)

Emerging from 19th century Ottoman Turkey and Egypt, this subdivision contextualized Islamic ideology for the times—emphasizing the need for religion to evolve with Western advances.

IIIa. Traditional Islam

Sunni (90% of the world's traditional muslims)

The largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Ahl as Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah* or 'people of the prophetic tradition and community'—with emphasis on emulating the life of the last Prophet, Muhammad.

Schools of Sunni Islamic Law

Hanafi (45%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Abu Hanifa** (699–767 CE/ 89–157 AH) in Iraq.

Shafi'i (28%)

Named after the followers of **Imam al Shafi'i** (767–820 CE/ 150–204 AH) in Madinah.

Maliki (15%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Malik** (711–795 CE/ 93–179 AH) in Madinah.

Hanbali (2%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal** (780–855 CE/ 164–241 AH) in Iraq.

Shi'a (9.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

The second-largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Shi'atu 'Ali* or 'the party of Ali,' the fourth caliph of Islam and first Imam in Shi'ism.

Branches

Zaidis (Fivers) (Less than 1%)

Named after the followers of **Imam Zaid ibn 'Ali** (695–740 CE) in Madinah.

Twelvers (8%)
Named after the followers of **Imam Ja'far al Sadiq** (702–765 CE/ 83–148 AH) in Madinah.

Isma'ilis (Sevens)
(Less than 0.5%)
Named after the followers of **Muhammad ibn Ismail** (746–809 CE/128–193 AH) in Madinah.

Schools of Islamic Law for Twelver Shi'a

Usuli

99% of Twelvers. This dominant school favors the use of *ijtihad*, independent legal reasoning, with an emphasis on four accepted collections of *Hadith*. Derive legal opinions from living *ayatollahs*, or *mujtahids*, whose rulings become obligatory. *Taqlid*, the practice of following rulings without questioning the religious authority, is a core tenet of this school. The name Usuli is derived from the Arabic term *usul* meaning 'principle'.

Akhbari

Akhbaris reject the use of *ijtihad* or reasoning, and do not follow *marjas* who practice *ijtihad*. They also prohibit exegesis of the Qur'an. Derive legal rulings from the Qur'an, *Hadith*, and consensus. The name Akhbari is derived from the Arabic term *akbbar* meaning 'traditions'. They can trace their roots to the followers of **Muhammad Amin Astarabadi** (d. 1627 CE). Akhbaris continue to exist to this day, although in small, concentrated pockets, particularly around Basra, Iraq.

Ibadi (0.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

The Ibadi school has origins in and is linked to the Kharijites, but the modern day community is distinct from the 7th century Islamic sect. It was founded after the death of Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by a majority of Oman's Muslim population. Also found across parts of Africa.

Mystic Brotherhoods

Although reliable statistics are not available for the millions of Muslims who practice Islamic mysticism, it has been estimated that 25% of adult Sunni Muslims in 1900 CE participated in these brotherhoods as either *murids* (followers of the Sufi guide of a particular order) or *mutabarrikin* (supporters or affiliates of a particular Sufi order).

Sunni Orders

Naqshbandiyya

Founded by **Baha al Din Naqshband** (d. 1389 CE) in Bukhara, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** popular from China to North Africa, Europe and America.

Chishtiyya

Founded by the Persian saint **Mu'in al Din Chishti** (d. 1236 CE) Khurasan. **Influence:** highly influential in India.

Qadiriyya

Founded by scholar and saint **'Abd al Qadir al Jilani** (1077–1166 CE) in Baghdad, Iraq. **Influence:** stretches from Morocco to Malaysia, from Central Asia to South Africa.

Mawlawiyya

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint and poet **Jalal al Din Rumi** (d. 1273 CE). **Influence:** mainly in Turkey.

Tijaniyya

Ahmad al Tijani (d. 1815 CE) who settled and taught in Fez, Morocco. **Influence:** major spiritual and religious role in Senegal, Nigeria, Mauritania and much of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Rifa'iyya

Founded by **Ahmad ibn 'Ali al Rifa'i** (d. 1182 CE) in southern Iraq. **Influence:** widely practiced across the Muslim world with a strong presence in Egypt.

Yashrutiyya

Founded by **'Ali Nur al Din al Yashruti** (d. 1892 CE) in Palestine. **Influence:** strong presence in Syria and Lebanon.

Shadhiliyyah

Founded by the Moroccan saint **Abu'l-Hassan al Shadili** (d. 1258 CE). **Influence:** most influential in North Africa and Egypt.

Badawiyya

An Egyptian order founded by the Moroccan saint **Ahmad al Badawi** (d. 1276 CE), considered by many as the patron saint of Egypt. **Influence:** active role in Egypt and the Sudan.

Kubrawiyya

(d. 1221 CE) from Khawarzm, modern day Uzbekistan. **Influence:** mostly present across Central Asia.

Suhrawardiyya

Founded by Persian scholar **Abu Najib Suhrawardi** (d. 1168 CE) in Iraq. **Influence:** a strong presence in India.

Khalwatiyya

A Turkish order founded by the Persian saint **'Umar al Khalwati** (d. 1397 CE). **Influence:** wide presence in the Balkans, Syria, Lebanon and North Africa.

Shi'a Orders

Irfan

Irfan, which means 'knowing' in Arabic and 'most beautiful and knowledgeable person' in Pashto, is Shi'a mysticism. **Mulla Sadr al Din Muhammad Shirazi** (1571–1636 CE) from Iran is considered a leading Shi'a theorist of *Irfan*.

IIIb. Islamic Fundamentalism

Sunni

Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood, or Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimeen is a transnational Sunni movement, with no particular ideological adherence. It is the largest political opposition organisation in many Arab states, particularly in Egypt where it was founded in opposition to colonial rule by Hassan al Banna in 1928. Al Banna originally sought to revive Muslim culture from its position of exploitation under colonial rule, through charitable and educational work, to bring Islam into a central role in people's life. Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966 CE) was also a leading member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 50s and 60s.

Wahhabism/Salafism

Wahhabism/Salafism are terms used interchangeably to refer to a particular brand of Islam. Salaf, meaning predecessors, refers to the very early practice of Islam by Muhammad and his immediate successors. Salafism seeks to revive the practice of Islam as it was at the time of Muhammad and can be critical of too much emphasis being placed on thinkers from after this period. Muhammad ibn 'Abd al Wahhab (1703–1792 CE) was an important figure in the resurrection of this ideology therefore Salafism is often simply known as Wahhabism.

Shi'a

Revolutionary Shi'ism

Revolutionary Shi'ism is an ideology, based on the teachings of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989 CE), which shares many similarities with Marxist revolutionary thought. Khomeini believed that the only way to secure independence from colonial or imperial forces was through the creation of a Shi'a state, under the idea of Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Jurist). This means that all politics is subject to the opinion of the Supreme Leader who is responsible for the continued success of the revolution. It is only practiced in Iran.

IIIc. Islamic Modernism

Islamic modernism is a reform movement started by politically-minded urbanites with scant knowledge of traditional Islam. These people had witnessed and studied Western technology and socio-political ideas, and realized that the Islamic world was being left behind technologically by the West and had become too weak to stand up to it. They blamed this weakness on what they saw as 'traditional Islam,' which they thought held them back and was not 'progressive' enough. They thus called for a complete overhaul of Islam, including—or rather in particular—Islamic law (*sharia*) and doctrine (*aqida*). Islamic modernism remains popularly an object of derision and ridicule, and is scorned by traditional Muslims and fundamentalists alike.



The Amman Message

www.AmmanMessage.com

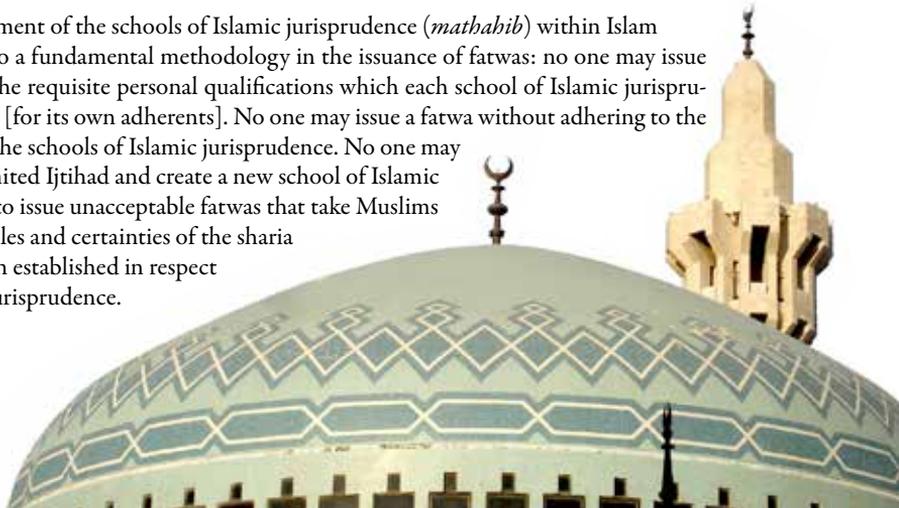
Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message, these points being:

(a) Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four Sunni schools (*mathabib*) of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali), the two Shi'a schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Ja'fari and Zaydi), the Ibadhi school of Islamic jurisprudence and the Thahiri school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Sheikh Al-Azhar's fatwa, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the Ash'ari creed or whoever practices real *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate.

Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion.

(b) There exists more in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them. The adherents to the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are in agreement as regards the basic principles of Islam. All believe in Allah (God), Glorified and Exalted be He, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Qur'an is the Revealed Word of God; and that our master Muhammad, may blessings and peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith (*shahadatayn*); the ritual prayer (*salat*); almsgiving (*zakat*); fasting the month of Ramadan (*sawm*), and the Hajj to the sacred house of God (in Makkah). All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in Allah (God), His angels, His scriptures, His messengers, and in the Day of Judgment, in Divine Providence in good and in evil. Disagreements between the *ulema* (scholars) of the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) and not as regards the principles and fundamentals (*usul*) [of the religion of Islam]. Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (*furu'*) is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among the *ulema* (scholars) 'is a good affair'.

(c) Acknowledgement of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*mathabib*) within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of fatwas: no one may issue a fatwa without the requisite personal qualifications which each school of Islamic jurisprudence determines [for its own adherents]. No one may issue a fatwa without adhering to the methodology of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. No one may claim to do unlimited Ijtihad and create a new school of Islamic jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable fatwas that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the sharia and what has been established in respect of its schools of jurisprudence.



❧ The Top ❧

50

The Top 50

1. His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,
Custodian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem
2. His Eminence Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb
Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University,
Grand Imam of the Al-Azhar Mosque
3. His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud (new)
King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian
of the Two Holy Mosques
4. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic
Republic of Iran
5. His Majesty King Mohammed VI
King of Morocco
6. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Al-Sa'id
Sultan of Oman
7. His Highness General Al-Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and
Deputy Supreme Commander
of the UAE Armed Forces
8. His Excellency President Recep Tayyip Erdogan
President of the Republic of Turkey
9. His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani
Marja of the Hawza, Najaf, Iraq
10. Hajji Mohammed Abdul-Wahhab
Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan
11. His Excellency President Joko Widodo
President of Indonesia
12. His Eminence Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh
Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
13. His Eminence Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse
Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order
14. HRH Prince Muhammad bin Naif and HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman (new)
Crown Prince and Deputy Crown
Prince of Saudi Arabia
15. Hodjaefendi Fethullah Gülen
Turkish Muslim Preacher
16. His Eminence Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a
Senior Religious Leader
17. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda
Saudi Scholar and Educator
18. Dr KH Said Aqil Siradj
Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama
19. His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
20. His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhairi (new)
President of Nigeria
21. Her Eminence Sheikha Munira Qubeysi
Leader of the Qubeysi Movement
22. His Eminence Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani
Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence
23. His Eminence Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah
President of the Forum for Promoting
Peace in Muslim Societies

24. His Royal Eminence Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III
Sultan of Sokoto
25. Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan Qadiri Al-Azhari
Barelwi Leader and Spiritual Guide
26. His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad Al-Mansour
Imam of the Zaidi Sect of Shi'a Muslims
27. His Excellency Prime Minister Ahmed Davutoglu
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
28. Sheikh Al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz
Director of Dar Al Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen
29. His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas
President of Palestine
30. His Excellency Rached Ghannouchi (new)
Former Prime Minister of Tunisia
31. Dr Amr Khaled
Preacher and Social Activist
32. Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi
Head of the International Union of Muslim Scholars
33. Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah
Queen of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
34. Sheikh Moez Masoud
Preacher and Televangelist
35. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah
Secretary General of Hezbollah
36. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson
Founder of Zaytuna Institute, United States of America
37. Professor Dr Seyyed Hossein Nasr
Islamic Philosopher
38. His Excellency Shaykh Ibrahim Salih
The Grand Mufti of Nigeria
39. Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al-Abideen Al-Jifri
Director General of the Tabah Foundation, UAE
40. His Royal Highness Shah Karim Al-Hussayni
The Aga Khan
41. Khaled Mashal
Leader of Hamas
42. His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani
Emir of Qatar
43. Maulana Mahmood Madani
Leader and Executive Member of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, India
44. Professor Dr M Din Syamsuddin
Former Chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia
45. Her Excellency President Atifete Jahjaga
President of the Republic of Kosovo
46. His Highness Amir Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum
Ruler of Dubai and the Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates.
47. Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari
Islamic Preacher, Egypt
48. Habib Luthfi Yahya
Ra'is 'Amm of the Jam'iyyah Ahli Thariqah al-Mu'tabarrah al-Nahdliyah, Indonesia
49. Prof. Ali Mohyi Al-Din Al-Qaradaghi
Secretary-General of the International Union for Muslim Scholars
50. His Excellency Dr Aref Nayed
Scholar and Libyan Ambassador to the UAE



Country: Jordan

Born: 30 Jan 1962 (Age 53)

Source of Influence: Political, Lineage

Influence: King with authority over approximately 7 million Jordanians and outreach to Traditional Islam

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009: 4 2010: 4 2011: 4

2012: 7 2013: 4 2014/15: 4

41ST

generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

“Blowing up buses will not induce the Israelis to move forward, and neither will the killing of Palestinians or the demolition of their homes and their future. All this needs to stop. And we pledge that Jordan will do its utmost to help achieve it.”

King Abdullah II



His Majesty

King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein

King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Custodian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem

Eye of Two Hurricanes: This year, for the first time, His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein has been selected as the most influential leader in the Islamic World. The main reasons are simple: location, location, location, politics and religion. Jordan is a relatively small state with a population of only 7+ million, but HM King Abdullah II has become a central figure in the two most consequential conflicts in the Islamic World: the conflict over Palestine and the conflict in Syria and Iraq with DA'ISH. The King is thus in the eye of two hurricanes.

Jordan controls the southern flank of Syria and the southwestern flank of Iraq. With the Kurds now limiting DA'ISH's ambitions to the north; Iran and Shi'a Iraq limiting them to the east; and with DA'ISH coming up against the rebels in the northwest and the Alawite/Hizbollah strongholds in the southwest, the crucial upcoming stage of the conflict will very much depend on King Abdullah II and Jordan. Jordan stands literally and figuratively between DA'ISH and Saudi Arabia—especially since Saudi Arabia is currently occupied with another war to its south, in the Yemen. As Jordan goes, so will go Saudi Arabia, and then the rest of the Islamic World.

Jordan is also the frontline Arab-Islamic state with Israel; the one with the largest border and one of only two states (the other being Egypt) with a finalised peace treaty with Israel. The King is using his inherited peace treaty with Israel to mediate a solution between Israel and Palestine and to protect the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Compound of which he is the Official Custodian.

Finally, Jordan stands at the greatest geographical crossroads in the world—the land crossroad between Asia, Africa and Europe. It is also wedged between Mecca and Medina to the south and Jerusalem to the west, and therefore is part of the *blessed land* that the Qur'an mentions (*Al-Isra*, 17:1) as being 'around' the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Classically, it was at the crossroads and trade routes of the great ancient high civilizations: Sumer and Babylon; Persia; Egypt and Greek and Roman amongst others. Today, it stands at the crossroads between five different and competing larger regional powers: Saudi

Arabia, Egypt, Israel, Turkey to the north and Iran to the east. What Jordan does (and what happens to Jordan) will tip the balance between these powers one way or another—or will keep the healthy buffer between them.

Politically and religiously the King represents the exact antithesis of DA'ISH. Though the King is not a religious scholar and personally very discrete in his piety, he—and the Jordanian religious establishment—never stray from traditional Hanafi/Shafi'i Orthodoxy, in contrast to the free-wheeling, anti-*madhhabism* of Wahhabism and Syed Qutb thought. In even starker contrast (to the *takfirism* of DA'ISH) is King Abdullah's traditional 'big tent' plural vision of Islam—as seen in the historical consensus on 'the Amman Message' in 2004-2005, which he personally spearheaded (see below).

Personally also, the polarity could not be more marked. King Abdullah's humane, open, friendly, modest, honest, and compassionate style of rule could not be more different from the brutal barbarity and deceptive titanic pretences and propaganda flowing out of DA'ISH. The king is also Western-educated (he attended the Sandhurst, and studied at Georgetown and Oxford Universities and has honorary PhDs from both), and he is openly comfortable with all cultures. This is in stark contrast to DA'ISH's schizophrenic anti-western vitriol on the one hand and its addiction to Western information technology, movies and video-games on the other. Finally, the king is a quiet but committed family-values man with one wife (see entry on HM Queen Rania) and four children—the exact antipode of DA'ISH with their sanctimonious sexual

Captain Mu'ath Al-Kasasbeh was a Royal Jordanian Air Force fighter pilot. On December 24th, 2014, while performing his duties as part of Jordan's efforts in the coalition against DA'ISH, First Lieutenant Al-Kasasbeh's F-16 jet crashed in Al-Raqqah, Syria where he was held captive and tortured by DA'ISH. Despite all efforts by HM King Abdullah II and the Jordanian government to secure his release, DA'ISH killed the pilot while still pretending to negotiate with Jordan. DA'ISH recorded Mu'ath's murder on video and showed it towards the end of a 22 minute video that it published online. In it Mu'ath is seen trapped in a cage, doused with gasoline and burned alive as armed DA'ISH members watch. In

response to this heinous murder, King Abdullah II of Jordan ordered the Jordanian Air Force to intensify its airstrikes against DA'ISH strongholds. Al-Kasasbeh was posthumously promoted to the rank of Captain.





enslavement and rape of women and their free jihadi-wife inter-circulation.

Perhaps the only thing King Abdullah has in common with DA'ISH is that he is ready for war, having been a professional soldier and Commander of the Jordanian Special Forces before becoming king.

But even then, his vision of war—as a defensive necessity and not as a means to eliminate those with different views—is a far more humane and regulated one than that of DA'ISH's.

HM King Abdullah II is the constitutional monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the Supreme Commander of the Jordan Arab Army: reportedly the best army, man for man, in the Arab World. He is also the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem. March 2013 saw the signing of a historic treaty which officially reaffirmed the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's custodianship of the Holy Sites of Jerusalem. The treaty was signed by HM King Abdullah II and HE President Mahmoud Abbas of the State of Palestine. This treaty makes formal a situation which has existed since 1924 and enables both countries to jointly legally protect the Holy Sites in Jerusalem against official and unofficial Israeli incursions, destruction and illegal annexation.

Prophetic Lineage: King Abdullah II is a 41st generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the line of the Prophet's grandson Al-Hasan. The Hashemite Family, the Hashemites or Banu Hashem, are descendants of the Arab Chieftain Quraysh, a descendant of the Prophet Ismail, son of the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). Hashem was the Prophet Muhammad's great-grandfather, thus the Hashemites are direct descendants of the Prophet ﷺ through his daughter Fatima and her husband Ali ibn Abi Taleb, who was the Prophet's paternal first cousin and the fourth Caliph of Islam. The Hashemite Dynasty is the oldest ruling dynasty in the Islamic World, and the second-oldest in the world, after that of Japan. As the current bearer of the Hashemite legacy, HM King Abdullah II has a unique prestige in the Islamic World.

Majalla Law: 80% of Jordan's laws are based on the Ottoman *Majalla* and hence on traditional Hanafi Shari'a. Jordan has a Chief Mufti; official Muftis in every province; Army and Police Grand Muftis and Shari'a Courts for all personal status issues for Muslims (such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and so on). Yet it has Orthodox Priest-run courts for its native Christian population in

Christian personal status issues, and Jordan guarantees Christian seats in the Parliament and de facto at every level of government. It has civil law for all citizens and additional tribal laws and customs for tribesmen and tribeswomen (who make up over half the native population). Jordan does not have corporeal punishment; it has capital punishment for murder and other capital offenses. However, with the exception of two terrorism offenses and nine particularly horrendous murders, the King has suspended capital punishment since March 2006 whilst instituting a comprehensive program of judicial retraining and reform. Abd Al-Razzaq Sanhoury, the great Egyptian Islamic Constitutional Scholar of the Twentieth Century, described Jordan's basic laws and Constitution as the most traditionally Islamic in the world.

International Influence: HM King Abdullah II has effectively promoted Jordan's positive moderating role not only in the Arab and Muslim Worlds but also in the world at large. He has worked tirelessly towards the establishment of a just and lasting comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and established Jordan's role as a regional power broker. He has also reached far beyond his borders to East Africa, East Asia and Central and South America. King Abdullah is now the third longest-serving of the leaders of the 21 Arab States—behind Oman's Sultan Qaboos and Sudan's President Bashir—ruling for over 16 years. This longevity in office—and accumulated experience and contacts—has led to an increased influence internationally.

Reformer: HM King Abdullah's progressive vision for Jordan is based on political openness, economic and social development, and the Islamic values of good will and tolerance. Under his reign, and during the Arab Spring, Jordan has witnessed sweeping constitutional changes (one third of the Constitution was amended), and political and social reforms aimed at increasing governmental transparency and accountability. Jordan does not have a single political prisoner, and there are several vibrant opposition currents in Jordan. The advancement of civil liberties and the efforts to institutionalize democratic and political pluralism in Jordan under King Abdullah II have made Jordan one of the most progressive and stable countries in the Middle East.

King Abdullah has always been particularly interested in economic reform and development in Jordan. Among his most successful economic initiatives over the years are Free Trade Agreements with the US (which has led to job-creating Free Trade Zones inside Jordan); the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (which has led to billions of dollars in investment and trade in the port city of Aqaba); the computer-literacy educational initiative (which has made Jordan a leading hub regionally and even worldwide in the IT sector); and the Affordable Housing Project (which has led to tens of thousands of

new homes for Jordanians). In his quest to make Jordan economically prosperous, King Abdullah has convened the World Economic Forum (WEF) many times in Jordan and tirelessly tried to improve the Jordanian economic climate for investors.

Islamic Outreach: In response to growing Islamophobia in the West in the wake of 9/11 and rising sectarian strife, King Abdullah II launched the Amman Message initiative (see page 32), which was unanimously adopted by the Islamic World's political and temporal leaderships. In total, over 500 leading Muslim scholars endorsed the Amman Message and its three points. This was an unprecedented historic religious and political consensus (*ijma'*) of the Islamic Ummah (nation) in modern times, and a consolidation of traditional, orthodox Islam. King Abdullah II is also credited with the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought's most authoritative website on the Holy Qur'an and Tafsir (www.altafsir.com). He also founded the new World Islamic Sciences and Education University in Jordan (www.wise.edu.jo) in 2008. In 2012, King Abdullah II set up integrated professorial chairs for the study of the work of Imam Ghazali at the Aqsa Mosque and Imam Razi at the King Hussein Mosque (see page 233). And in 2014, he established a fellowship for the study of love in religion at Regent's Park College, Oxford University.

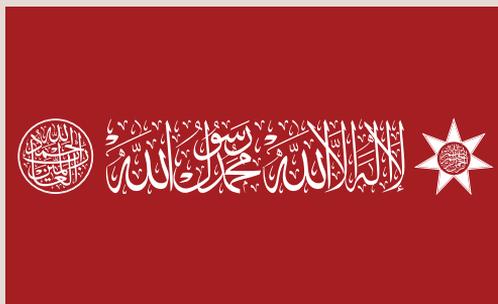
Interfaith Outreach: HM King Abdullah II is also lauded as an interfaith leader for his support of the 2007 *A Common Word* initiative—a groundbreaking initiative in Christian-Muslim engagement (www.acommonword.com).

He was also the initiator and driving force behind the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution (see www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com), marking the first week of February as an annual celebration of peace and harmony between faiths. He also set up the King Abdullah II Prize for the best event worldwide during that week. In 2014 HM King Abdullah hosted HH Pope Francis in Jordan (having previously hosted both HH Pope Benedict XVI and HH Pope John Paul II). In 2015 the Baptism Site of Jesus Christ on Jordan's River Bank was unanimously voted a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Thus, at the same time that DA'ISH was destroying Syria and Iraq's historical and archaeological treasures, King Abdullah was preserving not just Muslim Holy Sites, but Christian Holy Sites and universal historical treasures as well. The King was also active in trying to protect the minority religious communities not just in Jordan, but in Syria, Iraq and Palestine.

Safe Haven: Jordan has around 2 million registered and unregistered refugees from Syria and Iraq and other regional conflicts (such as Libya and Yemen), in addition to around 2 million refugees from the Palestine conflict. Jordan is the largest refugee host in the world, and by far the largest host per capita and per population. It bears this burden largely alone. Despite its paucity of resources, Jordan has welcomed and accommodated a staggering number of refugees and is seen by many as the most stable country in a turbulent region. Jordan houses Za'atari Camp, the second largest refugee camp in the world.

Hashemite Flag: Symbolism and Explanation

1. It contains the *Shahadatayn*. The *Shahadatayn* are the words of salvation (*al-kalimah al-munjiyah*), and the words of Truth. The *Shahadatayn* are the great message of Islam and the creed of Muslims.
2. It starts with the *Basmallah*. Every act that does not begin with the *Basmallah* is 'cut off' (*abtar*). The *Basmallah* is the symbol of action, but also of mercy, because it contains God's Names of Mercy: Al-Rahman (The Compassionate) and Al-Raheem (The Merciful).
3. It ends with the *Hamdallah*. Every act that does not end with the *Hamdallah* is deficient. The *Hamdallah* is the symbol of contentment in God (*rida billah*). God says: ... *all that is therein proclaim His praise ...* (*Al-Isra'*, 17:44).
4. It contains the first two verses of the Qur'an; they are the essence of the Qur'an. Together these two verses are the symbol of life itself which must start with the *Basmallah* and end with the *Hamdallah*. Between these two verses is the substance of life, i.e. that 'there is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God'.
5. The *Basmallah* and the *Hamdallah* also symbolize the beginning and the end, i.e. the *dunya* and the *akbira*. God says: *Their prayer therein: 'Glory be to You, O God!'; and their greeting therein will be: 'Peace'. And their final prayer will be: 'Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.'*
6. It contains the colour red: the colour of the Jordanian *shmagh*; the colour of the blood of martyrs; the colour of legitimate jihad and the colour of Jordanians' love for their country.
7. It contains the seven-pointed star which symbolizes the seven oft-repeated verses (*al-sab'a al-mathani*) and the Islamic Hashemite Monarchy.
8. It contains a circle which symbolizes inclusiveness, signifying that every citizen is protected and included in Jordan. The star and circle also symbolize men and women.
9. The calligraphy is *thuluth*, which is the most beautiful style of traditional Arabic calligraphy.



Country: Egypt

Born: 1946 (Age 69)

Source of Influence: Administrative

Influence: Highest scholarly authority for the majority of Sunni Muslims, runs the foremost and largest Sunni Islamic university.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 25

2010 Rank: 7

2011 Rank: 7

2012 Rank: 8

2013 Rank: 1

2014/15 Rank: 2

“The unity between the Muslims and Coptic Christians of Egypt is something of absolute importance.”

Sheikh Al-Tayyeb

The Muslim Council of Elders was formed in 2014, and consists of 14 members who are headed by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb. The council focuses on countering distorted teachings of Islam by relying on the traditional understanding expounded by Al-Alzhar. It thus opposes religious extremism and violence, and works to spread peace in the Islamic world and beyond.



❧ 2 ❧

His Eminence Professor

Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

His Eminence Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Mosque

Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad al-Tayyeb was appointed as Grand Sheikh of al-Azhar in March 2010, after the passing of his predecessor, Dr Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi. Tayyeb was formerly the president of al-Azhar for seven years and prior to that, served for two years as the most powerful cleric in Egypt as its Grand Mufti.

Scholarly Influence: His scholarly influence as a leading intellectual of Sunni Islam spans the globe. He has served as the Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Aswan, and the theology faculty of the International Islamic University in Pakistan. He has also taught in universities in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

Political Stance: Over the past years of political uncertainty and unrest in Egypt and in particular during the months that led up to the Egyptian armed forces deposing Muhammad Morsi as President of Egypt, Tayyeb attempted to mediate between Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood-dominated government on the one hand and opposition political forces on the other. It was the only time Morsi and the opposition sat together and given their mutual intransigence, Tayyeb's attempt at mediation did not succeed. When the Egyptian armed forces overthrew Morsi and his cabinet, Tayyeb appeared the following day alongside the Coptic Patriarch and other leading figures with the head of the Armed Forces General Sisi. With his presence and in his brief remarks he effectively acknowledged the legitimacy of the new political order. But weeks later when the armed forces moved with brutality against a massive Muslim Brotherhood sit-in, Tayyeb declared his disapproval of the bloodshed. These two seemingly contradictory public expressions following the coup in fact reflect Tayyeb's principled position.

But even before any of these events Tayyeb was the object of Muslim Brotherhood hostility precisely because of his defence of traditional Islam (including its spiritual (Sufi) dimension) in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood's effort to transform Islam from a religion into a power seeking religious ideology.

Advocate of Traditional Islam: Sheikh Tayyeb has emphasized his mission to promote traditional Islam since becoming Grand Sheikh. He has stressed the importance of teaching students about Islamic heritage — considering al-Azhar graduates as ambassadors of Islam to the world. In an age where the claimants to authoritative Islam seem to be on every corner al-Tayyeb has both the institute and the personal skills to authentically claim to be a representative of traditional Islam, Islam as practiced by the majority of Muslims throughout the ages.

Leader of al-Azhar University: Sheikh Tayyeb leads the second-oldest university in the world, where teaching has continued without interruption since 975 CE. Al-Azhar represents the centre of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. It is a key institution that issues authoritative religious rulings and has provided extensive Islamic education to Egyptian and international students since its inception over a millennium ago. This history makes it a bastion of Sunni traditionalism. The university is considered one of the most prominent Islamic educational institutions, and the foremost centre of Sunni Muslim scholarship worldwide.

Administers Al-Azhar Education Network: Al-Azhar is currently the largest university in the world, having risen from a group of three schools in the 1950s to its current state with 72 feeder schools, and close to 300,000 students studying there at any one time. Including schools that are part of Al-Azhar *waqf* initiatives, there are close to 2 million students. This immense size and grounded respect make the head of al-Azhar an extraordinarily powerful and academically influential person.

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 31 December 1935 (Age 79)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: King with authority over 26 million residents of Saudi Arabia and approximately 14 million pilgrims annually.

School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

“Every citizen in our country and every part of our dear land has all my attention and care.”

King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud

\$32^{BIL}

King's post-coronation giveaways

\$265^{MIL}

for a Yemen relief centre



3

His Majesty

King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud was proclaimed the seventh king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in January 2015, after the passing of King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz. He had previously held the position of Crown Prince since June 2012. King Salman's influence comes from being the absolute monarch of the most powerful Arab nation and is manifested by the role Saudi Arabia plays in three critical areas: 1. having the two holy cities of Makkah and Madina, which millions of Muslims visit throughout the year; 2. exporting crude oil and refined petroleum products, which ensures its central international role, and 3. propagating Islam through its huge da'wa network, which makes its influence felt in all Muslim countries.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques: HM King Salman has significant influence in the global Muslim community through his custodianship of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madina. Makkah is the main pilgrimage site for 1.7 billion Muslims. Each year approximately 4 million pilgrims perform the Hajj. In addition to this, approximately 10 million pilgrims (including Saudi residents and GCC citizens) perform the umrah, 'the lesser Hajj', throughout the year. A multi-billion dollar expansion to the two mosques is well under way.

Controller of the World's Largest Oil Reserves: HM King Salman reigns over a land of massive crude oil reserves—Saudi Arabia has approximately 20 percent of the world's proven oil reserves—making him a key player in the global petroleum industry.

Head of the World's Largest Da'wa Network: King Salman is also head of the most extensive da'wa network of missionary Muslims in the world, promoting the Salafi brand of Islam. Salafism is historically rooted in Saudi Arabia, and owes its global spread to the financial backing of Saudi Arabia.

Successful Governor: King Salman was governor of Riyadh Province from 1955-60 and from 1963-2011. During that period, he oversaw the development of the capital city Riyadh from a small town into a thriving city of more than 7 million people. He played a major role in attracting capital projects and foreign investment into his country and improved political and economic relationships with the West. He built up a strong reputation for having an efficient and corruption-free administration

Services and Awards: King Salman has been recognised for his various humanitarian services by the United Nations, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Morocco, Palestine, the Philippines, Senegal and Yemen amongst other countries. He was also awarded the Kant Medal by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities in appreciation of his contributions to science.

Military Action: In March 2015, King Salman launched a nine-state coalition bombing campaign against Houthi rebels in Yemen. The campaign is seen by many as curbing Iranian influence in the region. Saudi Arabia is also supporting many of the anti-Assad factions in Syria.

New Appointments: King Salman has made important decisions regarding appointments in key positions. The most important of these was the appointment of HRH Prince Muhammad bin Naif as Crown Prince. This marks the first time that a grandson of King Abdul-Aziz, rather than a son, has held the position. The transfer of power to the new generation, which some feared would be an issue that would split the country, has been set up remarkably smoothly. King Salman also promoted one of his sons, HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman, to Defence Minister and Deputy Crown Prince. This came as a surprise appointment, as the king has older and more experienced sons. Before the passing of HRH Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia's long-serving Foreign Minister, King Salman replaced him with Adel Al-Jubeir, someone who is not a member of the Saudi royal family.

Country: Iran

Born: 17 July 1939 (Age 76)

Source of Influence: Political, Administrative

Influence: Supreme Leader of 77.7 million Iranians

School of Thought: Traditional Twelver Shi'a, Revolutionary Shi'ism

2009 Rank: 2

2010 Rank: 3

2011 Rank: 5

2012 Rank: 6

2013 Rank: 3

2014/15 Rank: 3

“Mass killings of human beings are catastrophic acts which are condemned wherever they may happen and whoever the perpetrators and the victims may be.”

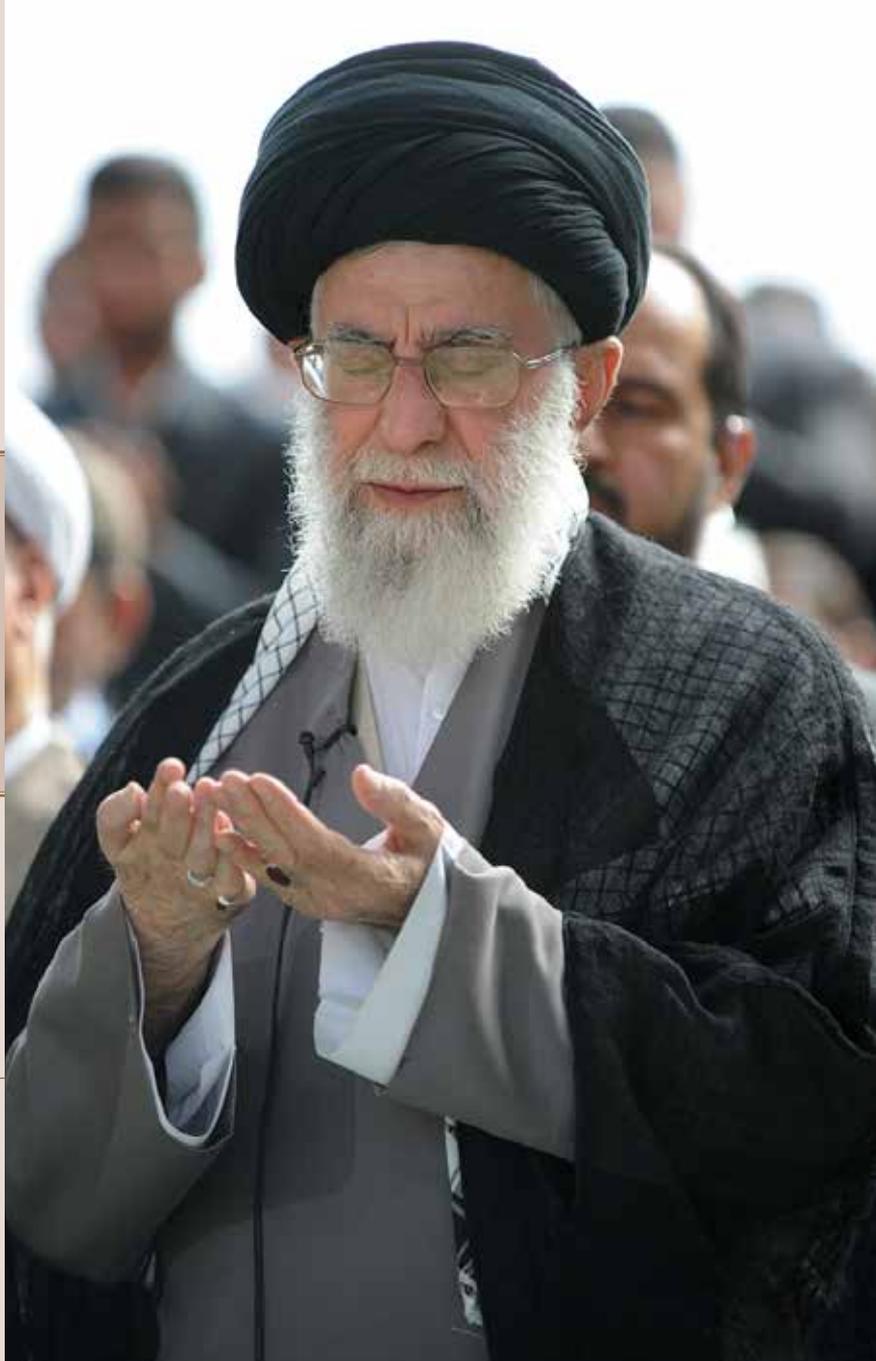
Ayatollah Khamenei

26

The number of years Khamenei has ruled over Iran as the Supreme Leader, being only the second leader in the 34 years since the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

6 TIMES

Was imprisoned 6 times between 1962 and 1975 for his activities against the government.



4

*His Excellency, Grand Ayatollah
Sayyid Ali Khamenei*

His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Grand Ayatollah Khamenei is the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He was born in Mashhad, and studied in the leading Iranian religious seminary in Qom, before becoming involved in the struggle with the Pahlavi Regime in the sixties and seventies. He was a key figure in the revolution in 1979 and served as President between 1981-1989 before succeeding Ayatollah Khomeini as Supreme Leader upon the latter's death. He has vocally supported most of the unrest in the Arab World, likening it to the Iranian Revolution.

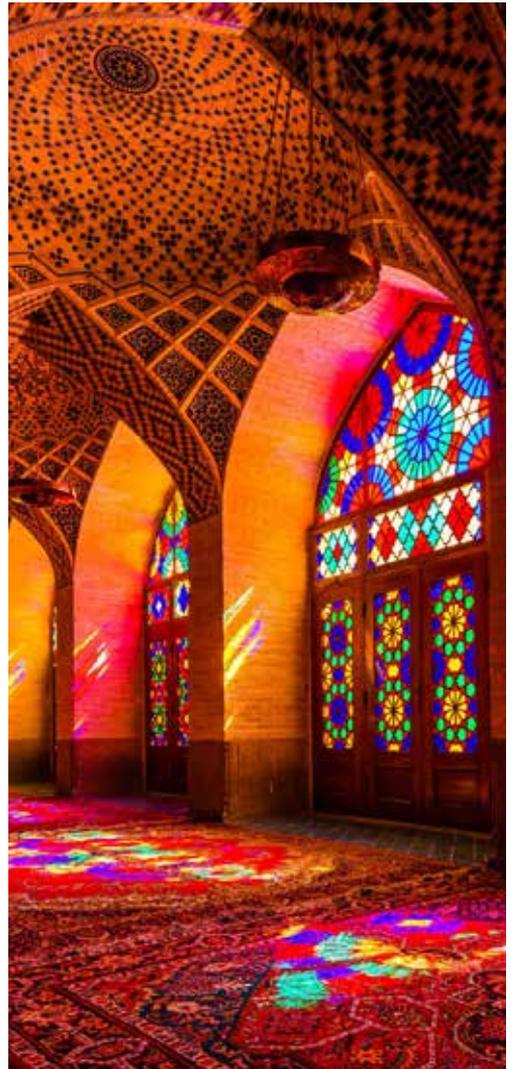
Champion of Iranian Solidarity: Although Khamenei was initially criticized for endorsing the June 2009 re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, he has been acclaimed for his response to the post-election turmoil. He ordered the closing of the Kahrizak detention centre in response to reports of prisoner abuse and death. He is a strong advocate of Iran's right to develop nuclear program.

Supreme Leader, Velayat-e Faqih: Khamenei's current influence stems from his powerful position as a religious leader, which gives him a unique role in political affairs. His job is to enact the Velayat-e Faqih—the guardianship of the jurist. In real terms this means a system where scholars of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) have a controlling say in the political affairs of the state. The rule of the jurist was a concept created by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, based on ideas that have run through Iranian political history since the time of Shah Ismail—who was the first to make Shia Islam the national religion of Iran. It was conceived in a battle against oppression as a way of safeguarding the Iranian nation from tyranny; giving the final say in all matters to a group of religious scholars, the Council of Guardians. This Council is headed by a chief arbitrator—the Supreme Leader.

Leader of Shi'a Revolution: Khamenei gains much of his influence in Iran from his role as a leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran was forged out of the 1979 Revolution. Combating what many saw as the tyrannical rule of the Shah, Khamenei joined the Society of Combatant Clergy that staged demonstrations mobilizing many of the

protests leading to the Shah's overthrow. After the revolution in 1979, Khamenei was one of the founding members of the Islamic Republic Party, and a member of the assembly of experts that was responsible for drafting Iran's new constitution.

Sunni-Shia Reconciliation: On September 2, 2010 Khamenei issued a historic fatwa banning the insult of any symbol that Sunnis hold to be dear, including but not limited to the companions and wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). This fatwa was received with great appreciation by the Chancellor of Al-Azhar University, Shaykh Ahmad al-Tayyeb.



Light shines through a window in Nasir al-Mulk Mosque aka "Pink Mosque" | Shiraz

Country: Morocco

Born: 21 Aug 1963 (Age 52)

Source of Influence: Political, Administrative, Development

Influence: King with authority over 32 million Moroccans

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni, Maliki

2009 Rank: 3

2010 Rank: 5

2011 Rank: 2

2012 Rank: 3

2013 Rank: 5

2014/15 Rank: 5

“By the grace of the Almighty, Morocco has made substantial progress. Our vision is clear and our institutions are strong, thanks to the powers they have under the rule of law.”

King Mohammed VI

384

The number of years since the founding of the Alouite dynasty, when its founder, Moulay Ali Cherif, became Prince of Tafilalet in 1631.

98.5%

The percentage of citizens who voted for the recommended changes to the constitution that King Mohammed proposed in July 2011, which reduced his powers as king.



5

His Majesty Amir al-Mu'minin
King Mohammed VI

His Majesty King Mohammed VI

King of Morocco

King Mohammed VI is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his family has ruled Morocco for close to 400 years. He is also constitutionally the Amir al Mu'minin, or Commander of the Faithful, thereby combining religious and political authority. King Mohammed VI is lauded for his domestic reform policies and pioneering efforts in modernizing Morocco and countering terrorism. He tackles issues of poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion at home, and has improved foreign relations. King Mohammed VI influences the network of Muslims following the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence, and is a leading monarch in Africa.

Four-Hundred Year Alaouite Dynasty: The 400 year-old Alaouite dynasty traces its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It takes its name from Moulay Ali Cherif, who became Prince of Tafilalt in 1631. It sees itself as a continuation of the Andalusian Golden Age of Islam, which was characterised by peaceful co-existence, intellectual and cultural exchange and development.

Influence on Maliki Network: Morocco is home to the oldest university in the world, Al-Karaouine. This university is the centre of the Maliki school of jurisprudence. Since early in his reign, King Mohammed VI has implemented the Mudawana family law code that gives rights to women in divorce and property ownership, as well as citizenship to children born from non-Moroccan fathers. He has also commissioned the Islamic Affairs Ministry to train women preachers, or Morchidat, who are now active chaplains to Moroccans across the globe.

Huge Influence over Muslims in Africa: King Mohammed VI leads the largest African monarchy, with a population of 32 million. Besides political links, Morocco maintains strong spiritual ties with Muslims all over Africa. Morocco is the site of the tomb of a highly revered Sufi sheikh, Mawlana Ahmed ibn Mohammed Tijani al-Hassani-Maghribi (1735-1815 CE), the founder of the Tijaniyya Sufi order, whose shrine attracts millions from across the continent. Morocco is also recognized as a source for the spread of Islam through West Africa. Thus, King Mohammed VI exercises vast amounts of power and influence over Muslims in Morocco, throughout Africa, and the rest of the world. He leads one of the most stable constitutional monarchies in the region, which is also the centre of a moderate, flourishing Muslim culture.

Support for Jerusalem (Al-Quds): The King and indeed all Moroccans show strong support for Palestinians and for Jerusalem. The Moroccan link with Jerusalem has been strong since Salah al-Din's son endowed the Magharbeh Quarter, next to the Buraq Wall, to North African pilgrims in 1193. This 800 year old quarter was demolished by the Israeli authorities in 1967 after they captured East Jerusalem.

Reform: King Mohammed VI has implemented major reforms in response to the Arab Spring protests. These have included a new constitution which has transferred many powers to a freely and fairly elected government. The Justice and Development Party (PJD) emerged as the largest party in the 2011 elections and heads the current government. The gradual reforms of the King have been hailed as a model for other Arab countries to follow.

Al-Karaouine in Fez, established in 859 by Fatima Al-Fihria, was a centre for both religious and secular subjects for over 1,100 years. During the Middle Ages many Europeans studied here and then returned to spread mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences to Europe.



Country: Oman

Born: 18 Nov 1940 (Age 74)

Source of Influence: Lineage, Political, Development

Influence: Leader of 4 million citizens and residents of Oman.

School of Thought: Traditional Ibadi

2009 Rank: 6

2010 Rank: 6

2011 Rank: 9

2012 Rank: 12

2013 Rank: 9

2014/15 Rank: 8

“I am working for Oman – the country and its people... for me it is a delight to see my country and my people in the situation I imagined from the very first day I assumed power. I feel that I am a man with a mission rather than a man with authority.”

Sultan Qaboos

365

The number of years since the founding of the Sultanate (1650), thus making it the oldest independent state in the Gulf.

8TH

was the rank Oman achieved on the World Health Organization list for the best overall health care.



6

His Majesty

Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Al-Sa'id

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Al-Sa'id

Sultan of Oman

Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id Al-Sa'id, the 14th descendant of the Al-Bu Sa'idi dynasty, is a socially and politically active monarch, who has ruled for over 40 years as Sultan. Sultan Qaboos has revolutionized and modernized Oman, transforming it from a poor, isolationist nation into a land closely-linked with the African continent and devoted to economic development, regional stability, and religious tolerance.

Leader of Omani Sultanate: Sultan Qaboos Al-Sa'id reigns over a country strategically situated in the Gulf region. Oman has a stake in the crude oil market due to the Strait of Hormuz, which connects the Gulf of Oman to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea, producing over 950,000 barrels of crude oil per day in 2014, according to Oman's Oil and Gas Ministry.

Historically, Oman is significant as one of the only countries with a large population of Ibadi Muslims and as the most authoritative state in the Ibadi movement—one that is recognized as one of the oldest schools of Islamic thought.

Beacon of Islam: Sultan Qaboos has helped build or restore thousands of mosques at his personal expense, the grandest being the Sultan Qaboos Mosque, which can accommodate up to 20,000 worshippers. The Sultan is a discreet but strong supporter of moderate Islam and has created a unique Islamic culture in Oman that has carefully combined the best of traditional Islam with the benefits of the modern world. Sultan Qaboos has promoted culturally-specific Islamic dress, art, architecture and education, and is a keen advocate of environmentalism. This quiet, measured rise has made Oman a hidden pearl of the Islamic world.

Personal Leadership: The Sultan has raised the Omani standard of living by building up Oman's school system, health care, infrastructure, and economy. He cites political participation as one of his major

long-term goals. Within the last two decades, he has introduced political reforms; including a bicameral representative body, a basic law, universal suffrage, and a supreme court. Moreover, despite Oman's relative lack of oil and gas compared to other Gulf States, the Sultan has invested his country's wealth so wisely that all citizens are guaranteed free education up to the doctoral level (should they qualify); free healthcare, free land, soft loans for building homes, jobs and social security for the disabled, orphans and widows. Furthermore, unlike neighboring countries, Oman has resolved all its border demarcation issues with all its neighbors, has no foreign debt and has a Sovereign Wealth Reserve Fund of over 30 billion Riyals (about \$100 billion). Oman is thus arguably the best administrated country in the Islamic world, if not in the whole world.

International Leader: Sultan Qaboos has been recognized by organizations such as the United Nations and the National Council of US-Arab Relations for his leadership in the Persian Gulf region. In 2008, he presided over the GCC Summit, where he was commended for his ongoing efforts toward political and economic cooperation amongst the GCC states. Sultan Qaboos has made an effort to strengthen ties between Oman and Iran, as well as the strategic partnership between Oman and India—showing the Sultan's foresight in carving foreign policy independent of that of his Arab neighbours.



Country: UAE

Born: 3 Oct 1961 (Age 54)

Source of Influence: Administrative, Development, Philanthropy

Influence: Military and political leadership.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 22

2010 Rank: 22

2011 Rank: 18

2012 Rank: 15

2013 Rank: 10

2014/15 Rank: 9

“The real asset of any nation is in its people ... and the prosperity and success of a country are measured by the standard of education available to all its citizens.”

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed

\$120^{MIL}

His financial support of a worldwide child health initiative to eradicate polio completely by 2018.

\$773^{BIL}

Abu Dhabi is the richest city in the world.



7

His Highness General Sheikh
Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

His Highness General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan is the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, as well as next in line to be President of the United Arab Emirates. The UAE is increasingly becoming an important centre for global weapons trading, with Abu Dhabi host to one of the world's largest defence expos.

Political and Military Leadership: Sheikh Mohammed is chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council—an executive leadership body in Abu Dhabi, which is constantly engaged in the assessment of public policy. Since becoming Crown Prince in 2004, Sheikh Mohammed has been recognized for his groundbreaking initiatives as an influential leader of Abu Dhabi as well as Deputy Supreme Commander of the armed forces. He is a special advisor to UAE President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Economic Development: With Abu Dhabi sitting on the 10th of the world's proven oil reserves, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan maintains immense political influence in the Muslim World as a leading member of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company—which directs development efforts for the UAE's role in the oil and gas industries. Sheikh Mohammed is chairman of the Abu Dhabi Council for Economic

Development (ADCED), which has been developing initiatives to boost entrepreneurship among youth in the UAE.

Humanitarian: Sheikh Mohammed is noted for his philanthropic and humanitarian efforts in charitable giving. He has donated billions of dollars to various causes, including DH55 million to the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, and purchasing vaccines in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Sustainable Development and Conservationist: Sheikh Mohammed has been a champion of sustainable development in Abu Dhabi as an advocate for the implementation of green technologies. He pledged \$15 billion for the development of clean energy through solar, wind and hydrogen power. He is also a keen falconer and is committed to protecting falcons and other species in the region.



Country: Turkey

Born: 26 Feb 1954 (age 61)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: President of 75.7 million Turkish citizens

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 3

2010 Rank: 2

2011 Rank: 3

2012 Rank: 2

2013 Rank: 6

2014/15 Rank: 6

“The safety and peace of our neighbouring countries and our brothers and friends across the world are among the pillars of our foreign policy”

HE Recep Erdogan

450%

The growth in the budget for the Ministry of Education during his leadership, now the country's largest ministry. The military formerly had that distinction.

1.7 MIL

Syrian Refugees



8

His Excellency

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

His Excellency President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

President of the Republic of Turkey

HE Recep Tayyip Erdogan was the Prime Minister of Turkey for 11 years, winning three consecutive elections with a majority, before becoming Turkey's first popularly-elected president in August 2014. During his three terms as Prime Minister, Turkey saw unprecedented economic growth, constitutional reform, and a re-emergence as a major global power.

The President: President Erdogan won 52% of the vote in Turkey's first direct elections for president. This was a continuation of his remarkable popularity and success at the ballot box over the past decade. During his time as president he has pushed aggressively for more powers for his post, a move not welcomed by all, and criticised by many as signs of wanting excessive power.

First Taste of Defeat?: The 2015 elections saw President Erdogan campaigning for his former party and ruling government, the AKP. The elections were seen by many as a referendum on Erdogan's vision of a new Turkey headed by a president. Despite an AKP victory, there was no majority, and talks to form a coalition have broken down; leading to the possibility of fresh elections. The results were a blow to Erdogan's ambitions.

A Popular Reformist: President Erdogan has pledged to continue working for Turkey's inclusion in the EU. In September 2010, over 58% of voters supported Erdogan's constitutional referendum which made changes to the Constitution in order to bring it into compliance with European Union Standards, hence facilitating Turkey's EU membership process. Erdogan has also led groundbreaking initiatives by introducing a number of democratic measures in regards to the country's judicial system; the Kurdish issue; non-Muslim minorities; Alawites; freedom of the press; zero-tolerance for torture and the fight against coup attempts.

Arab World: Turkey's position during the various uprisings of the Arab Spring has always been to side with the protestors and rebels. In Syria, this has led to border clashes with Syrian government forces, allowing Turkey the opportunity to deploy NATO Patriot missiles on its border with Syria. With Egypt, Erdogan reacted strongly and when former president Muhammed al-Morsi was deposed by the Egyptian armed forces and he publicly denounced former Field Marshal and now President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi as a

tyrant and he offered a haven to Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood members who evaded arrest. Arab media have accused Erdogan of allowing DA'ISH fighters to make use of safe houses and medical care in Turkey as well as covertly supplying DA'ISH with weapons and ammunition in 2014 and overtly serving as the middle man for DA'ISH sales of Iraqi oil, which has added a million dollars a day of revenue to the DA'ISH treasury. When Turkey finally moved against DA'ISH in the form of air attacks, Egyptian and other media suggested that those bombing runs against DA'ISH in Syria were a feeble cover for far more intensive attacks against the military units of both Syrian and Turkish Kurdish enclaves.

Global Relations: Under Erdogan, Turkey has focused on building stronger relations with all of its seven land-contiguous neighbours (especially Greece) and also all of those countries bordering the Black Sea (an important trading hub and a geopolitically significant area). In Africa, it has opened up over twenty new embassies and consulates and when Somalia suffered from a crippling famine and drought in 2011, Erdogan not only gave aid, but also became the first leader from outside Africa to visit Somalia in nearly two decades. While Turkey has about 45% of its foreign trade with European countries, it is developing strong trade relations with other regions and attracting investment from all over the world.

Challenges: Erdogan's popularity at home has dropped significantly with people uneasy about his plans to concentrate more powers in the hands of the presidency. He is also still suffering from the fallout from the heavy-handed response to the Taksim Square protests, and the highly publicised spat with Fethullah Gülen and the institutes dominated by the latter's followers (especially the police). Further, Turkey's support for the Free Syrian Army has been linked to the rise of DA'ISH which is threatening the stability of the whole region. Erdogan will have to balance these key domestic and international issues if he is to re-address his decline in popularity within the Muslim World.

Bait-and-Switch? In July 2015 Turkey finally declared war on DA'ISH after an agreement with the US. It immediately proceeded to bomb sites in Iraq and Syria that it said were PKK sites. Turkey was consequently accused by the Kurds and by some US officials of a 'bait-and-switch' ploy, using DA'ISH as bait to fight its old nemesis, the Kurds.

Country: Iraq

Born: 4 Aug 1930 (Age 85)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Lineage

Influence: Highest authority for 21 million Iraqi Shi'a, and also internationally known as a religious authority to Usuli Twelver Shi'a.

School of Thought: Traditional Twelver Shi'a, Usuli

2009 Rank: 7 **2012 Rank:** 13

2010 Rank: 8 **2013 Rank:** 8

2011 Rank: 10 **2014/15 Rank:** 7

“Do not refer to the Sunnis as our other brothers, but refer to them as ‘Us.’”

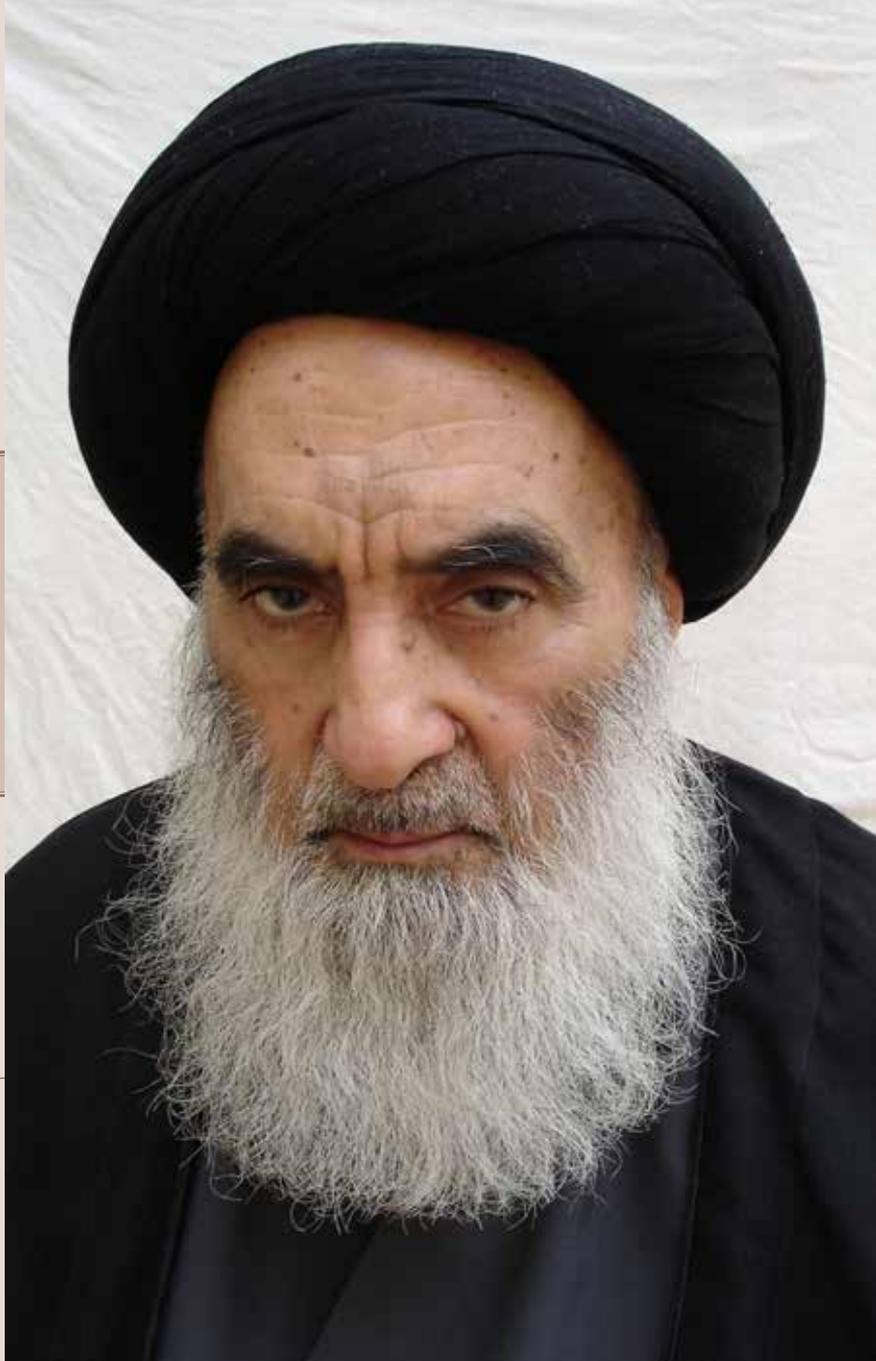
Ayatollah Sistani

50,000

The number of students that Sistani supports in Iran.

23

The number of years since he ascended to the rank of Grand Ayatollah.



۹

His Eminence Grand Ayatollah
Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani

His Eminence Grand Ayatollah

Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani

Marja of the Hawza, Najaf, Iraq

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani is the prime *marja*, or spiritual reference for Ithna'Ashari'a (Twelver) Shi'a Muslims. He is the leading sheikh of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq and the preeminent Shi'a cleric globally. Sistani is one of the most respected of the *marjaiyya*—the highest position of authority in the Usuli school of Twelver Shi'a *fiqh*.

Preeminent Shi'a Cleric and Marja Taqlid:

Sistani's influence in the Twelver Shi'a sect stems from his scholarly lineage and education, which have enabled him to reach the status of *marja taqlid*—the highest status in the Usuli branch of Twelver Shi'a Islam. *Marja taqlid* means literally one who is worthy of being imitated—placing Sistani in a position of great authority over Twelver Shi'a Muslims. There are currently only 29 *marjas* worldwide. Sistani is descended from a family of religious scholars, and was educated in the leading institutions in Iran. He later went to Najaf, Iraq to study under the Grand Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei. On Khoei's death in 1992, Sistani took over as grand ayatollah, inheriting Khoei's following. He soon rose to become the leading cleric in Iraq. With the recent opening of Iraqi shrines to Iranian tourists, Sistani is gaining a following outside of Iraq.

Financial Influence: Sistani also has very significant financial clout due to his position as *marja*. As a *marja* his followers give him a religious tax (*khums*, Arabic for one fifth). The redistribution of this tax for the com-

mon good is one of the key roles of a *marja*. Much of this remittance is redistributed through the Al-Khoei Foundation—the largest Twelver Shi'a development organization in the world that maintains a network of educational and humanitarian establishments for both Shi'a and non-Shi'a Muslims.

Quietist Influence: Significantly, Sistani is against the idea of Velayat-e Faqih, suggesting Shi'a clerics should not get involved in politics. Paradoxically this approach has afforded him very strong influence as a religious leader unsullied by politics. Ali Sistani has used his position of quietist authority to wield influence also as a peacemaker in the turbulent post-invasion Iraq. At a time when Sistani was losing support to Sheikh Muqtada al-Sadr, he showed his sway by arranging a lasting deal between Sadr and US forces at the Imam Ali Shrine in Najaf in 2005—a deal that secured the Shrine and pushed for an American retreat. Sistani was vocal about encouraging Iraqis to participate in the 2010 parliamentary elections. He strongly condemned the Baghdad church attack in October 2010 and also advised Iraqi security forces to take more responsibility for the protection of Iraqi citizens. He has strongly supported the new prime minister of Iraq, Haydar al-Abadi, asking him to form an inclusive, strong and efficient government. He has also issued strong statements against DA'ISH, calling on Iraqis to unite against the militants.



Tile-work containing the names of the family of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) at the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, Iraq.

Country: Pakistan

Born: 1923 (Age 92)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Administrative

Influence: Leader of an international organisation.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni, Hanafi

2009 Rank: 15 **2012 Rank:** 17

2010 Rank: 16 **2013 Rank:** 13

2011 Rank: 16 **2014/15 Rank:** 10

“People out there are burning in the fire of ignorance and you are wasting your time here inquiring after my health!”

Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi, Abd Al-Wahhab's teacher and the founder of Tablighi Jamaat.

169

The number of countries that have chapters of the Tablighi Jamaat.

150^{MIL}

Approximate number of followers.



10

Amir Hajji

Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab

Hajji Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab

Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan

Leader of the Pakistan chapter of the *Tablighi Jamaat*—a transnational Islamic organization dedicated to spreading the message of religious conservatism and renewed spirituality—Hajji Abdul-Wahhab is a prominent Pakistani scholar with a significant following in South Asia and the United Kingdom. Although the organization does not have a central authority, Abdul-Wahhab has been increasingly influential in his leadership of the throngs of Muslims that follow the international movement in Pakistan and abroad.

Missionary: As Amir, or leader of Pakistan's *Tablighi Jamaat*, Hajji Abdul-Wahhab's influence spans globally due to the organization's emphasis on missionary work. Considered a foremost *da'ee*, or inviter to the faith of Islam, Abdul-Wahhab has spoken about the need to return to the correct beliefs and practices of Islam in numerous countries and congregations.

Champion of Conservatism: Abdul-Wahhab urges Muslims to repent for their sins and to emulate the life of the Prophet Muhammad by adhering to the *Sunnah*—the Prophet's teachings and deeds. Among these is an exhortation to partake in the act of *da'wa* or spreading the message of the faith. The *Tablighi Jamaat* has gradually acquired a massive membership base owing to this core tenet. Abdul-Wahhab's work is derived from close ties to the founder of the *Tablighi Jamaat*, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelvi, and stems from the prominent Islamic institution *Darul Uloom Deoband*, in India, where the latter studied before establishing a following in Pakistan.

Mass Appeal: Among the throngs of Pakistanis,

diaspora South Asians, and others who carry the flag of the *Tablighi Jamaat* are notable Muslim leaders. In Pakistan alone, Abdul-Wahhab's influence has won the allegiance of prominent politicians, actors, and athletes. Despite his influence over key Muslim leaders from various fields of social power, Abdul-Wahhab is consistent in his assertion that the organization is wholly apolitical—identifying the work of the *Tablighi Jamaat* as a spiritual revivalist movement. Annual gatherings in Raiwind, Pakistan draw close to 2 million people, and those in Biswa, Bangladesh attract over 3 million.

Advocate of Non-violence: In light of heightened incidences of violence by fringe Islamic militant groups, Abdul-Wahhab has publicly stated the importance of non-violence in bringing people closer to the faith of Islam. This comes after the tragic Mumbai attacks which investigations found were linked to the Pakistan-based *Lashkar-e-Taiba*; a militant organization Abdul-Wahhab has made a point of distancing the *Tablighi Jamaat* from.

A member of the Tablighi Jamaat makes his way to the annual *ijtema* held in Raiwind, Pakistan where he will be joined by over 1.5 million others for a weekend of spiritual rejuvenation.

Country: Indonesia

Born: 21 June 1961 (age 54)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: Leader of 252 million citizens and residents of Indonesia

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2014/15 Rank: 11

“He’s made it possible for us to say to our kids - look at Jokowi - he used to sell furniture and grew up near a slum - and now he’s our president. Now anyone can be president.”

Dharsono Hartono, an Indonesian businessman and Jokowi supporter

17,508

The number of islands that make up Indonesia, the largest archipelago in the world, which are split between 33 provinces.

55%

Percentage of the vote he won in the Indonesian presidential elections.



❧ 11 ❧

His Excellency
President Joko Widodo

His Excellency President Joko Widodo

President of Indonesia

Joko Widodo, or Jokowi as he is popularly known, became the President of Indonesia on October 20, 2014. He won 55% of the vote in the presidential elections which took place in July 2014; a victory margin of 4%. He is seen very much as a populist leader, not enjoying the support of religious scholars, nor coming from a wealthy or military background.

Background: President Widodo is the first Indonesian president not to be from the military or the political elite. He comes from a humble background of Javanese descent. His father had a small furniture business, which often couldn't make ends meet. They struggled to put him through university, where he graduated in the field of forestry. After graduation, Widodo worked for three years in the forestry service of a state enterprise in Aceh before returning to his family business.

Successful and 'Clean' Politician: Widodo was the mayor of Surakarta before becoming the governor of Jakarta in September 2012.

Mayor of Surakarta: He was a successful mayor who enjoyed a close relationship with his constituents. He focused on promoting the city as a centre of Javanese culture, but also developed the public transport system, healthcare and business relations with the community. He forged a reputation for being a 'clean' politician, avoiding the charges of corruption and nepotism which plague most politicians.

Governor of Jakarta: His political success continued with his election as governor of Jakarta. He was equally successful as governor making meaningful reforms in education, public transportation, revamping street vendors and traditional markets, and implementing flood control.

Presidential candidacy: Various awards (3rd place of the 2012 World Mayor Prize, one of the 'Top 10 Indonesian Mayors of 2008') testified to his success as mayor and governor, and there was little surprise when Megawati Sukarnoputri, the former President of Indonesia, chose Widodo to be the presidential candidate of the PDI-P party. He has also enjoyed the support of many musicians and artists (he himself is reported to enjoy heavy metal music), and this helped him greatly on his presidential campaign.

Blusukan Culture: President Widodo has become well-known for impromptu visits to see and hear directly from people in local communities. This has allowed him to directly address their concerns and criticisms, allowing him to develop a strong personal relationship with the public.

High Expectations: There are high expectations of Widodo. Many will be expecting him to bring the success he had in his mayor and governor posts to his presidential post. He will be expected to maintain his promotion of transparency and accountability, and whether he will continue with methods such as *blusukan* is something that many people will keep an eye on. Economic growth levels have fallen to a 6 year low leading Widodo to court international investment.



Terrace rice fields in Bali, Indonesia. Indonesia is the third largest producer of rice after China and India.

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 1943 (Age 72)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Administrative

Influence: Grand Mufti to 30.8 million Saudi residents and the global network of Salafi Muslims.

School of Thought: Salafi

2009 Rank: 11

2010 Rank: 11

2011 Rank: 14

2012 Rank: 18

2013 Rank: 14

2014/15 Rank: 12

“Extremist and militant ideas and terrorism which spread decay on Earth, destroying human civilisation, are not in any way part of Islam, but are enemy number one of Islam, and Muslims are their first victims.”

Sh. Abdul Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh

1000+

The number of audio fatwas and lectures on his personal website.

20

The age at which he lost his eyesight, 52 years ago.



© Hassan Ammar / AP

❧ 12 ❧

His Eminence

Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh

His Eminence Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh

Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

As the Grand Mufti, Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh has the highest position of religious authority in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is an Islamic scholar based in Makkah and has influence as a leading cleric of the expansive global movement of Salafi Muslims.

Salafi Lineage: The Aal Al-Sheikh family in Saudi Arabia traditionally controls the religious and justice establishments. They are descended from Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703–1792), the founder of Wahhabi and Salafi thought, and for 250 years have been closely associated and intermarried with the ruling Al-Saud family.

Head of Sunni Jurisprudential Committees: Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Aal Al-Sheikh is chairman of the Council of Senior Scholars, a scientific consultative commission composed of leading Sunni specialist scholars of Sharia (Islamic law). He has been behind fatwas that call for more rights for women and children.

Al-Sheikh is also chairman of the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fatwas (religious edicts), a special committee designated for the researching and issuing of religious rulings and edicts on jurisprudence, the *Hadith*, and *Aqida* (creed) for the Sunni world.

As head of the Presidency for Scientific Research and Religious Edicts (*Dar al Ifta*), Al-Sheikh is often the spokesperson for controversial rulings issued from the Kingdom. He is recognized for his influence in enforcing a distinct view of Islamic tradition. In 2008, he publicly criticized Muslim televangelists who encouraged Muslims to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries—stressing, instead, that only the two occasions of ‘Eid and the weekly Friday observations

are valid occasions to celebrate. In this, and also in his condemnation of Turkish soap operas sweeping the Arab World, Al-Sheikh has stressed the importance of eliminating distracting practices. He is also ardently opposed to the practice of marrying off very young girls to older men, emphasizing its incongruence with human decency and Islamic tradition.

Central Figure of Global Salafi Movement: As Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al-Sheikh is the leading religious figure of the Saudi-based network of Salafi Muslims. The rulings derived by Al-Sheikh are based heavily on a literal reading of the Qur’an and emphasize the need to strip away innovative cultural practices that have become a part of Muslims’ lives. The movement he leads is characterized by an authoritative stance on Islamic religious practice.

Eminent Scholarship: Grand Mufti Al-Sheikh is recognized as a leading contemporary scholar of Islam. He has leveraged this influence by openly speaking out against Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda as entities that push a dangerous ideological terrorism. He spoke for the need for a war—to be fought by academics, the media, religious leaders and even parents—against deviant thought that leads overzealous Muslims toward extremism and violence. He recently described DA’ISH as ‘evil’, and called them ‘the number one enemy of Islam’.



Country: Senegal
Born: 1955 (Age 60)
Source of Influence: Lineage, Scholarly
Influence: Spiritual leader of around 100 million Tijani Muslims.
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Maliki, Tijani)
2011 Rank: 26
2012 Rank: 23
2013 Rank: 19
2014/15 Rank: 13

“You can only go to Paradise or to Hellfire, and you have to work for Paradise in this life. This is the way, and here, is the place to work for reward in the Hereafter.”

Sh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse

1815

The year the founder of the Tijani Tariqa passed away.

1 MIL+

The number of people who attended the 72nd anniversary of the construction of the Grand Mosque Medine-Baye, Senegal.



13

His Eminence

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani Ali Cisse

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse

Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse is the spiritual leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi order. The Tijaniyya is the largest Sufi order in Western Africa, and its leader commands a following of millions, who see him as their guide to true Islam.

Leader of Tijani Muslims: Cisse became leader of the Tijaniyyah following the death of his elder brother Sheikh Hassan Cisse in 2008. He is the Imam of the Grand Mosque in Medina Baye, Senegal, which is one of Western Africa's key positions of Islamic leadership. Tijani Muslims are located throughout Western Africa and further afield. As an order, Tijanis give allegiance to their sheikh giving him significant influence as a leader.

Education and Activities: Sheikh Tijani Cisse (b. 1955) studied Qur'an, Arabic and classical texts with both his father, Sheikh 'Ali Cisse, and his legendary grandfather, Sheikh Ibrahim Niass. He then continued his studies at Al- Azhar University in Egypt, studying Arabic and Usul al-Din (theology). Upon completing his studies in Egypt, he traveled extensively throughout Africa, the Middle East and America. He attended many conferences and participated in religious debates. He also managed to edit and publish several important works, including Sheikh Ibrahim's *Kashif al-Ilbas*.

Posts: In 2001, Sheikh Tijani Cisse was appointed Senegal's General Commissioner for the Hajj. In 2006, he was again recognized by Senegalese President Aboulaye Wade and appointed a Senegalese "Special Missions Ambassador", a position he holds until the present time. He has also received Senegal's distinguished award, the *Ordre de Merite* (1993).

Descendent of The Tijaniyya Founder: The Tijaniyya is a Sufi order founded by Ahmad al Tijani Hasani, an Algerian, in the late 18th century. As the spiritual leader of the Tijaniyya, Cisse is considered to be the bearer of a spiritual inspiration called the *Fayda Tijaniyya*, giving him authority to carry on the teachings of Ahmad al Tijani Hasani. Because of this position, some Tijani Muslims refer to Cisse as the reviver of the *Sunnah*.

LEFT: Mosque and Maqam of Sheikh Tijani, the founder of the Tijani Tariqa, in Fez, Morocco.



Prince Muhammad bin Naif bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia

HRH Prince Muhammad bin Naif is the current Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior of Saudi Arabia and chairman of the recently established Council for Political and Security Affairs. The appointment of Prince Muhammad as Crown Prince marks the first time a grandson rather than a son of the late King Abdul-Aziz has held the position.

Background: HRH Prince Muhammad is the son of the late Crown Prince Naif bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, and was initially educated in Riyadh before receiving further education in the USA and UK in politics, law enforcement and counter-terrorism. He was appointed as Assistant Minister of Interior for Security Affairs in 1999 by the late King Fahd, and was appointed Minister in 2005 by the late King Abdallah. After a successful decade in his post, he was appointed, in 2015, as first in line to the throne and first Deputy Prime Minister by King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz.

Countering Terrorism: HRH Prince Muhammad has successfully implemented the Kingdom's policy against terrorism, which includes not only security measures but also extensive counselling services. The Muhammad bin Naif Counselling and Care Centre is a rehabilitation centre which counters extremist ideology through exposure to traditional mainstream Islamic teachings. Around 3,000 people have graduated from the centre since its establishment in 2008. These measures have made Prince Muhammad himself a target for terrorists, and he has survived four assassination attempts.

Humanitarian Relief: HRH Prince Muhammad bin Naif chairs several humanitarian and service committees that provide relief from natural as well as man-made disasters. He has supervised relief campaigns to Lebanon, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan.



Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 30 August 1959 (Age 59)
Source of Influence: Political
School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

14

His Royal Highness

Prince Muhammad bin Naif bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

Deputy Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia

HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman Al-Saud is the Deputy Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Chief of the Royal Court, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, all at the tender age of 30.

Rapid Appointments: At the beginning of 2015, Prince Muhammad bin Salman was largely unknown in political and diplomatic circles. Since his father's accession to the throne in January 2015, Prince Muhammad has been swiftly appointed to a number of powerful positions. He was first, on 23 January, appointed Minister of Defence, and also named Secretary General of the Royal Court. Then, on 29 January, Prince Muhammad was named the chair of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs, and then in April 2015 Prince Muhammad was appointed Deputy Crown Prince.

Military Challenges: As Minister of Defence the young prince has to deal with many key military issues which Saudi Arabia is currently involved in. He is perhaps most personally identified with the air campaigns against Houthi strongholds in Yemen. Saudi Arabia is also backing the international coalition against DA'ISH in Iraq and Syria, supporting the monarchy in Bahrain, and arming the anti-Assad forces in Syria.

Charity Work and Youth Development: Before his recent promotions, Prince Muhammad bin Salman was known as the founder and chairman of the 'Misk Foundation', a charitable initiative seeking to bolster creativity, innovation and talent in Saudi youths in the fields of science, arts and technology. He also heads the King Salman Youth Centre. These experiences, and his own age, have made him popular amongst the youth (70% of the Saudi population is under 30).



Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 31 August 1985 (Age 30)
Source of Influence: Political
School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

14

His Royal Highness

Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

Country: Turkey

Born: 27 Apr 1941 (Age 74)

in Erzurum, Turkey

Source of Influence: Scholarly

Influence: Figure of spiritual and social leadership for millions of Turkish Muslims and others around the world

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 13

2010 Rank: 13

2011 Rank: 15

2012 Rank: 10

2013 Rank: 11

2014/15 Rank: 14

“Be so tolerant that your bosom becomes wide like the ocean. Become inspired with faith and love of human beings. Let there be no troubled souls to whom you do not offer a hand and about whom you remain unconcerned.”

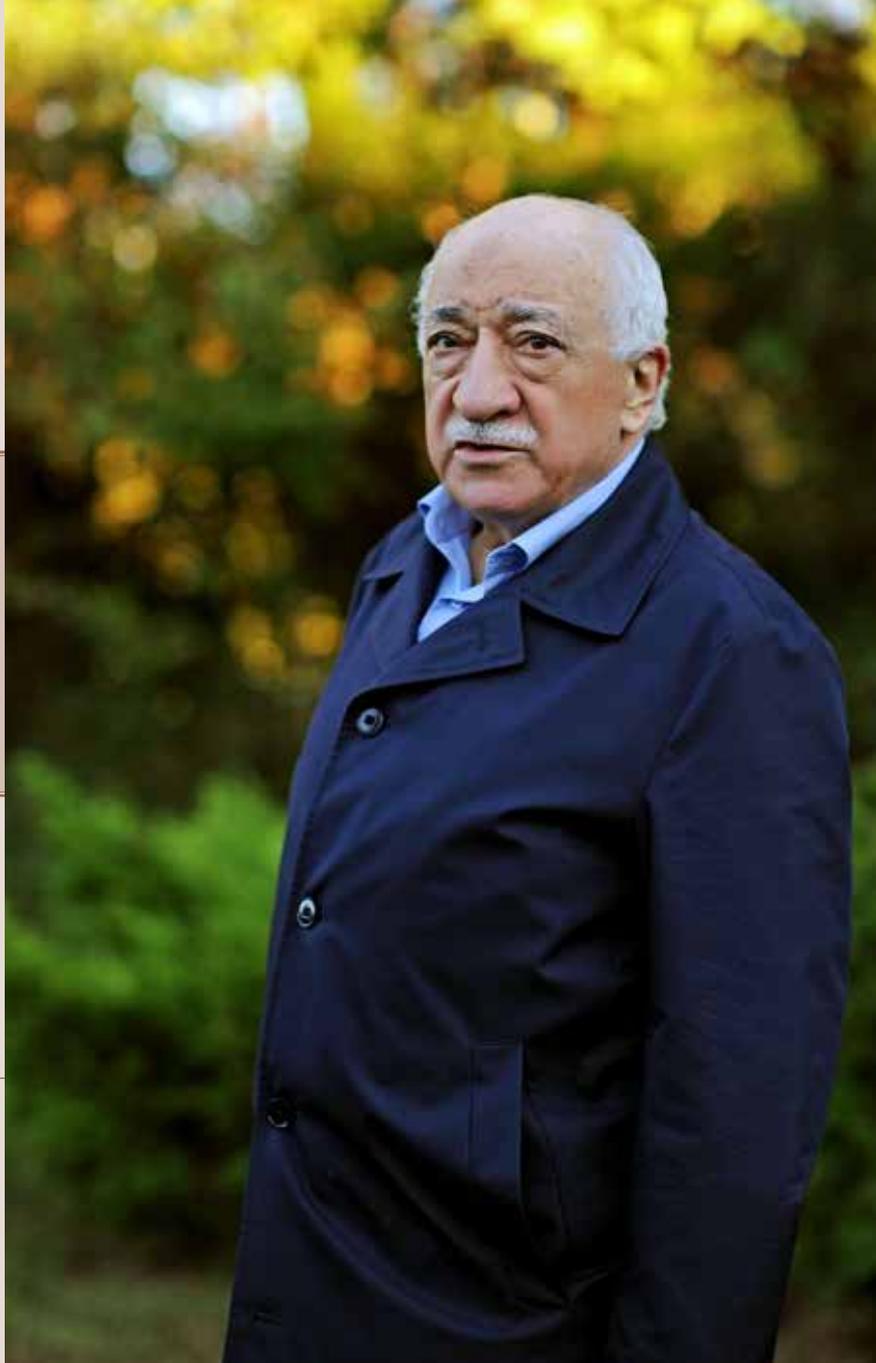
Fethullah Gülen

140

The number of Gulen-inspired chartered schools operating in the US alone with a student enrollment of nearly 45,000 students.

83

The number of books he has authored, 66 in Turkish and another 17 in English covering topics such as sociology, politics, religion, art, science and sports.



15

Hodjaefendi

Fethullah Gülen

Hodjaefendi Fethullah Gülen

Turkish Muslim Preacher

Fethullah Gülen is a preacher, thinker and educator, who having assumed the leadership of the Nurcu religious movement—started by Said Nursî (1878–1960 CE)—has gone on to become a global phenomenon in his own right. His popularity and authority in Turkey have been the driving force of the movement that is widely thought to have brought about the social and, eventually, political changes of which politician Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has been the ultimate heir—that is the enfranchisement of Muslim politics in Turkey. Despite his peaceful means of preaching and community organization, Gülen is hated by the secularist establishment in Turkey and has been living in the US since 1999.

Humanitarian Reformer: Gülen and his followers have devoted considerable energy in recent years on interreligious dialogue with tens of interfaith centres in Europe and the US being opened to foster better relations between faiths. Gülen is also the head of a series of socially-oriented philanthropic efforts. His teaching emphasizes that there are no material shortages in the world, and that there is no justification for starvation. Gülen has established many charities to distribute wealth to the needy.

Catalyst for Educational Change: When Gülen began preaching in Izmir—in his youth—a network of pupils began to unite around his teachings—as a ‘social movement’ inspired by Gülen’s example. This movement has culminated in the development of around 300 schools in Turkey and hundreds more worldwide (including the largest network of Charter Schools in the USA). Graduates from these private schools around the world are coached in ethics and philosophy that are inspired by Gülen’s teachings, and continue to take top honors in university placement tests.

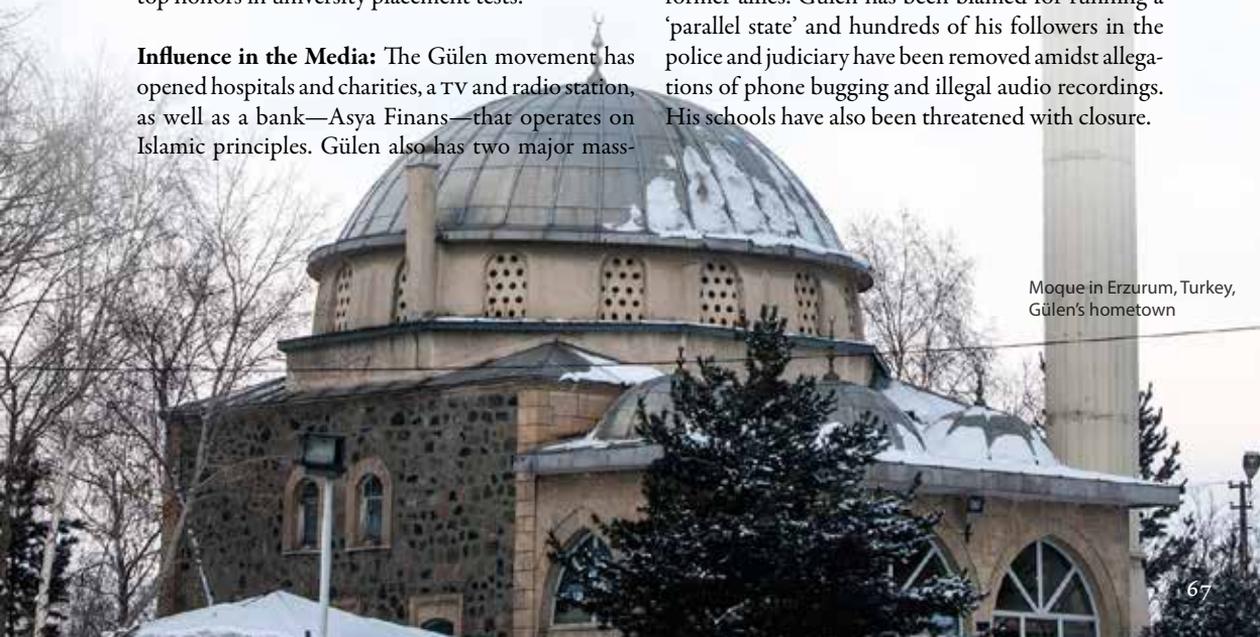
Influence in the Media: The Gülen movement has opened hospitals and charities, a TV and radio station, as well as a bank—Asya Finans—that operates on Islamic principles. Gülen also has two major mass-

circulation daily Turkish newspapers that are affiliated with his movement: ‘Zaman’ and the English-language ‘Today’s Zaman’. The Gülen network has also initiated a Journalists and Writers Foundation and a Teachers Foundation—providing an umbrella organization for a host of dialogue groups and charitable organizations.

Intellectual: Gülen is one of the most important thinkers and writers from Turkey, and among the most effective activists in twentieth-century Turkey. The Gülen movement is one of the best connected and therefore one of the most powerful networks competing to influence Muslims around the globe, making it likely to have an enduring impact on the modernization of Islam and its engagement with Western ideas. Belgium’s Catholic University of Leuven established a ‘Fethullah Gülen Chair’ (for Intellectual Studies).

Recent Problems: Corruption allegations posed by Gülen against then Prime Minister Erdoğan and his inner circle have created a great rift between these two former allies. Gülen has been blamed for running a ‘parallel state’ and hundreds of his followers in the police and judiciary have been removed amidst allegations of phone bugging and illegal audio recordings. His schools have also been threatened with closure.

Moque in Erzurum, Turkey,
Gülen’s hometown



Country: Egypt

Born: 3 Mar 1953 (Age 62)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Political

Influence: Legal authority for 87 million Egyptian Muslims

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 9

2010 Rank: 10

2011 Rank: 12

2012 Rank: 14

2013 Rank: 12

2014/15 Rank: 15

“This is not just an attack on Copts, this is an attack on me and you and all Egyptians, on Egypt and its history and its symbols, by terrorists who know no God, no patriotism, and no humanity,”

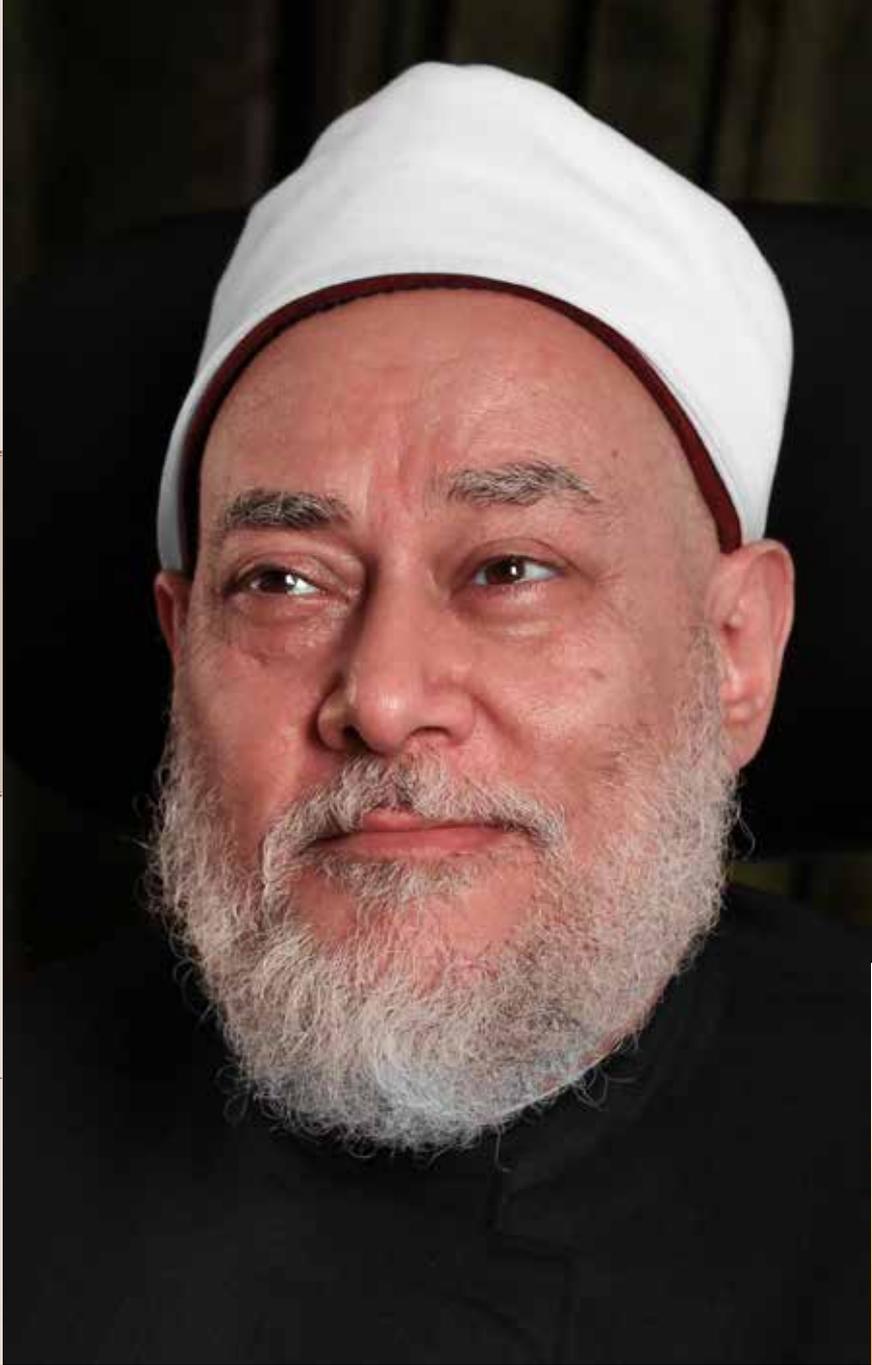
Sh. Dr Ali Goma'a

30,000

The number of books in his personal library which is sought out by students and researchers from around the world in need of rare texts.

10

The number of years he was grand mufti of Egypt.



❧ 16 ❧

His Eminence

Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a

His Eminence Sheikh Dr Ali Goma'a

Former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Sheikh Ali Goma'a is the former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt. He is one of the foremost Islamic scholars in the world. Despite retiring from the post of Grand Mufti of Egypt, Goma'a has remained active on many fronts and his counsel is more in demand than ever before.

Egypt's Weight in Islamic Scholarship: Goma'a's scholarly influence is derived from his position at the centre of many of the most significant institutions of Islamic law in the world. Before becoming Grand Mufti, Goma'a was a professor of jurisprudence at Al-Azhar University—the second oldest university in the world, founded in 975 CE—Goma'a also served as a member of the Fatwa Council. He is currently a member of the International Islamic *Fiqh* Academy, the highest institute of Islamic law in the Organization of the Islamic Conference—an intergovernmental organization for Muslim-majority countries. Goma'a has authored over 50 books, as well as hundreds of articles.

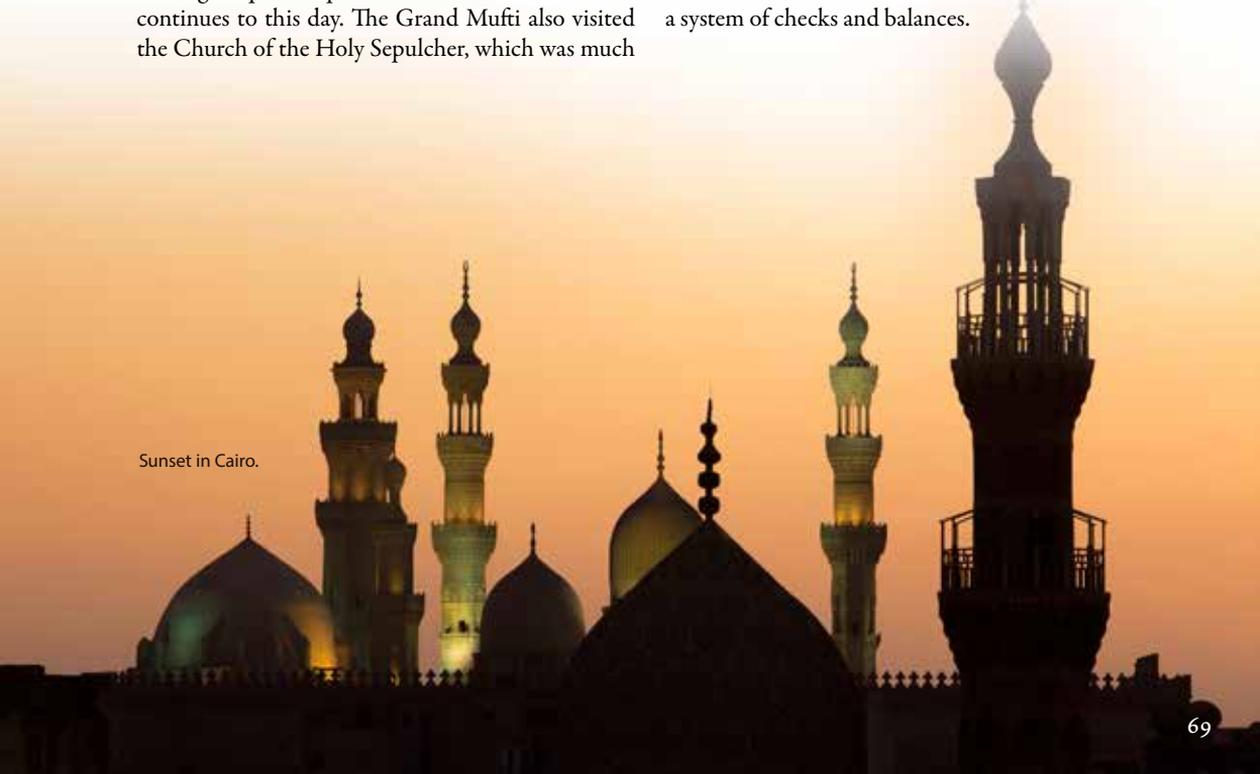
Visit to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Controversy: On April 18th, 2012, Sheikh Ali Goma'a, with HRH Prince Ghazi of Jordan, broke what had been a 45 year taboo in some parts of the Islamic World (propagated notably by Qatar based Sheikh Al-Qaradawi) and visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to pray there and support the beleaguered Muslim community in Jerusalem. The visit was viewed as controversial in Egypt, but set off a change of public opinion in the Islamic World that continues to this day. The Grand Mufti also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was much

appreciated by the Christian community of Jerusalem.

Personal Popularity: Goma'a was exceedingly popular as a mufti and remains ever popular since his retirement. Apart from appearing on popular broadcast and satellite television, he also revived the practice of informal 'knowledge circles' at the Al-Azhar Mosque, and the very well attended Q&A sessions after his Friday sermons at the Sultan Hasan Mosque, where Goma'a makes a point of taking on anyone who tries to simplify or distort Islamic teachings without knowledge of its traditions. This has made him extremely popular with those who are against extremism. He has published regular articles in mainstream US papers like the New York Times, and the Washington Post.

Popularized and Simplified Fatwas: Goma'a has immense legal influence through his advocacy of Islamic religious edicts (*fatwas*). When he was Grand Mufti of Egypt, he modernized the process of issuing fatwas in the country. He did this by overhauling the Dar Al-Ifta organization into a dynamic institution with worldwide reach, based on a fatwa council and a system of checks and balances.

Sunset in Cairo.



Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: May 1955 (Age 60)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Media

Influence: 53 published books, supervises IslamToday.net, and reaches millions through TV

School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

2009 Rank: 19

2010 Rank: 25

2011 Rank: 19

2012 Rank: 20

2013 Rank: 16

2014/15 Rank: 16

“When we stumble and forget ourselves, this should make us all the more vigilant to maintain our dignity and composure in the future: to be patient, to pardon and to overlook.”

Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda

4.7^{MIL}

Number of followers on his Facebook page with an additional 7.09 million followers on Twitter at the time of publication.

53

The number of his publications.



17

Sheikh

Salman Al-Ouda

Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda

Saudi scholar and educator

A leading Saudi sheikh, Salman Al-Ouda is a former hard-line cleric turned advocate of peaceful coexistence. He is increasingly influential due to his innovative reach in the Muslim World propagated via IslamToday.net and his persistent efforts at ministering to the needs of the global Muslim community.

Key Scholar of Salafi Network: Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda is a leading scholar of the Salafi movement. Although he is not noted for propagating innovative ideas within the network, he has notable influence in the movement due to his use of multiple modes of education (the Internet, audiovisual media, and print) to educate the large body of Salafi Muslims in the Islamic sciences. Sheikh Al-Ouda's website brings together a diverse range of Islamic scholars and educators to provide guidance in Islamic thought.

Influence Through Virtual Islamic Resources: Sheikh Al-Ouda supervises all content published on IslamToday.net—a website that offers virtual resources for Islamic education in multiple languages. His work has far-reaching impact in an age when religion is spread through media and technology, with IslamToday.net at the forefront of this trend. In response to a February 2010 ruling from the Al-Azhar Fatwa Committee condemning the use of Facebook, Sheikh Al-Ouda defended the social networking website, stating that he uses it to communicate with Muslims across the globe and to provide Islamic guidance online. Sheikh Al-Ouda has a following of over five

million fans on Facebook and nearly that many views of his official videos on YouTube. He also has over 6 million followers on Twitter.

Innovative Educator: Al-Ouda developed a following from weekly talks at his local mosque in Buraydah and has become an authority for Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide who access IslamToday.net—a Saudi-funded website dedicated to providing Islamic educational resources in English, Arabic, French and Chinese. He also addresses Islamic issues on the Saudi satellite channel MBC.

Ambassador of Non-violence: In an effort to distance himself from alleged connections to perpetrators of terrorism, Al-Ouda is outspoken about the importance of inculcating love and mercy as opposed to violence (except in valid cases of self-defense) in the daily lives of Muslims. As a prominent member of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, he led the delegation in talks with Arab heads of state regarding the need for them to unite in opposition to Israel's siege of Gaza in early 2009. He has strongly condemned DA'ISH.



Country: Indonesia

Born: 3 July 1953 (Age 62)

Source of Influence: Administrative, Political, Education

Influence: Leader of approximately 30 million members of the *Nahdlatul Ulama*

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: Unlisted

2010 Rank: 19

2011 Rank: 17

2012 Rank: 19

2013 Rank: 15

2014/15 Rank: 17

“I am not interested in any political offers. I will never run for any presidential or vice presidential election; for me Nahdlatul Ulama chairman is the highest position [of all].”

KH Said Aqil Siradj

6,830

The number of boarding schools under Nahdlatul Ulama.

40^{MIL}

The estimated number of members in the NU.



❧ 18 ❧

Dr KH
Said Aqil Siradj

Dr Kh Said Aqil Siradj

Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama

Dr KH Said Aqil Siradj is the leader of Indonesia's largest independent Muslim organization and one of the world's most influential Islamic organizations, *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), or 'Awakening of Scholars'. Siradj guides millions through his work with the NU.

Head of Expansive Network: The Nahdlatul Ulama boasts an expansive network that covers 30 regions with 339 branches, 12 special branches, 2,630 representative councils and 37,125 sub-branch representative councils across Indonesia. This network practices the doctrine of *Ahlassunah wal Jama'ah*, which is Arabic for 'people of the *Sunnah* (practices of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and the community'. They base their practices on the traditional sources of Islamic jurisprudence—mainly the Qur'an, *Hadith*, and major schools of law. Among its aims are the propagation of *Nahdlatul Ulama's* message and also an expansion of its already extensive network of members in Indonesia. This is the basis of many of the organization's social reform efforts. With a solid structure of central and regional boards, branch and special branch boards, and various advisory councils, Siradj sits at the top of this increasingly influential Sunni movement.

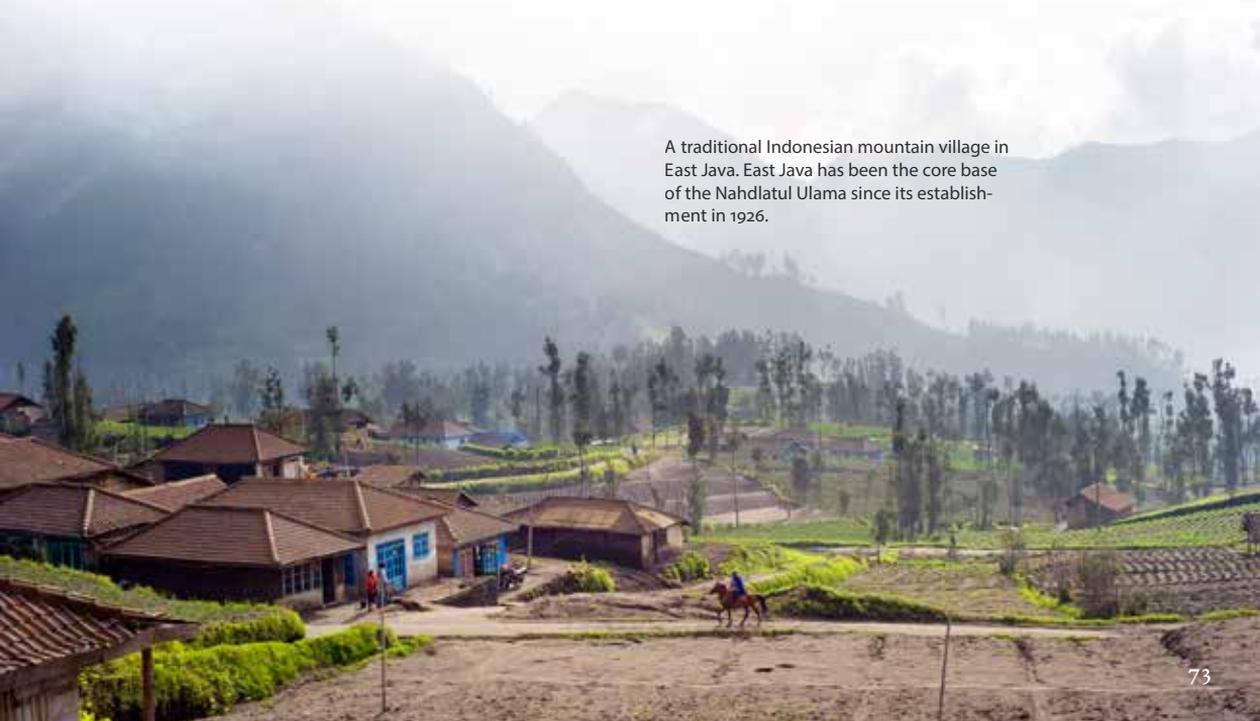
Model of Traditionalism: With a mainly rural membership base, the *Nahdlatul Ulama* distinguishes itself from other Islamic organizations in Indonesia by positioning itself as a premier organization of traditional Islam—with an emphasis on education and political engagement based on Islamic principles.

Social Service: The *Nahdlatul Ulama* has made substantial charitable contributions to Indonesian society in the fields of educational development, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Siradj, like his predecessors, propagates the *Nahdlatul Ulama* as an organization that is geared toward establishing a secular nation-state based on a body of modern and moderate Muslims—with agenda items such as anti-corruption laws and social reform measures that are deeply rooted in Islamic principles.

Human Rights Activism: Prior to his role as *Nahdlatul Ulama* chairman, Siradj served on Indonesia's National Commission for Human Rights. Only a few weeks into his position as chairman of the country's largest Muslim political party, and after violent clashes erupted in different churches across the country, Siradj made strong statements condemning the discrimination against Christian minority groups in Indonesia.

Educational Reform: Siradj has an extensive academic background in the Islamic sciences, and regards education as a tool for development. He founded the Said Aqil Centre in Egypt, a study centre that focuses on developing Islamic discourse, particularly in the Arab World.

A traditional Indonesian mountain village in East Java. East Java has been the core base of the Nahdlatul Ulama since its establishment in 1926.



Country: Egypt

Born: 19 November 1954 (Age: 60)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: President of Egypt

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2013 Rank: 29

2014/15 Rank: 24

“I want you Egyptians to delegate the army and the police to confront violence in a suitable way.”

Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi

26^{MIL}

The number of signatures supporting his candidacy for president

37

Number of years he served in the Egyptian army.



❧ 19 ❧

His Excellency

President Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi

His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Former Field Marshal Abdel Fattah Saeed al-Sisi was sworn into office as President of Egypt on 8 June 2014, having earlier that year resigned from his post as the Commander in Chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces. As a civilian and as Deputy Prime Minister Sisi went on to win the presidential elections held in May 2014. Since then, and despite acts of terrorism, a DA'ISH insurgency in the Sinai, occasional bombings by elements from within or sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood, Sisi and his cabinet of technocrats have undertaken major steps to restore a sense of stability, revive the economy as well as undertake successful political and diplomatic initiatives beyond Egypt's borders.

Army: Sisi first came to public attention when then President Muhammed al-Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood retired the head of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) and promoted Sisi to take his place; to serve as the Commander-in-Chief as well as Minister of Defence in Morsi's new cabinet. Sisi was known for his personal piety and that is considered the thinking behind Morsi's decision. Morsi had confused piety with sympathy for the Muslim Brotherhood, a common error among Islamists. Morsi was increasingly perceived as a President solely dedicated to increasing the concentration of power in the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood. Morsi had ruled out any sort of massive public works necessary to generate new jobs – steps that would subsequently be undertaken by Sisi.

A Coup by Popular Demand: On June 30 2013, millions of Egyptians again took to the streets in larger numbers than ever before. They demanded Morsi step down. Morsi refused. He also refused Sisi's demand that he negotiate an understanding with the united opposition, several dozen political movements that had either rallied or taken form during the 2011 Tahrir Uprising. Morsi had promised this opposition, on the eve of the second round of the election that brought him to power, a role in any government he might form; a promise that was never kept. So the armed forces intervened, deposing and arresting Morsi. At that moment Sisi enjoyed a massive popularity reminiscent of the following acquired by Gamal Abdul Nasser after his coup, a popularity Sisi has retained to a great degree given the craving on the part of ordinary Egyptians for stability and work after the chaos and resulting high unemployment that characterized the first years after the fall of Mubarak. But the MB's organized protests against

Sisi came to a head in August 2013 when the Interim government finally ordered the Ministry of Interior to disperse two large MB organized settlement-like-encampments in Cairo where MB speakers were calling for Morsi's restoration, and refusing negotiations until that happened. They called on their supporters not to disperse but to welcome martyrdom. That call and the sporadic gunfire directed at the paramilitary police as they moved in, ultimately resulted in the death of many hundreds of protesters. Almost simultaneously, outbreaks of violence by pro-Morsi militants occurred in the countryside that included armed attacks on churches, police stations, priests and nuns.

Presidential Expectations: With the MB officially banned, its leadership and cadre either in prison or in exile, Egyptians have looked to Sisi to resolve other issues. A depressing feature of daily life in Egypt in the summer of 2014 were daily power cuts. Sisi was expected to act swiftly and effectively; to a great degree he has. The blistering hot summer of 2015 passed with barely a single power cut thanks to significantly increased imports and the redirection of available power to general rather than industrial use – a temporary solution that will require more imports until a new offshore natural gas field – estimated as the largest in the Mediterranean comes on stream within five years. But the major public works success in 2015 was completion this past summer of the excavation of a second Suez Canal running parallel to the first. Engineers had estimated the work would take three years but Sisi ordered it to be done in one year, and it was. The resulting industrial and residential zone between the two canals and now under construction should generate one million new jobs.

Country: Nigeria
Born: 17 December 1942 (age 72)
Source of Influence: Political
Influence: President of Nigeria
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

“Insecurity, corruption and economic collapse have brought the nation low.”

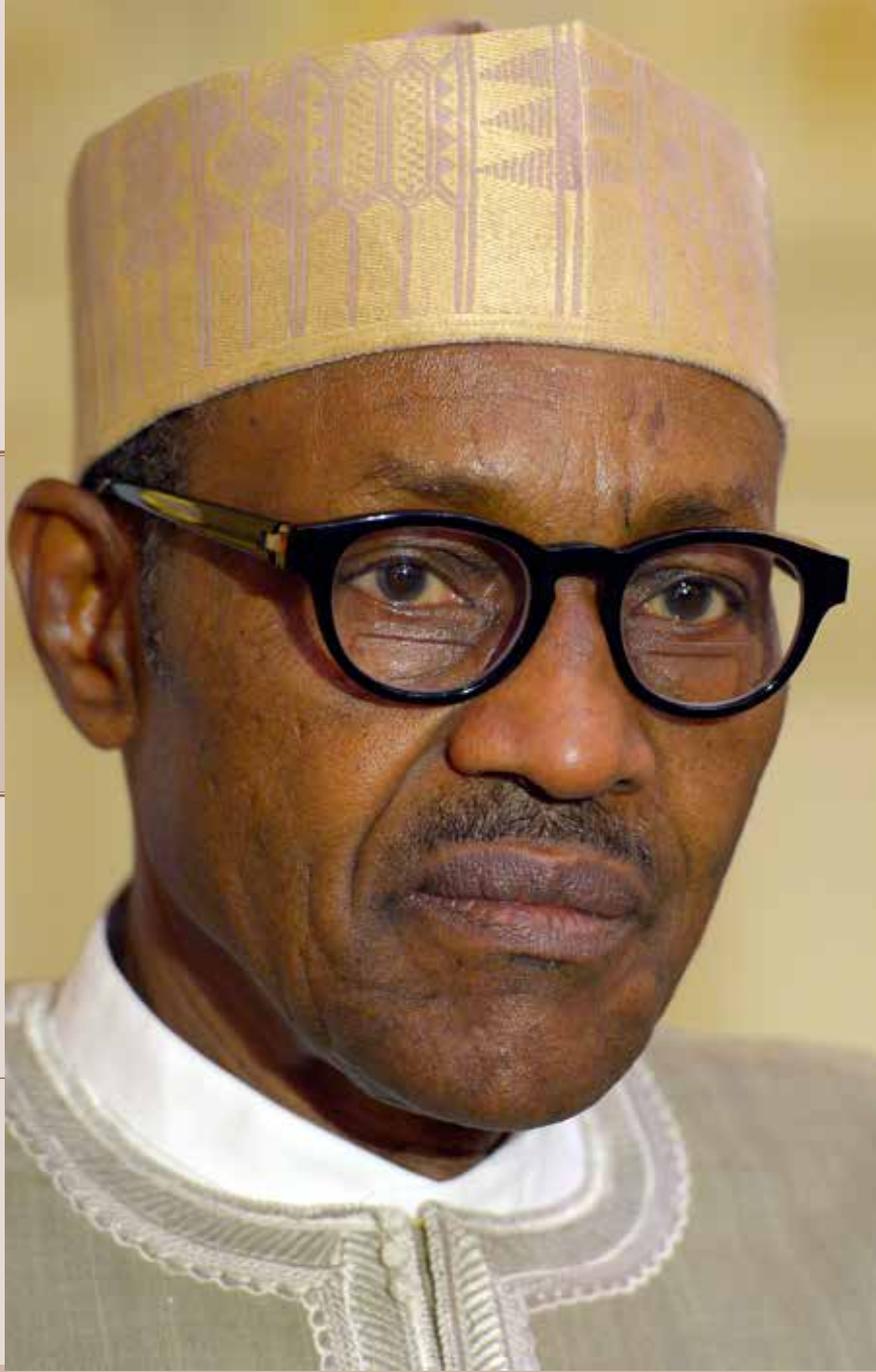
President Muhammadu Buhari

1.15^{BIL}

allocated for poverty reduction programme annually.

12TH

largest producer of petroleum in the world and the 8th largest exporter.



20

His Excellency

President Muhammadu Buhari

His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari (new)

President of Nigeria

President Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in as President of Nigeria in May 2015. He was the candidate for the All Progressives Congress and won the presidential election by almost 2.6 million votes. This was the first time in Nigeria's political history in which power transferred peacefully from one political party to another.

Military Past: President Buhari began his military career at the Nigerian Military Training School of Kaduna in 1963. He was involved in military counter-coups in 1966 and 1975, and the coup of 1983 which overthrew the democratically-elected government and resulted in him being head of state for two years. During these years, he gained fame for his all-out war against corruption and indiscipline, a reputation he has since kept. In 1985 he was overthrown and kept in detention for 3 years.

Anti-Corruption Presidential Candidate: President Buhari ran as the main opposition candidate in the presidential elections of 2003, 2007 and 2011, all ending in defeat, before winning in 2015. His platform was built around his image as a staunch anti-corruption fighter and his reputation for honesty and incorruptibility. He is considered an icon by the Muslims of northern Nigeria, but enjoys nationwide respect due to his stance on corruption.

Fighting Boko Haram: The President has put defeating Boko Haram on top of his agenda. Boko Haram's actions have consistently caused international outrage, and the

President will have to show firm resolve and determination to stop the terror attacks. In July 2014, he escaped a suicide bombing attack that killed over 50 people.

Economy and infrastructure: President Buhari was the first chairman of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and was the mastermind behind the construction of 20 oil depots throughout Nigeria, a project involving over 3200 kilometres of pipelines. Both the Warri and Kaduna refineries were built under his leadership. He also established the blueprints for the country's petro-chemical and liquefied natural gas programmes.

Environment: President Buhari is an active environmentalist who has drafted several plans to preserve wildlife in Nigeria. He has also exerted great efforts on the conservation of nature in Nigeria; such as controlling the logging industry whereby he has ensured that double the number of trees felled are replaced by loggers. He has also worked on restricting the Ecological Fund Office so it can deliver on environmental challenges.



Country: Syria

Born: 1933 (Age 81)

Source of Influence: Scholarly

Influence: More than 75 thousand students in Damascus alone.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009 Rank: 31

2010 Rank: 24

2011 Rank: 24

2012 Rank: 21

2013 Rank: 17

2014/15 Rank: 18

Masjid Al-Nour in Damascus, the central mosque for the Qubeysi movement. Photographs of Sheikha Qubeysi are not available due to her adherence to the traditional prohibition of the use of images of people and her covert leadership style.

“To be asked to join the Qubeysiat is very prestigious”

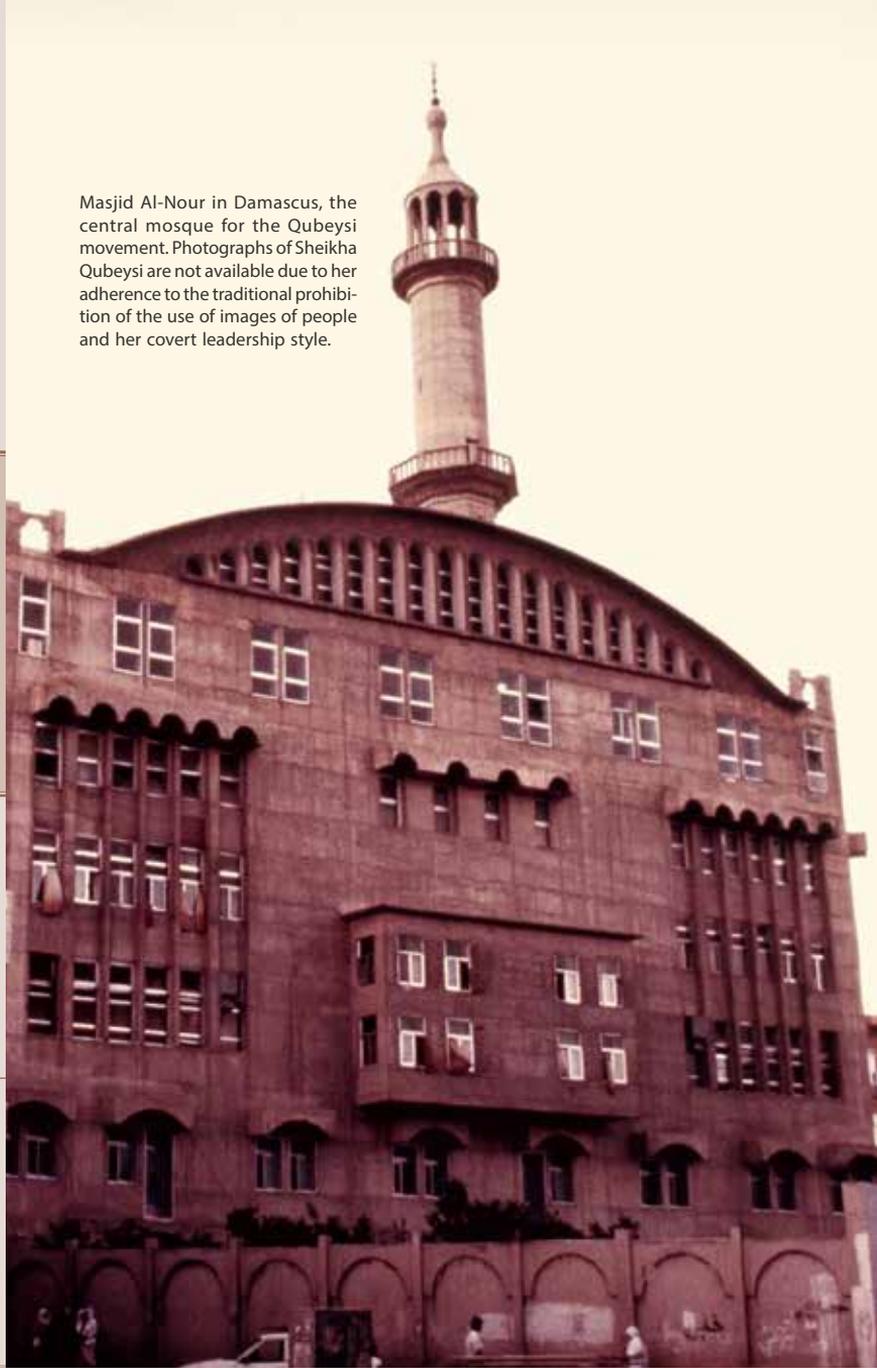
Maan Abdul Salam, (women’s rights campaigner)

75,000

Estimated number of students studying in Qubeysi educational institutes.

9,680

The estimated number of unique Hadith found in the six major Hadith collections, not counting thousands of repetitions, that many of the Qubeysi students memorise.



21

Her Eminence

Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

Her Eminence Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

Leader of the Qubeysi Movement

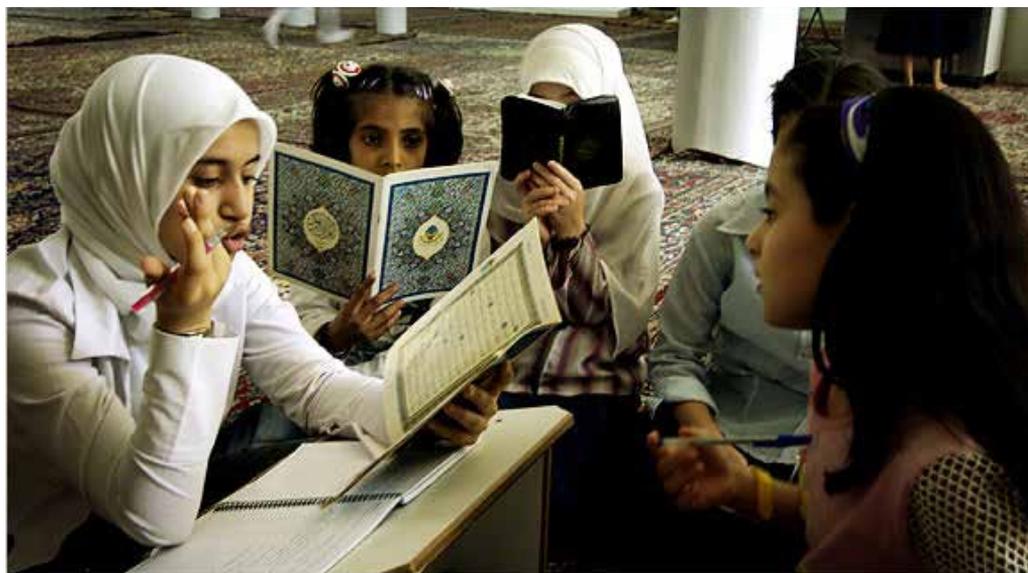
Munira Qubeysi is the head of the largest women-only Islamic movement in the world. It offers Islamic education exclusively to girls and women. Qubeysi commands around 80 schools in Damascus alone, teaching more than 75,000 students. She is one of the most significant Islamic scholars in the world; her movement focuses on learning the Qur'an and six Hadith collections by heart. Qubeysi is arguably the most influential Muslim woman in the world, albeit in great discretion.

Female Muslim Order: At a time when clandestine meetings of Islamic organizations are proscribed in Syria, Sheikha Qubeysi's network, the Qubeysiat, has legally been permitted to host classes and meetings in mosques since 2006—although they had been operating as a secret society for long before that time. Members of the Qubeysiat identify themselves, and ranks within the group, based on specific colors and articles of clothing—headscarves knotted at the neck, and overcoats denoting membership status. Women within the network are provided a unique role within Arab society as scholars and teachers exclusively catering to the needs of Muslim women; they provide an open forum to address religious questions and discuss religious issues.

Milestones in Islamic Education: Qubeysi is influential as the leader of an incredibly successful educational movement. The religious education of women had previously been neglected so the emergence of a female-specific educational initiative has become very popular, making the Qubeysiat, in numbers, the

leading Islamic movement in Syria. Qubeysi's students are also at the forefront of a significant achievement in Islamic history in regards to education—no less than 70 Qubeysiat have memorized nine canonical books of Hadith with extensive chains of narration. By training this sizeable group of female scholars, Sheikha Qubeysi has made Islamic knowledge widely accessible, and is credited for the resurgence of Islamic education in the country.

Leading an Islamic Revival in Syria: Qubeysi's influence in Syria is due to the fact that she has been able to develop a very large network of madrassas (religious schools) without attracting the criticism of the government, which has traditionally been dubious of large networks of Muslim organizations. The organization follows traditional Sunni practice, and follows the Shafi'i school of thought. Although member groups are found in Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon, Damascus is the centre of the revivalist movement.



Country: Pakistan

Born: 5 October 1943 (age 71)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Lineage

Influence: Leading scholar for the Deobandis and in Islamic finance.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

2009 Rank: 27

2010 Rank: 31

2011 Rank: 32

2012 Rank: 32

2013 Rank: 25

2014/15 Rank: 19

“Since wealth is the property of God, humanity does not have autonomy in this ownership but through the specific path He has instituted in the Islamic Shari‘ah.”

Sheikh Taqi Usmani

\$1.14^{TRIL}

The current worth of the global Islamic financial services market.

10,000

The number of students at Darul Uloom, Karachi.



❧ 22 ❧

His Eminence Justice
Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani

His Eminence Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Leading Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence

Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani is a leading scholar of Islamic jurisprudence. He is considered to be the intellectual leader of the Deobandi movement. He served as Judge of the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan from 1982 to May 2002. He specialises in Islamic jurisprudence and financial matters.

Leading Islamic Finance Scholar: Usmani's chief influence comes from his position as a global authority on the issue of Islamic finance. He has served on the boards, and as chairman, of over a dozen Islamic banks and financial institutions, and currently leads the International Shariah Council for the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) in Bahrain. He is also a permanent member of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, one of the highest legal bodies in the Muslim world.

Deobandi Figurehead: Usmani is very important as a figurehead in the Deobandi movement—one of the most successful of the Islamic revivalist initiatives of the past century. Usmani was born in Deoband, India, to Mufti Muhammad Shafi (the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan) who founded the Darul 'Uloom, Karachi, a leading centre of Islamic education in Pakistan. It is estimated that over 65% of all madrassas in Pakistan are Deobandi as well as 600 of the 1500 mosques in the UK. Deobandis consider themselves orthodox Hanafi Sunnis. They rely heavily on the writings of the 18th century scholar Shah Waliullah Dehli.

Writer: He is the Chief Editor of both the Urdu and English monthly magazine 'Albalagh', and regularly contributes articles to leading Pakistani newspapers on a range of issues. He has authored more than 60 books in Arabic, English, and Urdu.



Country: Mauritania

Born: 1935 (age 80)

Source of Influence: Scholarly

Influence: Significant influence as a leading contemporary scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Maliki)

2009 Rank: 30

2010 Rank: 30

2011 Rank: 31

2012 Rank: 29

2013 Rank: 23

2014/15 Rank: 20

“If I asked for people to die for the sake of God, I would have them lining up at my house. But when I ask people to live for the sake of God, I can’t find anyone.”

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah

101

The number of years that a terrible misprint of the Mardin Fatwa

of Ibn Taymiyya continued to be used among extremists as the core proof of their legitimacy before Bin Bayyah corrected it based on the earliest manuscripts.

114

Fatwas on his official website.



❧ 23 ❧

His Eminence

Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah

His Eminence Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah

President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies

Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah's influence is derived from his scholarship, piety and preaching. Uniquely, all of the different sects and schools of Muslims respect him as a scholar. A testament to this is the notable fact that whilst he is not a Salafi, the Saudi government promulgates his fatwas as authoritative. He is an instructor at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah and was the deputy head of the Union of Muslim Scholars having previously been a Judge at the High Court of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Head of Shariah Affairs at the Ministry of Justice.

Education: Sheikh bin Bayyah was raised in a household famous for its scholars, and his Sheikh Mahfoudh bin Bayyah, was the head of the Conference of Mauritanian Scholars established after the country's independence. Sheikh bin Bayyah studied in the Mauritanian centres of learning known as Mahadhir, in which all the sacred sciences were taught including: jurisprudence, legal theory, syntax, language, rhetoric, Qur'anic exegesis and its auxiliary sciences, and the science of Prophetic tradition.

Diplomat: As a member of the International Islamic *Fiqh* Academy or *Al Majma' al Fiqhi* of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Sheikh bin Bayyah is at the forefront of the legal arm of a dynamic organization with a permanent delegation to the United Nations.

Author: Having written numerous texts, Sheikh

bin Bayyah's scholarly explorations have gone global through speaking engagements that draw crowds of tens of thousands. He has spoken at length about the endurance of the Islamic legal tradition and also written extensively on rulings for Muslims living as minorities in foreign lands, or *fiqh al aqaliyaat*.

Activist: In June 2013, Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah visited the White House where he met with senior advisers and aides to President Obama. He called for the protection of the Syrian people and the Muslim minority in Myanmar. Also, he met with Bill Gates during the Global Vaccine Summit in Abu Dhabi in April 2013. He recently initiated the 'Muslim Council of Elders' which embraces leading scholars (including the Sheikh of Al-Azhar), and presided over a large gathering of religious scholars at a forum entitled 'Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies'.



Ben Amera, the world's third largest monolith, is located in western Mauritania. There are also many other smaller monoliths nearby.

Country: Nigeria

Born: 24 Aug 1956 (Age 59)

Source of Influence: Lineage, Development, Administrative

Influence: Central figure for 85.5 million Nigerian Muslims

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni, Maliki; linked to the Qadiriyyah Sufi order by lineage

2009 Rank: 16 **2012 Rank:** 22

2010 Rank: 23 **2013 Rank:** 18

2011 Rank: 25 **2014/15 Rank:** 21

“Talking is very important and is critical to finding an amicable solution to the violence.”

Sultan M. Abubakar III

206

The number of years since the Sokoto Empire was first established in 1809 by Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio.

52

The number of years that his father, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, led the Muslims of Nigeria, the longest rule of the 20 Sokoto Sultans.



© Anonymous / AP

24

*Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan
Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III*

His Royal Eminence Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III

Sultan of Sokoto

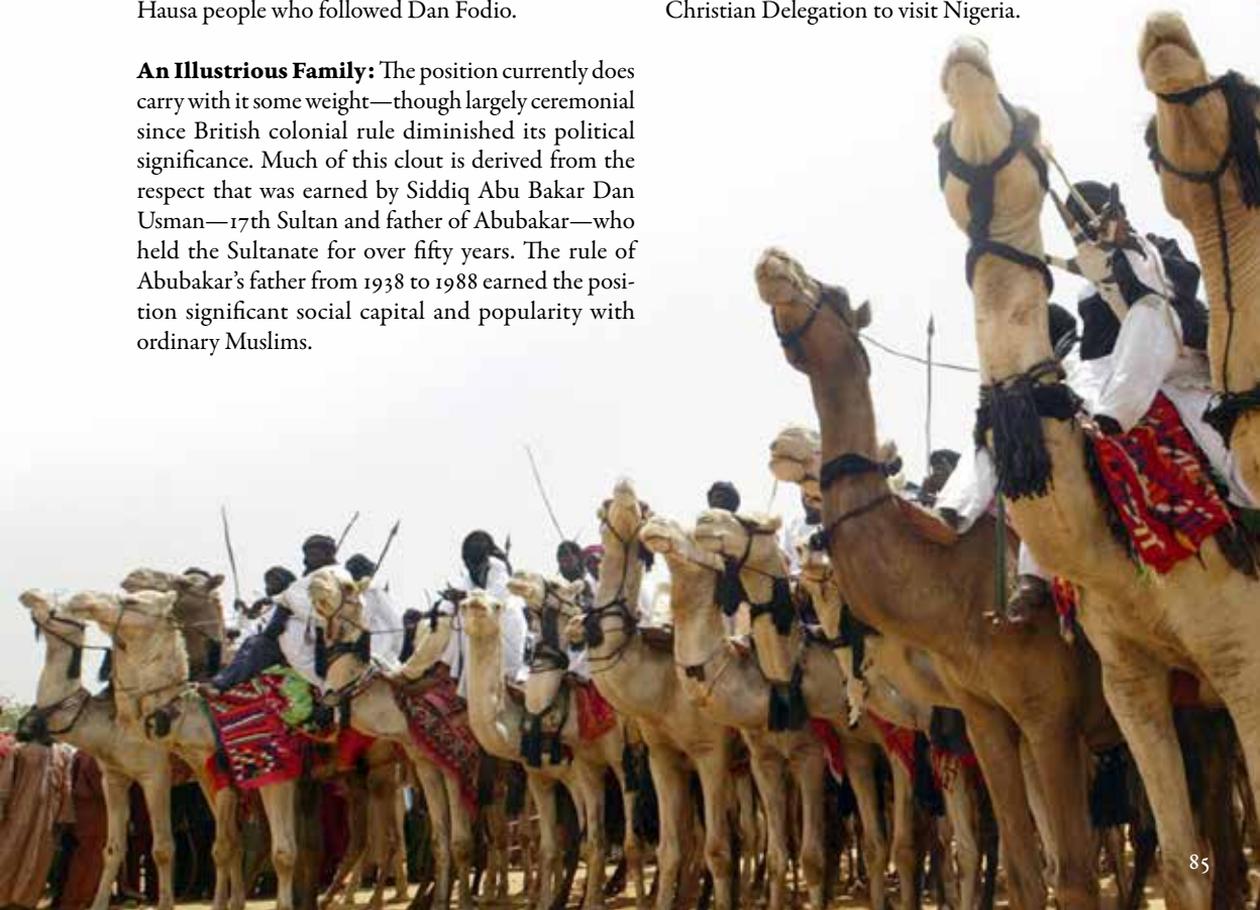
Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III is the 20th Sultan of Sokoto. As Sultan of Sokoto, he is considered the spiritual leader of Nigeria's 74.6 million Muslims, who account for roughly 50 percent of the nation's population. Although the position of Sultan of Sokoto has become largely ceremonial, the holder is still a central figure for Nigerian Muslims.

Lineage Back to Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio: The Sultan of Sokoto is the spiritual leader of Nigeria's enormous Muslim community. He gains this position by lineage. Abubakar is the 20th heir to the two-century-old throne founded by his ancestor, Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio. Dan Fodio (1754-1817 CE) was a scholar, leader of the Maliki school of Islam and the Qadiri branch of Sufism, and Islamic reformer of the nineteenth century. Dan Fodio believed that Islam should have a more central role in the life of the people of West Africa and led an uprising to institute the changes he sought. His figure and his writings are a very important chapter in the history of Islam in West Africa, and Abubakar, by lineage, holds a key place in West African Islam, and particularly for the Fulani and Hausa people who followed Dan Fodio.

An Illustrious Family: The position currently does carry with it some weight—though largely ceremonial since British colonial rule diminished its political significance. Much of this clout is derived from the respect that was earned by Siddiq Abu Bakar Dan Usman—17th Sultan and father of Abubakar—who held the Sultanate for over fifty years. The rule of Abubakar's father from 1938 to 1988 earned the position significant social capital and popularity with ordinary Muslims.

Administrative Power: Abubakar holds important administrative influence in Nigerian religious life. Abubakar is the titular ruler of Sokoto in northern Nigeria and is also the head of the Nigerian National Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. Leadership of this council means that the Sultan of Sokoto remains the only figure that can legitimately claim to speak on behalf of all Nigerian Muslims. This role has become increasingly influential over the years with a rise in interreligious tensions between Nigeria's Muslim-majority north and Christian-majority south.

Boko Haram: The Sultan has started many initiatives to counter and reduce the influence of Boko Haram, including inviting an international joint Muslim-Christian Delegation to visit Nigeria.



Country: India

Born: 2 Feb 1943 (age 71)

Source of Influence: Political, Administrative, Lineage, Philanthropy

Influence: Administrative, Scholarly. Leader of 2 million barkatiya Barelwis.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Barelwi Sufi)

2010 Rank: 26

2011 Rank: 28

2012 Rank: 26

2013 Rank: 22

2014/15 Rank: 22

“For as long as a person does not please his parents, in reality none of his obligatory or superogatory prayers, or any other good deeds is accepted in the Court of Allah.”

Mufti Raza Khan Al-Azhari

20

His age when he received Khilafah (ordination into spiritual succession) by Maulana Mustafa Raza Khan.

5,000+

The number of English fatwas he has written in his published *Azharul Fatawa*.



25

Mufti Muhammad Akhtar
Raza Khan Qadiri Al-Azhari

Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan Qadiri Al-Azhari

Barelwi Leader and Spiritual Guide

Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan is the leader of the Indian Barelwis and considered by his followers as the Grand Mufti of India. He is the great-grandson and successor of one of the most influential sub-continental Islamic scholars in history: Ahmad Raza Khan (d.1921), who founded the Barelwi movement in South Asia.

Spiritual Tradition: Most Muslims from the sub-continent can be categorised as Barelwis (the other major group is known as the Deobandis). This group emphasises the mystical love of the Prophet ﷺ often expressing this through devotion to a holy personage (who is part of an unbroken chain reaching back to the Prophet ﷺ), visits to tombs of saints, and use of *hams* and *naats*. To their critics these practices represent the cardinal sins of *bid'a* (innovation) and *shirk* (associating another being with God).

Education and Scholarly Lineage: Mufti Akhtar Raza received his basic education at Darul Uloom Manzar-e-Islam in Bareilly, India. He then went to Al-Azhar University to study *tafsir* and *hadith* (1963-1966). Upon graduation, he was awarded the Jamia

Azhar Award by Colonel Jamal Abdul Nasir. He then returned to India and has written numerous books, educated hundreds of scholars, and overseen the development of many educational institutes. He also serves as a spiritual guide, having been given permission by his predecessor Mufti Mustafa Raza Khan to lead the Qadriya, Barakaatiyah, and Nooriyah Sufi orders in India. He was also appointed to the position of Muslim Chief Justice of India in 2006.

Dynamic Mufti: Mufti Akhtar Raza is esteemed for his extensive collection of English-language rulings, the Azharul Fatawa. He became involved in issuing Islamic rulings from the age of 17 and is noted for having issued over 5,000 rulings.





His Eminence
Mohammad bin
Mohammad Al-Mansour
Imam of the Zaidi Sect
of Shia Muslims

Country: Yemen

Born: 1 January 1917 (Age: 98)

Source of Influence: Imam of 10 million Zaidi Shia in Yemen and Saudi Arabia

Influence: Scholarly

School of Thought: Traditional Zaidi (Fiver) Shia

2009: 26

2010: 29

2011: 30

2012: 30

2013: 24

2014/15: 24



His Excellency
Prime Minister
Ahmet Davutoglu
Prime Minister of Turkey

Country: Turkey

Born: 26 February 1959 (Age: 56)
Konya, Turkey

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: Prime Minister of Turkey

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009: 450

2010: 450

2011: HM

2012: HM

2013: HM

2014/15: 26

His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad Al-Mansour is the Imam of the Zaidi branch of the Shia sect of Muslims, one of the three main branches of Shia Islam. With approximately ten million followers, Zaidis constitute almost half the entire population of Yemen and around 3 percent in Saudi Arabia.

Lineage in the Imamate: Zaidi Muslims are a Shia sect named after the followers of Zaid bin Ali, grandson of al Hussein (grandson of the Prophet Muhammad). The sect was formed by the followers of Zaid bin Ali who led an unsuccessful revolt against the Umayyad Caliph Hisham ibn Abd Al-Malik in 740 CE. The Zaidis are also known as 'the Fivers' (referring to the number of Imams they consider infallible). They are the closest branch of Shia to the Sunnis, and even their fiqh is similar to the Hanafis.

Current Social Influence: In the past decade a Zaidi movement known as the *Shabab al Mumineen* first led by Hussein Al-Houthi, and now by Abdul Malik al-Houthi, has been gaining prominence in the northwest of Yemen. This has stoked some sectarian rivalry in Yemen, between the Zaidi and radical anti-Shia groups who are fearful of the resurgence of Zaidi rule in Yemen. Al-Mansour has maintained his quietist approach and enjoys much respect in Yemeni society. Al-Mansour was influential in stemming the escalation of conflict in 2005. Sheikh Muhammad is part of a political party that consists of all the prominent Zaidi opposition (including some Houthis). Their latest activity (2011) was signing the Gulf-brokered deal which ended Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule.

Ahmet Davutoglu became the Prime Minister of Turkey on August 29, 2014, succeeding HE Recep Erdogan. He is a political scientist academic who became ambassador and then chief advisor to the Prime Minister before being appointed Foreign Minister on May 1st, 2009. Davutoglu is considered to be the most important figure for redefining the new framework of Turkish foreign policy under the AKP's rule.

Prime Minister: Some of the policies Davutoglu formed as Foreign Minister must be redefined post Arab-Spring (e.g. "zero problems with neighbours"). On Turkey's doorstep he must confront the problem of DA'ISH, build relations with a post-Morsi Egypt, decide what relations to build with Israel as well as continue Turkey's path to the EU and continue to expand its global role. With these and other issues, the question is how much will he be his own man, and how much will he simply follow the role that President Erdogan wants from him.

2015 Elections: The 2015 General Election saw the AKP remain as the largest party (with 258 seats), but fall short of winning the 276 seats required for an outright majority. This was a blow for Davutoglu, being the first general election with him as prime minister, and also for President Erdogan who was hoping that a large majority could push through presidential reforms that he wanted.



Habib Umar bin Hafiz
 Director of Dar Al
 Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen

Country: Yemen

Born: 1962 (Age 53)

Influence: Lineage, Scholarly. Runs one of the foremost centres for Islamic education in the world.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Shafi'i, Ash'ari, Ba' Alawi Sufi)

2009: 36
 2010: 37
 2011: 37
 2012: 36
 2013: 28
 2014/15: 28

Habib Umar bin Hafiz is well known for his Prophetic lineage and status as one of the most influential Sufi scholars alive today. His influence through scholarship and preaching is vast in the Middle East, Indonesia and East Africa especially. He is also incredibly influential through his leadership of the Ba Alawi movement. He has been touring Europe and the US regularly in the past few years in response to his growing following there.

Cultivation of Scholarship: Habib Umar founded and runs Dar al Mustafa, a centre for traditional Islamic scholarship that currently hosts an array of international students, in Tarim, Yemen. He has joined the ranks of the world's leading Muslim academics and scholars as a signatory of 'A Common Word Between Us and You', a document that builds bridges between the Muslims and Christians. He has also spoken at Cambridge University on the need for such a dialogue.

Da'wa and Humanitarian Efforts: Habib Umar is noted for his *da'wab* efforts, with significant visits to the USA and Europe. He has also partnered with Muslim Aid Australia as founder of Yemen-based NGO Al Rafah Charitable Society to address issues of poverty and hunger and lack of sufficient health care that affect areas of Tarim.



**HE President
 Mahmoud Abbas**
 President of the Palestin-
 ian National Authority

Country: Palestine

Born: 26 March 1935 (age 80) in Galilee, Palestine.

Influence: Political. One of the founders of Fatah, and leading peace negotiator in the Palestine-Israel conflict.

School of Thought: Sunni

2009: 450
 2010: 450
 2011: 36
 2012: 35
 2013: 30
 2014/15: 29

Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, is the President of the Palestinian National Authority, and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Politics: President Abbas is one of the few surviving founder members of Fatah - the main political grouping within the PLO. He has always been committed to pursuing an independent Palestinian state through negotiations and was one of the principal architects of the Oslo peace process. He accompanied Yassir Arafat to the White House to sign the Oslo Accords.

Problems and Statehood Bid: After seeing that years of peace negotiations have led to nothing but the relentless growth of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, President Abbas has chosen to look for an alternative strategy: submitting a statehood bid at the UN.

Historic Treaty with Jordan: President Abbas signed a historic agreement with King Abdullah II of Jordan confirming the Hashemite Kingdom's custodianship over the Holy Sites of Jerusalem. This treaty makes formal a situation which has existed since 1924, and it will not merely avoid any disputes between Jordan and Palestine, but will more importantly enable both countries to jointly legally protect the Holy Sites in Jerusalem against Israeli (official or unofficial) incursions, physical destruction and illegal annexation.

Future Issues: Mr Abbas is in the 10th year of what was initially meant to be a four-year term in office and the lack of any clear progress for the Palestinian situation, and an economy in ruins has led to support for Fatah waning even in the West Bank. The PNA has submitted initial documents to the International Criminal Court to investigate possible war crimes by Israel during their onslaught of Gaza in 2014.



Rached Ghannouchi
Former Prime Minister of Tunisia

Country: Tunisia
Born: June 1941 (age 74)
Influence: Political, Scholarly.
School of Thought: Sunni

2014/15: 450



Dr Amr Khaled
Preacher and Social Activist

Country: Egypt
Born: 5 Sept 1967 (Age 48)
Influence: Media, Youth. Popular multimedia preacher with highly visited website and social network following.
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009: 14
2010: 15
2011: 21
2012: 34
2013: 38
2014/15: 30

Ghannouchi is one of the world's leading Islamic thinkers and one of the most influential Tunisian politicians in the post-revolution transition period. With the fall of President Ben Ali, Ghannouchi returned to Tunisia in January 2011 after spending 20-years in exile. He led the Ennahda (Renaissance) Party to victory in the October 2011 National Constituent Assembly elections. He is currently assistant Secretary-General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars.

Politics: Ghannouchi co-founded The Ennahda Movement in the 1970s. He was imprisoned several times before being forced into exile. After successfully returning to Tunisia and winning power in 2011, Ghannouchi then, in 2014, quit government and handed power over to a technocratic government, and when elections were held later that year, Ennahda, without Ghannouchi leading them, came second to the Nidaa Tounes party.

Honours and Awards: In 2012, Time magazine named Ghannouchi one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World. Foreign Policy's also included him in the top 100 Global Thinkers. Ghannouchi was awarded the Chatham House Prize in 2012 (alongside Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki) for "the successful compromises each achieved during Tunisia's democratic transition". He was also awarded the Ibn Rushd Prize for Freedom of Thought in Berlin in 2014.

Countering terrorism: Ghannouchi has stated that the widespread phenomenon of terrorism in the Arab region is due to corruption in the economic, social and political sectors. He also believes that whoever wants to fight extremism must do so in moderation by following the Tunisian model.

Amr Khaled has been a televangelist to the Islamic world since 1998. He communicates through his TV shows and web campaigns using Islamic ethics as a way to inspire, foster community development, tolerance and inter-cultural relations.

Popular Media Figure: Part of Khaled's influence derives from the fact that he appeals to the common person. He holds a degree in accounting, and has no formal religious education; wears suits and ties, and has a clean-shaven face except for a trimmed moustache—everything you do not expect from a Muslim preacher. His everyman appeal has led to immense popularity. Khaled is credited with the launch of the first "Muslim reality TV show" *Mujaddidun* on Dubai Television. Khaled's speeches are published online, on best selling cassettes and CDs. His website is translated from Arabic into nearly twenty languages and it rivals Oprah Winfrey's in terms of traffic. His videos have racked up 60 million views on YouTube, and he boasts 18.4 million likes on Facebook.

Community Development: Khaled's goal is to encourage community development in the Muslim world by its own people with religious faith as the guiding inspiration—something he believes should be linked to interfaith dialogue, tolerance and moderation. The break up of communities is something Khaled sees as responsible for the malaise in the Muslim World, and something he believes puts the future of young people in jeopardy. One program he has launched to realize this objective of community development is Life Makers, which has a stated goal of producing a renaissance for the Arab and Muslim Worlds.



**Sheikh Dr Yusuf
Al-Qaradawi**
Head of the International
Union of Muslim Scholars

Country: Qatar

Born: 9 Sept 1926 (Age 89)

Influence: Leading scholar for global Muslim Brotherhood movement, host of popular show with over 40 million viewers worldwide.

School of Thought: Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood/Salafi

2009: 9
2010: 14
2011: 13
2012: 16
2013: 31
2014/15: 31

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi is a preeminent Egyptian scholar. Articulate and widely read, he is one of the most famous Islamic scholars of our time.

Post Mubarak Era: Return to Egypt: In February 2011, Qaradawi returned to Egypt after a 30 year exile and addressed a crowd of over a million people at Tahrir Square during Friday prayers. He addressed all segments of Egyptian society (including the Copts and the military) and called for unity and a return to civilian rule.

Leading Figure of the Muslim Brotherhood:

Qaradawi is the intellectual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. He has twice turned down offers to be their leader—in 1976 and 2004—preferring to be free of institutional restrictions. As early as 1997 he stated categorically that he was not a member of the Brotherhood. Earlier in his life Qaradawi was jailed three times for his relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood and subsequently stripped of his Egyptian citizenship in the 1970s—driving him to seek exile in Qatar.

Fatwas: Qaradawi vocally supported the ‘Arab Spring’ movements issuing fatwas for the killing of Colonel Gaddafi, and fatwas against the Assad regime in Syria. He also issued a fatwa condemning the overthrow of Morsi, saying that it was an obligation to continue to support Morsi. He advised Al-Sisi to remain neutral and protect the legitimate rule of government. Finally, he criticised the Sheikh Al-Azhar for supporting a rebellion against the ruler of a country.



**Her Majesty Queen
Rania Al-Abdullah**
Queen of Hashemite
Kingdom of Jordan

Country: Jordan

Born: 31 Aug 1970 (age 45) in Kuwait City, Kuwait

Influence: Philanthropy, Social, Media, Political. Queen of Jordan with millions of followers and subscribers on social media sites.

School of Thought: Modernist Sunni

2009: 450
2010: 32
2011: 34
2012: 37
2013: 32
2014/15: 32

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah is the wife of HM King Abdullah II, but is also in her own right an educational activist with global appeal. Through sheer hard work, she has developed the biggest virtual following of any Muslim in the world, and she defends and humanizes Islam and Arab causes in-and to-the West as effectively as any Muslim scholar in the world.

Educational Ambassador: HM Queen Rania is the initiator and key leader behind the launch of several educational initiatives such as the Jordanian Madrasati, ‘My School’, a project for the development of Jordan’s public school system. She is also the co-founder and global chair of the ‘1 Goal: Education For All’ campaign which calls for the complete primary schooling of all boys and girls in the world by 2015. She attends high-level meetings (Davos, WEF etc) to promote her vision of education for all.

Intercultural Dialogue: In April 2010, Queen Rania launched her children’s book ‘The Sandwich Swap’ (which made the New York Times best-sellers list) through the United Nations Bookshop in an initiative to promote cross-cultural understanding among youth.

Online Presence: Queen Rania embraced the new technologies early on and wholeheartedly. She has an amazingly popular YouTube channel with over 7.1 million views and a very popular website (www.queenrania.jo). She also has 4.3 million followers on Twitter and 4.1 million likes on Facebook.



Sheikh Moez Masoud

Preacher and Televangelist

Country: Egypt
Born: 4 July 1978 (age 37) in Cairo, Egypt
Influence: Preacher.
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2009: 450
 2010: 450
 2011: 450
 2012: HM
 2013: 37
 2014/15: 33

Moez Masoud is an Egyptian preacher, television and radio presenter, and activist who focuses on the fields of contemporary spirituality, interfaith dialogue, and Islam in the modern world. His influence is derived from ongoing academic work as well as media.

Religious and academic work: Founder of al-Tareeq al-Sahh (The Right Way) Institute, Masoud is trained in the Islamic sciences and is currently a research affiliate at the University of Cambridge. His writings are primarily centred around religious identity and spiritual quest, as well as religious radicalization. He has spoken at such key global events as the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos.

Media and Social Media: His engagement in media has been significant since 2007 when his first Arabic TV show debuted, and by now his programs and appearances have acquired millions of viewers across the Arab world. His latest work, broadcast during Ramadan, "Khutuwat al-Shaytan;" was widely viewed across the Arab world programs and was ranked 9th most viewed in the Gulf even when competing with conventional TV dramas. In this particular work the main character, "Adam" is carried by Masoud's vision through various stages in the drama including "bad religion" and "anti-theism."

Masoud is active in various social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, where he has over six million followers. Masoud participated in the brief post-Tahrir "Egyptian National Dialogue" and has continued that dialogue on socio-political issues in Egypt from within the perspective of traditional Islam.



Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah

Secretary General of Hezbollah

Country: Lebanon
Born: 31 Aug 1960 (Age 55)
Influence: Political, Development. Political leader of 1–2 million Lebanese Shi'a and supporters of his resistance to Israel.
School of Thought: Revolutionary Shi'ism

2009: 17
 2010: 18
 2011: 23
 2012: 28
 2013: 27
 2014/15: 34

Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah is serving his sixth term as the current and third Secretary General of Hezbollah (the Party of God). Hezbollah is a Twelver Shia Islamic political party and paramilitary organization based in Lebanon. Hezbollah's ideology is based on seeking social justice through Islamic ideals.

Military Power: Hezbollah remains a *de facto* security force in southern Lebanon, and its military presence is felt throughout the country, with a force of around 300,000 fighters. The military successes Nasrallah had in the late nineties are seen as the main factor for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, and the repulsion of Israeli forces in July 2006 earned Nasrallah many more supporters.

Social Services: Hezbollah has also won significant grassroots support by cultivating a social welfare system that provides schools, clinics and housing in the predominantly Shia parts of Lebanon. These welfare activities are run with efficiency and rival those carried out by the state, giving the organisation even broader appeal. It also runs Al Manar—an influential television station.

Popularity: His popularity peaked just after the 2006 conflict with Israel, when many Sunni Muslims looked to him as a figure of defiance against Israel. Since the Syrian conflict, however, many if not all of these supporters have left him because of his support of the Syrian (Alawi) regime against the Syrian people (Sunnis). His claim that the Syrian conflict is not sectarian in essence is not one that many Sunni Muslims agree with.



**Sheikh Hamza
Yusuf Hanson**
Teacher and Co-Founder
of Zaytuna College, USA

Country: USA

Born: 1960 (age 55)

Influence: Scholarly. Leading Islamic authority in a country with 2.6 million Muslims.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Maliki, Asha'ri)

2009: 38
2010: 42
2011: 43
2012: 42
2013: 41
2014/15: 35

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson is one of the most influential Islamic figures in the Western world. He is seen as one of the foremost authorities on Islam outside of the Muslim world. He is a co-founder of the Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, the first accredited Muslim liberal arts college in the USA

Islamic Scholar: Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson converted to Islam in 1977 when he was only 17 and spent many years studying Arabic, Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy with some of the Muslim world's most prominent and well-respected teachers. His popularity, and accordingly his influence, stem from his application of Islamic knowledge being rooted in the lived experience of modern, western society.

Speaker and Educator: Sheikh Hamza is a much sought after speaker. He has given thousands of lectures to public audiences and is interviewed regularly by the media. He spreads traditional Sunni orthodoxy in the West through his popular speeches and his teaching at short intense study programmes such as Deen Intensive, Rihla and RIS.

Advisor: He advises on Islamic Studies to several US universities, and is also on the board of advisors of George Russell's One Nation, a national philanthropic initiative that promotes pluralism and inclusion in America.



**Professor Dr Seyyed
Hossein Nasr**
Philosopher and
University Professor

Country: USA

Born: 7 April 1933 (age 82)

Influence: Scholarly. Written major books and given countless lectures internationally.

School of Thought: Traditional Shi'a

2009: 47
2010: 48
2011: 47
2012: 44
2013: 39
2014/15: 36

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is an Islamic Studies professor at George Washington University. He remains one of the most influential Muslim scholars in the world for his work on Islamic tradition and philosophy. He is the only Muslim to be included in the Library of Living Philosophers and has written over 50 books and over 500 articles.

Reviver of Tradition: Nasr's work has covered the most important areas of contemporary Muslim thought from classical Islamic philosophy, Islamic science, Sufism, and critique of modernity to interfaith relations, Islam–West relations, and the environmental crisis. Nasr was the first Muslim scholar ever to be invited to give the prestigious Gifford Lectures, which were later published as *Knowledge and the Sacred*.

Islamic Environmentalism: Nasr's work has been ahead of its time in predicting the disastrous consequences of the environmental crisis. Books such as *The Encounter of Man and Nature: the Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (1968), and *Religion and the Order of Nature* (1996), narrate the rise of a secular, modern conception of nature as inert matter to be conquered by modern technology, and the attempt to revive a sacred notion of nature.



His Eminence Sheikh
Ibrahim Salih
The Grand Mufti of Nigeria

Country: Nigeria
Born: 1 January 1946 (Age: 69)
Influence: Scholarly.
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2014/15: 37



Habib 'Ali Zain Al
Abideen Al-Jifri
Director General of the
Tabah Foundation, UAE

Country: UAE
Born: 16 April 1971 (age 44)
Influence: Scholarly, Lineage, Philanthropy. Reaches millions with his global teaching endeavors.
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Shafi'i, Ash'ari, Ba 'Alawi Sufi)

2009: 37
2010: 41
2011: 42
2012: 41
2013: 34
2014/15: 38

Sheikh Ibrahim was born in Borno State in north-eastern Nigeria in 1938 and started his quest for knowledge at a very young age by accompanying his father. He completed his initial studies at the Supreme Islamic Institute in Nigeria and then studied at the hands of renowned scholars in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, India, Pakistan, Senegal, Niger and Sudan.

Scholar: Sheikh Ibrahim lectures in the fields of Tafsir Al Qur'an (exegesis) and the Hadith as well as Islamic Sciences, Jurisprudence and ethics. He has over 100 written works. He has held and still heads several significant positions, some of which are: Founder and mentor of the Islamic renaissance Organization, Adviser to the Federal Government on its Islamic Affairs since 1992, Assistant Secretary-General for African Affairs in the World Islamic People's Leadership 1989 and many more.

Current Post: Sheikh Dr. Ibrahim Al-Husseini is currently the head of the Supreme Council for Fatwa and Islamic Affairs in Nigeria and recently became a member of the 'Muslim Council of Elders' which embraces prominent scholars.

Tracing his lineage to the family of 'Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam and cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Habib 'Ali Zain al Abideen Al-Jifri is a leading Islamic scholar and prominent speaker in the Muslim world. Al-Jifri is Director General of the Tabah Foundation in the UAE, member of the board of Dar al Mustafa in Yemen, member of the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan, and affiliated with various other international Islamic organizations.

Sufi Guide: As a Ba Alawi Sufi, Al-Jifri is part of a tradition that has been based in Yemen for approximately 800 years. His numerous teachers include the scholar and spiritual master Habib Abdul-Qadir bin Ahmad al-Saqqaf in Jeddah, and Habib Ahmad Mashhur bin Taha Al-Haddad. Habib Ali often teaches at Dar al Mustafa in Tarim, Yemen, and also travels all over the world meeting his students.

Educator: Al-Jifri founded the privately-funded philanthropic Tabah Foundation for Islamic Studies and Research in Abu Dhabi, a young non-profit institution that aspires to become a formidable source of reputable work in Islamic research and thought.

World-Wide following: Habib Ali's popularity has grown enormously over the past few years. His inspirational speeches often leave many in tears, and his smile and gentleness touch all who meet him. Despite not speaking English, he is in huge demand by English-speaking Muslims.



**His Royal Highness
Shah Karim Al-Hussayni**
The Aga Khan IV, 49th
Imam of Ismaili Muslims

Country: France
Born: 13 Dec 1936 (Age 78)
Influence: Lineage, Administrative.
Leader of 5–15 million Nizari Ismailis
School of Thought: Modernist Shia,
Ismaili, Nizari

2009: 20
2010: 20
2011: 22
2012: 31
2013: 35
2014/15: 39

Shah Karim Al-Hussayni, also known simply as the Aga Khan (Imamate: 1957-present), is the leader of the Shia sect of Muslims known as the Nizari Ismailis. For 5–15 million Nizari Ismaili Muslims the Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam, with lineage descending back to Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad. He is only the fourth Aga Khan, a hereditary title bestowed upon the Imam by the Shah of Persia in the mid-nineteenth century.

Hereditary Leader of Ismailis: The Aga Khan derives his position of authority from his lineage. At the age of 21 the Aga Khan bypassed his father and uncle to become the 49th Imam, a choice that his grandfather made because he felt the community needed a leader ‘who has been brought up and developed during recent years and in the midst of the new age, and who brings a new outlook on life to his office.’

Unparalleled Philanthropist: The Aga Khan set up the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which is a collection of development and humanitarian agencies working in areas of poverty. The network is widely known for its architectural and cultural work, including projects that revitalize historic cities. These initiatives aim to show the greatness of Islamic civilization through projects such as the renovation of the Old City of Aleppo and the Al-Azhar Park in Cairo. The Aga Khan’s foundation maintains a strong and enduring presence in developing countries—building health care capacity, promoting economic development in rural areas and helping improve educational opportunities. The AKDN is particularly influential in Central Asia, where it works in areas that are often neglected by other organizations.



Khaled Mashal
Leader of Hamas

Country: Palestine
Born: 1956 (age 58)
Influence: Political. Leader of approximately 1,000 members in military wing of Hamas.
School of Thought: Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

2009: 37
2010: 38
2011: 39
2012: 48
2013: 50
2014/15: 40

Khaled Mashal became the leader of Hamas after the Israeli assassinations of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and Abdel Aziz Al-Rantisi in 2004. Mashal is the head of Hamas’s political bureau and is the international representative for the Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation. He was re-elected in April 2013.

Fighter for Social Justice: Since becoming head of Hamas, Mashal has seen the organization through multiple attempts at a roadmap to peace and a major Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip.

Pioneering Leader: Mashal has been recognized for his persistence with Hamas’s effort. His determination is combined with a unique effort at diplomacy. Mashal has shown a willingness to negotiate with Israel to return to the 1967 borders and grant Palestinians a right of return, while importantly implying the necessary existence of the State of Israel, despite Hamas’s historic denial of that possibility. Mashal has been one of the most direct, and candid leaders in dialogue and confrontation with Israel and this has garnered international recognition.

Changing Times: The fall of Morsi saw Hamas lose their biggest supporter, and the new rulers of Egypt have shown that opening and sealing the Gaza–Rafah border is very much in their control. The conflict in Syria first signalled an end to Hamas offices in Damascus, and then strained relations with Hezbollah and Iran. Hamas’ new offices in Qatar along with support from Turkey show who their strongest backers are.



His Highness Emir
Sheikh Tamim bin
Hamid Al-Thani

Emir of Qatar

Country: Qatar

Born: 3 June 1980 (age 34) in Doha, Qatar

Influence: Political.

School of Thought: Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

2013: 43
2014/15: 42



Maulana Mahmood
Madani

Leader and Executive
Member of Jamiat
Ulema-e-Hind, India

Country: India

Born: 3 March 1964 (age 50)

Influence: Scholarly, Political, Administrative. 10 million members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

2009: 36
2010: 40
2011: 41
2012: 40
2013: 44
2014/15: 43

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani became the Emir of Qatar at the age of 33 after his father, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, abdicated in June 2013. Qatar is the richest country in the world with a GDP per capita of \$93,352. It is the top exporter of liquefied natural gas, and the site of the third largest natural gas reserves in the world.

Family: Sheikh Tamim is Sheikh Hamad's fourth son and was chosen as Crown Prince in August 2003. His mother is the powerful Sheikha Moza, who still plays a prominent public role as an advocate for social and educational causes.

Education: Sheikh Tamim completed his studies at a private school in UK before going on to graduate at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst (in 1998). During his time as Crown Prince (2003-13), Sheikh Tamim had exposure to a wide-range of posts including security (he was deputy commander of the armed forces), economics (chairman of the Qatar Investment Authority) and sports. Indeed he supervised Qatar's successful bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup

Expectations: Qatar exploded onto the world scene under his father's reign, and expectations are that Sheikh Tamim will try to consolidate these achievements. He has to repair relations with other Gulf countries over the issue of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood, and defend Qatar's world image over the treatment of labourers in Qatar. Joining a Saudi-led alliance against the Houthis, and pledges made to improve working conditions of labourers have addressed both issues.

Maulana Mahmood Madani, a leading Islamic scholar and politician in India, has gained influence for his forthright condemnations of terrorism and unfaltering support of the Indian Muslim community.

Religio-Political Heavyweight: Madani has served as Secretary General of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, or Organization of Indian Scholars—one of the most prominent Islamic organizations in India. He has been outspoken in his opposition to the misuse of the term jihad as a tool of terrorism in India. Following fatal bomb blasts in 2008, he and others of the Darul Uloom Deoband institution hosted events condemning terrorism as inherently un-Islamic.

Defender of the Faith: As a respected political leader and Islamic scholar of India, Madani represented the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and the esteemed community of scholars from Deoband when he addressed the Pakistani government, and Pakistani High Commissioner Shahid Malik in particular, in an open letter regarding the commissioner's remarks in December 2008 at the UN Security Council about terrorism stemming from 'mullas in Deoband'. Maulana Madani is also a strong opponent of government interference in the madrassa system.



**Professor Dr M
Din Syamsuddin**
Former Chairman of
Muhammadiyah, Indonesia

Country: Indonesia
Born: 31 Aug 1958 (age 56)
Influence: Scholarly, Administrative, Development. Over 35 million members in the Muhammadiyah organization, including thousands of umbrella institutes.
School of Thought: Modernist Sunni

2009: 35
2010: 39
2011: 40
2012: 39
2013: 33
2014/15: 27

Prof Din Syamsuddin Din Syamsuddin influences the Muslim world on various fronts. He was chairman of the Muhammadiyah movement between 2005-2015, being elected twice of the largest modernist Islamic organization in Indonesia. He is Chairman of the Indonesian Council of Ulema, member of Group of Strategic Vision Russia - Islamic World, Chairman of the World Peace Forum and President of the Inter Religious Council - Indonesia. He is also Professor of Islamic Political Thought at the National Islamic University in Jakarta and Chairman of Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilizations.

Social Welfare: Established in 1912, the Muhammadiyah is one of the oldest and largest Muslim movements in the world. Syamsuddin is involved with the educational, health, and social welfare efforts of the organization which includes 14,000 schools, 172 universities and institutes of higher learning, 484 clinics and hospitals, 600 orphanages, 300 microfinance institutes, and numerous other projects across Indonesia.

Interfaith Dialogue Leadership: Syamsuddin is also very active in interfaith and intercultural dialogue. He was recently re-elected for another five-year term as President of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP).

Conflict Resolution: The Muhammadiyah is active in conflict resolution such as in the south of Thailand and Mindanao. It is a member of the International Contact Group (ICG) for peace talks between the government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.



**Her Excellency President
Atifete Jahjaga**
President of the Re-
public of Kosovo

Country: Kosovo
Born: 20 April 1975 (age 39)
Influence: Political
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2014/15: 45

HE President Jahjaga assumed her position in 2011, thereby becoming not only the youngest, but also the first female Kosovan president. She is the fourth President since Kosovo became independent in 2008, and the first not to have affiliation to any political party. She was elected president in the first round of voting with 80 out of 100 votes cast in her favour.

Background: After earning a law degree from the University of Prishtina in 2000, she continued her studies in the UK and the USA. She then served in various governmental positions including the rank of Major General for the Kosovo Police.

EU: President Atifete's main aim since assuming office has been pursuing a membership for her country in the European Union as well as reserving a seat for her country in the United Nations.

Issues at Home: She has also concentrated her efforts on establishing an Anti-Corruption Council aimed at reducing corruption. She also hosted an International Women's Summit under the title "Partnership for Change—Empowering Women". One of the outcomes of the summit was the "Prishtina Principles" which affirm the rights of women's participation in politics, economic resources, the access to security and justice, and calls for actions that will take these rights to the whole world.

Interfaith: She has been active in interfaith dialogue and has visited mosques and a Serb Orthodox monastery in her efforts to build bridges between the various ethnic communities.



His Highness Amir
Sheikh Mohammed bin
Rashid Al-Maktoum
Prime Minister of UAE

Country: UAE
Born: 12 July 1949 (age 65)
Influence: Political, philanthropy
School of Thought: Sunni

2009: 450
2010: HM
2011: HM
2012: HM
2013: 48
2014/15: 46



Sheikh Usama Al-
Sayyid Al-Azhari
Scholar

Country: Egypt
Born: 16 July 1976 (age 38)
Influence: Scholarly
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2012: 450
2013: HM
2014/15: 47

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum is the constitutional monarch of Dubai, as well as the Prime Minister and Vice President of the United Arab Emirates. After taking a heavy hit during the financial crisis of 2007-2010, Dubai's economy is back in full swing, and stands out as a regional leader. Al-Maktoum is a well-respected politician in the Middle East.

Philanthropist: He has launched multiple charity initiatives from Dubai, such as 'Dubai Cares', which has reached over 13 million beneficiaries in 39 developing countries since its inception in 2007. In 2008, Sheikh Mohammed launched 'Noor Dubai', an initiative that aims to help the World Health Organization in achieving the goals of VISION 2020: the Right to Sight. Noor Dubai will offer health services to one million people suffering from treatable blindness and visual impairment in developing countries.

Visionary: In 1995, Sheikh Mohammed was appointed Crown Prince of Dubai, with a chief objective of overseeing the transformation of a small patch of desert into a resort and business destination. To that end, he helped develop the Palm Islands, the Burj al-Arab hotel, the Burj Khalifa skyscraper, the Dubai World Cup and the Godolphin Stables.

Arts: Al-Maktoum and his children are patrons of the arts, including participating in poetry competitions, as well as horse and camel racing. In addition to authoring poems in the traditional Nabati style, Sheikh Mohammed produced an electronic compilation of Arabic poetry that includes the work of 3000 poets spanning more than 3.5 million lines of poetry.

Sheikh Usama Al-Sayed Al-Azhari is an Azhari scholar, preacher, an academic and a Senior Fellow of Kalam Research & Media. He teaches Hadith, Logic, and Islamic Creed at the renowned Al-Azhar Mosque's Riwaq al-Atrak in Cairo, Egypt. He also holds a teaching post in the Faculty of Usul al-Din and Da'wah at Al-Azhar University, Egypt.

Scholar: Sheikh Usama was chosen by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Goma'a to deliver the Friday sermons on his behalf in the Sultan Hassan Mosque from 2005 and until late 2009. He studied with many esteemed scholars from all over the Islamic world, acquiring numerous authorisations (*ijazaat*) all testifying to his accepted position in the unbroken-chains of transmission known as *isnad* essential in the field of Islamic sciences and scholarship.

Peace Activist: He is considered to be one of the most influential voices calling for and working towards reaching new understandings founded on the Islamic tradition and in ways that accommodate the contemporary condition. In this regard, he has presented a number of original and fresh ideas attempting to renew authentic Islamic outlooks, through his publishing and scholarly contributions. Some of the ideas include creating a relational map of Shari'ah sciences, and their relationship with other circles of sciences, creating "Islamic hermeneutics", reviving the tradition of auditing religious sciences and transmitting them through a chain of transmission as a criterion of authenticity, the Qur'anic accommodation of different civilizations, among others.



2014/15: 48

Habib Luthfi bin Yahya

Preacher

Country: Indonesia

Born: 10 November 1947 (age 68)

Influence: Scholarly, Spiritual Guide

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni



2014/15: 49

Prof. Ali Mohyi Al-

Din Al-Qaradaghi

Scholar

Country: Iraq

Born: 1949 (age 66)

Influence: Scholarly, Political.

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni.

Habib bin Luthfi is currently: *Ra'is 'Amm of the Jam'iyyah Ahli Thariqah al-Mu'tabarab al-Nahdliyah*, Head of MUI Middle Java, and the spiritual leader of the Ba Alawi tariqah in Indonesia. The Ba Alawi are descendants of the Prophet ﷺ who migrated to Hadramaut in Yemen early on in Islamic history. They played the major role in bringing Islam to the Far East, including Indonesia and Malaysia, and they hold high prominence to this day.

Seeker of Knowledge: Habib Luthfi started his quest for knowledge early in life, and first studied under the tutelage of Ba Alawi teachers in Indonesia. He then travelled to Makkah and Madinah for further education and received authorisation (*ijaza*) in all the traditional fields of learning including hadith, and sufism (*tasawwuf*). His authorisation to be a spiritual master comes from more than one tariqah (spiritual brotherhood).

Spiritual Guide: He has established thousands of schools, mosques and zawiya's in Indonesia, and has a following numbering millions. He emphasises spiritual practices, especially the recitation of litanies (*awraad*).

Prof. Ali Mohyi Al-Din Al-Qaradaghi: is the Secretary-General of the International Union for Muslim Scholars. Prof Ali is a descendant of al-Hussein bin Ali and was raised in a family of scholars, and was tutored by famous and renowned scholars.

Scholar: He received his PhD in Shari'a and Law at the University of Al Azhar in the field of contracts and financial transactions. His thesis was highly acclaimed and translated into several languages.. Prof. Ali later joined Qatar University and became part of its teaching cadre and was promoted to Professor in 1995.

Awards: He was a recipient of the Ajman Award 2001, -an award dedicated to global figures who have had a significant role in community service- as well as being granted the State Incentive Award in Islamic Comparative Jurisprudence, awarded by the State of Qatar and the Weqaya Award for best Takaful insurance research. Prof Ali is currently the Vice-President of the European Council for Fatwa and Research and the Chairman of the Supreme Consultative Council for Bringing Islamic Madhahib Closer Together of ISESCO in addition to many other professional positions. He has more than 30 written works.



Dr Aref Ali Nayed
Scholar and Libyan
Ambassador to the UAE

Country: Libya

Born: 1962 (age 53), in Libya

Influence: Scholarly, Political. Interfaith scholar and influential figure in the new Libyan government.

School of Thought: Sunni

2009: 450

2011: 50

2012: 49

2013: 40

2014/15: 50

Nayed was the first post-Gaddafi Libyan Ambassador to the UAE for Libya's National Transitional Council. He led the Tripoli Stabilisation Team. Prior to the Libyan revolution he worked as an important scholar in the field of Muslim-Christian relations, and is the founder and director of Kalam Research & Media (KRM).

Religious Scholar: Nayed is a former professor at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome), a former professor at the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC, Malaysia) and a senior advisor to the Cambridge Interfaith Program and the Faculty of Divinity in Cambridge, UK. Prior to the Libyan revolution he lectured on Islamic Theology, Logic, and Spirituality at the restored Uthman Pasha Madrasa in Tripoli, Libya, and supervised Graduate Students at the Islamic Call College there. He is also a member of the Board of Advisors of the Templeton Foundation.

Political Leader: Nayed's other strengths have not gone unnoticed, and when he submitted his resignation from the post of Ambassador to the UAE, it was rejected, and he was asked to take the position again. He is viewed in many circles as a man of integrity, wisdom and strength; virtues that are needed at the highest level to put Libya back on track.

- 3. His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
- 14. HRH Prince Muhammad bin Naif and HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman, Crown Prince and Deputy Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia
- 20. His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhairi, President of Nigeria
- 30. His Excellency Rached Ghannouchi, Former President of Tunisia and leading intellectual (from 450)

✿ Honourable ✿
MENTIONS



**Sheikh Mohammed
Ali Al-Sabouni**
Scholarly

Country: Syria
Born: 1 Jan 1930 (age 85)

Al-Sabouni is influential because of his easy-to-read, simplified commentaries of the Holy Qur'an. They are now thought of as some of the most popular short commentaries in history after those of Jalalayn, Baydawi, Ibn Kathir and Ibn Juzayy. One of Al-Sabouni's most influential commentaries is the Tafsir Ayat Al-Ahkam, an exploration of the Qur'anic verses that pertain to legal rulings. The Institute of Scientific Research and Revival of Islamic Heritage at the Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah, Saudi Arabia commissioned al-Sabouni to investigate the ancient tafsir manuscript of Abu Jaafar Al-Nahas (d. 949 CE/338AH). Al-Sabouni's landmark achievement of verifying the only surviving manuscript of the text has come to fruition as a six volume work published by the university.



**HE Grand Ayatollah
Abdullah Jawadi Amoli**
Scholarly

Country: Iran
Born: 1933 (age 82)

Grand Ayatollah Amoli is a leading theologian and interpreter of the Qur'an. He is a prolific scholar having published over 300 articles and books. He is most well-known for his commentary of the Qur'an the Tafsir al Tasnim, which has been widely lauded by his peers. Amoli has remained a very public figure throughout his career, having led a diplomatic mission to the USSR, and continues to speak publicly on current affairs.



**His Eminence
Sheikh Professor Dr
Mustafa Ceric**
Scholarly

Country: Bosnia
Born: 5 February 1952 (age 63)

Mustafa Ceric became Grand Mufti of Bosnia in 1993 and formally retired from the office in 2013. Ceric is outspoken on interfaith initiatives in the Muslim world and is considered one of the most influential Muslim leaders of current times. In 2006, Ceric issued the 'Declaration of European Muslims' to the European Union stating that European Muslims are dedicated to the common values of law, tolerance, democracy and human rights, the value of life, faith, freedom, property, and dignity. In 2008, Ceric led the Muslim delegation of the 'A Common Word' initiative to the Vatican, which included a meeting with the Pope. He is President of the World Bosniak Congress, which connects Bosniaks, home and abroad.



Dr Ingrid Mattson
Scholarly

Country: Canada
Born: 24 August 1963 (age 52)

Ingrid Mattson is the first chair of Islamic studies at Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. Previously she had worked for 14 years as professor at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. In 2001 she was elected Vice President of ISNA and in 2006 she was elected president, becoming the first woman and the first convert to hold such high positions within the organisation. She is the author of the highly acclaimed 'The Story of the Qur'an.' Dr. Mattson is frequently consulted by media, government and civic organizations and has served as an expert witness.



Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi

Scholarly

Country: Syria

Born: 7 May 1963 (age 52)

Sheikh al-Yaqoubi was born in Damascus and was trained in Islamic studies by his father, who was an Imam and instructor at the Grand Umayyad Mosque. Sheikh al-Yaqoubi followed in his father's footsteps teaching in the same mosque, and becoming a world renowned Islamic scholar of theology, jurisprudence, and Hadith. He is widely-recognised as one of the reliable authorities for the issuing of fatwas in Islam. He was one of the first scholars to speak against DA'ISH, and his book *Refuting ISIS* has become essential reading. His criticism of the Syrian government's response to protests made his stay in Syrian untenable, and so he had to flee the country. He is a charismatic public speaker in both Arabic and English, and one of the most vocal moderate voices of Islam making a huge positive impact in media channels.



Professor Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad)

Scholarly

Country: UK

Born: 1960 (age 55)

Winter teaches theology at Cambridge University and is the director of Studies in Theology at Wolfson College in Cambridge. He is also the Dean and founder of the Cambridge Muslim College, which trains imams for British mosques. He has written on various topics including British Muslim history and theological discourse, and regularly appears on BBC radio. He is also Chair of the Muslim Academic Trust, which is overseeing the building of the new Cambridge mosque. With its emphasis on sustainability and almost total reliance on green energy, the new Cambridge mosque will be Europe's first eco-mosque. He is the author of *Understanding the Four Madhhabs* (2002) and *Commentary on the Eleventh Contentions* (2012). He is also the founder-director of Mishkat Media, an Islamic TV production company.



His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh

Scholarly

Country: Iraq

Born: 1930 (age 85)

Grand Ayatollah Fayyad, originally from Afghanistan, is one of the four marjas of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq—one of the two most important seats of learning in Twelver Shi'ism. Fayadh is known for his quietist approach to politics and is well-respected especially amongst the Shia population of South Asia.



Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad Al-Hussein

Political

Country: Jordan

Born: 26 January 1964 (age 51)

Prince Zeid Bin Ra'ad was Jordan's permanent representative and ambassador to the United Nations before moving to his new position as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, making him the first Muslim and Arab to hold the post. He is reputed for his role in promoting peace, human rights and was nominated by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for a four year mandate. Prince Zeid has a PhD from Cambridge University and played a key role in the establishment of the International Criminal Court.



Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Political

Country: Kuwait

Born: 16 June 1929 (age 86)

HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Sabah is the fifth Emir of Kuwait and the Commander of the Military of Kuwait. He had previously been Foreign Minister for 20 years, from 1963 to 2003, making him one of the longest-serving foreign ministers in the world. During his role as Foreign Minister, he restored Kuwaiti international relations after the Gulf War as well as restoring the country after the Iraqi invasion. During his reign as Emir of Kuwait, he instituted one of the strongest press freedom laws in the Arab world. He also sponsored the 27-article UN resolution 2178 that focuses on eliminating DA'ISH and related militants.



Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi

Political

Country: Yemen

Born: 22 May 1979 (age 36)

Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi is the current leader of the Houthi political, religious and militant movement in the Sa'dah governorate in Yemen. The Houthi movement was established in 1992 by Hussein Badr Al-Din Al-Houthi, a Zaydi Shia scholar and anti-Wahhabi who had written a number of books criticizing Wahhabism and the leading authorities of Yemen. The Zaidis ruled most of Yemen for over 1,000 years until 1962. They believe that Muslims should be ruled only by a descendant of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, whom they call an Imam.



HE Masoud Barzani

Political

Country: Iraq

Born: 16 August 1946 (age 69)

Barzani has been the President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region since 2005 and has also been the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party since 1979. He entered the political arena at the young age of 16 under the wing of his late father, the Kurdish nationalist leader, Mustafa Barzani. He had a major role in shaping the new Iraq through his political position and by becoming a member of the Iraqi Governing Council in April 2004 after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. He has been the main force fighting DA'ISH and recovered much territory. He is adamant about establishing an independent (from Iraq) Kurdish state. There are approximately five million Kurds live within the Kurdish in Iraq, but they also make up roughly 10 percent of the populations of Iran and Syria, and 18 percent of Turkey.



Mohamed Bechari

Political

Country: France

Born: 16 April 1967 (age 48)

Bechari, born in Morocco, is a leader and prolific and dynamic public figure in the landscape of European Islam. He is the president of the French National Federation of Muslims, one of the leading entities organizing Islam in France. He is also the secretary general of the Islamic European Conference, a Europe-wide umbrella organisation that seeks to be a single organisation representing European Muslims at a European level. Bechari is the founder of the Avicenna Institute in Lille and is the Vice President of the French Council of the Muslim Faith.



Ismail Haniyah

Political

Country: Palestinian Territories
Born: 29 January 1963 (age 52)

Haniyah is a senior political leader of Hamas and one of two disputed prime ministers of the Palestinian National Authority, a matter under political and legal dispute. After being dismissed by President Mahmoud Abbas, Haniyah continued to exercise prime ministerial authority in the Gaza Strip. Haniyah is a popular figure able to broaden the appeal of Hamas in Gazan politics. The Israeli blockade and regular bombardment of Gaza has strengthened the popularity of Hamas, and especially Haniyah, who leads the resistance through personal example.



HE Anwar Ibrahim

Political

Country: Malaysia
Born: 10 Aug 1947 (age 68)

Ibrahim is a Malaysian politician of global stature.. He was the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1993-98 and was then widely expected to succeed Mahathir Muhammad. A falling out between the two led to him being jailed on controversial charges. When the Supreme Court overturned his sodomy conviction, he returned to Malaysia and was voted back into parliament. This whole story was repeated from 2012-2013, and the in February 2014 his acquittal was overturned and he was back in prison. The People's Alliance coalition which he headed collapsed a few months after his arrest. His imprisonment on sodomy charges have been condemned as unjust and a travesty by many international leaders and rights organisations.



HE Prime Minister

Nawaz Sharif

Political

Country: Pakistan
Born: 25 December 1949 (age 66)

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is the current Prime Minister of Pakistan. His party (the Pakistan Muslim League) formed a coalition government following the 2013 general elections, which were noted as being the first civilian transfer of power in Pakistan's history. There have been accusations of widespread ballot rigging and this has brought Sharif into a headlong confrontation the opposition. Sharif has previously twice served as Prime Minister: from November 1990 to July 1993 and from February 1997 to October 1999. The latter term ended when General Musharif Pervez overthrew the government, and forced Sharif into exile (in Saudi Arabia) until 2007. Sharif was a prosperous businessman before he entered politics. He is the owner of Ittefaq Group, and one of the country's wealthiest men.



Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi

Administration of
Religious Affairs

Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 15 July 1970 (age 45)

Dr Al-Arifi is a well-known scholar and lecturer from Saudi Arabia. He is a founding and honorary member of various Da'wa organisations, as well as being a member of their advisory committees. He is also a professor in King Saud University of Riyadh. He takes a special interest in Hadith literature and has received licenses for the chains of transmission for various Hadith texts from a number of scholars. Has over 14 million followers on Facebook and almost 9 million on Twitter.



Dr Iyad Madani
Administration of
Religious Affairs

Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 2 March 1946 (age 69)

His Excellency Iyad Ameen Madani took office as the 10th Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on 1 January 2014. He held various jobs ranging from management to editor-in-chief of the Saudi Gazette, before being appointed as Hajj Minister and, six years later, as Minister of Culture and Information. He has written many articles in both English and Arabic, and has received a number of decorations.



Sheikh Mustafa Hosny
Preachers and
Spiritual Guides

Country: Egypt
Born: 8 August 1978 (age 37)

Sheikh Mustafa Hosny is a well known televangelist and Islamic preacher who presented his first show back in 2004. Mustafa had a turning point in life when he changed careers from the field of marketing and embarked upon the world of preaching. He is a presenter and producer of over 17 programs on Iqra's channel and is the Chairman of the Board of Directors Foundation Ommar Al-Ard (The Developers of Earth), in addition to many other positions. He has also contributed to many charitable projects. He has over 18 million fans on Facebook in addition to 2.11 million on Twitter.



Sheikh Mahmud Effendi
Preachers and
Spiritual Guides

Country: Turkey
Born: 1929 (age 86)

Sheikh Mahmud Ustaosmanoglu, also known as Sheikh Mahmud Effendi, is one of the most popular Islamic teachers in Turkey today. He has millions of followers and has established various religious, social and charity organisations such as the Marifet Association, the Federation of Marifet Associations and Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaah Confederation. Although he himself has moved to the suburbs of Istanbul, his stronghold is still the Fateh area where his followers are easily recognised by their traditional dress. He emphasises service to humanity on the basis of sincerity.



Maulana Tariq Jameel
Preachers and
Spiritual Guides

Country: Pakistan
Born: 1 January 1953 (age 62)

Tariq Jameel is a prominent Islamic scholar who is also one of the most popular preachers in Pakistan, and now globally. He belongs to the Tablighi Jamaat group and his lectures focus on the subjects of self-purification, avoidance of violence, observance of Allah's orders, and to pursue the way of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He has been very effective in influencing all types of the community ranging from businessmen and landlords to ministers and celebrities.



Dr. Zakir Abdul Karim Naik
Preachers and
Spiritual Guides

Country: India
Born: 18 October 1965 (age 50)

Zakir Abdul-Karim Naik is a popular preacher and comparative religion specialist in the mould of the legendary Ahmed Deedat. He hosts huge public events where he speaks on all aspects of Islam and answers questions from the audience. Naik challenges leaders of other faiths to public debates that are broadcast around the world on Peace TV—a satellite channel that he helped to found. He is also the founder of the Islamic Research Foundation, which runs United Islamic Aid. In 2015, he was awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Services to Islam.



Nouman Ali Khan
Preachers and
Spiritual Guides

Country: USA
Born: 4 May 1978 (age 37)

Nouman Ali Khan is the founder and CEO of Bayyinah and serves as a lead instructor for several programs including Dream, traveling seminars and Bayyinah TV. Nouman served as a professor of Arabic at Nassau Community College until 2006 when he decided to take Bayyinah on as a full-time project. Since then he has taught more than 10,000 students through traveling seminars and programs. With 785,000 followers on Facebook and 97,000 Twitter followers and over 7.6 million YouTube video views, Nouman is one of the most influential young western scholars.



Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Sudais
Qur'an Reciter

Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 10 February 1960 (age 55)

Al-Sudais is the chief of the Imams at the Grand Mosque of Makkah. He memorised the Qur'an at the age of 12, and studied Shari'ah at Riyadh University, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, and Umm al-Qura University. Al-Sudais is also popular for his sermons and stance on peaceful conflict-resolution. His recitation of the Qur'an is perhaps the most widely available around the world, making his voice instantly recognisable to most Muslims.



HRH Prince Feisal ibn Al-Hussein (new)
Social Issues

Country: Jordan
Born: 11 October 1963 (age 51)

HRH Prince Feisal of Jordan is the second son of the late King Hussein of Jordan, and the younger brother of King Abdullah II. He has been Chief of Air Staff since 2002, and is also Deputy Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces. He has held senior positions in a wide variety of organisations. He is the President of the Jordan Olympic Committee and a member of the International Olympic Committee. He is also Chairman and Founder of Generations For Peace, a non-profit peace building organization, which has been ranked as the 32nd most effective NGO in the world (see Issues of the Day on p.108)



Uthman Taha

Arts and Culture

Country: Syria
Born: 1934 (age 81)

Uthman Taha is an internationally acclaimed Arabic calligrapher. After training with the world's top calligraphers, Taha began working on producing copies of the Qur'an, or mushafs with the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an. Of the copies he has worked on, over 200 million have been distributed and are continually sought by students of the Qur'an and Muslims across the globe.



Sami Yusuf

Arts and Culture

Country: United Kingdom
Born: 29 July 1980 (age 35)

Sami Yusuf is an internationally renowned singer-songwriter and master musician. Although not the sole indicator of his achievements, his music has revolutionised the nasheed industry. Yusuf's music is about the perennial truths that enlighten and strengthen the listener. His songs appeal to all age groups, ethnicities and beliefs across the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and North America. He recorded the anthem for the World interfaith harmony Week initiative (see page 234). He is also known for his extensive involvement in global charitable initiatives.



Generations for Peace

Founded by HRH Prince Feisal al-Hussein in 2007, Generations for Peace is a leading global non-profit peace-building organization with its headquarters in Amman, Jordan. A volunteer movement, they are dedicated to sustainable conflict transformation at the grassroots in communities, promoting youth leadership, community empowerment, active tolerance, and responsible citizenship.

Generations for Peace has developed a unique curriculum for training carefully selected volunteer leaders of youth, and mentoring and supporting them to implement sustained activities for children, youth, and adults. Conflict sensitivity, and the full participation and empowerment of girls and women, are integrated into the approach.

Sports are an entry point to engage with youth, with carefully-facilitated sport-based games providing a vehicle for integrated education and behaviour change. Generations for Peace is one of only two peace-through-sport organizations officially recognized by the International Olympic Committee.

The Generations for Peace Institute has partnerships with Georgetown University and the University of Oxford, supporting field research of the programmes. The research evidence shows programme outcomes and impacts which include: reductions in different forms of violence; increased capacity to manage conflict in non-violent ways; strengthened ability to break-out of cycles of violence; changes in attitudes and shattering of stereotypes; greater understanding, respect and trust between different tribes, ethnic groups, religions, genders, and minorities; strengthened social capital and social networks; empowerment of girls and women; greater volunteerism, youth engagement, and responsible citizenship.

In the last six years, they have trained and mentored more than 8,100 volunteer leaders of youth in 46 countries and territories in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Europe. Their activities have touched the lives of more than 210,000 people. Generations for Peace is ranked in the *Top 100 NGOs in the World* by *The Global Journal*. Rankings are based on an assessment of innovation, impact, and sustainability.

❧ The Final ❧

450

THE LISTS

- 1. Scholarly page 111**

These scholars, thinkers, and educators are well-respected leaders who have made significant contributions to the study and cultivation of Islamic knowledge and Muslim culture.
- 2. Political page 122**

These leaders possess high positions of power over substantial groups of people and exert influence from their status, reputation, or political clout.
- 3. Administration of Religious Affairs page 130**

These agents of change are responsible for founding and/or directing institutions that influence the religious affairs of Muslims.
- 4. Preachers & Spiritual Guides page 137**

Preachers rely on charisma to inspire millions through multimedia while spiritual guides traditionally teach through live study circles and individualized directives to their disciples.
- 5. Philanthropy, Charity & Development page 142**

These activists work in the field, affecting the world through poverty alleviation programmes, emergency aid, charitable giving, sponsorships of various initiatives for people and communities to become self-reliant.
- 6. Social Issues page 146**

These individuals address various social issues such as health, education, women's rights, the environment, human rights and conflict resolution.
- 7. Business page 154**

These entrepreneurs head and direct key organisations in the business world pushing innovation and financial development forward.
- 8. Science & Technology page 159**

These are the main figures from the world of science and technology.
- 9. Arts & Culture page 163**

These are artists and cultural ambassadors whose work has become part of people's daily lives.
- 10. Qur'an Reciters page 169**

The recitation of the Qur'an is a special art that is valued by Muslim communities across the world. The word al-Qur'an literally means 'the recitation' referring to its origins as an oral text.
- 11. Media page 170**

In an age of impulsive news and innovative media, these personalities have garnered influence from their activity in the media world.
- 12. Celebrities & Sports Stars page 173**

These instantly recognisable figures have a huge public following due to their prominence in popular culture and sport.
- 13. Top Extremists page 175**

These individuals are responsible for heinous acts and controversial statements that are rejected by Muslim orthodoxy, separating them clearly from others engaged in armed conflict.

Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Cherif, HE Ambassador Prof Dr Mustapha

Professor Mustapha Cherif is a former minister of higher education and ambassador. He is a philosopher and researcher specializing in international relations and dialogue between cultures. Co-founder and co-chair of the Muslim Christian Friendship in France and the Mediterranean, Cherif has written numerous works on religion, civilization, and dialogue between cultures. He was awarded the UNESCO-Sharjah prize for Arab Culture and the Ducci Foundation peace prize in 2013.

BAHRAIN

Yaquby, Nizam

Nizam Yaquby is one of the most respected scholars of Islamic finance and sits on many advisory boards including Arab Banking Corporation, Citigroup Inc, Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, Barclays, BNP Paribas, Credit Agricole CIB, Dow Jones Islamic Index, Lloyds TSB, and HSBC Amanah. A highly sought-after expert with an immense breadth of experience with the Muslim community, Yaquby has received the Annual Islamic Finance Summit's Outstanding Contribution to Islamic Finance Award.

EGYPT

Emara, Mohamed

Dr Emara is an intellectual and scholar who has authored over 200 books. He is currently a member of the Al-Azhar Al-Sharif Islamic Research Academy, The International Institute for Islamic Thought, and The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. He was chosen to be part of the team re-writing the Egyptian constitution before the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood. Dr Emara is outspoken on his views against Western intervention and influence over the Muslim world, calling upon all Muslims to unite and form an Islamic State under moderate Islamic rule.

IRAN

Amoli, HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi

Read bio on page 108 in Honourable Mentions.

Damad, HE Ayatollah Dr Seyyed

Mostafa Mohaghegh

Damad is one of very few high-level clerics in Iran to have been educated in international law in the West. Damad is a forceful advocate for a more progressive interpretation of Sharia. He is a very well-respected scholar, Dean of the Department of Islamic Studies at The Academy of Sciences of Iran, and a professor of Law and Islamic Philosophy at Tehran University. In October 2010, at the Pope's behest, he addressed the Synod in the Vatican, stressing the Muslim view towards Christians as one of friendship, trust, and mutual understanding.

Shirazi, HE Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim

Grand Ayatollah Shirazi is a leading theologian teaching at the seminary in Qom, one of the two most important centres of learning for Twelver Shia. He is most influential for his *Tafsir al-Amthal*, a very popular simplified commentary of the Qur'an. He has also spearheaded the creation of schools and magazines devoted to young people. He has been outspoken in his support for Palestinians. His official website (www.makarem.ir) is in six languages, including English.

Sobhani, HE Ayatollah Jafar

Sobhani is a leading member of the Council of Mujtahids in the Seminary of Qom, one of the two most important centres of learning in Twelver Shiism. He is the director of the Imam Sadiq Institute, Iran. His work in all areas of the Islamic sciences is widely known and receives critical attention. Sobhani is a prolific writer, having published over 300 scholarly works.

IRAQ

Al-Najafi, HE Grand Ayatollah Bashir

Grand Ayatollah Bashir al-Najafi is one of the four *maraji'* of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and one of Iraq's most powerful Shia clerics. As a *marja'* of the Hawza in Najaf, Iraq's premier Shia institution, al-Najafi holds a position of immense authority. Al-Najafi, originally from Pakistan, holds less sway amongst Iraq's population than the other *maraji'* but has significant clout in South Asia. His website (www.alnajafy.com) is available in five languages.

**Al-Sadr, HE Ayatollah Al Faqih
Seyyed Hussein Ismail**

Ayatollah al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail al-Sadr is the most senior Shia cleric in Baghdad, Iraq. He heads the Ayatollah Seyyed Hussain Ismail Al-Sadr Foundation Trust, which runs humanitarian, development, and peace and reconciliation projects in Iraq. His role as a social leader and humanitarian has increased significantly during the recent hostilities in Iraq. The issue of reconciliation and dialogue between Iraq's different religious and ethnic communities has featured heavily in the Ayatollah's recent efforts.

Fayyad, HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq
Read bio on page 103 in Honourable Mentions.

Hakim, HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Said
Grand Ayatollah Hakim is one of the four *maraji'* of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and, accordingly, is one of Iraq's most important Shia clerics. His family is very prominent in Iraq, holding key positions in Shia social and religious organizations and also in government. Hakim leads around five percent of the Iraqi Shia population. His influence stems partly from his relationship with Grand Ayatollah Mohsen al-Hakim, a former religious leader of the Twelver Shia in Iraq.

JORDAN

Khasawneh, HE Sheikh Abdul Karim
Sheikh Khasawneh was appointed by royal decree to the post of Grand Mufti of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in February 2010. Sheikh Khasawneh is the former mufti of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

LEBANON

Qabbani, HE Dr Mohammad Rashid
Mohammad Rashid Qabbani is the former Grand Mufti of Lebanon and the country's leading Sunni scholar. Qabbani speaks out regularly against sectarianism and violence.

MOROCCO

Abdurrahman, Prof Dr Taha
Taha Abdurrahman is a Moroccan philosopher famous for his work in trying to create an ethical humanistic modernism on the basis of the ethics and values of Islam. He has taught logic at Muhammad V University for over 30 years. Abdurrahman has won the Moroccan Book Prize twice, and was awarded

the ISESCO Prize for Islamic Philosophy in 2006. He is the president of the Wisdom Circle of Thinkers, Morocco, and a member of the International Union of Muslim Scholars.

Al-Maghrawi, Muhammad

A scholar of Islam who was a *hafiz* of the Qur'an at the age of 10, al-Maghrawi established the Da'wah to the Qur'an and the Sunnah Association from his home in Morocco. It is still active to date after founding dozens of Qur'an teaching schools. Sheikh Muhammad has lectured for more than three decades in several cities in Morocco and has over 24 written works.

OMAN

Al-Khalili, HE Sheikh Ahmad

Sheikh al-Khalili is the Grand Mufti of Oman. He is a strong advocate for religious tolerance and works hard to ensure harmony between the different religious schools of thought in Oman.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Abu Sway, Prof Mustafa

Professor Abu Sway was appointed as the first holder of the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Ghazali's Work at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and at Al-Quds University in 2012. He has been Professor of Philosophy and Islamic Studies at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem, Palestine since 1996. He taught at the International Islamic University in Malaysia (1993-96) and was a visiting Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at the Wilkes Honors College at Florida Atlantic University, as well as a visiting professor of Islamic Studies at Bard College, NY.

Al-Tamimi, HE Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab
Al-Tamimi is a leading scholar and Chief Islamic Justice of Palestine. Popular as an outspoken thinker and leader on Palestinian-Israeli relations, al-Tamimi is the head of the Palestinian Centre for Religion and Civilization Dialogue.

Nusseibeh, Prof Sari

Sari Nusseibeh, who comes from one of Jerusalem's oldest and most prominent families, is a professor of philosophy and a leading intellectual. He served as president of the Al-Quds University in Jerusalem for more than twenty years. In 2008, Nusseibeh was voted the 24th in the *Top 100 Public Intellectuals* by *Prospect Magazine* (UK) and *Foreign Policy* (US).

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Saleh Bin Fawzan (new)

He is considered to be the most senior scholar of the Salafi movement in Saudi Arabia. Sheikh Saleh is a member of the council of senior scholars and committee for fatwa and research. He has authored over 35 books and is one of the major muftis on the program *Noor 'Ala Al Darb*, one of the oldest and most famous programs broadcasted on the Qur'an radio channel, where a number of major scholars answer questions and deliver fatwas.

Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabee Ibn Haadi 'Umayr
Sheikh Rabee Ibn Haadi 'Umayr al-Madkhali is one of the most radical thinkers in the Salafi movement. He is an influential writer and speaker whose influence has led to an independent faction within Salafism. Al-Madkhali's adherents are known as Madkhali Salafis and make up one of the most significant and influential branches inside the Salafi movement.

Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa

Hasan Musa al-Saffar is a Saudi Shia reformist leader who has made significant progress in communicating with Salafi leaders and other senior officials in Saudi Arabia. This is important as sectarian tensions throughout the Muslim world have risen with increased Sunni-Shia hostilities in Iraq.

SYRIA

Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib

The son of a well-known Syrian religious scholar who left a large collection of books and manuscripts, Dr al-Nabulsi is known for his lectures on Islam. Al-Nabulsi has represented Syria all over the world in many Islamic conferences. Muslims know him through the lessons, orations, symposiums, and interviews broadcast on radio and television. He has written a number of Islamic books, many of which have been translated into English.

Al-Sabouni, Sheikh Mohammed Ali

Read bio on page 102 in Honourable Mentions.

Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh Muhammad

Read bio on page 103 in Honourable Mentions.

Hassoun, HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Badr Al-Din

Hassoun has been the Grand Mufti of the Republic of Syria since 2004 when he succeeded the late Sheikh Ahmed Kuftaro. He is an advocate of interfaith

dialogue and is very vocal in his opinion that states should be ruled on a civil, rather than religious, basis, believing that secularism is not synonymous with atheism, a sentiment that holds great sway in Syria's religiously diverse society. He has remained loyal to the Syrian regime, calling upon Syrians to remain united and fight against foreign-backed enemies.

Itr, Sheikh Dr Nuruddin

Sheikh Itr is an Al-Azhar-trained sheikh based in Syria. A leading scholar of the Qur'anic sciences and Hadith, he is credited for participating in the Qubeysiat, a female-only Sufi network which is the leading Islamic movement in Syria with Sheikh Itr as the principal instructor.

TUNISIA

Djait, Hisham

Professor Hisham Djait is a well-known pan-Arab intellectual from Tunisia. A professor of history at the University of Tunis, he has written important works such as: *Al-Fitna, L'Europe et l'Islam* and his most recent book on the *seerah* (biography) of the Prophet ﷺ.

Sub-Saharan Africa

BURKINA FASO

Dokori, Dr Abu Bakr

Abu Bakr Dokori is the President of the Islamic University of Ouagadougou. He is a major scholar and advisor to the president. Dokori is also Burkina Faso's representative to ISESCO. He is one of the leading Muslim scholars in a country with around 10.2 million Muslims.

ETHIOPIA

Idris, HE Hajji Omar

Omar Idris is a mufti and leader in Ethiopian Muslim politics. A proponent of Muslim unity, he is the current chair of the Addis Ababa Majlis and also the chair of the Addis Ababa Ulema Unity Forum.

GAMBIA, THE

Jah, HE Ambassador Prof Dr Omar

Jah is an important figure in the Muslim community

A Common Word:

The ‘A Common Word Between Us and You’ initiative (ACW) was launched on October 13th, 2007 initially as an Open Letter signed by 138 leading Muslim scholars and intellectuals (including such figures as the Grand Muftis of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Oman, Bosnia, Russia, and Istanbul) to the leaders of the Christian churches and denominations of the entire world, including His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. In essence it proposed, based on verses from the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Bible, that Islam and Christianity share, at their cores, the twin ‘golden’ commandments of the paramount importance of loving God and loving one’s neighbour. Based on this joint common ground, it called for peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims worldwide, who together comprise over 55% of the world’s population. ACW was and is an extended global handshake of interreligious goodwill, friendship and fellowship and consequently of world peace.

ACW is a document which uses religion as the solution to the problems of interreligious tensions. By basing itself on solid theological grounds in both religions—the twin Commandments to love God and love the neighbour—acw has demonstrated to Christians and Muslims that they have a certain common ground (despite irreducible theological differences) and that both religions require them to have relations based on love not on hatred.

During the seven years since its launch ACW has become arguably the most influential interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians in history. It has provided a common ground on which thousands of Muslim and Christian religious leaders have been brought together through:

- Initiating a multitude of conferences, seminars, workshops, training programs, university courses etc., including in: Jordan; the Vatican; the USA (Yale University; Georgetown University and the College of William and Mary; Fuller Theological Seminary; ISNA; Portland, Oregon; Richmond Virginia; South Carolina; New Orleans); the UK (Cambridge University, Oxford University, Heythrop College and Lambeth Palace); Oman; Malaysia; Egypt; Sudan; Pakistan; the UAE; the Brookings Institute in Qatar; the Mediterranean Dialogue of Cultures; Germany (the Munich School of Philosophy); the World Council of Churches in Switzerland; the Philippines and Australia (see: <http://bit.ly/acwfruits>).
- Being the subject of books, articles, PhDs and over 74 dissertations and reports (see: <http://bit.ly/acwpubs>).
- Founding the regular [every 3 years] Catholic-Muslim Forum which was first held at the Vatican in 2008 and then at the Baptism Site, Jordan, in 2011. The third was held at the Vatican in November, 2014.

- Giving rise to a variety of other events, activities, initiatives and even legislative bills (see: <http://www.bit.ly/acwnwf>).

Thus HH Pope Benedict XVI, said of it (during the First Seminar of the Catholic-Muslim Forum held at the Vatican, November 4–6, 2008:

The Open Letter ‘A Common Word between Us and you’ has received numerous responses and has given rise to dialogue, specific initiatives and meetings, aimed at helping us to know one another more deeply and to grow in esteem for our shared values

Equally, HG Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said of it (in 2010):

“The appearance of the A Common Word [Open Letter] of 2007 was a landmark in Muslim-Christian relations and it has a unique role in stimulating a discussion at the deepest level across the world.”

In so far as Muslim-Christian relations are concerned, Professor Miroslav Volf of Yale University said of it (in 2011):

“The A Common Word Initiative is the most significant initiative in Muslim-Christian relations since *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council.”

And in so far as Muslim initiatives towards Christians are concerned, Professor David F. Ford (Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge, U.K. and Director of the Cambridge Interfaith Program) said of it (in 2011):

“The Open Letter A Common Word Between Us and You (2007) was probably the single most important initiative ever taken by Muslim scholars and authorities towards Christians.”

The A Common Word initiative was awarded the UK’s Association of Muslim Social Scientists Building Bridges Award of 2008; Prince Ghazi, Habib Ali Al-Jifri and Grand Mufti Mustafa Ceric were awarded Germany’s Eugen Biser Award for it in 2008, and Prince Ghazi was awarded the St Augustine Award for Interreligious Dialogue in the Mediterranean (Milan, Italy, 2012) and the Interfaith Harmony and Tolerance Prize by the International Islamic University of Malaysia, *Jamia Ma’din* and the National Unity and Integration Department, Malaysia.

of Gambia and in Gambian scholarship on Islam. Jah was the former Gambian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. He is now Secretary of the Muslim Scholars Council, Gambia, and acting vice-chancellor at the University of Gambia.

MAURITANIA

Al-Hajj, Sheikh Murabit

Sheikh Murabit al-Hajj is a Mauritanian ascetic and scholar who has devoted his life to worship, learning and teaching Islamic sciences. Based in a remote village in Mauritania, he has trained hundreds if not thousands of scholars, including Sheikh Hamza Yusuf (p. 93). At the age of 111 he still continues his rigorous daily routine of praying and teaching.

NIGERIA

Ahmed, Dr Ibrahim Datti

Dr Ibrahim Datti Ahmed is the President-General of the Supreme Council for Sharia in Nigeria (SCSN). The SCSN is the focal Islamic religious institution that deals with Sharia in Nigeria and is also a representative body of Nigeria's Muslim scholars. Recently, the SCSN has petitioned for fair treatment of Muslim military officers and has spoken out against prejudice and violence against Muslims. He has been touted as a mediator between Boko Haram and the government.

Zakzaky, Sheikh Ibraheem

Sheikh Ibraheem is the leading force behind the most influential Shia movement in Nigeria (5-10 million) and heads its Islamic Movement. The movement has witnessed rapid growth and is based on the model of Hezbollah, focusing on social services, education, charity, etc, but also including military training. He has given lectures in several countries including: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Niger, Algeria, Britain, France, Spain, the United States, Lebanon, Azerbaijan, and Iran. He suffered personal loss when three of his sons were amongst a number of his group killed by Nigerian troops during the annual Al-Quds rally in 2014.

SOUTH AFRICA

Desai, Mufti Ebrahim

A prominent Deobandi sheikh, Mufti Desai runs askimam.org, issuing numerous fatwas online through the Camperdown-based Islamic institution Darul Iftaa, Madrassah Inaamiyyah where he is the principal mufti and a senior lecturer.

Esack, Farid

Farid Esack is a Muslim scholar who has authored many famous written works, a gender equality commissioner appointed by Nelson Mandela, a politician, a worker against apartheid, and an advocate of interreligious dialogue. Through the organization of Muslim Call, Esack calls out to hundreds of people and has created close ties with interfaith groups opposing apartheid. He is also active in helping Muslims infected with HIV in South Africa and currently holds the position of Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Hendricks, Sheikh Seraj

Hendricks is the Mufti of Cape Town, as well as the imam and teacher at the Zawiya Mosque. He is a leading scholar on Sufism in South Africa and a patron of Dome Publications. Hendricks is seen as one of the highest authorities on Islamic scholarship for South Africa's large and affluent Muslim population.

Moosa, Ebrahim (new)

Ebrahim Moosa is the Professor of Islamic Studies in Keough School of Global Affairs, the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and in the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame. Ebrahim Moosa's interpretative and historical research on questions of tradition, ethics and law includes two monographs as well as several edited and co-edited books. His prize-winning book *Ghazali and the Poetics of Imagination* was awarded the Best First Book in the History of Religions by the American Academy of Religion. And, is the author *What is a Madrasa?* (2015). Moosa is also regarded as a prominent public intellectual. In 2007 he was invited to deliver the 2007 King Hasan Lecture (Durus Hasaniyya) to his Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco in Arabic.

UGANDA

Mamdani, Mahmood

Mamdani is the Herbert Lehman Professor of Government in the departments of Anthropology and Political Science at Columbia University in the United States, and Director of Makerere Institute of Social Research in Kampala, Uganda. In 2008, Mamdani was named one of the world's top 20 intellectuals by *Foreign Policy* (New York) and *Prospect* (London) magazines. He is the former president of the Council for Development of Social Research in Africa in Dakar, Senegal. Mamdani is well-known for his book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, The Cold War,*

and *The Roots of Terror*, which became significant in liberal policy circles in the US. His books have won several awards and have been included in many "best of" lists.

Asia

AZERBAIJAN

Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Hummat

Pashazade is not only the Grand Mufti of Azerbaijan, but also the mufti, by election, of the whole Caucasus region. Pashazade is also the world's only Sunni-Shia Grand Mufti, giving each group fatwas according to their relevant madhab, reflecting Azerbaijan's Sunni-Shia mix. He co-chaired the World Summit of Religious Leaders, held in Azerbaijan in April 2010.

INDIA

Al-Mustafa, Allamah Zia

Allamah Zia al-Mustafa Sahib is a well known scholar who has taught Hadith for over 40 years in India. He has memorized 60,000 Hadiths with their chain of narrators and authenticity. His students, who have become scholars in their own right, number in the thousands. He has been nominated as successor (*khalifa*) of Mufti Azam-e-Hind Mustafa Akhtar Rida Khan.

Khan, Wahiduddin

Wahiduddin Khan is an Islamic scholar who strongly advocates peace, interfaith and co-existence. He is the author of over 200 books including a translation and commentary of the Qur'an into simple English. He is also the co-founder, along with his son, Saniasnain Khan, of Goodword, the popular publisher of children's books.

Nadvi, Rabey Hasani

Nadvi is an Islamic scholar and a bilingual author of around 30 books in both Arabic and Urdu. His influence emanates from being the fourth president of All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Rector of Darul-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and a founding member of the Muslim World League, Makkah al-Mukarramah. He is also the president of multiple Islamic centres and academies.

Nadwi, Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen
Dr Bahauddeen Muhammed Jamaluddeen Nadwi has published more than 100 works in Arabic, English and Malayalam. He is regarded as one of the six founding fathers of Darul Huda Islamic University, the Editor-in-Chief of an international journal of Islamic studies and a member of many regional (Kerala), national, and international organizations. He has visited more than 40 countries and delivered a number of religious, academic, and cultural lectures. He has also initiated and participated in many academic, cultural and religious seminars and conferences around the globe.

INDONESIA

Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa

Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa Bisri is widely revered as a religious scholar, poet, novelist, painter, and Muslim intellectual. He has strongly influenced the NU's (Nahdlatul Ulama) social and political development over the past thirty years. He heads the prestigious Raudlatuth Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Rembang, Central Java. Mustofa Bisri's role in combining spirituality with artistic expression is widely admired in Indonesia, where he is regarded as a cultural icon. Often called the 'President of Poets' he is celebrated for his courage in defending artistic and religious freedom in the face of radical onslaughts.

Maarif, Syafii

Maarif is one of Indonesia's most famous scholars whose political comments regularly attract significant attention. In 2008 he won the prestigious Magsaysay Award for guiding Muslims to embrace tolerance and pluralism. This former president of the influential Muhammadiyah organization is actively involved in interfaith and peace movements both domestically and internationally, largely through his Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity. He was recognized for his role in promoting interfaith dialogue and religious harmony at the Habibie Awards. Maarif is also a professor of history at the National University of Yogyakarta and a productive author and columnist, currently writing two regular columns in *Republika* newspaper and also in *Gatra* Magazine.

MALAYSIA

Al-Akiti, Dato Dr Muhammad Afifi

Al-Akiti is a scholar, trained theologian and philologist. He is a lecturer of Islamic studies with the Faculty of Theology at Oxford University, a KFAS Fellow in

Islamic Studies, and a fellow at Worcester College. He is internationally acclaimed for his 2005 fatwa *Defending the Transgressed*, written in response to the 7 July London bombings, which was praised by scholars of Islam and gained a massive readership on the Internet. Al-Akiti was appointed Privy Councillor to the State of Perak, Malaysia by the Crown Prince of Perak. In 2012, he was the sole recipient of the *Darjah Dato's Paduka Cura Si-Manja Kini* (DPCM) which carries the Malaysian title of *Dato* in the Sultan of Perak Birthday Honours List.

Al-Attas, Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib

Dr al-Attas is considered by many to be a giant of scholarship in the Muslim world. An influential philosopher and thinker, he has written on the traditional Islamic sciences as well as Sufism, metaphysics and philosophy. He has served at various global academic institutions as an educator and lead administrator and is also a noted calligrapher.

Bakar, Dr Osman

Dr Osman Bakar is Chair Professor and Director of the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS), Univeristi Brunei Darussalam, and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. He has published 18 books and over 300 articles on Islamic thought and civilization, particularly on Islamic philosophy and science. He also writes on contemporary Islam and inter-religious and inter-civilizational dialogue. His writings have been translated into many languages. He has served as advisor and consultant to a variety of international academic and professional organizations and institutions, including UNESCO and The Qatar Foundation. He served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Malaya (1995-2000) and was awarded a *Datukship* by the Malaysian King in 2000.

Kamali, Prof Mohammad Hashim

Originally from Afghanistan, Kamali was dean and professor at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) and the International Islamic University in Malaysia. Kamali is currently Founding CEO of the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies in Malaysia. He is the world's leading expert on comparative studies between Islamic and modern law, and one of the most prolific producers of quality scholarship on Islam in the world today. Kamali received the King Abdullah II bin Hussein International Award for the year 2010 in recognition of his intellectual and academic contribu-

tions towards serving Islam and Muslims. In February 2010, he worked on the new constitution of Somalia.

PAKISTAN

Ahmed, Ambassador Dr Akbar

Ambassador Akbar Ahmed is the author of over a dozen award-winning books including *Discovering Islam which was the basis of a six-part BBC TV series called Living Islam*. He examined relations between Islam and the West after 9/11 in the quartet *Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization; Journey into America: The Challenge of Islam; The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam*, and *Journey into Europe: Islam, Immigration and Empire*. Dr Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at the American University, Washington D.C. and has also taught at Cambridge, Harvard and Princeton. He is regularly interviewed by leading media.

Al-Qadri, Shaykh Dr Tahir

Shaykh Tahir al-Qadri is a professor of law, and the founder of Minhaj ul Qur'an International Worldwide, and the Minhaj Welfare Foundation. Al-Qadri has authored some 450 published works and given more than 6,000 lectures on various subjects which are aired on international satellite channels. In March 2010, Qadri issued a 600-page fatwa, which declared terrorists and suicide bombers to be unbelievers. He has continued to be outspoken against terrorists. His attempts to lead popular revolts against the Pakistani government has led to a fall in his standing. He is based in Canada.

Hashmi, Dr Farhat

Hashmi is an influential lecturer and scholar. She has been instrumental in the burgeoning field of the role of women in Islam and has contributed greatly to its literature. Hashmi is the founder of Al-Huda International, an NGO actively promoting Islamic education and welfare since 1994.

Najafi, HE Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Hussain
Grand Ayatollah Hussain Najafi is the only *marja'* in South Asia. Based in the Sargodha district of the Punjab province in Pakistan, he was the first scholar from that country to be given the status of *marji'yya* and is one of only two ayatollahs from Pakistan.

Europe

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa

Read bio on page 102 in Honourable Mentions.

Karic, Dr Enes

Dr Enes Karic is a professor of Qur'anic studies and history of the interpretation of the Qur'an at the Faculty of Islamic Studies with the University of Sarajevo. He previously served as the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports with the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1994-1996. Dr Karic has written extensively on the Qur'an and Islamic studies in English and Bosnian and delivered lectures worldwide including at: Ljubljana University, Yale University, Boston University, Zagreb University, Istanbul University, Leiden University and King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (Riyadh).

FRANCE

Bencheikh, Sheikh Sohaib

Bencheikh is a theologian, a modernist former Grand Mufti of Marseilles, and one of the most influential social leaders and scholars of Islam in France. Bencheikh is also head of the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies. Marseilles is a cosmopolitan city with a huge population of Muslims of North African ancestry. Bencheikh is a passionate advocate for integration of the Muslim population, hijab rights and women's involvement as imams in the Muslim community.

GERMANY

Hoffman, HE Ambassador, Dr Murad

Hoffman is an author and Muslim intellectual, respected by both Muslims and non-Muslims. He is a prominent former German diplomat and author of several books on Islam, including *Journey to Makkah* and *The Future of Islam in the West and the East*, published in 2008. Many of his books and essays focus on Islam's place in the West and the United States, specifically in light of the post-9/11 climate.

RUSSIA

Gaynetdin, HE Sheikh Ravil Ismagilovich

Sheikh Ravil Gaynetdin is a Moscow-based Muslim scholar. Among various academic roles, he is Grand Mufti of Russia and Chairman of the Union of Muftis

of Russia. He is probably the single most important figure in the schema of Russian Islam. As a member of the Russian president's Council for Relations with Religious Associations, he is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population. In September 2015, he formally opened, alongside President Putin, the Moscow Cathedral Mosque, which is one of the largest mosques in Europe.

SWITZERLAND

Ramadan, Dr Tariq

Ramadan is a pre-eminent European Muslim intellectual author about Islam in public life. He is a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University, as well as holding academic positions at other institutions worldwide. He is the president of the European Muslim Network think tank based in Brussels and is an advisor to the European Union on religion. Ramadan has written about 30 books in his native French, many of which have been translated into English. He appears on the Press TV show *Islamic Awakenings*.

TURKEY

Çagrıcı, HE Prof Dr Mustafa

Mustafa Çagrıcı is the mufti of Istanbul as well as a theology professor and is a respected figure among Turkish Muslims. He welcomed and prayed with Pope Benedict XVI in the Blue Mosque in 2006.

Kalin, Dr Ibrahim

Ibrahim Kalin, PhD, is Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey in charge of Public Diplomacy. Dr Kalin is the founding director of the SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research based in Ankara, Turkey, and served as its director from 2005 to 2009. He is a fellow at the Prince Al-Waleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Dr Kalin has published widely on Islamic philosophy, relations between Islam and the West, and Turkish foreign policy.

Karaman, Prof Dr Hayrettin

Karaman is one of the most prominent scholars of Islam in Turkey, and the pre-eminent scholar of Islamic law (Sharia) there. He publishes popular academic texts extensively and writes a weekly column in the newspaper *Yeni Safak (New Dawn)*. His long career in academia has garnered him much respect. At the pinnacle of his career, Karaman was a dean

at Turkey's premier university, Marmara University. He left this position at the height of the headscarf controversy in 2001.

UNITED KINGDOM

Motala, Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadith Maulana Yusuf
Sheikh Motala is the founder of the Dar ul Ulum Al-Arabia Al-Ilamia in Holcombe, Bury, Lancashire. He is a scholar's scholar: many of the United Kingdom's young Deobandi scholars have studied under his patronage. Sheikh Motala has an expansive network of students and educational institutions which he has founded. He is also regarded as the spiritual *khalifa* of the famous scholar Shaikh al-Hadith Muhammad Zakariyya al-Kandahlawi, and consequently acts as a spiritual guide for thousands of people.

Nadwi, Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram (new)

Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram Nadwi is one of the most important Islamic scholars in the Western world today. He has *ijaza* (licenses) from over 600 scholars, a doctorate in Arabic, and has authored and translated over 25 titles on language, jurisprudence, Qur'an, and Hadith. His scholarly academic work, *al-Muhaddithaat*, which researches the legacy of female Hadith scholars, has highlighted the rich legacy of Islamic learning among women. His courses and lectures have a worldwide following.

Pirzada, Sheikh Muhammad Imdad Hussain

Shaykh Muhammad Imdad Hussain Pirzada is a scholar who has actively promoted education, community and charity work in the UK and abroad. He has written over three dozen books on educational, religious, and contemporary affairs in Arabic, Urdu, and English. He has authored a full, five-volume *Tafseer Imdad-ul-Karam*, which is a modern and relevant exegesis of the Qur'an, and the first to be written in the UK. Currently he is working on a commentary to *Sahih al-Bukhari*. He is founder and principal of Jamia Al-Karam, an educational institution that has produced hundreds of young British scholars, male and female, who are actively serving the British community in many fields including teaching, chaplaincy, community leadership, as well as imams and managers in mosques and educational centres. He is the founder and chairman of Muslim Charity - Helping the Needy, which is serving humanity in seventeen countries whilst managing five hospitals in Pakistan.

Shah-Kazemi, Dr Reza

Dr Shah-Kazemi is a research associate at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. He is a specialist in Comparative Religion and has published many books including *Paths to Transcendence* and *The Other in the Light of the One: The Universality of the Qur'an and Interfaith Dialogue*. The Dalai Lama wrote a foreword to his pioneering study, *Common Ground between Islam and Buddhism*.

Winter, Professor Timothy (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad)

Read bio on page 103 in Honourable Mentions.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

El-Imam, Sheikh Fehmi

El-Imam is one of Australia's most senior Islamic scholars and leaders. As a founding member of Victoria's Islamic community, he has had a major influence on the development of Islam in Australia. He is Secretary-General of the Victorian Board of Imams and also Senior Imam at the Preston Mosque in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

North America

CANADA

Mattson, Dr Ingrid

Read bio on page 105 in Honourable Mentions.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Abdullah, Dr Umar Faruq

Dr Umar is an American convert to Islam who founded and now directs the Nawawi Foundation, a Chicago-based non-profit organization that educates Muslims in the US about Islamic teachings, and conducts research on Islam in America. Abdullah has published *The Story of Alexander Russell Webb*, a biography of Muhammed Webb, one of the significant early American converts to Islam. He is a sought-after teacher and lecturer.

Al-Alwani, Dr Taha Jaber

Al-Alwani is an active academic and organizer in the international community of Sunni Muslim scholars. He is the President of Cordoba University, a former chairman of The Fiqh Council of North America, a member of the OIC's International Islamic Fiqh Academy, and a former president of the US office of the International Institute of Islamic Thought. Al-Alwani is also the author of acclaimed works such as: *Source Methodology in Islamic Jurisprudence*, *Towards a Fiqh for Minorities*, *The Ethics of Disagreement in Islam*, *Ijtihad and The Quran and the Sunnah: The Time-Space Factor*.

El Fadl, Professor Khaled Abou (new)

Prof Abou El Fadl is an Islamic Scholar, lecturer and author whose writings focus on universal themes of humanity, morality, human rights, justice and mercy. He was awarded the University of Oslo Human Rights Award, the Leo and Lisl Eitinger Prize in 2007, and named a Carnegie Scholar in Islamic Law in 2005. He was previously appointed by President George W Bush to serve on the US Commission for International Religious Freedom, and also served as a member of the Board of Directors of Human Rights Watch. His book, *The Great Theft*, was named one of the Top 100 Books of the year by Canada's *Globe and Mail* (Canada's leading national newspaper).

Huda, Qamar-ul (new)

Qamar-ul Huda is a senior policy advisor to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on religious and global affairs. He is the former Senior Program Officer scholar of Islamic studies and comparative religion, and is the Senior Program Officer in the Religion and Peacemaking Program at the United States Institute of Peace. He is the author of *Striving for Divine Union: Spiritual Exercises for Subrawardi Sufis*. His studies and writings are geared towards examining comparative ethics, the language of violence, conflict resolution and non-violence in Islam and have been published in major American Islamic journals.

Jackson, Sherman

Jackson is the King Faisal Chair in Islamic Thought and Culture and Professor of Religion and American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. He is a well-respected scholar and author of works dealing with Islam, Sharia, and the African-American Muslim community. Jackson is the co-founder of the American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM) and is featured on the Washington Post-Newsweek blog *On Faith* and the *Huffington Post*. He is a former member of the Fiqh Council of North America and a former professor of Law, Near Eastern Studies, and Afro-American Studies at the University of Michigan.

Maghraoui, Sheikh Mokhtar

Sheikh Mokhtar Maghraoui is a popular religious teacher working mainly at Al-Madina Institute. Originally from Algeria, he is thoroughly versed in the Islamic sciences and holds a doctorate in the fields of physics and engineering. His expertise includes the disciplines of *tazkiyah* and *fiqh*. He is best known for his enlightening retreats and seminars empowering Muslims on their spiritual quests. Sheikh Maghraoui is also an active participant of interfaith dialogue with the Jewish and Christian communities in the Capital District of New York State.

South America

ARGENTINA

Garcia, Prof Muhammad Isa

Garcia was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He studied Arabic, Islamic studies and theology at Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah. He is a specialist in the origins of Prophetic Tradition. Garcia has translated numerous books, with many only available to a Spanish-speaking readership in his translation. He is also the author of the series *Know Islam*.

الذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ
 قَدْ جَعَلُوا لَكُمْ فِتْنَةً فَآنِثُوا
 وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

“Men said to them: “A great army is gathering against you”:
 And frightened them: But it (only) increased their Faith:
 They said: “For us Allah sufficeth, and He is the best disposer of affairs..”

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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Altafsir.com

ALTAFSIR.COM is a completely free, non-profit website providing access to the largest and greatest online collection of Qur'anic Commentary (*tafsir* or *tafseer*), translation, recitation and essential resources in the world.

It was begun in 2001 by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Jordan, being the brainchild of HRH Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to H.M King Abdullah II. Today the website is fully operational in Arabic and English and provides the original Arabic texts of 150 or more books of Qur'anic Commentary, Interpretation and Explanation (*tafsir* or *tafseer*), recitation (*tajwid*) tutorials and Hadith collections, and other fields, pertaining to the study of Qur'an exegesis. Translations of the meanings of the Qur'an are currently available in 24 different languages, and in several cases more than one translation is available. The site also includes audio Qur'an recitations; resources on Qur'an syntax; resources on the Contexts of Revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*); resources on the meanings of words found in the Qur'an, and other works on the Qur'anic sciences. It contains over a million pages of Qur'anic Commentary and translation. Some of

the texts presented here exist only as manuscripts and have never previously been published in book form despite their historical importance and influence. Altafsir.com is thus a complete website for the study of the Qur'anic Sciences.

In addition to presenting the standard Classical and Modern Commentaries on the Holy Qur'an (*tafsir* or *tafseer*) texts of all eight schools of jurisprudence, the site also contains works of various mystical, philosophical, linguistic and theological currents. Moreover, the first time in one place, comparative studies between the Shafi'i, Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaydi, Ibadi and Thahiri schools can be carried out complete with multi-screen displays and search programs.

In 2012 altafsir.com added the highly praised "Love in the Holy Qur'an" as a free downloadable pdf, and received 8 million visits bringing the total number of visits to over 27 million visitors.

In 2013, the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought put up a sister website www.GreatTafsirs.com with a special emphasis for iPad and iPhone devices.

11 MILLION

The approximate number of visitors to altafsir.com over the last 12 months.

POLITICAL

Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Bouteflika, HE President Abdelaziz

Bouteflika is the incumbent president of Algeria. During his years of presidency, Bouteflika has succeeded in ending a civil war that ran throughout the nineties and was one of the bloodiest civil unrests of the 20th century in the Muslim world. Peace was reached through a process of reconciliation and amnesty that was strongly supported by the Islamist and Nationalist belligerents. Following constitutional amendments, Bouteflika won his fourth term as president in April 2014 with 81% of the vote. He suffered a stroke which has left him frail and confined to a wheelchair.

Brahimi, HE Lakhdar

Lakhdar Brahimi is a veteran politician and was UN and Arab League Envoy to Syria until he resigned in May 2014. He has spent much of life seeking peace and stability in troubled areas. Brahimi is a member of the The Elders group which aims to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts. He played a major role in the the Taif Agreement, which managed to end 17 years of civil war in Lebanon. He then became Special Representative for the United Nations and was sent on missions to South Africa, Haiti, Nigeria, Cameroon, Burundi, Sudan, Afghanistan, Zaire, Yemen, Angola, Liberia, the Ivory Coast, and finally to Syria after the resignation of Kofi Annan. He resigned from this post in May 2014.

EGYPT

Al-Ayyat, HE Muhammad Morsi Isa

HE Muhammad Morsi Isa al-Ayyat, a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood, became the first democratically elected president of Egypt in June 2012. A little more than a year later, following massive anti-Morsi demonstrations, he was deposed from office and detained by the Egyptian armed forces. His critics accused him of trying to turn Egypt into an Islamist dictatorship while doing nothing to improve the dire state of Egypt's economy. With the Muslim Brother-

hood now banned and Morsi sentenced to death on charges of inciting deadly violence, the future looks very bleak.

Al-Shater, Khairat

Khairat al-Shater is a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He was their first choice for standing in the presidential elections but was disqualified by the electoral commission. He has been an active member of the Brotherhood since the 1980s and consequently, during Mubarak's regime, he was imprisoned several times. Charismatic and outspoken, he is known as the real powerhouse of the MB. He is also a very successful businessman and has financed many of the MB's activities. During the recent ousting and crackdown on the MB, he was arrested and had his assets frozen. He has been sentenced to life imprisonment for charges ranging from incitement to violence and a prison break.

IRAN

Ebtekar, HE Dr Masoumeh

Dr Ebtekar was the first female Vice President of Iran in 1997, and has remained at the centre of the revolutionary movement in Iran since 1979. A scientist, journalist, and politician, she frequently writes on environmental, political, social, and women's issues in Persian and English. She is a considerable force in the reformist movement in Iran, and one of the founding members of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front. After Rouhani was elected President, she was appointed as Head of Environmental Protection Organization, a position she previously held for eight years under Mohammad Khatami. In January 2014, Ebtekar was awarded the Energy Globe Foundation Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award in Tehran. Previously she has been named as one of the seven 2006 Champions of the Earth by the United Nations Environment Program, and one of 50 environmental leaders by the *Guardian* newspaper.

Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali

General Mohammad Ali Jafari is the Chief Commander of the Iranian Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (also known as the Revolutionary Guard), a 300,000 strong elite faction of the Iranian armed force's separate from the armies that reports directly to the Velayat-e Faqih. The Revolutionary Guard Corps occupies cabinet positions, parliament seats, and controls an extensive business empire, which it partially used to fund and direct Shia movements

abroad such as Hezbollah and the Mahdi Army. Because of this, Jafari has a significant degree of influence in Iraq and Lebanon.

Khatami, HE Sayyid Mohammad

Khatami is a reformist politician who served as president of Iran from 1997 to 2005. Although he was ineffective at bringing around many of the changes from his mandate that were sought by Iranian society, he remains a figurehead of the reformist movement. Khatami was elected to the first Majles al Shura and is known internationally for his proposal of the UN's Dialogue Among Civilizations initiative, a movement he hopes will counter the prevailing sentiment that there was a "Clash of Civilizations". He continues his work in inter-civilizational dialogue and internal reform through two NGOs that he founded and heads. He also issued a joint statement with ex-prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir Muhammad, urging an end to Sunni-Shia violence.

Rouhani, HE President Hassan

In Iran's 2013 Presidential elections, Hassan Rouhani won 50.7 percent of the vote to secure an outright victory. With voter turnout estimated at 72% from over 50 million eligible voters, this was an impressive number and resulted in him becoming the 7th President of Iran in August 2013. Rouhani has held many high-level positions such as the deputy speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis - Iranian Parliament), and the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council. Rouhani is also an accomplished scholar and has written 20 books in Persian, Arabic, and English. His personality as well as his policies have opened up new possibilities of international dialogue over various contentious issues including the nuclear issue. The recently concluded deal regarding dropping of sanctions for monitoring and restriction of Iran's nuclear programme has been a major breakthrough.

Zarif, HE Mohammad Javad (new)

Mohammad Javad Zarif is the current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran. After studying diplomacy and law in the USA, he moved back to Iran in 1980, where he has held significant diplomatic and cabinet posts. As someone at the heart of the current Iranian government having intimate knowledge of the USA, he is key to building bridges.

IRAQ

Al-Saadi, Sheikh Abdul Malik

Sheikh Abdul Malik al-Saadi is a Sunni cleric who opposed Saddam Hussein and has recently re-emerged as the leading Sunni voice in Iraq. His power base is in the province of Anbar. He was offered the post of Grand Mufti in 2007 but refused. He is known for his calm and moderate stance, and strives to keep a unified Iraq in the face of sectarian conflict.

Al-Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada

The son of the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadiq al-Sadr, Muqtada is a highly influential political leader who inherited control over large social institutions that served millions in the slums of Baghdad. He gained prominence after the US invasion of Iraq by creating the Mahdi Army, an armed insurgency movement that formed its own courts and system of law enforcement. Al-Sadr leads one of the largest parliamentary blocs, the al-Sadr Bloc. Along with Grand Ayatollah Sistani, he is one of the two most important Shia leaders in Iraq. He has also spoken increasingly for Shia-Sunni unity and became critical of the al-Maliki government.

Barzani, Masoud

Read bio on page 104 in Honourable Mentions.

ISRAEL

Salah, Sheikh Raed

Raed Salah is the head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel. He is widely respected in the Islamic World as a religious leader. From 1989 to 2001, Salah also served as the mayor of Umm al-Fahm, an Israeli-Arab city. He has been arrested and imprisoned by the Israeli government on a number of occasions.

JORDAN

Abu Rashta, Ata

Ata Abu Rashta is the global leader of the Islamic political party Hizb ut-Tahrir. Having worked closely with the founder of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, Abu Rashta became prominent in Jordan during the First Gulf War when he contested the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In 2003 he became the leader of the party. Hizb ut-Tahrir is popular in the Levant, the former Soviet Union, South and Southeast Asia, and Western Europe.

Al-Abdullah, HRH Crown Prince Hussein

HRH Prince Hussein bin Abdullah is the eldest son of His Majesty King Abdullah, making him heir to the throne. He was named Crown Prince in 2009. HRH holds the rank of First Lieutenant in the Jordanian Armed Forces and has accompanied his father on several military and political occasions. His efforts to develop the Jordanian youth community started with the “Haqeq” (achieve) initiative, an activity targeting school-aged children. Prince Hussein, who completed his secondary education at King’s Academy in Jordan, is currently studying international history at Georgetown University.

Al-Hussein, Prince Zeid bin Ra’ad

Read bio on page 103 in Honourable Mentions.

KUWAIT

Al-Sabah, Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber

Read bio on page 104 in Honourable Mentions.

LIBYA

Haftar, Khalifa

Haftar has held the rank of Major General in the Libyan army since 2011. He rose to prominence after the uprising against the late General Gaddafi and was the person who announced that the Libyan government had been suspended. He announced the launch of Al-Karamah Operations, aimed at cleansing Libya of political assassinations, terrorism, militias, gangs, and outlaws. He is committed to establishing a democratic process in Libya. Haftar was made commander of the forces of the internationally recognized Tobruk government in March 2015.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Haniyah, Ismail

Read bio on page 105 in Honourable Mentions.

SUDAN

Al-Bashir, HE President Omar

Al-Bashir is the current president of Sudan and head of the National Congress Party. He came to power in a coup in 1989 and has since instituted elements of Sharia law throughout the country, including Christian and animist areas. The International Criminal Court has accused him of crimes against humanity in Darfur. The 20-year-old civil war between the north and south

of the country ended in 2005, and the referendum to create a new nation in south Sudan was successful with the new nation declaring its statehood on 9 July 2011.

Al-Mahdi, HE Imam Sayyed Al Sadiq

Al-Mahdi is the president of the moderate Islamic Umma Party, and the imam of the al-Ansar Sufi order. He was prime minister of Sudan until the government was overthrown and he was forced into exile. Al-Mahdi has now returned and is working to restore peace and democracy in the Sudan. He derives a significant portion of his authority from the fact that he descends from Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the Mahdi, a prophesied figure that many Muslims believe will return to revive the Islamic faith.

SYRIA

Al-Assad, HE President Bashar

Al-Assad is an ethnically Alawite Shia and president of the Syrian Arab Republic. Because of its strategic position, Syria is regarded as a major player in any peace agreement in the Middle East. Since 2011, the regime has been fighting an assortment of groups who are mainly gathered under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army, and now DA’ISH. Over 320,000 people have been killed and over four million Syrians have fled the country in a growing humanitarian crisis which is also having a destabilizing influence on neighbouring countries. Claims of atrocities and misinformation abound on both sides. With deep animosity between the different parties, the strong support of al-Assad by Russia, China, and Iran, and the presence of Jabhat al-Nusra and DA’ISH amongst the rebels, it has been hard for Western countries to develop a case for attacking al-Assad directly, and the prospects for a long, drawn-out war seem likely.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-Nahyan, HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed

Sheikh Khalifa al-Nahyan is the president of one of the fastest-growing nations in the world. Under his leadership, the UAE has seen significant economic growth and the renaming of the Burj Dubai to Burj Khalifa is considered a symbol of al-Nahyan’s financial power. According to *Forbes*, Sheikh Khalifa is the world’s third wealthiest monarch, with an estimated wealth of US\$15 billion. He has made substantial donations to many health institutions around the world, and finances a major housing programme in the Gaza Strip.

YEMEN

Al-Houthi, Sheikh Abdul-Malik

Read bio on page 104 in Honourable Mentions.

Sub-Saharan Africa

CHAD

Deby Itno, HE President Idriss

Deby is the president of Chad and the head of the Patriotic Salvation Movement. He took power in 1990, leading a predominantly Muslim army. Muslims make up around 55.7 percent of Chad's 13.2 million people. Deby holds great domestic authority through his ability to consolidate power in Chad. Chad was previously affected by a high frequency of coups d'état. He participated in the negotiated peace agreement in February 2010 between the rebel groups of the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudanese government.

SOMALIA

Adan, Fowsiyo Yusuf Haji

Fowsiyo's influence stems from the fact that she was the first woman to be named as Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia. She had a significant role in revitalizing the Somali economy by recovering national assets that were frozen, as well as signing an agreement with Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan for bilateral cooperation. A similar agreement was also signed with China. Fowsiyo launched a TV channel named RAADTV aimed at providing a better image of the unstable and war-torn Somalia.

Mohamud, Hassan Sheikh

Mohamud, a former university professor and dean, became the new Somali president on 10 September 2011 by defeating former president, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, by 190 votes to 79. He stayed in Somalia throughout the civil war, contributing to society with academic, charitable, and political work. He inherits a host of problems, including how to tackle the al-Shabaab militants.

Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Ahmadzai, HE Ashraf Ghani

The former Finance Minister and chancellor of Kabul University, Ashraf Ghani assumed the office of President of Afghanistan on 29 September 2014 after months of uncertainty following recounts in the elections. Previously, he had worked at the World Bank from 1991 to 2001. After the September 11 attacks, he engaged intensively with media, appearing regularly on *NewsHour*, BBC, CNN and US National Public Radio. In 2013, he ranked second in an online poll of the world's top 100 intellectuals conducted by *Foreign Policy* and *Prospect* magazines.

Haqqani, Sirajuddin

Haqqani heads militant forces based in Waziristan, fighting against American and NATO forces in Afghanistan. His group is reportedly closely allied with the Pakistani Taliban. He was one of the leaders on the Taliban's Quetta Shura.

Hekmatyar, Gulbuddin

Former prime minister of Afghanistan (1993, 1994, 1996), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is also founder of the Hezb-e-Islami political party that was founded as a *mujabideen* force against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Since then, it has continued fighting, first against other *mujabideen* forces, and more recently against foreign invaders. He has recently changed his political position and now supports elections.

AZERBAIJAN

Aliyev, HE President Ilham

Aliyev is the current president of Azerbaijan and the chairman of the New Azerbaijan Party. Although not outwardly religious, he is a Muslim and his advocacy of a moderate cultural Islam is representative of the demands of the population of the country. Azerbaijan, with a population of 9.3 million Muslims, is an active member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

BANGLADESH

Nizami, Motiur Rahman

Motiur Rahman Nizami is the leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, the third largest political party and the largest Islamic party in Bangladesh. He has played an active

role in pushing the mission of the organization through political and social reforms and propagating Islamic educational initiatives. His arrest in July 2013, along with eight other leaders of the Jamaat, for war crimes committed in the 1971 war of independence led to widespread protests and claims of political persecution. He was sentenced to death on those charges in late 2014.

Wazed, HE Sheikh Hasina

Sheikh Hasina Wazed became the prime minister of Bangladesh for the third time after winning the 2014 parliamentary. Poverty alleviation has become a priority for one of the poorest but most populous Muslim countries in the world. Wazed is the daughter of Mujibur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh.

CHINA

Kadeer, Rebiya

Kadeer is the de facto leader of the movement for social justice for the 15-million-strong Uighur ethnic population of China. She was formerly a successful businesswoman and philanthropist in China but was imprisoned in 1999 for leaking state secrets and now lives in exile in the United States. Before her arrest, Kadeer was running the 1,000 Families Mothers' Project, which helped Uighur women start businesses. She now presides over both the World Uighur Congress and the Uighur American Association. She is well known for her work in Europe and North America publicizing the plight of the Uighur ethnic group, and is partially responsible for raising the issue's status both in China and abroad. The Chinese government sees Kadeer as an agitator. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

INDIA

Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar

Dr Farooq inherited the 14th Mirwaiz (a Kashmiri term for traditional preacher of Muslims in Kashmir) in 1990 at the age of 17 after the assassination of his father. At the young age of 20 he became chairman and founder of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, a grassroots coalition of pro-freedom parties in Jammu & Kashmir. He has raised the Kashmiri problem at the UN, the EU parliament, and the IOC while advocating dialogue with both India and Pakistan so that the aspirations of the Kashmiri people may be realized.

INDONESIA

Matta, Anis

Anis became the president of the Justice Party (PKS) in 2013 after having been the Secretary General of PKS for four consecutive terms (1998 - 2013). He has spoken on the need for interfaith dialogue, and campaigns on the basis of conservative values. The PKS won 40 seats in the 2014 elections, a decrease of 17 seats from the 2009 elections.

Subianto, Lt. Gen. Prabowo

Prabowo Subianto is a former Lieutenant General turned politician. He ran for the vice-presidency in 2009, and for president in 2014, where he was narrowly defeated by Joko Widodo. As a 2014 presidential candidate, Prabowo's military past prompted mixed reactions from various organisations.

Sukarnoputri, Megawati

Megawati Sukarnoputri was Indonesia's first female president and the fourth woman to be the leader of a nation dominated by Muslims. She lost presidential elections in 2004 and 2009.

MALAYSIA

Ibrahim, HE Dr Anwar

Read bio on page 105 in Honourable Mentions.

Mohamad, Dr Mahathir

Dr Mahathir Mohamad was the Malaysian Prime minister for 22 years. He was the key figure behind the transition from the agricultural-based economy of Malaysia into a newly industrialized market economy. He is noted for his support for liberal Muslim values and has established Islamic institutions such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia. Mahathir established the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission to focus on victims of abuse in Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territories. In May 2012, Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and their legal advisers Alberto Gonzales, David Addington, William Haynes, Jay Bybee, and John Yoo were found guilty of war crimes.

Razak, Najib Tun

Razak became the 6th prime minister of Malaysia in 2009. He is focused on domestic economic issues and political reform, promotes economic liberalization, and has stated that Malaysia is led by Islamic principles and is not a secular state. Razak is also the president of the United Malays National Organisation. In the

2013 general elections, his party, Barisan Nasional, won a majority of the seats.

Shah, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam

Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, aged 86, was crowned King of Malaysia again in 2011. Malaysia uses a rotating system where the kings of the nine states each take turns spending five years as the monarch, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong is the constitutional monarch of Malaysia, with a population of 30.3 million. As king, he is also considered the Head of Islam in Malaysia, plus the nominal chief of the military.

PAKISTAN

Fazlur Rahman, Maulana

Maulana Fazlur Rahman is the Secretary-General of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal coalition of religious parties in Pakistan's parliament. He is also the president of the Deobandi religio-political organization, Jamiat Ulema-Islam, or Assembly of Islamic Scholars. Fazlur Rahman leads one of two main branches of the expansive organization which is a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. He is widely-respected as a dedicated scholar of Islam and is a seasoned politician.

Khan, Imran

A sportsman turned politician who is also a widely respected philanthropist, Khan founded and became the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice) party in 1996. Khan has helped establish the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre and Mianwali's Namal College. In the 2013 general elections, his party emerged as the second largest party in the country, and were asked to form the provincial government in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (formerly NWFP). He led an unsuccessful protest with Shaykh Tahir al-Qadiri in demanding the prime minister's resignation over the issue of vote fraud in the 2013 elections.

Sharif, HE Nawaz

Read bio on page 105 in Honourable Mentions.

Sharif, General Raheel (new)

General Raheel Sharif was appointed Chief of Army Staff of the Pakistan Army by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2013. He has played an important role in the country's fight against militants within Pakistan. He has changed the mindset of many who felt the danger

posed by these groups was not significant, as well as leading the operations against terrorist groups.

PHILIPPINES

Misuari, Nur

Nur Misuari is a revolutionary leader of the Bangsamoro who began his campaign for better treatment of the people of Mindanao by the Manila government through the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) in the 1970s, which later became the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Under Misuari's leadership, the MNLF challenged the government until the Tripoli Agreement was negotiated in 1976.

SINGAPORE

Rasheed, HE Zainul Abidin

Rasheed was a former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for Singapore and mayor of the North Eastern district of Singapore. Rasheed's activities have a focus on Singapore's diplomatic relations with the Muslim world, and also on sharing knowledge about Singapore's experience of inter-cultural and inter-religious relations with nations with substantial Muslim populations. Rasheed is widely known domestically, having held numerous positions of leadership throughout his career in journalism, organized labour, and representing Singapore's large percentage of Muslims. In 2013 he was appointed as ambassador to Kuwait.

TAJIKISTAN

Rahmon, HE President Emomalii

HE President Emomalii Rahmon has been President of Tajikistan since 1994. In 2013, he was elected to a fourth term in office. He has performed the Hajj and addressed OIC conferences. He has been a supporter of Tajiki cultural roots, and in 2007 changed his name from Rahmonov to Rahmon following a decree which banned Slavic names endings and other Soviet-era practices.

TURKMENISTAN

Berdimuhamedow, HE President

Gurbanguly Mälikgulyewiç

Berdimuhamedow has been the president of Turkmenistan since 21 December 2006. He is a moderate Muslim traditionalist who has sought to normalize life in Turkmenistan after the more unorthodox re-

ligious beliefs of his predecessor Niyazov. In the 2012 elections, he was re-elected with 97% of the vote. In August 2013, Berdimuhamedow suspended his DPT membership for the duration of his presidency in order to remain above partisan politics and promote a multiparty system.

Europe

FRANCE

Bechari, Dr Mohamed

Read bio on page 104 in Honourable Mentions.

NETHERLANDS

Aboutaleb, Ahmed

Ahmed Aboutaleb has served as Mayor of Rotterdam since 2009. Born in Morocco and arriving in the Netherlands at the age of 15, Aboutaleb has also served as State Secretary for Social Affairs and Employment. He has balanced the racial/interfaith tensions that exist in Rotterdam and is favoured to be appointed for a second term.

RUSSIA

Kadyrov, HE President Ramzan

President of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov is the son of former president, rebel leader, and mufti, Akhmad Kadyrov. He maintains an iron grip on Chechnya's government and institutions. He has overseen a massive reconstruction of Chechnya, mainly from money from Moscow. Because of this, he remains controversial.

SWEDEN

Hadzialic, Aida (new)

A Swedish politician and lawyer who fled her troubled homeland of Bosnia and in 2014 became the youngest person to serve as Minister, at the young age of 27. Previously, Hadzialic was the deputy mayor of the Swedish city Halmstad at the age of 23. She is a law graduate from the University of Lund. In 2013, Aida was ranked number 10 in a contest proposed by *Veckans Affärer*, a famous economic magazine in Sweden, for the most influential women in the world.

UNITED KINGDOM

Warsi, Lady Sayeeda

Warsi has been the most senior Muslim lady to serve in government. From May 2010 to September 2012 she was the Co-Chairman of the Conservative Party, and a Minister without Portfolio in David Cameron's Cabinet. She was Minister of State for Faith and Communities and Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. She resigned from her post in August 2014 citing her disagreement with HM Government's policy over the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict. She remains a powerful voice against Islamophobia and other issues.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Husic, Ed

In 2010 Ed Husic became the first Muslim to be elected to the Australian federal parliament. When Kevin Rudd announced the Second Rudd Ministry in 2013, Husic was named as Parliament Secretary to the Prime Minister, becoming the first Muslim sworn in to the Australian federal government frontbench, taking his oath on the Qur'an. As his profile has increased, the Australian Muslim frontbencher has been subject to growing Islamophobic abuse.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Khera, Farhana (new)

Farhana Khera is the President and Executive Director of Muslim Advocates, a well respected and connected legal advocacy organization that is independent of the state or any sectarian ideology and which has had a tremendous impact on the trajectory of civil rights for Muslims (and others). Previous to this she was Counsel to the US Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Property Rights. She focused substantially on the Patriot Act, racial and religious profiling, and other civil liberties issues raised by the government's anti-terrorism policies after 11 September 2001.

Carson, Andre

Andre Carson is one of only two Muslims -- the other being Keith Ellison -- serving in the US Congress. He was first elected to Congress in 2008, and is now serving his third two-year term. He helped pass the health care reform and works to improve the lives of working families in Indianapolis.

Ellison, Representative Keith

Keith Ellison is the first Muslim to serve in the US Congress. He is the representative for the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota in the United States House of Representatives. Ellison has been an outspoken advocate for American Muslims and his trips to the Muslim world, such as a visit to Palestine in the aftermath of the Israeli attacks in 2009, have garnered international support for his outreach to the Muslim world.

Hussain, Rashad

Rashad Hussain was appointed Special Envoy for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications by President Obama in 2015. Previously, he was the first Indian-American to be appointed Deputy Associate Counsel to the president. He is a former trial attorney at the US Department of Justice, a former legislative assistant to the House Judiciary Committee, and a former editor of the *Yale Law Journal*. Hussain was named the US envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference in March 2010. He is lauded for his balance of secular and religious leadership as a young Muslim lawyer and *hafiz* (one who has memorized the entire Qur'an), playing a key role in advising the American President on US-Muslim world affairs.



Al-Taghabun

“And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.”

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Allam, Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim

Allam is the 19th Grand Mufti of Egypt (succeeding Ali Goma'a). He was elected in February 2013 by al-Azhar's Council of Senior Scholars headed by Sheikh Ahmad al-Tayeb, an unprecedented act since the Grand Mufti had previously been chosen by the President of Egypt. He is also a Professor of Islamic Jurisprudence and Law at the University of al-Azhar and has over 25 written works, many of which address issues pertaining to women.

Badie, Dr Mohammed

Dr Mohammed Badie succeeded Mohammad Mahdi Akef as the 8th Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in January 2010. Following the military coup against Morsi's leadership, many Muslim Brotherhood leaders were arrested. Badie, whose son was shot dead during one of the counter-protests against the coup, was sentenced to death in April 2015 along with 13 other senior Muslim Brotherhood members.

El-Araby, HE Nabil

Nabil el-Araby is an Egyptian diplomat who is currently the Secretary-General of the Arab League. He has previously held the post of Foreign Minister of Egypt as well as working in many well esteemed positions in the United Nations.

IRAN

Rashad, Prof Ali Akbar

Professor Dr Ali Akbar Rashad founded the Islamic Research Institute for Culture and Thought and has been its president since its establishment in 1994. Professor Dr Ali Akbar Rashad is a philosopher and a scholar in the field of Philosophy of Religion and Islamic studies. Dr Ali has written over 35 books and 69 articles in addition to translated works and ongoing

research activities. He is also active in international scholarly activities and conferences especially in the field of interfaith dialogues.

Vaez-Tabasi, HE Ayatollah Abbas

Vaez-Tabasi is at the head of Iran's single richest institution, the Holy Estate of Imam Reza. The Holy Estate owns hundreds of companies and resources. Its revenue is supplemented by the donations of the millions of pilgrims that make the journey to Mashhad, where Imam Reza (the eighth of the Twelver Imams) is buried.

MOROCCO

Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad

Al-Tawfiq is the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs in Morocco. He is a strong supporter of Sufi groups. He is a writer for the Moroccan Association for authorship, publications, and translation as well as the Vice President of the Moroccan institution for historical research. Al-Tawfiq is an advocate of interfaith dialogue and is currently on the Board of World Religious Leaders for the Elijah Interfaith Institute.

Modghari, HE Dr Abd Al Kabir

Modghari is the director of the Casablanca-based Bayt Mal al-Quds agency of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which is devoted to safeguarding the city of Jerusalem and its religious, architectural and cultural heritage, and also providing development assistance to the Palestinian population and their institutions. Modghari was a former long-term Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco representing the late King Hassan II.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Hussein, HE Muhammad Ahmad (new)

Hussein was appointed Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in 2006. Previously he had been the manager and imam of the Blessed Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. He is outspoken in his defence of the occupied territories, and has personally defended the Al-Aqsa Mosque from the settlers and Israeli army.

Sabri, HE Sheikh Dr Ikrima Sa'id

Sabri is head of the Supreme Islamic Council, and a former grand mufti of Jerusalem and all of Palestine. He remains an imam of the Blessed Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, preaching there regularly. Sabri is an important

figure who is well-respected by many in Palestine for his forthright views on Israel.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Arifi, Muhammad

Read bio on page 105 in Honourable Mentions.

Altwaijri, HE Dr Abdulaziz Othman

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri is the Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), and the Secretary General of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUW). Dr Altwaijri is an accomplished academic with a keenly holistic vision for human civilization development, a senior lecturer, and an eminent writer and poet. Dr Altwaijri played a vital part in the development, supervision and launch of 16 strategies approved by the Islamic Summit Conference. He also established the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture, an alliance designated for work outside of the Islamic world. Dr Altwaijri is also a staunch advocate of dialogue of cultures and alliance of civilizations.

Madani, Dr Iyad

Read bio on page 106 in Honourable Mentions.

SUDAN

El-Bashir, HE Dr Issam

El-Bashir is the Secretary-General of the International Moderation Centre (IMC) in Kuwait. The IMC is an organization set up by the Higher Committee for the Promotion of Moderation of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs; its aim is to promote Islamic moderation domestically and around the world. The centre has worked with communities in Britain and Russia, among other places, to promote moderation among the extremist elements of their Muslim population. Locally, it trains over 700 imams at a time with a focus on practices of moderation.

Sub-Saharan Africa

CHAD

Abakar, Sheikh Hussain Hassan

Sheikh Hussain Hassan Abakar is the Imam of the Muslims of Chad and the chairman of the Supreme

Council of Islamic Affairs in Chad. He is also a founding member of the Muslim World League (MWL). Abakar oversees the activities of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in implementing educational and cultural programs through Islamic schools, educational books and training courses for imams. He has been important in fundraising for the education of Muslims in Chad.

KENYA

Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed

Khalifa is the organizing secretary of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya. He is also the head of the as yet unregistered Islamic Party of Kenya. Relations between the Muslim population of Kenya and the broader society, especially the government, have frayed recently with the instances of demonizing Muslims as terrorists. There is widespread displeasure among the coastal Muslim population with the national government.

MOZAMBIQUE

Cheba, Sheikh Muhamad Aboulai

Cheba is the provincial director of 139 registered *madrassas* (Islamic schools) where pupils start learning about HIV/AIDS as early as six years of age. He raises awareness that the disease is not a divine punishment, and sees mosques as the perfect place for the dissemination of such knowledge. HIV/AIDS affects roughly 15 percent of the adult population of Mozambique.

NIGERIA

Ajibola, HE Prince Bola

Prince Bola Ajibola is the former head of the Nigerian High Commission in London and the president and founder of the Islamic Movement for Africa. He also served as the vice chairman of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague between 1991 and 1994. In 1994 Prince Ajibola was appointed Judge ad-hoc to the Permanent Court of International Arbitration with respect to the court's deliberations on the land dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. He also served as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice in Nigeria. Most recently he founded the Crescent University, in Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Oloyede, Prof Ishaq Olanrewaju

Prof Ishaq Olanrewaju Oloyede is the Secretary General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic

Affairs and co-Secretary of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC). He is also the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin and President of Association of African Universities (AAU).

Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi Lamido

The 14th Fulani Emir of Kano, Sanusi succeeded his late uncle Dr Ado Bayero in 2014. He is former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), and a respected Islamic scholar who has won numerous awards. Kano was once the Hausa Kingdom of Kano, being conquered by Fulani Usman dan Fodio in 1805.

ZIMBABWE

Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa

Mufti Ismail Musa Menk is the director of the Daarul Ilm (Islamic Educational Centre) of the Majlisul Ulama. The Majlisul Ulama Zimbabwe is an Islamic welfare organization which caters to the needs of the Muslim population of Zimbabwe, especially in terms of Islamic education. Menk is a noted scholar in eastern Africa and also lectures internationally.

Asia

BANGLADESH

Sayeedi, Delwar Hossain

Sayeedi is an Islamic scholar, politician, lecturer, and chief of the the Jamaat-e-Islami, which is the largest Islamist political party in Bangladesh. From 1996 up to 2008, he was a member of the National Assembly of Bangladesh; he also served as Member of Parliament in the 1996 and 2001. In 2009 Sayeedi was put on trial, accused of committing war crimes during the Bangladeshi War of Independence in 1971. He was handed a death sentence in 2013, a decision which led to violent protests. Many international observers criticized the impartiality of the trial, declaring it to be politically motivated.

Shamim Mohammed Afzal (new)

Afzal is the leader of the Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. The Islamic Foundation is a quasi-governmental organization working under the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Bangladesh. Its chief aims are educational, organizational, researching, publishing, offering scholarships, and also providing funding to maintain mosques. The head office of the Islamic Foundation

is in Dhaka, and is supported by six regional offices and 58 district offices.

CAMBODIA

Adam, HE Zakaryya

HE Zakaryya Adam is a member of the Cambodian parliament, and serves as a member of the Commission on Education, Youth, Sport, Religious Affairs, Culture and Tourism. Previously, he held the position of Secretary of State in the Ministry of Cults and Religions. In addition to his government service, he serves as Vice President of the Highest Council for Islamic Religious Affairs, as the Vice President of the Cambodian Muslim Development Foundation (CMDF), general secretary for the Cambodian Islamic Centre (CIC), and as a director of Cambodian Islamic Voice Radio. Adam has translated the Qur'an, as well as other Islamic books, from Arabic into the Khmer language for Cambodian readers; he has also written a Melayu-Khmer dictionary.

CHINA

Guangyuan, Imam Chen Chen

Guangyuan is the Grand Imam of China as well as the president of the Islamic Association of China and the president of the Chinese-Islamic Institute. He has a very important position, with China's 24.6 million Muslims coming almost exclusively from minority groups. Guangyuan has also recently spoken out in opposition to violence against Uighurs.

INDIA

Ahmad, Sheikh Aboobackar

Sheikh Aboobackar Ahmad is the General Secretary of the All India Muslim Scholars Association and founder and Vice Chancellor of Jamia Markus Ssaquafathi Ssunniyya (Sunni Cultural Centre), Karanthur, Kozhikode, Kerala. He is also chief patron of the Sunni Youth Society and General Secretary, Jamiat Ulema (Kerala). He was awarded with the Sheikh Muhiyudheen Abdul Khadar Jeelani Award in 2009. Aboobackar is known in India and in Arab countries by the title of *Abul Aytam*, meaning 'the Father of Orphans', for the services he has rendered to the orphans and destitute.

Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibrahimul Khaleel

Sayyid Ibrahimul Khaleel al-Bukhari has founded and directed numerous educational and charity

initiatives in India over the past 25 years. His Ma'din Islamic Academy has grown into a mass movement with 25 educational institutions and has participated in international interfaith celebrations.

Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali

Maulana Noorie is the President of Sunni Dawate Islami (a non-political religious organization) in Mumbai, India. Under his leadership, the organization has been very successful in reviving Sunni Islam in India by conducting various religious events including full day congregations at state and national levels in India. The Annual Congregation is one of the largest Sunni Muslims assemblies held in India attracting around 300,000 people every year in the heart of the financial capital of India, Mumbai. The mission has been growing year on year with thousands of members & volunteers joining the organization from across the states. He has also been very successful in establishing schools providing both modern and religious education and providing a platform for creating new set of Muslim leaders in the country.

Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin

Barrister Asaduddin Owaisi is an eminent parliamentarian of India and president of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen. Asaduddin Owaisi was elected as president of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) in 2008. Under Asaduddin Owaisi's stewardship, the party won seven assembly seats each in 2009 and 2014. An outspoken parliamentarian, Asaduddin Owaisi has been instrumental in persuading the Indian Government to establish an exclusive Ministry of Minority Affairs to look after the welfare of religious minorities, including Muslims, in India. The Dar-us-Salam Educational Trust (DET) is the branch of the AIMIM which oversees various social, educational and welfare programs.

MALDIVES

Saeed, Mohamed Shaheem Ali

Saeed recently resigned as the Minister of State for Islamic Affairs for the Republic of Maldives. His knowledge of Islam has provided good leadership to his ministry, especially in the drafting of regulations under the Religious Unity Act of the Maldives which, he believes, would provide a legal framework to protect Islam. He was a member of the World Islamic People's Leadership and the Islamic Fiqh Academy in the Maldives and has advocated for a study regarding comparative religion.

PAKISTAN

Khan, Mawlana Saleemullah

Mawlana Saleemullah Khan, a student of the late Indian politician and scholar, Sheikh al-Islam Mawlana Husayn Ahmad Madani, is the Sheikh al-Hadith (seniormost Hadith lecturer) at Jamia Farooqia in Pakistan. He is also the head of Wifaq al-Madaris al-Arabia Pakistan, the primary *madrassa* board of education in Pakistan. Wifaq al-Madaris administers the curriculum of more than 70,000 *madrassas* in Pakistan with several hundred thousand students enrolled and producing thousands of scholars and graduates each year.

Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali

Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali Naqvi leads the Shia Ulema Council (previously called Tehrik-e-Jafaria (TJP) of Pakistan). He was chosen by the Supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei, to lead the Shia Muslims in Pakistan and is now his religious representative.

Ul-Haq, Siraj

From humble beginnings, Haq has worked his way up to senior leadership positions in both religious and political parties. He is a former finance minister of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly in Pakistan, resigning in protest at US drone strikes. In 2014, Haq was elected Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, one of the most influential Islamic movements in Pakistan. He is also a member of the parliament, being the Pakistani Senator from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

SRI LANKA

Mufthi, MIM Rizvi

MIM Rizvi Mufthi is the head of the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU), an organization that plays an active role as the Islamic religious higher authority of Sri Lanka with 3,000 active members under its 22 districts and 15 divisional branches. ACJU has recently established a Halal Certification Authority in Sri Lanka and also publishes a quarterly *Halal Guide* which lists the organizations/products that are certified as Halal by the authority. One of the pioneering scholars in the field of Islamic banking and finance, Mufthi is a member of the Sharia advisory councils for a number of Islamic financial institutions in Sri Lanka.

TAJIKISTAN

Abdulkodirzoda, HE Saidmukarram (new)

Saidmukarram Abdulkodirzoda is the state-selected Grand Mufti and thus head of Tajikistan's Muslims. Most of Tajikistan's population is Sunni Muslim, following the Hanafi school of law (*madhab*) and the Naqshabandhi spiritual method (*tariqa*) and belongs to the Persian-speaking Tajik ethnic group, who share language, culture, and history with Afghanistan and Iran.

UZBEKISTAN

Alemov, HE Usman

Alemov has been the Grand Mufti of Uzbekistan since 2006. He is respected for his moderate stance and proven record in coping with extremists in the Samarkand region where he was formerly a mufti. Alemov was instrumental in making Tashkent the ISESCO Capital of Islamic Culture for 2007.

Europe

BULGARIA

Hadzhi, HE Mustafa Alish

Hadzhi is Bulgaria's chief mufti. Bulgaria has been referred to as "Istanbul Bulgaria" because of the importance of Turkish-Bulgarian relations. Hadzhi is important as the leader of the Muslim community in a predominantly Christian state with a large influx of Muslims. He has had to defend his community from extreme nationalists who went so far as to attack mosques and worshippers.

GERMANY

Köhler, Ayyub Axel

Köhler is former chairman of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany. Ayyub Axel Köhler has numerous articles primarily in Islamic magazines such as *Al Islam* of the Islamic Centre of Munich, and *Al Fajr* of the Islamic Centre of Hamburg, and has published newsletters for the Muslim League in which he is mostly concerned with the integration of Islamic ways of life into German society.

ITALY

Pallavicini, Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe

Pallavicini is an important figure in the religious life of Italian Muslims as well as in European relations with the Muslim world. He is Vice President of COREIS (Comunit Religiosa Islamica; the Islamic Religious Community), Italy, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West, and an advisor for Islamic affairs to the Italian Minister of Interior. Pallavicini is also the imam of the Al-Wahid Mosque of Milan in Via Meda, where he organizes the training of imams in Italian. His father is Abd Al-Wahid Pallavicini, the noted preacher and head of the Ahmadiyyah Idrissiyyah Shadhiliyyah brotherhood in Italy.

KOSOVO

Ternava, HE Sheikh Naim

Naim Ternava is the Grand Mufti of Kosovo. He is the leading religious figure in Kosovo, which emerged after an ethno-religious war that caused widespread loss of life and destruction. Ternava is a key figure in the attempts of the country's Muslim population to overcome the horrors of war. He was instrumental in the creation of the Inter-Religious Council Organization for Interfaith Relations.

RUSSIA

Nasibullahoglu, Mufti Cafer

Cafer Nasibullahoglu is the imam of the St Petersburg Mosque. He is also the mufti of St Petersburg, which is home to close to one million Muslims. His diverse congregation consists of Muslims of Tatar, Kazakh, Uzbek, Tajik, and Arab origin, among others, and the sermon at St Petersburg mosque is often conducted in Arabic, Tatar, and Russian.

TURKEY

Görmez, Mehmet

Görmez holds the Presidency of Religious Affairs, which is the highest Islamic authority in Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. He earned his PhD from Ankara University, later to become professor in 2006. He frequently gives lectures at the Hacettepe University and has mastered three languages: Arabic, English, and Turkish. He is a strong advocate for building mosques in Turkey and beyond.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ahsan, Dr Manazir

Ahsan is the rector of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education in Leicester, which is one of the oldest centres working for integration and understanding of Islam in the UK. It has many publications and offers many courses.

Oceania

NEW ZEALAND

Ghani, Dr Anwar

Ghani is president of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ). His work leading FIANZ has been considerable; building bridges with the government as well as with the broader New Zealand population and leaders of other faiths.

North America

CANADA

Valiante, Wahida

Wahida Valiante is a founding member, and currently, the president of the Canadian Islamic Congress. The CIC is made up of 24 organizations and the CIC's newsletter has 300,000 subscribers worldwide. She is a published author of books on theories of family therapy and community issues. She is an outspoken advocate of the rights of Canadian Muslims and was awarded the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding leadership and service to the Canadian Muslim community.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Crane, Dr Robert Dickson

An American Muslim activist since the early 80s, Dr Crane is the former adviser to the late President of the United States, Richard Nixon. Dr Crane was Director of Da'wa at the Islamic Centre in Washington, DC, and served as Director of Publication in the International Institute of Islamic Thought. From the early 90s, he headed his own Centre for Policy Research and was a board member of the United Association for Studies and Research, as well as being a Managing Editor of its Middle East Affairs Journal. He has authored

or co-authored more than a dozen books. Dr Robert Crane is currently full professor at the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies at Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

Ghazi, Drs Abidullah and Tasneema

Dr Abidullah Ghazi, a prominent writer, speaker and poet is cofounder of the IQRA' International Educational Foundation with his wife Dr Tasneema Ghazi. IQRA' is a non-profit organization that creates Islamic studies textbooks and educational materials especially for children. The institution has produced a complete system of Islamic education for part and full time schools and a comprehensive madrasa integrated program for the Singapore *madrasa* system. IQRA's programs and educational materials are used in the United States and worldwide.

Caribbean

JAMAICA

Muhammad, Mustafa

Muhammad is a spokesperson for the Muslim population of Jamaica and has been the president of the Islamic Council of Jamaica for the past 14 years. His work involves education and halal certification. He oversees the eleven mosques in Jamaica which are attended regularly by more than 2,000 Muslims.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Ali, Imam Yacoob

Ali is the president of the largest and most influential Muslim organization in Trinidad and Tobago, the Anjuman Sunnat ul Jamaat Association (ASJA) which was founded in 1936. Ali's organization runs numerous schools and focuses on the importance of education for Muslim youth.

South America

ARGENTINA

Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf

Hallar is an active figure in Argentina involved in community development for Muslims. He has conducted comprehensive research on Muslims in Latin America and holds a number of positions including

Secretary-General of the Islamic Organization of Latin America and the director of the Office of Islamic Culture and is a member of the Expert Committee on Minority Rights for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

ECUADOR

Suquillo, Juan

Suquillo is an imam and the director and co-founder of the Islamic Centre of Ecuador. He has received awards in recognition of his services to the nation, and has translated many books into Spanish. These have become very popular since the 9/11 attacks when non-Muslims became interested in learning about Islam. Suquillo's books have become bestsellers since then. He is very well respected, especially by South American Muslim scholars.



“My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise”

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-Nacer

Sheikh Abdul-Nacer is a master of the Shadhili *tariqa* and has a wide following in his native Algeria, as well as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, and various countries in Europe. He is a descendant of the famous Sufi *sayyid*, Abdul Salam Mashish.

Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif

Sheikh Abdellatif is well-known in Algeria, Egypt, and Europe as a spiritual teacher who inherited the spiritual gifts of his father. His students include many in high positions in the Algerian government, and also included the famous Egyptian scholar, Sheikh Sha'rawi before the latter's death.

EGYPT

Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar

Abdelkafy is an Egyptian preacher and *da'wa* practitioner. He is very well-respected by his peers as a *hafiz* of the Qur'an (one who has memorized the entire Qur'an). He is also the director of the Qur'anic Studies Centre at the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award. As well as working in his native Egypt, he travels abroad to help Muslim communities, working specifically with the Muslim community in Canada.

Hosny, Mustafa

Read bio on page 106 in Honourable Mentions.

IRAQ

Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed

Kubaisi is a very popular Sunni cleric and preacher in Iraq, who preaches for the end of foreign occupation in Iraq and the institution of an Islamic state. To this end he is a spokesperson of the Sunni Ulema Council, an important association of Sunni Muslim scholars in

Iraq. Kubaisi leads prayers that are televised worldwide from the state mosque of Abu Dhabi.

JORDAN

Keller, Sheikh Nuh

Sheikh Nuh Keller holds the distinction of translating the first Islamic legal work into a European language to receive certification from al-Azhar University. He also possesses a number of *ijzas* in various disciplines, most notably as an authorized sheikh of the Shadhiliyyah Sufi order and teaches students from his *zawiya* in Jordan as well as at annual gatherings all over the world.

MOROCCO

Al-Boutchich, Sidi Hamza Al-Qadiri

The *tariqa* (Path to God) under the leadership of Sidi Hamza al-Qadiri Boutchich has attracted disciples from all over the world, but especially from Europe. The Bouchichiya Tariqa was founded by his grandfather who organized armed resistance against the French occupation of Morocco.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Al-Rifa'i, Sheikh Muhammad Said Al-Jamal

Sheikh al-Rifa'i is a guide of the Shadhiliyyah Tariqah founded by Sheikh Ali Abu al-Hassan al-Shadhili in Egypt in the thirteenth century. In 1997 he restored the 1,000 year old Sufi Council in the Holy Land and became head of the Council. He is a teacher and central figure at the Blessed Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, one of the three holiest sites in Islam. The sheikh has students and followers not only in the Holy Land but in America and Europe also.

QATAR

Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal

A notable convert and Salafi scholar, Philips is founder of Preston International University in Chennai, India, and most notably founder and chancellor of the virtual educational institution, Islamic Online University, which currently has over 100,000 registered students studying Sharia in English from all 215 countries in the world. He also reaches mass Muslim audiences through his television appearances on the Indian-based satellite channel Peace TV, Egyptian-based Huda TV, and the UK-based Islam Channel. Dr

Bilal is also the author of over 50 published books on various Islamic topics.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Qarni, Dr Aaidh

Dr Aaidh al-Qarni is a prominent Saudi scholar, author, and activist preacher, best known for his popular self-help book *Don't Be Sad*. Dr al-Qarni has garnered a substantial following through a preaching career which spans various modes of broadcast media from audio lectures to a comprehensive website, *alislamnet.com*. He lectures at mosques, colleges, and Islamic institutions, and hosts a popular weekly television show. He was found guilty of plagiarism in 2012 and has since lost some of his standing.

Al-Qarni, Dr Awad

Awad al-Qarni is one of the most prominent Islamic preachers in Saudi Arabia. He lectures frequently, gives many TV interviews, has written several popular works and has a large social media following.

Al-Shugairi, Ahmad

Al-Shugairi is a televangelist with a huge following around the world. He is at the forefront of a religious revivalist movement that is affecting young people across the Middle East. In addition to his work as a television host, al-Shugairi is the founder of the youth-centric coffee shop, *Andalus Cafe*. With no formal Islamic training and an MBA, his popularity comes from repackaging a balanced understanding of Islam for his throngs of fans of all ages. He has 12 million fans on Facebook and was listed amongst the World's 500 most influential Arabs by *Arabian Business* in 2012.

YEMEN

Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abd al-Majid

Al-Zindani is an active Yemeni politician and preacher, founder of Iman University in Yemen, founder of the Commission on Scientific Signs in the Qur'an and Sunnah in Makkah, Chairman of the Shura Council of the Islah party (the Yemeni Congregation for Reform), and heads the Muslim Brotherhood political party in Yemen. He has been a vocal critic of terrorism and any killings of civilians but is outspoken against US policies and called for jihad against any army that potentially invades Yemen as the right of citizens to act of self-defence. The US treasury has labelled him as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" for his

indirect association with al-Qaeda. Despite that, he is a respected scholar and has a large number of followers who the Wall Street Journal labelled as "a charismatic Yemeni academic and politician."

Sub-Saharan Africa

NIGERIA

Bauchi, Sheikh Tahir Usman (new)

Now in his mid-80s, Shaykh Tahir Usman Bauchi of the Tijaniyya Sufi order is celebrated for his Qur'anic schools which specialize in producing *buffaz* (memorizers) of the Qur'an. His public exegesis of the Qur'an, delivered in Hausa every year during the month of Ramadan, attracts thousands and is listened to by millions on radio, as well as in recordings that are sold all over West Africa. He has critically engaged with puritanical Islamic schools of thought since the early 1980s. In July 2014, he escaped a suicide bombing attack which killed 23 people.

Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa

Sheikh Yakubu Musa Katsina is a popular preacher in Nigeria. He is also the leader of the Izala revivalist sect in Katsina. The Izala, or Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah (Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy) is an activist Sufi brotherhood which calls for a return to the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and a true practice of Islam. Hailing from Katsina, the predominantly Muslim city in northern Nigeria, Sheikh Katsina is outspoken against corruption in the country.

SENEGAL

Mbacke, Serigne Sidi Al Moukhtar

Serigne Sidi Al Moukhtar Mbacke has been the leader of the Tariqah Muridiyyah since 1 July 2010. The *tariqa* was founded by the religious leader and mystic Amadou Bamba, who died in 1927 and was buried at the mosque in Touba, Senegal. Sidi Mbacke is the second grandson to inherit the leadership. It is estimated that over a sixth of all Senegalese are members of the tariqa.

Asia

INDIA

Azmi, H. Hazrat Allama

Maulana Qamaruzzaman

Maulana Azmi is the Khalifa of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan Bareilvi's son. He is a prolific speaker and according to the *Times of India*, has millions of followers all over the world. At the age of 18 he established the Islamic university, Al-Jame-atul-Islamia, which is currently recognized as one of India's top Islamic universities. For over 50 years he has been building many organizations and institutions, mosques, colleges, and universities all over the world.

Madani, Arsad

Madani is the President of the 86-year old Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, a group which strongly opposed the creation of a separate Muslim state of Pakistan. Maulana Syed Arshad Madani succeeded his brother, Maulana Syed Asad Madani in 2006, but since 2008, the group has been split into two factions. Maulana Arsad is also a noted scholar, and gave a speech in Arabic in the presence of the late King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. He also does much social work and heads a number of Islamic seminaries and bodies.

Naik, Dr Zakir Abdul Karim

Read bio on page 107 in Honourable Mentions.

Quadri, Professor Sayid Ameen Mian

Professor Sayid Ameen Mian Quadri is leader of the Indian Bareilwis and a *sajjada nashin*, or Sufi disciple, of the Barkatiya Sufi tradition which stems from the Qadiriyyah tradition of eminent Sufi master, 'Abd Al-Qadir Al-Jilani (1077-1166 CE). Quadri is also a professor of Urdu at India's esteemed Aligarh Muslim University.

Saifuddin, Syedna Mufaddal

The 53rd *Dai al-Mutlaq*, or "Unrestricted Missionary", of the Dawoodi Bohras, a subgroup within the *Mustaali*, Ismaili Shia branch of Islam. He succeeded, not without dispute, to the office after his father, Syed Mohammed Burhanuddin, passed away in 2014. Mufaddal Saifuddin is also one of the four *Omara* (Rectors) of Al Jamea tus Saifiyah. He is the spiritual leader of 2-5 million people living in 100 countries.

Shuaib, Sheikh Dr Thaika

Sheikh Dr Thaika Shuaib of Tamil Nadu is the head

of the Arusiyya branch of the Qadiri Sufi order, a prominent *tariqa* in South India and Sri Lanka and whose adherents are spread in the UAE and Far East.

INDONESIA

Alawiyaah, Prof Dr Tuti

Alawiyaah was the Indonesian Minister of Women's Empowerment in President Suharto's last cabinet. Alawiyaah is currently the dean of one of Indonesia's oldest and most prominent Islamic educational institutions, the As Syaifiyah University. She is a prolific preacher and broadens her reach through her regular television appearances on almost all Indonesian television channels.

Gymnastiar, Abdullah Aa Gym

Abdullah Gymnastiar, more commonly known as Aa Gym (Elder Brother Gym), was for a long time Indonesia's most popular preacher. With his style of modern, youthful, enjoyable preaching he built a substantial following and a large media empire with a regular audience of over 80 million Indonesians and an approval rating that peaked at 91% leading to being courted by several political parties as a potential Vice President nominee. In 2006 Gym announced a polygamous marriage and immediately saw a huge backlash from his mainly female audience: his ratings dropped with his commercial enterprises taking a huge hit. Over the past seven years, Gymnastiar has been slowly regaining his popularity using his unique preacher/performer style; he is an attractive, funny and charismatic man who tells engaging stories and sings *nasheeds* (religious songs).

Shihab, Quraish

Quraish Shihab is an Indonesian expert on Qur'anic exegesis who regularly preaches on national television. He is noted as a progressive scholar who teaches Qur'anic exegesis using actual context and simple language. He is an author of many Islamic books, including *Tafsir al-Misbah*. He served as Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs in 1998 and also as chairman of the Indonesian Ulama Council since 1984. Shihab was also a director of State Islamic University, Syarif Hidayatullah 1992-1998.

MALAYSIA

Awang, Abdul Hadi (new)

Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin Awang is the current President of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS.

He is also the Vice President of International Union of Muslim Scholars. He was former Chief Minister of Terengganu state in Malaysia from 1999-2004 and also a Member of Parliament for Marang Terengganu and state lawmaker for Rhu Rendang. He has written several books related to Democracy and Politics in Islam and also gives lectures every Friday morning at Rusila Mosque which draw thousands of people.

Ibrahim, Dato Mashitah

Ibrahim is a prominent motivational preacher in Malaysia, and a lecturer at University Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia. Sultan Pahang awarded her with the honorary title *dato* for her devotion to *da'wa* initiatives in 2000. Her views and opinions on contemporary Islamic issues receive wide attention.

MrGlani, Sheikh Dr Mahmoud

A native of Madinah, Sheikh MrGlani has settled in Malaysia, where he has built up a huge following on the basis of his spiritual teachings of excellence (*ihسان*) in all fields. His students often have very successful working careers, but this does not impede their dedication to their spiritual development, which is based upon meetings of *Khatm Qur'an*, and *Majlis Salawaat* (abundant recitation of blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ). Although himself following the Shadhili way, he aims to promote all authentic groups and to this end has opened many *zawiyas* in the Far East, which attract members of all sufi orders. He is a frequent speaker at conferences, as well as on TV and radio.

PAKISTAN

Akhtar, Dr Ahmad Rafique

A university professor for many years, Dr Rafique has now dedicated himself to giving lectures on various aspects of Islam. He is particularly popular in middle-class circles.

Awan, Ameer Muhammad Akram

He is a lecturer, a leader, a philosopher, and a reformist with followers worldwide. Sheikh Muhammad is the *mufassir* of four *tafsirs* and is the spiritual leader of the Naqshbandia Owaisiah Order, which has over a million murids. He is currently the dean of Siqarah Education System, which aims at making its students practical and enlightened young Muslims. He is also Patron of Al Falah Foundation and of *Al Murshid* Magazine; the former aimed at helping the poor, especially in rural areas, and the latter aimed at providing guidance for the seekers of truth.

Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba

Bukhari is one of the very few female religious scholars in Pakistan that has significant influence. She is a sought-after speaker who excels in six languages: Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, Punjabi, and Siraiki. Alongside Pakistan, she also has a large following in Europe, North America, and Australia. Ms Bukhari is also the founder the well known charitable organization, Bukhari Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization that aims at helping people all over Pakistan who have been displaced by major natural disasters.

Jameel, Maulana Tariq

Read bio on page 106 in Honourable Mentions.

Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar

Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri is a leader of the Qadiriyyah-Radaviyyah-Attariya branch of the Qadiriyyah Sufi order. He is also the founder of Dawat-e-Islami, a Sunni Bareilwi revivalist movement centring on the propagation of Islamic knowledge. Qadiri is a widely-respected sheikh with a significant global following which is supported by the Madani TV Channel.

Europe

ITALY

Pallavicini, Sheikh Abd al-Wahid

Sheikh Abd al-Wahid Pallavicini is a noted preacher from Milan, Italy. After converting to Islam in 1951, he joined the Ahmadiyyah Idrisiyyah Shadhiliyyah Sufi order and is now head of the brotherhood in Italy. His son is Imam Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavicini, the chairman of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West and imam of the al-Wahid Mosque of Milan.

SWEDEN

Mousa, Hassan

Sheikh Hassan Mousa is head of the Swedish Council of imams, Sweden. He is also a preacher and the leading imam of the Stockholm Mosque at Medborgarplatsen, which is run by the Islamiska F rbundet in Stockholm.

TURKEY

Effendi, Sheikh Mahmud

Read bio on page 106 in Honourable Mentions.

Topba, Osman Nuri

Osman Nuri Topba is an author, philanthropist and spiritual leader of a Naqshbandi Sufi Order based in Istanbul. His group is known as Eronkoy (named after the town where he was born) and, like other Sufi groups in Turkey, focus heavily on charitable work. He has written works in history, literature, religious sciences, and poetry, some of which have been translated into English and other languages.

UNITED KINGDOM

As-Sufi, Sheikh Abd al-Qadir

Sheikh as-Sufi is the founder of the Murabitun World Movement. Born Ian Dallas in Scotland, as-Sufi converted to Islam in 1967. He has written on a wide-range of subjects, and is especially well-known for his criticisms of modern banking and modern education.

Nakshawani, Ammar

Dr Sayed Ammar Nakshawani is a popular speaker. He studied Islamic Studies at Shahid Beheshti University in Iran and pursued further studies at the Islamic Seminary in Damascus, Syria. He was also a visiting scholar at the Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge. He recently moved to the USA where he now is Special Representative for the Universal Muslim Association of America, engaging in interfaith dialogue and advocating on behalf of Shia Islam.

Siddiqui, Khwaja Pir Mohammad Alauddin

Khwaja Pir Mohammad Alauddin Siddiqui is a world-renowned Islamic scholar and sheikh of the Naqshbandi *tariqa*. He was born in Azad, Kashmir on 1 January 1938, and spent his early life serving and studying with top traditional scholars of his time, including his father Khwaja Ghulam Mohiuddin Ghaznavi. In the late 70s and early 80s he began travelling to the UK to support its early Muslim community, and has since established various charitable, religious, educational, and media institutions such as: the Al-Ehya Trust (now known as Mohiuddin Trust), Noor TV and more recently, Mohiuddin International Girls College. He also leads an anti-Islamophobia movement.

North America

CANADA

Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz

Sheikh Rabbani is the founder, education director, and an instructor at SeekersGuidance, an educational institute featuring a very popular Q&A service, online courses, and occasional retreats. In August 2011 he helped launch SeekersHub in Toronto with affiliated branches being developed in Australia and elsewhere. He was formerly a central figure with SunniPath and has continuously been at the vanguard of effectively utilizing the latest web technologies and services to teach Islam in the West for over a decade.

Slimi, Sheikh Hamid (new)

Shaykh Hamid has been serving as an educator, imam, chaplain, and consultant in Canada for 18 years in different religious and educational institutions. He has a huge audience due to his ability to speak English, Arabic, and French fluently and for his high level of expertise in various Islamic disciplines. He has nine published works.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Kabbani, Shaykh Muhammad Hisham

Sheikh Kabbani established the American branch of the Naqshbandi Haqqani Educational Foundation, dedicated to the promotion of the fundamental Islamic teachings of tolerance, respect, and peace. In 1991, Kabbani moved to the United States and has since founded 23 study and meeting centres in the United States and Canada as well as an Islamic retreat centre in Michigan focusing on spreading Sufi teachings. He is the son-in-law of the late Sheikh Muhammad Nazim, one of his oldest students, and a designated successor.

Khan, Nouman Ali

Read bio on page 106 in Honourable Mentions.

Shakir, Imam Zaid

Imam Zaid is a senior faculty member and co-founder of Zaytuna College, USA. He is an influential Islamic scholar in the West and a voice of conscience for American Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He founded the New Brunswick Islamic Center (formerly Masjid al-Huda) in New Jersey, Masjid al-Islam in Connecticut, the Tri-State Muslim Education Initiative, the Connecticut Muslim Coordinating

Committee, the Lighthouse Mosque in Oakland, California, and United for Change. He initiated a four year pilot seminary programme at Zaytuna Institute, which graduated its inaugural class in 2008. And, in the fall of 2010, he and his colleagues co-founded Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, the first accredited Muslim liberal arts college in the USA.

Wahhaj, Siraj

Siraj Wahhaj is imam of the al-Taqwa Mosque in Brooklyn, a prolific lecturer, community activist, the leader of the Muslim Alliance in North America, and former Vice President of ISNA. He first became famous for his successful efforts in fighting drugs and crime in his neighbourhood. In 1991, he became the first Muslim to recite the Opening Prayer of the Qur'an (*al-Fatiha*) at the US House of Representatives.

Webb, Imam Suhaib

Suhaib Webb was a student at al-Azhar University in Egypt from 2004-2010 and has come to prominence as a young American preacher and activist from Oklahoma. On 1 December 2011, Webb was inaugurated as the Imam of the Islamic Society of Boston's Cultural Center (ISBCC) the largest Islamic center in New England. He helped raise \$20,000 for widows and children of firefighters killed in the 9/11 attack. He has spoken out against radical clerics that seek to prey on insecure youth and their American identities.

Caribbean

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Hosein, Sheikh Imran

Sheikh Imran N Hosein is an Islamic Scholar specializing in contemporary interpretations of Islamic eschatology. Having given up his career as a diplomat in 1985 to dedicate his life to the mission of Islam, Sheikh Imran is a tireless missionary who often travels for 2-3 years at a time in the cause of Islam and calls for Muslims to retreat to faith-based eco villages until such time as Imam Mahdi appears. He is also a respected commentator on international monetary economics, and advocates the establishment of free-markets and currency with intrinsic value as a means of savings and aversion of a pending collapse of the "world of paper money". He has very popular videos on YouTube with millions of views, especially on the end of time, politics, and the economy.



The *Shahadatayn*
Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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PHILANTHROPY, CHARITY & DEVELOPMENT

Middle East and North Africa

IRAQ

Al-Khoei, Sayyed Jawad

Sayyed al-Khoei is the Secretary-General of the London-based al-Khoei International Foundation, an international charity promoting the welfare of Shia communities throughout the world. He spends his time between the United Kingdom and his native Iraq. As a researcher in Islamic Affairs, Sayyed Jawad has authored various studies and articles on the religious minorities in Iraq and the need for interfaith dialogue.

LEBANON

Al-Sadr, Rabab

Rabab al-Sadr is a social and human rights activist and a philanthropist. She is a dynamic thinker and is the president of the Imam al-Sadr Foundation, one of the most successful humanitarian organizations working in Lebanon. The foundation's projects focus on training, development, and poverty alleviation across Lebanon. She is the sister of Imam Musa al-Sadr.

Daouk, Amine M

Daouk is the president of the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut. Makassed is one of the oldest modern Islamic development organizations in Lebanon. It started as an initiative to make free education available to girls and has developed into a major Muslim development organization, focusing on education, healthcare, and social issues.

QATAR

Al-Missned, Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser

Her Highness Sheikha Mozah is the mother of the current emir of Qatar and chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. The Foundation has brought some

of the leading US university programs to Qatar. It also promotes international research and provides scholarships around the world. Sheikha Mozah also serves as the President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and is Vice Chairperson of both the Supreme Education Council, and the Supreme Health Council. She plays a very active role in promoting a wide range of issues at home, in the Gulf region, and internationally.

SAUDI ARABIA

AbuSulayman, Muna

Muna AbuSulayman is the former Director of the Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, and was the first Saudi woman to become a regional TV personality. She is one of the founding co-hosts of the *Kalam Naw'iem* show which was ranked number one across the Arab World for seven years in a row. She was also chosen as the first Saudi UN Goodwill Ambassador for the UNDP as well as a Young Global Leader at the World Economic Forum in the same year. Recently AbuSulayman has successfully launched, managed, and scaled multiple businesses, and is running a consultancy that focuses on finding "Big Ideas that Work" to solve problems in Education, Gender Issues, Media, and Entrepreneurship.

Al-Madani, HE Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali

Al-Madani is the president of the Islamic Development Bank, which aims to provide short and long-term solutions to poverty alleviation in the Muslim world. The Islamic Development Bank is the principal financing institution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Previously, al-Madani served as the deputy minister of education in Saudi Arabia, and as Secretary-General of the Muslim World League. He currently serves as a Member of the Board of Trustees of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology.

Al-Rajhi, Sulaiman Abdul Aziz

Al-Rajhi owns the world's largest organization for Islamic banking and finance, Al-Rajhi Bank. As Saudi Arabia's richest non-royals, members of the Al-Rajhi family are among the world's leading philanthropists. In 2012, Al-Rajhi received the King Faisal International Prize for dedicating half his fortune to charity. He also runs the SARR Foundation, a network of charities and research organizations. He has been listed as one of the "Richest Arabs 2010" by *Arab Business* and UAE Mega Projects.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-Hussein, HRH Princess Haya

HRH Princess Haya bint al-Hussein of Jordan is married to HH Amir Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and the ruler of Dubai. Princess Haya is recognized for her efforts in developing initiatives in humanitarianism, sports, health, science, culture, and business, as well as advancing the Millennium Development Goals toward the alleviation of hunger and poverty. She chairs Dubai's International Humanitarian City, which is now the world's largest operational centre for the delivery of aid in emergencies. She was an ambassador for the World Food Programme 2005-2007, and then appointed a UN Messenger of Peace in July 2007 by Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon. She writes editorials and articles on hunger, nutrition, and the UN Millennium Development Goals, and serves on the boards of many non-profit organizations. She founded Tkiyet Um Ali, the first Arab NGO dedicated to overcoming local hunger.

Al-Qassimi, Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed
Sheikh Sultan is the ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah. He had the educational vision to start "University City", which included the American University of Sharjah, the University of Sharjah, and other colleges. Since then, his vision has inspired neighbouring emirates and countries to emulate his endeavour of bringing world-class university education to the region. He is known for his philanthropic activities and has endowed chairs for Arabic and Islamic studies in Western universities (e.g. Exeter University).

Sub-Saharan Africa

SOUTH AFRICA

Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail

Sooliman is the founder of the Gift of the Givers Foundation. It is the largest disaster relief organization of African origin on the African continent. His organization has delivered over \$37 million in aid to 25 countries around the world. The organization has also designed and developed the world's first and largest containerized mobile hospital, which has been deployed in Bosnia. It also runs 24 development projects in South Africa and Malawi. He was awarded

South Africa's Order of the Baobab for distinguished service in April 2010.

Asia

INDIA

Prenji, Azim

Prenji is an Indian business tycoon and philanthropist who is the chairman of Wipro Limited, a leader in the software industry. According to *Forbes*, he is currently the third wealthiest Indian as well as being the richest Indian Muslim. The Azim Premji Foundation supports programmes that reach more than 2.5 million children. His recent \$2 billion donation to his foundation was the largest charitable contribution in the history of modern India. In 2011, he was awarded *Padma Vibhushan*, the second highest civilian award by the Government of India. By 2015, he has already given more than 39 per cent of his personal wealth to charity.

Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal

Maulana Badruddin Ajmal is a prominent businessman in India who runs the Ajmal Group of Companies that sells attar perfume, oils, and textiles. He is a proponent and member of various social service organizations and is also a scholar of Islam, having studied at the Darul Uloom Deoband. Qasmi is also a politician who founded the Assam United Democratic Front political party. He is noted for his contributions to charitable hospitals, orphanages, and educational institutions, including a women's science college.

INDONESIA

Bagir, Haidar

Haidar Bagir is the founder and director of Mizan, a large publishing company that significantly shapes the development of Islamic discourse in Indonesia. Bagir has founded and lectured in many educational institutions, and his philanthropic contributions include work on community development. He has written extensively on Sufism.

MALAYSIA

Al-Bukhary, Syed Mokhtar

According to *Forbes*, Syed Mokhtar al-Bukhary is the

8th richest Malaysian. He owns a variety of companies including the Malaysian Mining Corporation. He has established many humanitarian projects including rebuilding the lives of Afghan refugees, helping Pakistan's tsunami victims, and establishing an AIDS hospital in Uganda. He also supports many educational foundations.

PAKISTAN

Edhi, Abdul Sattar

Abdul Sattar Edhi is the founder of the Edhi Foundation, the largest and most organized social welfare system in Pakistan. For over 50 years, Edhi has devoted his time and resources to help the less fortunate by providing a range of services including a 24-hour emergency service across the country through 300 "Edhi centres", which provide free burial of unclaimed dead bodies. He also funds free hospitals and dispensaries, rehabilitation for drug addicts, shelter for the destitute, orphans, and handicapped persons, as well as national and international relief efforts. In November 2011, Edhi was recommended for a Nobel Peace Prize by the Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani.

Mushtaq, Chaudhary Faisal

Mr Mushtaq has excelled at providing a quality education for millions of people, an initiative that has occupied fifteen years of his life. He encourages academic excellence, student achievement, social entrepreneurship, and opportunity for all. He currently works in the capacity of Executive Director of Pakistan's leading Roots School System, the country's third largest private school. He is also the founder and CEO of Roots Millennium Schools in Pakistan and a member of many of the government's committees on education. He has helped students from various backgrounds fulfill their dreams of getting into top

universities worldwide. An attendee of the World Economic Forum, he is Pakistan's youngest national award winner of the *Tamgha-i-Imtiaz* and was voted as the best young entrepreneur of 2011 by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Rizvi, Prof Dr Adib

Dr Rizvi is one of Pakistan's leading humanitarians, having established the largest free health organization in Pakistan. He works as a doctor and an administrator at SIUT in Karachi, which was founded in 1971 as an eight-bed unit but is now the largest health organization in Pakistan, providing free and comprehensive services in urology, nephrology, transplantation, and liver-related diseases. He is a recipient of many awards for his life's work.

Europe

UNITED KINGDOM

Al-Banna, Dr Hany

Al-Banna is the co-founder and president of Islamic Relief, the largest Western-based international Muslim relief and development NGO. Established in 1984, the organization provides assistance in over 30 countries worldwide. Queen Elizabeth honoured al-Banna's work, granting him an Order of the British Empire for his services to the community.

Kazmi, Nadeem

Nadeem Kazmi is the Director for International Development of the Imam al-Khoei Benevolent Foundation based in London. The foundation is notable for its humanitarian aid and for its community work in both the UK and the United States.



"Ask the followers of the Remembrance if ye know not!"

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

SOCIAL ISSUES

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Abulmagd, HE Prof Dr Kamal

Abulmagd was the Vice President of the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt. He is an important intellectual in Egypt and the wider Arab world, and holds significant influence over media relations and public diplomacy in the Middle East. Shortly after 11 September 2001, Abulmagd was appointed the Commissioner Responsible for Dialogue between Civilizations by the Arab League. He is noted as one of the most influential “new Islamist” thinkers.

IRAN

Ebadi, Shirin

Shirin Ebadi is a lawyer who, in 2003, became the first Iranian to win the Nobel Peace Prize. She is the founder of Children's Rights Support Association and has defended and supported the rights of children and women. Ebadi lectures about the human rights situation in Iran and espouses a liberal view of Islam appreciated by many Muslim feminists. Since the presidential elections of 2009, she has been forced to live in exile (in London) while her husband is barred from travelling out of Iran.

JORDAN

Al-Hussein, HRH Prince Feisal ibn (new)

Read bio on page 107 in Honourable Mentions.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Abu Awwad, Khaled

Khaled Abu Awwad is the General Manager of the Israeli-Palestinian Bereaved Families Forum and Chairman of the Palestinian Institution for Development and Democracy, also known as Al Tareeq. He was awarded the 2011 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the promotion of tolerance and non-violence. In 2014 he co-founded, with a Rabbi, the group Roots,

which aims to foster dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis.

Abu Elaish, Dr Izzeldin

Izzeldin Abu Elaish is a Palestinian physician and internationally recognized peace and human rights activist devoted to advancing health and education opportunities for women and girls in the Middle East. He is also known for using health as a vehicle for peace. Dr Abu Elaish's book, *I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor's Journey*, an autobiography of his loss of his three daughters—Bessan, Mayar, and Aya—and their cousin Noor to Israeli shelling on 16 January 2009 and his subsequent transformation, has achieved critical acclaim. Published in 2010, and currently available in 17 different languages, the book has become an international best-seller. It has become a testament to his commitment to forgiveness as the solution to conflict, and the catalyst towards peace. He has received a number of national and international awards for his work.

Abu Sarah, Aziz

Aziz Abu Sarah is a Palestinian activist who is globally recognized for his work on peace and conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He is currently the Executive Director of the Centre for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University. He was named as National Geographic Explorer in 2011, being among only handful of Arabs and Muslims to get that position. He was given first prize of the intercultural innovation award by the UN. He continues to pioneer work in Palestine on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but has also been working in Afghanistan, Syria, and other Muslim and Arab countries mainly on sectarian conflicts and Islamic approaches to conflict resolution.

Al-Faqih, Judge Kholoud

Al-Faqih made history when she became the first female Sharia judge in the Middle East (in Ramallah, Palestine). She has travelled internationally to speak about her struggles in succeeding in a male-dominated field, and has become an inspiration to many females outside the Middle East as well. She was ranked number 10 of the “100 Most Powerful Arab Women” in 2012, by the CEO Middle East magazine, *Arabian Business*.

QATAR

Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali

Dr Abdulla bin Ali al-Thani is the President of the new Hamad Bin Khalifa University in the State of Qatar, and is Chairman of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE). Dr Abdulla, a member of Qatar's ruling family and a former university professor, is the man at the centre of many of Qatar's education initiatives, and is leading the way to transform Qatar's educational system.

Al-Thani, HE Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh bint Nasser

Sheikha Aisha al-Thani is the founder of the Doha Academy and board member of Reach Out to Asia, Qatar. She is also a member of the Qatar Supreme Education Council, the highest educational authority in Qatar. She is a modernist development thinker, who promotes a more pronounced and well-judged engagement with people of faith. Sheikha Aisha's perspective resonates with the more concerted efforts by humanitarian organizations to look at the networks of people of faith as a solution to practical development problems.

SAUDI ARABIA

Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed

Thoraya Obaid is one of the few Saudi women in the Shura Council. She was formerly the executive director of the United Nations Population Fund, the world's largest multilateral fund for population assistance. She was the first Saudi Arabian to head a UN agency and was also the chair of the principal inter-agency organization for coordinating management matters within the UN. She had underlined religion and culture as important aspects for the agency's development work.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mattar, Dr Maryam

Dr Maryam Mattar is Director-General of the Community Development Authority (CDA), a newly launched Dubai government authority that takes responsibility for setting up and developing frameworks for social development. She is also the founder and Executive Director of two non-profit civil associations, UAE Down's Syndrome Association and UAE Genetic Diseases Association. She has also initiated several national community outreach programs such as UAE Free of Thalassaemia by 2012 and established a

number of wellness centres. She was ranked the 83rd most powerful woman in the Arab world in 2012 by *Arabian Business*, and listed by *Muslim Science* as one of the top 20 Muslim female scientists.

YEMEN

Karman, Tawakul

Karman was one of three women jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2011. She is a Yemeni journalist and activist who has regularly led protests against the government. Over the past six years, this mother of three has campaigned for the release of political prisoners and advocated freedom of expression and other human rights. These activities have caused her to be jailed several times. She has repeatedly called for an end to US drone strikes in Yemen and was ranked second in the 2013 list of the *Most Powerful Arab Women* by *Arabian Business*.

Sub-Saharan Africa

BURKINA FASO

Aboubakary, Maiga

Aboubakary is the Secretary-General of the Burkina Faso Islamic Organization for Population and Development. His organization promotes family-planning in mosques around the country. The tremendous growth rate in Burkina Faso has put great strain on the economy there, and threatens to sharpen the already serious problem of poverty.

BURUNDI

Nkunduwiga, Haruna

Nkunduwiga is the secretary general of the Muslim Community of Burundi. He has been working recently to battle the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Burundi with other faith leaders to raise awareness, asking people to "stay clean". HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Burundi, affecting close to 20 percent of the urban population and nearly 10 percent of the rural population.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba

Abdoulaziz is the leader of the *Association Soulatine Pour Les Actions de Bienfaisance*. He works in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso on the development of

the Muslim community and the fair treatment of Muslims. He has been active at major international conferences trying to deal with the problem of Islamophobia.

GAMBIA, THE

Bensouda, Fatou

Bensouda is Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, being the first African woman to hold such a position. She is a former Attorney General and Minister of Justice. In 2012, she was named in *Time Magazine* as one of *The 100 Most Influential People in the World*.

MALAWI

Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala

Chabulika is the Islamic Information Bureau's national coordinator. He is known as an Islamic rights activist and has taken it upon himself to present the need to address social issues as religious duties. Chabulika works on health issues, exploitation, and has built bridges with non-Muslims in Malawi. He has also fought against the forced teaching of religious texts to school children.

NIGER

Mindaoudou, HE Dodo Aichatou

Aichatou was appointed as UN Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in May 2013. Ms Mindaoudou is a former Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and African Integrity. She has served the government since the mid-1990s and is the former Secretary General for the Network for Rural Law. Aichatou has written extensively about economic development and women's issues. She is one of the most senior-level women politicians in West Africa.

NIGERIA

Ashafa, Imam Muhammad

Ashafa is the co-director of the Muslim-Christian Interfaith Mediation Centre (in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria), a leading task force that resolves conflicts across the country. He works with Christian Pastor James Wuye to promote peace between religions. Previously, both were leaders who encouraged hatred of the others but have turned a leaf after being injured

and affected by inter-religious violence. Pastor Wuye and Imam Ashafa have gained a wide audience and mass interest in their particular story through speaking on the issue around the world and their successful work in resolving conflicts. In April 2013, they were awarded the first World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Amman, Jordan.

SENEGAL

Kane, Zeinaba

Zeinaba Kane is the President of Women of the Rassemblement Islamique du Sânegal (RIS) / Alwahda, the largest Islamic organization in Senegal, which is composed of over forty Islamic associations. She works for the improvement of living conditions for rural women in Senegal. She has written many articles and is frequently interviewed by the media.

SOMALIA

Abdi, Dr Hawa

Dr Hawa Abdi has for more than two decades been providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable victims of the civil war in Somalia. She has saved tens of thousands of lives in her hospital while simultaneously providing an education to hundreds of displaced children at the Waqaf-Dhiblawe school. Dr Abdi runs her 400-bed hospital, with the help of her daughters Deqo and Amina, who are also doctors, on her own savings and donations. She also helps to provide food and clean water, runs a school and a women's education centre and campaigns against female genital mutilation. In 2012, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her work in serving displaced persons and the rural population, providing equal access to healthcare, education, and food security for all.

Elmi, Asha Haji

Asha Haji Elmi is a peace activist in Somalia and a member of the Federal Parliament of Somalia. In 2008, she won the Right Livelihood Award (known as the alternative Nobel Prize). She is an activist for women's rights and formed the Six Clan 125 movement when women were excluded from the peace process in Somalia that involved the five traditional clans. Elmi is also the founder of Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) and campaigns internationally against female genital mutilation in Somalia and in other areas of Africa.

AFGHANISTAN

Joya, Malalai

A well-known activist, writer, and a former politician from Afghanistan. She was a parliamentarian in the National Assembly of Afghanistan, later to be dismissed for publicly condemning the Afghan parliament. She was the first ever to speak against the democratically elected Karzai administration and its western supporters, specifically the United States. Her actions have received international acclaim. She was listed in *The 100 Most Influential People of 2010* by *Times* as well as in the *Guardian's* top 100 women. She is renowned for her attempts to teach females how to read and write in the refugee camp where she resided during the Soviet Afghan war, later to be smuggled back to Afghanistan at the age of 16 to set up a secret school for girls.

BANGLADESH

Abed, Sir Fazle Hasan

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed is founder and Chairman of one of the largest non-governmental organizations in the world, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). It was established over 40 years ago and now has more than 140 million students of all levels and ages and in nine countries. He was recognized for a lifetime's work bringing basic primary education to some of the world's poorest communities, from Afghanistan to South Sudan, by being awarded the WISE Prize (established by the Qatar Foundation).

Hossain, Dr Hameeda

Dr Hossain has published many books and articles relating to human rights and women's issues in Bangladesh, in Islam, and worldwide. She is a founding member of *Ain o Salish Kendra*, a legal aid and human rights organization.

Yunus, Mohammad

Mohammad Yunus is the founder of the Grameen Bank. He developed the concept of microcredit for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. His efforts to create economic and social development and to help the impoverished escape poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them and by teaching them a few sound financial principles have been recognized by many international organizations including the King Hussein Foundation, Jordan and

UNESCO. In 2012, he was named the Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland.

CHINA

Tohti, Ilham

Ilham Tohti is a university professor who has supported the rights of ethnic Uighurs. He has recently been sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of separatism. Much of the evidence against him included his teaching materials and interviews with foreign journalists. This sentencing comes in the midst of a general Chinese crackdown on Muslim practice in their eastern region. There are estimated to be over 10 million Uighurs living in northwestern China in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

INDONESIA

Muhammad, Husein

Husein Muhammad is a commissioner of Indonesia's National Commission on Violence against Women. He is one of the founders of Fahmina Institute (in 1999), an NGO that advocates women's issues using an Islamic framework and reinterpretation of Islamic classical literature, *tafsir*, and *fiqh*. Muhammad has also written many articles and books about gender and women's issues in Islam. Muhammad led an anti-trafficking media campaign, which included the distribution of 22,000 leaflets each week in mosques after Friday prayers, along with outreach to village health clinics. His scholarship highlights the Islamic perspective on victims' rights, the rights of women and children, and the immorality of human trafficking, while emphasizing that victims should not be criminalized and that communities have a responsibility to combat trafficking.

MALAYSIA

Anwar, Zainah

Anwar is the founder and former executive director of Sisters in Islam, an organization committed to gender issues and increasing respect for women. She is also a journalist who has contributed to the *New Straits Times* and the *Star*, the country's two main newspapers, and has written a book about Islam in Malaysia. She also addressed prestigious overseas forums such as the World Economic Forum in Davos and has delivered a keynote address titled *Islam, Human Rights, and Activism* at Harvard University.

NEPAL

Siddiqui, Mohammadi

Mohammadi Siddiqui is a pioneer female Muslim politician, social worker, and human rights activist. She established the Fatima Foundation in 2003 to ensure Muslim women's rights on two related fronts: the personal daily struggle of women against discrimination, and the social and legal practices that influence women's independence and access to basic rights. The foundation organizes Muslim women's groups and works with religious scholars and women leaders to educate women and raise awareness of their rights in order to advocate for the practice of "actual" Islamic law and ensure social justice for women. The foundation also publishes books and translations of the Qur'an in the local language and provides services to the victims of domestic violence.

PAKISTAN

Jehangir, Asma

Asma Jehangir is a well-known jurist who has fought many high-profile social justice cases. She is a former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association and founder Chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). She refused an offer to become a caretaker Prime Minister.

Yousafzai, Malala

The teenager who was shot in a school bus by the Taliban for encouraging girls to go to school in Swat. After the assassination attempt, Malala was flown to England, where she recovered and then continued her schooling. She has received high-profile support for her campaign to ensure that all children worldwide be schooled. In 2013, Yousafzai spoke at the UN, became the recipient of the prestigious Sakharov Prize and was nominated for the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. In 2014, at the age of 17 she became the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. (She was a co-recipient.) She has been granted audiences with royalty and world leaders, and this along with her high-profile international exposure has led some in her native Pakistan to question whether she has overreached.

PHILIPPINES

Rasul, Santanina Tillah

The first and only Muslim woman elected to the Philippine Senate, former Senator Santanina Tillah Rasul is also the last Muslim Senator of the Philippines. She is chair and founder of the *Magbassa Kita*

(Let us Read) Foundation Inc, which focuses on literacy and education. She is noted for her work towards women's empowerment, effective civil service, improved literacy for the Muslims of Mindanao, and equitable treatment of Muslims of the Philippines. She authored much landmark legislation including: the *Women in Development and Nation-Building Act* which empowered women, allocated development funds for women's initiatives, and opened the Philippine Military Academy to women. A peace champion, she was a member of the government panel during the peace talks with the Moro National Liberation Front that led to a peace agreement that was signed in 1996.

Rasul-Bernardo, Amina

Amina Rasul-Bernardo, advocate for peace and democracy, is President and Co-founder of the Philippine Centre for Islam and Democracy (PCID), and a columnist with the *BusinessWorld*. Appointed Director of the Mindanao Development Authority, she was a member of the cabinet of former President Fidel V Ramos, former Commissioner for Women, former Director of the Development Bank of the Philippines and Director of the Philippine National Oil Corporation. She has led the organizing of the National Ulama Conference of the Philippines, and the Noorus Salam (Light of Peace), a national network of *ustadzas* and Muslim women civil society leaders. She has also led the development of an Islamic Model for Peace Education for Mindanao. She was awarded as Mindanao Peace Champion by the UN Act for Peace Programme in December 2010, Muslim Democrat of the Year 2007, and in 2013, she won second prize of the World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize.

SRI LANKA

Ismail, Jezima

The founder of the Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum (MWRAF), and the President of the Sri Lanka Muslim Women's Conference (SLMWC), Jezima Ismail has been an educator for over three decades. She serves on various international committees on women's rights and is the recipient of various awards in recognition of her work.

Marsoof, Justice Saleem

Supreme Court Judge Saleem Marsoof was sworn in as the Acting Chief Justice before President Mahinda Rajapaksa in May 2013. Justice Marsoof is a former judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and former president of the Court of Appeals. He is an award-

winning lecturer on law and development of legal studies and a prolific author with special interest in law reform in Sri Lanka.

THAILAND

Sabur, M Abdus

Sabur is the Secretary-General and co-founder of the Asian Resource Foundation and the Asian Muslim Action Network. He is also co-director of the School of Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation in Bangkok. In the nineties Sabur served as coordinator of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD). He has edited a number of publications on peace and dialogue in Southeast Asia including *Understanding Human Rights: Perspectives from South Asia*, *Interfaith Conference on the Culture of Peace, Globalization and Asian Perspectives for an Alternative Development*, and *Towards Peace in Multi-Ethnic Asia*.

Europe

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Mahmutćehajić, HE Prof Dr Rusmir

Rusmir Mahmutćehajić is a Bosnian academic, author, and former statesman. Considered one of Bosnia's leading intellectuals and public figures, he is the foremost advocate of the idea of a diverse Bosnia. A scholar of the Muslim intellectual tradition and a contributor to contemporary Muslim thought and the liberal interpretation of Islam, Professor Mahmutćehajić has served his country as Deputy Prime Minister and as Energy Minister through the process of independence and much of the war (1991—5). For the past 15 years, he has been President of International Forum Bosnia, which is dedicated to the development of critical intelligence and a plural society in Bosnia. He is the author of more than 20 books in Bosnian, some 12 of which have been published in multiple languages, and author of several hundred academic articles and essays.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ahmed, Muddassar

Muddassar is Managing Partner of Unitas Communications, a leading reputation management agency. Unitas is the official agency for the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, other clients include various

governments and international organisations. Muddassar is currently President of the Concordia Forum, an annual retreat for Western Muslim leaders. He's also President of John Adams Society and a director of Duke University's Centre for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, the European Network of American Alumni Associations, HaLOL Entertainment, and Faith's Forum for London. He's a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts and a Member of the US Atlantic Council. Muddassar recently completed a term as Advisor to the UK Government.

Amin, Imtiaz (new)

Amin is the founder and CEO of the award winning Zahid Mubarek Trust (ZMT) which was established to oversee the national implementation of the recommendations stemming from the Mubarek Inquiry and campaigns for penal reform. The Trust is one of a few independent organisations which successfully prioritise the equality function in UK prisons whilst providing advocacy to offenders who face discrimination.

Hasan, Mehdi

Mehdi is a leading Muslim political journalist whose analysis and comments on contemporary issues find resonance with many Muslims, especially the younger generation. He currently works as the Political Director of the *Huffington Post* UK and also presents *Head To Head* on Al Jazeera English (AJE). He previously worked for the Guardian, BBC and Sky News.

Ismail, Sufyan (new)

Ismail is an award-winning entrepreneur who has now turned his attention to a string of philanthropic endeavours including: humanitarian relief work, Islamic finance, and Muslim community empowerment. His involvement in the latter endeavour is through the work of MEND, an organization involved in media engagement, lobbying, and policy research. On the community empowerment front, MEND regularly works with grassroots Muslims to help them tackle Islamophobia locally and to increase their media and political literacy.

Khalid, Fazlun

Fazlun Khalid is the founder and director of the Birmingham-based Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences. Khaled is an expert on Islamic environmentalism, and has written extensively on religion and conservation. One of his major projects involved working with fishermen in Zanzibar,

North America

and persuading them, in light of Qur'anic teachings, to stop dynamiting the coral reefs to help their fishing.

Nahdi, Fuad

Fuad Nahdi is a pioneering and award-winning journalist, campaigner, thinker, and interfaith activist whose contributions have spanned three decades. He is currently Executive Director of the Radical Middle Way, which has harnessed positive religious narratives to encourage civic engagement, encourage positive social action, and empower relevant religious leadership to build resilience to violence and extremism. In 2014, Nahdi became the first Muslim to address the General Synod of The Church of England.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Ali, Imam Afroz

Imam Afroz studied in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Mauritania, and at al-Azhar University before he established the al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences & Human Development. A professional architect, he offers commercial corporate training on team building, personal leadership, spiritual development, and motivation and goal setting. He is involved in various community developments and sustainable environment projects in Australia and the Pacific and is a recipient of the International Ambassador for Peace award. Lately, he has worked extensively with SeekersHub Global where he serves as the Managing Director.

Chowdhury, Shaykh Tawfique

Chowdhury is the Founder, Chairman and CEO of Mercy Mission, which is now considered to be one of the world's fastest growing Muslim social enterprises. Its premier program is the AlKauthar Institute [alkauthar.org], established in 2005, growing from the UK and delivering weekend Islamic courses to professionals and the public across the Western world, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Tawfique is a Medical Doctor by profession from Australia who has also been trained in Islamic theology, specializing in Islamic finance, personal law and Islamic medical ethics. He also runs a successful multinational IT company, and is a corporate trainer and business coach to many successful people worldwide.

CANADA

Kutty, Faisal

A leading North American Muslim lawyer, Faisal Kutty is outspoken on issues of human rights, Islamic thought, and anti-terror legislation. He is a co-founder of KSM Law, a respected Toronto law firm with an international client base. He co-founded the Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association and served as its first legal counsel and previously served as the vice chair and legal counsel to the Council on American Islamic Relations (Canadian Chapter). He has written numerous op-eds, academic articles, papers, reviews, and essays on topics ranging from national security to religion and law. He is currently an assistant professor of law at Valparaiso University School of Law in Indiana and serves as an adjunct professor of law at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Al-Hibri, Dr Azizah

Founder and Chair of Karamah Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, Dr al-Hibri Esq leads a dynamic organization dedicated to the empowerment of Muslim women by focusing on the Qur'anic principle of *'adalah* and its egalitarian message of gender-equity. Al-Hibri is also a Professor Emerita of Law at the TC Williams School of Law, University of Richmond, where she has published numerous articles on Islamic jurisprudence in American law journals. She was appointed by President Obama in 2011 for a two year term as a commissioner on the US Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Awad, Nihad

Nihad Awad is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR is the most prominent Muslim lobby group in the US and is frequently sought out by the media and politicians for the Islamic perspective on events. Awad is one of the signatories of *A Common Word Between Us and You* and participates regularly in the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Awad coordinated the formal release of the *Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi*, signed by over 120 leading Muslim scholars and academics, which rejected the teachings that DA'ISH are promoting.

Khan, Salman

Salman Khan is the founder of an online educational website which features more than 4,000 mini-lectures for people around the world. It is a free website which has video tutorials stored on websites such as YouTube teaching subjects such as mathematics, history, health-care, medicine, finance, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, economics, cosmology, organic chemistry, American civics, art history, macroeconomics, microeconomics, and computer science. Overall, they have delivered over 240 million lessons. He recently published the international best-seller, *The One World Schoolhouse*, in October 2012. He was featured on the *Forbes* magazine cover with the story *\$1 Trillion Opportunity* where he was described as "the Most Influential Person In Education Technology."

Majid, Imam Mohammed

An outstanding figure in inter-faith activities, Imam Majid is the Imam and executive director of the ADAMS Centre in Virginia and former president of ISNA. He is an advocate for youth and women and serves on the FBI's Muslim, Sikh, and Arab Advisory Committee. Imam Magid was among the ten "Washingtonians of the year" in 2010 who were presented with the *Washingtonian Magazine's* award for outstanding leadership, in particular for his efforts toward inter-faith bridge-building. He has served as an advisor to many in Washington, including President Obama.

Mogahed, Dalia

Dalia Mogahed is the Director of Research at ISPU, where she works on major research projects related to American Muslim families and institutions. Previously, she was the Executive Director at the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. She was appointed by President Obama to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and is the first hijab-wearing Muslim woman to hold a White House position. Mogahed has also held high positions in the US-Muslim Engagement Project and is co-author of the book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. She is a frequent expert commentator in global media outlets and international forums.

Mujahid, Abdul Malik

As president of the multimedia company Sound Vision he has created a critical educational resource for Muslims. His development of the *Radio Islam* nightly talk show in Chicago is not only a source of support for Muslims, but an important educational

link to non-Muslims in the greater Chicago area. During his tenure as Chair of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago and now in his role as Chair of the Parliament of the World's Religions, Mujahid speaks with eloquence not only about the destructiveness of Islamophobia but also of the need for all people to come together in a spirit of justice and peace.

Qadhi, Dr Yasir (new)

Yasir Qadhi is the Dean of Academic Affairs at the al-Maghrib Institute in the USA. He has established a reputation as a cleric who appreciates the cultural impact that Muslims have to face in the US. He is also renowned for reaching out to mainstream Americans of different religions and media outlets to promote a better understanding of Islam in the face of stereotypical views of Muslims in the US.

Sarsour, Linda (new)

An American-Palestinian award-winning human rights and social justice activist and a fighter against the rapidly increasing Islamophobic acts and racial injustice in the United States, Linda is the Executive Director of the Arab American Association of New York and Senior Strategist for the Campaign to Take on Hate. She is also the co-founder of the Muslim Democratic Club of New York, the first of its kind in New York City. Her awards and honours in her continuous efforts to stand in the face of hate crimes include Champion of Change by the White House, the New York City Council's Shirley Chisholm Women of Distinction Award, and the inaugural American Muslim of the Year honour from the Council on American Islamic Relations. Linda has also written for and been featured in local, national and international media on issues that focus on Arab-Muslim American communities, immigration, criminal justice issues, and Middle East affairs.

BUSINESS

Middle East and North Africa

BAHRAIN

Al-Zayani, Afnan

Afnan al-Zayani is the CEO of the multi-million dollar company al-Zayani Commercial Services (AZCS). She is recognized internationally as one of the most powerful businesswomen of this era. She is responsible for the passing of personal status laws in Bahrain that ensure the protection of Muslim women's rights in divorce and custody proceedings, something she oversaw during her leadership of the Bahrain Businesswomen's Society (BBS). Subsequently, al-Zayani led the Middle East and North Africa Businesswomen's Network and in 2010 she received the Leadership in Public Life Award from Vital Voices, a women's empowerment organization. She was listed among the most powerful women by *Forbes* and *Arabian Business* magazine.

IRAN

Ansari, Anousheh

Anousheh Ansari is a prominent Iranian businesswoman who is chairman, CEO, and co-founder of Prodea Systems, a private US-based company which offers technological solutions for businesses. In 2004, along with other members of the Ansari family, she co-sponsored the Ansari X Prize which awarded \$10 million to the first company that launched a reusable manned spacecraft. However, she garners most of her influence for being the first privately-funded woman, and the first Iranian, to explore space in 2006. She was lauded for leading a new era that financially advances scientific development while extending participation in space exploration to women and "space tourists". She recently received an Honorary Doctorate of Science from Utah Valley University.

JORDAN

Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal

Abu-Ghazaleh is the chairman and founder of the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization. He is credited with

introducing the concept of intellectual property into the Arab World. Abu-Ghazaleh has been selected as deputy chairman of the UN Global Compact, as well as being appointed by the UN as Chair of UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development. He is the only person listed in the IP Hall of Fame in Chicago, USA, who is not from one of the G8 countries.

KUWAIT

Al-Bahar, Sheikha

Sheikha al-Bahar is the deputy CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait and is responsible for \$16bn. She is in charge of loans, investment banking, marketing, and treasury. Al-Bahar is also the chairperson of Al Watany Bank of Egypt and is the vice-chair at NBK Capital, a subsidiary of National Bank of Kuwait, and sits on the board of the International Bank of Qatar. She attended business schools such as Harvard Business School, California University, Stanford University, and Duke University.

Al-Ghunaim, Maha

Al-Ghunaim is an Arab Kuwaiti specializing in banking and finance. In 1998, she founded Global Investment House, one of the most renowned companies in the Arab World. She is well-known for taking the company international and into the London Stock Exchange in 2008, making it the first Kuwaiti company to be listed on the exchange. The firm is also listed on the Kuwait, Dubai, and Bahrain stock exchanges.

LEBANON

Kassar, Adnan

Kassar is a renowned award-winning Lebanese politician and businessman who held the position of President of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce and Industry for over 30 years. He was the steering power behind Lebanon, remaining open for business during its long years of war and conflict. Kassar acquired Fransabank and has made it the largest branch network in Lebanon. He has been awarded several orders as recognition for his efforts, including: The Order Merit by France, Italy, and Hungary; Commander of the Rio Branco order granted by the President of Brazil; China Honorary Award; and Order of Friendship State Decoration of the Russian Federation. Kassar was recently the recipient of the Business for Peace Award 2014.

MOROCCO

Bouhia, Hynd

A Moroccan-born, Harvard PhD holder, Bouhia was a helping hand in her country's bourse as well as being the Prime Minister's advisor on economic issues in 2004. Bouhia was in the forefront of securing foreign investment and attracted a \$700m US grant to aid private enterprises. She was ranked as one of the most influential women in the world by *Forbes* magazine as well as *Arabian Business*. Bouhia was a Special Assistant to the Vice President for Middle East and North Africa, specifically in economic, technical and diplomatic issues.

QATAR

Al-Ansari, Buthaina

For her extensive and devoted work, al-Ansari was voted *L'Officiel* Qatar's most inspirational Arab woman of the year in 2012, was named "Business Woman of the Year 2011" by *Arabian Business*, and rated 67 among the 100 most powerful women in the Middle East in 2011. She is manager of a strategic programme planning in Qatar Telecom and founder and chairperson for Qatariat T&D holding company aimed to assist women to develop their knowledge. An entrepreneur at heart, she is a strong supporter of women who are determined to contribute to the society and economy of Qatar.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali

Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Ali al-Amoudi has a portfolio of businesses in oil, mining, agriculture, hotels, hospitals, finance, operations, and maintenance in various countries including Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia. His charitable and philanthropic works are substantial, especially in Ethiopia. In 2014, *Forbes* listed him as the second wealthiest Arab and ranked him as 61st on its annual billionaires list.

Al-Saud, HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz

Prince al-Waleed bin Talal is a member of the Saudi royal family who has who has built up a fortune through entrepreneurship and investment in real-estate and the stock market. His philanthropic contributions are wide-ranging and include a contribution of \$20 million to found the Centre for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, which remains one of the key institutions globally working on

Christian-Muslim relations. He has worked tirelessly for women's empowerment. He recently announced that he would donate his entire fortune to charity. His net worth is estimated at \$30 billion, according to *Forbes*, making him the 34th richest person in the world on their list published in 2015.

Al-Saud, HRH Prince Mohammed Al-Faisal

Prince Mohammed al-Faisal has been groundbreaking in the area of Islamic finance, setting up the first modern bank run in compliance with the rules of the Sharia. The Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt was set up in Cairo in 1977, and aimed to be a model of Islamic banking for future initiatives. The bank was set up in Egypt because at the time Saudi Arabia rejected the idea that interest went against Islamic teachings; Islamic banking is founded on the premise of lending without interest. Prince al-Faisal remains the chairman of the board of directors of the bank.

Bin Laden, Bakr

Bakr bin Laden, half-brother of the deceased al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, is the chairman of the Saudi Binladin Group. Revenue of his company is estimated at \$6 billion. He was listed number three on the 2013 Construction Week Power 100 by *Arabian Business*. His company is responsible for construction projects in the al-Haram al-Sharif in Makkah, such as the expansion and the *Jamarat* projects. The group has been involved with several major projects in the country, including the King Abdullah Economic City, the King Abdul Aziz International Airport, and the King Saud University. The property giant has also signed a \$1 billion deal with the Kingdom Holding Group to build Kingdom Tower, the world's tallest building, in Jeddah.

Olayan, Lubna

Lubna Olayan is internationally recognized as Saudi Arabia's top businesswoman. As a leading investor in the Saudi economy, chief executive officer of the Olayan Financing Company, and a board member for organizations such as Saudi Hollandi Bank, Rolls Royce, and Citigroup, among others, she is one of the most influential businesswomen in the world. She has been listed as the 86th most powerful woman in the world by *Forbes* in 2014.

SUDAN

Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed 'Mo'

Mohamed Ibrahim—more commonly known as Mo

Ibrahim—is a Sudanese-born entrepreneur, currently based in the UK. He became successful as a businessman in the telecommunications industry, founding one of Africa's biggest cellular phone companies, Celtel. He has recently come to prominence for his idea of the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership—which awards the recipient a \$5 million initial payment, plus \$200,000 a year for life. The prize was conceived as a way to curb corruption by African leaders, who often resort to corruption to obtain financial security when they leave office, and to promote good governance. The prize is believed to be the world's largest, surpassing the \$1.3 million Nobel Peace Prize.

SYRIA

Alchaar, Dr Mohammed Nedal

Alchaar is the secretary general of the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI). The AAOIFI is an independent international corporate organization supported by its 200 members from 45 countries around the globe which comprise the international Islamic banking and finance industry. It is one of the key organizations creating standards for the Islamic banking industry.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-Abbar, Mohamed Ben Ali

Mohamed Ben Ali al-Abbar is a member of the Executive Board of the Government of Dubai and the Director of the Department of Economic Development. Under his leadership Dubai has been one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. He has been successful in increasing the financial regulations requiring transparency, making Dubai a more attractive place to invest and do business in. He is one of the main assistants of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, and is the Chairman of Emaar, one of the world's largest real estate companies. *Arabian Business* ranked him as the world's fourth most powerful Arab.

Al-Gurg, Raja (new)

Raja al-Gurg is the Managing Director of Easa Saleh Al-Gurg (ESAG) Group LLC and President of the Dubai Business Women's Council. After leaving her 11-year role as secondary school headmistress, she joined the Board of Directors of the ESAG Group. She expanded ESAG to include 24 companies and 370 international brand partnerships. Raja operates in a variety of philanthropic, economic, political,

and feminist capacities throughout the region via her affiliation with other societies and companies.

Al-Jaber, Fatima

Al-Jaber is an Emirati businesswoman and Chief Operating Officer of the Al-Jaber Group. She supervises more than 50,000 employees and manages around \$4.9 billion in assets. She speaks on a regular basis in economic-oriented conferences. Al-Jaber was the first ever Emirati woman to be elected to the board of directors at the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce in December 2009. She has received many awards and was listed as the 94th most powerful woman in the world by *Forbes* in 2014.

Al-Qassimi, Sheikha Lubna

Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid bin Sultan al-Qassimi is the UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade. She was the first woman to hold a ministerial post in the UAE where she served as the Minister of Economic and Planning from 2000-2004. In 2000, she founded Tejari, the Middle East's first business-to-business online marketplace, which now has franchises in Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. In March 2014, she was appointed President of Zayed University and is frequently ranked highly in most powerful women lists. (She was listed 42nd in 2015 by *Forbes*, and first in 2012 by *Arabian Business*.)

Lootah, Haj Saeed

Haj Saeed Lootah is an accomplished entrepreneur, businessman, philanthropist, and visionary community leader. In 1975, Haj Saeed set up the first commercial Islamic bank in the world: Dubai Islamic Bank. He built his construction company into a business empire that has holdings in almost all economic sectors. He maintains high ethical and Islamic standards throughout all his companies. He has been granted honorary degrees from universities in the USA and Russia. Haj Saeed was also presented with EFICA Lifetime Achievement Award for contribution to Islamic banking.

Sub-Saharan Africa

KENYA

Merali, Naushad

Merali is a business tycoon who has helped the commercial development in Kenya. He is best known for owning three of Kenya's major companies; Sasini

Ltd, battery manufacturer Eveready East Africa, and Sameer Africa. He is also chairman of the mobile phone company Bharti Airtel's Kenya operations. Merali was listed in Africa's 50 richest people by *Forbes*.

NIGERIA

Dangote, Alhaji Aliko

He is the Chairman and CEO of Dangote Group, which is the largest industrial group in Nigeria. He is the richest man in Africa and the 23rd richest person in the world. In January 2009, Dangote was honoured for being the leading provider of employment in the Nigerian construction industry. In 2011, Dangote was also awarded Nigeria's second highest honour, Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) by the President of Nigeria. As a philanthropist, he has donated to the Abuja National Mosque, the Presidential Library, and a host of charities.

Asia

BRUNEI

Waddaulah, HM Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Sultan of Brunei Darussalam

HM Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah has been the Sultan since 1967. His Majesty is one of the wealthiest people in the world. His official residence has over 1,800 rooms and he maintains a car collection in the thousands. He owns many properties (via the Brunei Investment Authority) in the UK including the famous Dorchester hotel. He is estimated to be worth \$20 billion.

INDONESIA

Indrawati, Sri Mulyani

Sri Mulyani Indrawati ranks among the most powerful women in the world. She is one of the few Indonesian policymakers with an international profile. During her time as Finance Minister, Southeast Asia's largest economy became a member of the group of 20 leading economies and was one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, partly thanks to the combination of sound economic policies and a more stable political situation. She was appointed Managing Director of the World Bank in 2010.

MALAYSIA

Bin Hashim, Tan Sri Muhammad Ali (new)

Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Bin Hashim served as President and CEO of Johor Corporation for more than 28 years as well as holding a mayoral position for one of Malaysia's most successful industrial townships for a period of 26 years. He is currently President of the Malaysian Islamic Chamber of Commerce (DPIM) and has been awarded Malaysia's *Ma'al Hijrah* Appreciation Award. His three books speak about how to fully meet highest social responsibility as well as environmental sustainability standards, and at the same time fully integrate Islamic aspirations into business practice, aligning them with the objectives of *maqasid al-sharia*.

Europe

TURKEY

Sabancı, Güler

Sabancı is a renowned award-winning Turkish businesswoman and the chairperson of the family-controlled Sabancı Holding, a \$25 billion industrial and financial corporation, the second largest in Turkey. Ban Ki-moon appointed Sabancı as a member of the Board of United Nations Global Compact, the UN's highest-level advisory body involving business, civil society, labour, and employers organizations. She was recently honoured with the David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award for her philanthropic contributions.

UNITED KINGDOM

Shafik, Nemat (new)

An active economist who has held significant position in international organisations, Shafik is the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England. She was the Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund and was the Permanent Secretary of the United Kingdom Department for International Development. She has written extensively in the fields of globalisation, emerging markets and private investment, international development, the Middle East and Africa, and the environment. She was granted the title Dame Commander of the British Empire in the June 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Yassine, Talal

Talal has spent 20 years in business, politics, and charity work. He is the Founder and Managing Director of Crescent Wealth, the world's first Sharia-compliant pension fund. Talal also serves as the Chairman of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Council of Australian-Arab Relations. He is also a Director of Australia Post (a 6 billion dollar revenue organization with 35,000 employees) and serves on the Whitlam Institute Limited, an esteemed Prime Ministerial Board connected to the University of Western Sydney. Talal is also a Professorial Fellow at the Australian National University.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

El-Erian, Mohamed

El-Erian's career history started from the International Monetary Fund where he worked for 15 years and served as deputy director. He then worked as managing director at Citigroup in London, and later moved to PIMCO, a global investment management firm and one of the world's largest bond investors, serving as CEO. He is currently Chief Economic Adviser at Allianz, which is the world's largest insurance company and was appointed by President Obama as chair of the Global Development Council. El-Erian contributes to major economic journals and magazines such as *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg View*, *Business Insider* as well as *Fortune* (CNN), and *Foreign Policy*. In April 2013, *Foreign Policy* named him one of the 500 most powerful people on the planet.



“Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter; but Allah will leave, to stray, those who do wrong: Allah doeth what He willeth.”

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Amer, Dr Ghada Mohammed

Dr Ghada is the Vice-President of the Global Awqaf Research Centre that aims to employ technology as well as to help poor communities through *waqf* (a trust). She is also Deputy head of of the Arab Science and Technology Foundation, and Head of Electrical Engineering at the University of Benha. She has been listed in the top 20 of the most influential scientists in the Muslim world according to the *Muslim Science* British Magazine. She has contributed to the field of electrical engineering and has been productive in supporting Muslim and Arab women's issues in the fields of science, technology, and entrepreneurship.

El-Baz, Farouk

Farouk el-Baz worked with NASA as an assistant in exploring the moon as well as selecting landing sites for the Apollo missions and the training of astronauts in lunar observations and photography. He is well-known for discovering groundwater in arid land, and in 1999, the Farouk El-Baz Award for Desert Research was established by the Geological Society of America Foundation (GSAF) to annually reward excellence in arid land studies. Another award was established in 2007 by the GSAF, the Farouk El-Baz Student Research Award to encourage desert research. He has received numerous honours and awards, including: Egypt's Order of Merit – First Class.

El-Naggar, Zaghloul

El-Naggar is an Egyptian geologist and scholar who writes and speaks on science and the Qur'an. He is a fellow of the Islamic Academy of Sciences, and is well-respected by the global scientific community for his work on geology. He has published close to 200 academic scholarly articles and scientific studies. He also works for the Arab Development Institute.

IRAN

Salehi, Dr Ali Akbar

Dr Ali Akbar Salehi was appointed as head of the Atomic Energy Organization in Iran in July 2009, after the resignation of Gholam Reza Aghazadeh. Salehi is an academic and politician who has been involved in developing Iran's nuclear energy program since before the Islamic revolution in 1979. He transitioned to leading the Atomic Energy Organization after serving as a permanent representative of Iran with the International Atomic Energy Agency. He is the former Minister of Foreign Affairs.

JORDAN

Dajani, Prof Rana

Rana Dajani is a professor of molecular biology who obtained her degree from the University of Iowa through the Fulbright program. Dr Rana is also a renowned public speaker and has given speeches internationally. Her initiative "We Love Reading" garnered her the Synergos Arab World Social Innovator Award in 2009. Other awards include: a membership to the Clinton Global Initiative 2010 and a place in the book *Innovation in Education: Lessons from Pioneers Around the World*. She was also named one of the 20 most influential scientists in the Muslim world by the *Muslim Science* British Magazine.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Namankany, Abeer

Dr al-Namankany made history when she became the first person in the world to create pediatric dentistry and psychology inquiries to measure and treat dental anxiety using drug-free psychotherapy methods, a method used to protect patients from the risks of general anesthesia and the side-effects of the medicine used for sedation. She is the winner of six Distinguished Clinical and Research Awards including from: The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (The Research Prize), and The Young Researcher's Prize of the Emirates Medical Association. Other than her medical excellence, Dr Abeer is a social activist and a defender of women's and children's rights.

Sindi, Hayat

Hayat Sindi is a pioneer in the field of medical science with a number of significant groundbreaking scientific contributions. She was chosen amongst a

delegation of 15 of the best scientists in the world to explore the trends and the future of science. She was the first female member of the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia, the first Saudi to complete her studies at Cambridge University in the field of biotechnology, and the first Arab to complete a doctoral degree in the field. She was ranked by *Arabian Business* as the 19th most influential Arab in the world and the ninth most influential Arab woman in 2012. Sindi has been appointed by UNESCO as a Goodwill Ambassador in recognition of her efforts in promoting science education in the Middle East.

Asia

INDONESIA

Mumpuni, Tri

Tri Mumpuni has spent 14 years on improving rural communities in Indonesia through rural electrification initiatives based on developments with micro-hydroelectric power plants. Her influential work, which offers economic incentives for implementation of the micro-hydro system, has been applied in 65 villages across Indonesia and a village in the Philippines. She was presented with the award for Community Power at the Ashden Awards in May 2012.

MALAYSIA

Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar

Dr Shukor, an orthopaedic surgeon by profession, became the first Malaysian in space when he was selected as one of two astronauts to be trained at Star City in Russia and subsequently selected to be the astronaut to further Malaysia's Angkasawan program, which sent him to the International Space Station in 2007. Images of him praying and celebrating Eid increased his popularity in the Muslim world. His launch also prompted the Malaysian National Fatwa Council to issue specific rulings regarding observance of religious obligations (praying and fasting) while in space. In 2010 Shukor was appointed as one of the ambassadors of Malaysia's nationwide reading campaign to encourage literacy among children.

PAKISTAN

Atta-Ur Rahman, Prof

Atta-Ur Rahman is the coordinator general of the

OIC's COMSTECH, the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the promotion and cooperation of science and technology activities among the OIC member states. Rahman is also former Pakistani Federal Minister for Science and Technology, former chairman of the Higher Education Commission and president of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences. In 1999 he became the first Muslim scientist to win the UNESCO Science Prize. In July 2013, in recognition of his work in the field of science, the largest Malaysian university, Universiti Teknologi Mara, named its Research Institute of Natural Products after Professor Atta-ur-Rahman. He was given the International Cooperation Award, the highest award of the Chinese Academy of Sciences for Institution Building, in January 2014.

Khan, Dr Abdul Qadeer

Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan is the scientist who brought nuclear technology and nuclear weapons technology in the 1970s to Pakistan which was the first—and remains the only—Muslim-majority country to have nuclear weapons. This has made him a figure of great international interest. He has continued to use his financial success and stature to improve the quality of education in Pakistan through building educational institutions for metallurgical engineering. He has also formed a political party called *Tehreek-e-Tahafuzz Pakistan* (Save Pakistan Movement - SPM), but didn't himself contest the general elections in 2013.

Saif, Umar

An award-winning scientist, entrepreneur, innovator, and a tech tycoon, Dr Saif studied at Cambridge and was a core member of the \$50 million Project Oxygen at MIT. He created the first startup incubators in Pakistan called the Saif Center of Innovation and is the founding Vice Chancellor of the Information Technology University Punjab and is one of the main forces behind the IT ecosystem in Pakistan. The *MIT Technology Review* named Saif among its list of the 35 "World's Top Young Innovators for the year 2011" and he was named: "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum in 2010. He is the recipient of many other awards.

THAILAND

Dahlan, Prof Dr Winai

Prof Dr Winai Dahlan is the director of the Halal Science Centre (HASCI) in Thailand, named the Best Innovation in the Halal Industry by Malaysia's *Halal*

Journal. HASCI promotes halal manufacturing and service through exhibitions and regional cooperation with halal centres in Indonesia and Malaysia. Dr Winai Dahlan is involved in scientific training and has written more than 30 original research articles published internationally and locally. He has also produced more than 2000 scientific and nutritional articles, writing weekly in 3 magazines since 1989. He is the only Thai Muslim Scientist ranked in *The World's 16 most Influential Muslim Scientists in Science and Technology*.

Europe

FRANCE

Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd al Haqq

Dr Guiderdoni is an astrophysicist and French convert to Islam. A specialist in galaxy formation and evolution, he has published more than 140 papers and organized several conferences on these subjects. Guiderdoni serves as Director of the Observatory of Lyon. Besides his extensive writings on science, he has also published around 60 papers on Islamic theology and mysticism and is now Director of the Islamic Institute for Advanced Studies.

UNITED KINGDOM

Al-Hassani, Dr Salim

Dr Salim al-Hassani is a former professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, and the celebrated author of *1001 Inventions: Muslim Heritage in Our World*, a best-selling account of scientific and technological developments in Islamic history. Dr al-Hassani also serves as the chairman and founder of the Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilisation, which partners with the Abdul Latif Jameel Foundation, a British charity that showcased the 1001 Inventions Global Touring Exhibition across the UK, the United States, and Turkey in 2010.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Amanat, Omar

Omar Amanat is an entrepreneur and successful businessman. He founded Tradescape Corporation before its sale to E*Trade in 2002 for \$280 million. Amanat is the founder of Summit Entertainment, a production and distribution studio in Hollywood worth \$1 billion that created the popular sitcom *Aliens in America*. *The Wall Street Journal* named Amanat one of the "Top Ten Most Influential Technologists".

Elgamal, Taher

Taher Elgamal, widely known as the "father of SSL (Secure Sockets Layer)", is a world-renowned Egyptian-American cryptographer. In addition to being the driving force behind SSL, the technology used to secure web browsing online, his work is also used as the basis for Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA) adopted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology as the Digital Signature Standard (DSS). He is a recipient of the RSA Conference 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Khan, Mehmood

Dr Mehmood Khan is Executive Vice President, Chief Scientific Officer, and Global Research & Development for PepsiCo. He previously consulted for the Mayo Clinic on diabetes and other diseases and was President of Takeda pharmaceuticals. He is one of the world's leading thinkers in food, nutrition, and innovation. Dr Khan sits on numerous boards.

Siddique, Prof Teepu

Prof Siddique is a neurologist and scientist known for his groundbreaking discoveries concerning genetic and molecular abnormalities. He was head of the team that discovered the common cause behind the mysterious and deadly disorder of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He studied at Dow Medical College in Karachi and earned his medical degree in 1973 before moving to the USA. He worked his way up at the faculty of Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, becoming professor in the departments of neurology and cell and molecular biology and then the director of the university's division of neuromuscular medicine.

Ying, Jackie

Jackie Y Ying received her PhD from Princeton University, and was Professor of Chemical Engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is Executive Director of the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN), Singapore. Her interdisciplinary research is focused on nanostructured materials and systems for catalytic and biomedical applications. She has authored over 310 articles and has over 120 patents issued or pending. She is the Editor-in-Chief of *Nano Today*. She was elected as a Materials Research Society Fellow in 2013, and has been selected as an Inaugural Inductee for The Singapore Women's Hall of Fame in 2014.

Zewail, Dr Ahmed

Dr Zewail is a Linus Pauling Professor at the California Institute of Technology who won the 1999 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in femtochemistry. He serves on Obama's Presidential Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. In January 2010 Dr Zewail was appointed one of the first US science envoys to the Muslim world. The group of scholars visited Muslim countries from North Africa to Southeast Asia to find opportunities to develop the fields of science and technology in the Muslim world.



"In the name of Allah , the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. [All] praise is [due] to Allah , Lord of the worlds. The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful, Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path. The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray."

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Mosteghanemi, Ahlam

Ahlam Mosteghanemi is a best-selling author who has won numerous prizes including the Naguib Mahfouz Prize for *Memory in the Flesh*, a novel about Algeria's struggle against foreign domination and the problems that plagued the emerging nation after its independence. The book, written in Arabic, has sold over a million copies. Although Algerian, she earned her PhD at Sorbonne in France, and now lives in Beirut (with her Lebanese husband). She is the first contemporary Arab author to sell millions of copies of her work and dominate book charts for years in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, and the UAE. She has been identified by *Forbes* as: "the most successful Arabic writer, and "one of the ten most influential women in the Arab world and the leading woman in literature."

EGYPT

Al-Aswany, Alaa

Alaa al-Aswany is considered to be one of Egypt's best-selling novelists and a leading figure in current political reform movements in Egypt. A dentist by profession, al-Aswany came to prominence for his 2002 novel *The Yacoubian Building*, which has since been translated into over 23 different languages. He was a founding member of *Kefaya*, a political movement for change. He writes a weekly article in *al-Masry al-Youm* on Tuesdays. His articles have been published in leading international newspapers such as the *New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, and others.

Badreya, Sayed

Badreya is an Egyptian-born actor who played significant roles in some Hollywood movies. His production company Zoom in Focus emerged on the grounds of seeking to show the world the Arab-American story. Much of his efforts with this regard have been publicized in prominent news networks such as *The New York Times*, BBC, ABC, and Fox News.

El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed

Abdel-Wahed el-Wakil is an international architect considered by most as a contemporary icon for Islamic architecture. A student of the famous Hassan Fathy, el-Wakil has designed over 50 buildings all over the world, working for clients such as the Prince of Wales, and won various awards including the Aga Khan Award for Architecture twice and the First Prize for the Design of the Contemporary Mosque Architecture in Riyadh.

IRAN

Majidi, Majid (new)

Majid Majidi is an Iranian film director whose films have won many international awards. His *Children of Heaven* was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Academy Awards. In August 2015, the first part of an intended trilogy directed by Majidi on the life of the Prophet ﷺ was released. *Muhammad: The Messenger of God* is the most expensive film in Iranian movie history (\$40m).

Nazeri, Shahram

Shahram Nazeri is a world-famous icon of classical Persian, folkloric Kurdish, and Sufi music. Hailed as "Iran's Pavarotti" by the *Christian Science Monitor*, Nazeri has released over 40 recordings to date and performed in major venues worldwide. In June 2014 Nazeri received France's National Order of Merit.

JORDAN

Al-Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir Al-Fattal

Abbas al-Baghdadi is one of the world's foremost exponents of Islamic calligraphy. He was born in 1951 in Baghdad and has had a distinguished career as a calligrapher and teacher of calligraphy. He adheres strictly to the rules of classical calligraphy and is averse to "modern calligraphy", especially when its practitioners do not master the art in its traditional form. He is well-known for the balance, clarity, and majesty of his works.

LEBANON

Assaf, Roger

Roger Assaf is a convert to Islam. He is a prominent Lebanese director, actor, and playwright. With his actress wife Hanane Hajj-Ali, he co-founded *Al-Hakawati* (Storyteller) Theatre Company and the Shams Cultural Cooperative for Youth in Theatre

and Culture, an organization that provides underprivileged individuals with a forum for self-expression through drama.

MOROCCO

Lalami, Laila (new)

A professor of creative writing at the University of California, Lamali is a novelist and essayist. Her novels have received international tribute and have been translated into 10 languages. In 2015, her novel, *The Moor's Account*, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction. Her political essays have been published in renowned media platforms. In 2009, she was selected by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader.

QATAR

Al-Thani, HE Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad

Sheikha al-Mayassa is the chairperson of Reach Out To Asia, an NGO under the Qatar Foundation that contributes to the development of societies in Asia, including the Middle East, with specific emphasis on improving the quality of both primary and secondary education, in addition to achieving some of the goals of UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). She is the chair of the board of the Qatar Museums Authority and has spearheaded Qatar's recent massive investment in art. She was named as "the most powerful person in the art world" by *Art and Auction* magazine.

SYRIA

Taha, Uthman

Read bio on page 108 in Honourable Mentions.

Sub-Saharan Africa

MALI

Keita, Salif

Known as the "golden voice of Africa", Salif Keita is an Afro-pop singer-songwriter from Mali. His West African music is combined with influences from Europe and the Americas. In 1977 Keita received a National Order Award from Guinean President Sékou Touré. His music is very popular in the Francophone

world, and more broadly in Europe. Keita's album, *La Différence*, was awarded Best World Music 2010 by the Victoires de la Musique.

SENEGAL

N'Dour, Youssou

Youssou N'Dour became Senegal's Minister of Tourism and Culture in April 2012. He is a world famous composer, singer, percussionist, and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. In 2005, N'Dour received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Music Album for *Egypt*. In 2011, N'Dour was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in Music from Yale University. In 2013, N'Dour won a share of Sweden's \$150,000 Polar music prize for promoting understanding between faiths as well as for his music.

SOUTH AFRICA

Bhikha, Zain

Zain Bhikha is a South African singer-songwriter and a pioneer performer of nasheed songs. He is known for his collaborative efforts with other prominent Muslim entertainers, including Yusuf Islam and Dawud Wharansby-Ali. Bhikha also writes and directs plays as well as creative expression workshops conducted specifically within schools.

Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Hosseini, Khaled (new)

A novelist and physician, best known for his 3 groundbreaking novels, which have been published in over seventy countries and sold more than 40 million copies worldwide. *The Kite Runner* spent 101 weeks on the *The New York Times Best Seller* list. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) was a *Times Best Seller* for 103 weeks while *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013) debuted near the top of the *Times*. Hosseini is currently a Goodwill Envoy for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He established the Khaled Hosseini Foundation, which as a "non-profit provides humanitarian assistance for the people of Afghanistan. The Foundation works with the United Nations refugee organization (UNHCR) to build shelters for refugee families. It also provides

economic opportunities, education, and healthcare for women and children of Afghanistan.”

AZERBAIJAN

Qasimov, Alim

Alim Qasimov is an Azerbaijani musician and one of the most recognized singers of Islamic folk music in the world. In 1999, he was awarded the prestigious International IMC-UNESCO Music Prize. Qasimov has recorded nine albums and performed in many concerts around the world. According to the *New York Times*, “Alim Qasimov is simply one of the greatest singers alive.” Back in 2010, Alim Qasimov was nominated for the United States National Public Radio’s “50 great voices in recorded history” award.

CHINA

Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang)

Haji Noor Deen Mi Guang Jiang is a renowned master of Arabic calligraphy. He was born in 1963, in Yucheng in the Shandong Province of China. In 1997, Haji Noor Deen was awarded the Certificate of Arabic Calligrapher in Egypt, the first Chinese person to be honoured with this prestigious award. His work has been displayed in galleries and museums around the world – often as the first Chinese/Arabic artist – including the British Museum, San Francisco Asian Museum, National Museum of Scotland, and Harvard University Art Museum. The focus of his work is writing Arabic using traditional Chinese calligraphic brushes and techniques of quick organic strokes which uniquely fuse both the Chinese and Arabic arts.

INDIA

Azmi, Shabana

Azmi has been described as one of India’s finest actresses of film, television, and theatre. She has been involved in over 120 movies both in Hindi and foreign languages, many to international acclaim. During her extraordinary career, Shabana has won the National Film Award for Best Actress five times and garnered several international honours. She has also received four Filmfare Awards. In addition to her successful career, Shabana is a social activist and supports issues such as women’s rights, child survival, and fighting AIDS and injustice in real life via the use of mainstream media. She was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador for India by the United Nations Population Fund in

1998. She is also a member of *Rajya Sabha*, the upper house of the Indian parliament.

Khan, Aamir

Aamir Khan is one of the leading stars of Bollywood. His phenomenal success has won him awards in India and international acclaim. His film *Lagaan* was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the Oscars while his venture *Dhoom 3* was the highest-grossing Bollywood film of all time. He is also a UNICEF brand ambassador, promoting child nutrition. He performed the Hajj in 2012.

Rahman, Allah Rakha (AR)

Rahman is a prolific composer, record producer, and musician for the Indian film industry. In 2011, *Time* described him as the world’s most prominent and prolific film composer. He is the first Indian to receive a Golden Globe Award and two Academy Awards for his soundtrack *Slumdog Millionaire*, for which he also received two Grammy awards. He was named “CNN-IBN Indian of the Year” for 2009. In 2004, Rahman was appointed the “Global Ambassador of The Stop TB Partnership”, a World Health Organization project. A street was named in his honour in Markham, Ontario, Canada in November 2013.

INDONESIA

Nadia, Asma

Asma Nadia is a popular author who has written over 40 books ranging from short stories, collections, novels, and nonfiction (including books on: self improvement, *sakinah* family, parenting, and motivational books). Movies have been made of two of her books. She has also established a publishing house and a foundation to help young writers.

Rosa, Helvy Tiana

Helvy Tiana Rosa is a prominent Indonesian writer and lecturer in literature at the State University of Jakarta (UNJ). Rosa is a member of *Majelis Sastra Asia Tenggara* (the Southeast Asia Board of Literature) and often represents Indonesia in literary events, both at home and abroad. She also helped found the Pen Circle Forum (FLP) in 1997 with the goal of encouraging young writers.

MALAYSIA

Hamidun, Hafiz (new)

He is currently the most influential *nasheed* singer in

the Far East. He is a multi-platinum award winner in the music industry.

Nurhaliza, Dato' Siti (new)

Dato' Siti Nurhaliza binti Tarudin is a Malaysian singer who has won numerous musical awards. She has also been honoured for her contributions to charitable works, and was one of the recipients of the Icon of Malaysia award.

Raihan

Raihan are a world-famous Malaysian nasheed group with four members: Che Amran Idris, Abu Bakar Md Yatim, Amran Ibrahim, and Zulfadli Bin Mustaza. Since their coming together in 1996, they have made 11 albums and received numerous awards in Malaysia.

PAKISTAN

Ismail, Al-Hajj Siddiq

Al-Hajj Siddiq Ismail is a world-renowned *naat* and *hamd* reciter, philanthropist, and a spiritual leader. He has been reciting for the past 50 years in over 10 languages. Ismail has performed in the presence of presidents, prime ministers, governors, chief ministers, and foreign dignitaries. He was presented with the national award *Sitara-e-Imtiaz* and the prestigious presidential award Pride of Performance, which he donated to the victims of Swat and Malakand.

Parveen, Abida

Abida Parveen is an internationally-acclaimed vocalist, often referred to as the “Queen of Sufi mystic singing”. She is the only woman to reach this level of influence in devotional music. She specializes in traditional ghazals, often performing to stadium-size audiences across South Asia and globally.

Qadri, Muhammad Owais Raza

With millions of followers, Qadri is considered a legend in the field of *naat khawan* (reciter of *naats*). He is known for his passionate performances as well as his beautiful voice. A devout Muslim, he is particularly vocal on the subject of his love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Europe

FRANCE

Sy, Omar

A rising star in the movie industry, Sy came to prominence for his role in the multi-award winning French film *The Intouchables*. His performance as Driss, an impoverished man who works as an aide to a wealthy quadriplegic man earned him a prestigious César award for best actor, ahead of Jean Dujardin who won the academy award the same year. Recently, he has begun to break into Hollywood, landing roles in *X-Men: Days of Future Past* and *Jurassic World*.

NETHERLANDS

El Mouhandiz, Rajae

Rajae El Mouhandiz is a Dutch-Moroccan-Algerian poet, singer, composer, producer, and founder of the record label Truthseeker Records. After being the first Moroccan to study at a Dutch conservatory, El Mouhandiz left classical music to follow her own artistic path, seeking to incorporate her cultural roots. She is also one of the 60 female curators of the international MUSLIMA exhibition.

SWEDEN

Zain, Maher

A Swedish R&B singer, songwriter and music producer of Lebanese origin, Maher Zain sings mainly in English. He also occasionally sings in French, Arabic, Urdu, Turkish and Malay, among others. Maher's debut album 'Thank You Allah' reached the number 1 spot on Amazon.com World Music charts and number 9 on the R&B charts. He has over 25 million fans on Facebook. In 2013, he took part in the Colours of Peace project constituting songs based on works by Fethullah Gülen. He has attended many rallies in support for refugees and the children of Gaza.

TURKEY

Çelebi, Master Hasan

Master Hasan Çelebi is an eminent Turkish calligrapher who is hailed for his classical Ottoman calligraphy style. His exhibitions have been featured globally and he is celebrated for his restoration of calligraphic panels in mosques around the world from the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

Yalçin, Rabia

Rabia Yalçin is a Turkish fashion designer. Her creations represent a synthesis of local and international cultures and are inspired by the opulence of her homeland's Ottoman past. With her line Rabia Yalçin Haute Couture, Yalçin has a strong presence in the European fashion scene.

UNITED KINGDOM

Hadid, Dame Zaha Muhammad

Dame Zaha Muhammad Hadid is one of the world's leading architects. She was born in Iraq, and moved to the UK at the age of 17. She has won numerous prizes for her work and recently became the first woman to be awarded the RIBA Gold Medal in recognition of her lifetime's work.

Islam, Yusuf

Formerly known as Cat Stevens, Yusuf Islam is a globally influential British musician and singer-songwriter. In 1977, he converted to Islam and left the music industry for educational and philanthropic causes. His international fame and high-regard has probably made him the single most influential figure in the field of arts and culture in the Muslim world. He made a gradual return to music over the past five years with his latest albums *An Other Cup* and *Roadsinger*. Islam is a vocal opponent of terrorism and extremism and in 2004 was recognized with the Man of Peace award by the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Committee. He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014.

Yusuf, Sami

Read bio on page 108 in Honourable Mentions.

North America

CANADA

Nawaz, Zarqa

Zarqa Nawaz is a journalist and filmmaker who created the award-winning Canadian sitcom *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, a comedy about a Muslim community living with its non-Muslim neighbours in the town of Mercy, Saskatchewan. The series ran for six seasons with 91 episodes produced. It was one of the most highly rated and successful shows produced by the CBC.

Wharnsby, Dawud

A Canadian singer-songwriter, poet, performer, educator, and television personality, Dawud Wharnsby is best known for his pioneering efforts in the musical-poetic genre of English Language *nasheed* and spoken word.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Friedlander, Shems

Shems Friedlander is a writer, artist, filmmaker, and photographer. He is the author of nine books among which are *The Whirling Dervishes* and *When You Hear Hoofbeats Think of a Zebra*. He has won over 30 awards for graphic design. Friedlander has written two monodramas and had his documentary films shown at film festivals in the US. He is a Professor of Practice at the American University in Cairo.

Gray-Henry, Aisha

Aisha Gray-Henry is the director of the charitable foundation and publishing company Fons Vitae. She has a five decade history of teaching at schools and universities. Aisha's written works have been utilized all over the world; her four-part video of her MA thesis on Islam for high school and university students has been used by American universities, US embassies, and corporations in the Middle East for staff orientation. She co-authored a book which has become a part of the curriculum at al-Azhar University and has gone as far as publishing Islamic books in Bosnian for their war-torn school system upon her return from the refugee camps there. She wrote and produced the booklet *Understanding Islam and the Muslims* (also in Spanish, Bosnian and Arabic) for the Saudi government.

Moore, Daniel Abdal-Hayy

Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore is a convert to Islam who has gained wide popularity through his poetry. Already a published poet before his conversion, he now draws on the Sufic tradition within Islam to inspire a new generation of English-speaking Muslims. He is widely seen as the poet-laureate of the English speaking Muslim community.

Zakariya, Mohamed

A machinist by training, American-born Mohamed Zakariya is a classically educated Islamic calligrapher who earned diplomas in three calligraphic scripts from the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art, and Culture in Istanbul. His work has been collected

South America

GUYANA

Shah, Ryhaan

Ryhaan Shah is considered to be among the best contemporary writers in Guyana and the Caribbean, best known for her 2005 novel *A Silent Life*. Shah is also an active public figure as the president of the Guyanese Indian Heritage Association.

and displayed worldwide, including most recently at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar. Zakariya designed Eid holiday stamps for the US Postal Service in 2001 and 2011. He has been featured in several movies, including the 2002 PBS documentary *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*. Zakariya is represented by Linearis Art.



Al-Ahzab 33, 40

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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QUR'AN RECITERS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Tablawi, Sheikh Mohammad

Tablawi is the deputy of The Association of Qur'an Reciters and the main reciter of al-Azhar University. He gained popularity in the Middle East after studying at al-Azhar and reciting the Qur'an on Egyptian television in 1956. He is widely recognized as a leading reciter of the Qur'an.

KUWAIT

Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid

Al-Afasy is an imam at Masjid al-Kabir in Kuwait, and is also a singer of Arabic language *nasheed*. He has gained international acclaim through his innovative use of technology to promote Islam through two satellite channels, a website (www.alafasy.me), and videos on YouTube.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmad Ali

Al-Ajmi is a Qur'an reciter from Khobar Province in Saudi Arabia. Prior to gaining prominence for his recitation style as an imam at mosques in Khobar and Jeddah, he studied Qur'anic interpretation in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Has over quarter of a million fans on Facebook.

Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Said

Al-Ghamdi has served as imam to Muslim communities across the globe and is currently the imam of Kanoo Mosque in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. El Ghamdi has studied *usul ad din* (fundamentals of religion) and *isnad* (chain of narration of Hadith) and is recognized as an influential Saudi theologian. In 2009, he was appointed as a co-imam for the *taraweeh* prayers in the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah by Royal Decree.

Al-Mueaqly, Sheikh Maher bin Hamad

Al-Mueaqly is an imam at the Grand Mosque in Makkah. He left his career as a mathematics teacher

to become a scholar in Makkah and is now a popular preacher and teacher of Qur'anic studies.

Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr

Al-Shatri is an imam in Jeddah and a leading reciter of the Qur'an. Although he studied accounting, he has become increasingly influential for his recitation of the Qur'an at international Islamic events and particularly across the Middle East and in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Saud Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad

Al-Shuraim is a leading reciter of the Qur'an known for his unique recitation style across the world. He formally studied *usul ad din* (fundamentals of religion) in Saudi Arabia before becoming a teacher, and subsequently became imam of the Grand Mosque in Makkah.

Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul Rahman

Read bio on page 107 in Honourable Mentions.

Asia

INDONESIA

Ulfah, Hajjah Maria

Hajjah Maria Ulfah is an internationally acclaimed reciter of the Holy Qur'an and is the first woman to win an international Qur'an recitation competition. She has popularized the Egyptian style of recitation and currently serves as director of the women's department of the Institute for Qur'an Study in Indonesia. She also lectures at the National Islamic University in Indonesia.

MEDIA

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Heikal, Mohamed Hassanein

A leading Egyptian journalist, he has been a respected commentator on Arab affairs for more than 50 years. He was considered a close confidant of Gamal Abdul Nasser, and his weekly column in *al-Abram* was considered to reflect Nasser's views. Recently, his lecture series on al-Jazeera has given him an even greater platform in the Arab World. It is widely reported that Heikal wrote both General al-Sisi's speech giving Morsi a 48-hour ultimatum and Sisi's post-coup announcement.

Howeidy, Dr Fahmy

Howeidy is one of the leading columnists in the Arab World. He writes for the Egyptian daily *al-Abram*, where he is the Deputy Editor-in-Chief; his articles, however, are syndicated to seven other Arabic publications. Howeidy is influential both through his popularity and the fact that he has highlighted issues concerning Muslim communities outside the Arab World in groundbreaking work on Chinese, Bosnian, and Senegalese Muslims, among others. Muslims appreciate and respond well to Howeidy's use of Islam as a frame of reference in his articles.

Mansour, Ahmed (new)

Ahmed Mansour is a journalist and TV presenter for Al Jazeera channel. He is best known for his coverage of wars, most prominently in Iraq and Afghanistan from where he published more than 1000 reports. He is also the presenter of a widely watched TV program *Bela Hodod* (without borders) and *Shabed Ala al-Asr* (A Witness to History). He was recently arrested in Berlin by German police at the request of the Egyptian government, but was later released. Mansour has published 25 books and has over 3 million followers on his Facebook page.

Youssef, Dr Bassem

Dr Youssef (a practicing cardiac surgeon) presents the famous political satire TV shows, *El Bernameg* (The

Program) and *B+*. His shows replicate Jon Stewart's satirical *The Daily Show*. Stewart actually invited Bassem to his show and described him as "a kind and generous friend. I am an American satirist, and Bassem Youssef is my hero." In January 2015, Harvard's Institute of Politics (IOP) at the John F Kennedy School of Government, announced that Youssef will be a Resident Fellow for the spring semester.

KUWAIT

Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif

Dr Naif al-Mutawa is founder and CEO of Teshkeel Media Group and creator of the popular Islamic-themed comic series *The 99*. *Forbes* named *The 99* as one of the top 20 trends sweeping the globe. He has been named as one of WEF's Young Global Leaders for 2011. In addition to having authored multiple children's books, al-Mutawa holds a PhD in clinical psychology and has practiced in the field for many years.

Al-Mutawa, Jassem

Jassem al-Mutawa is the president of the Iqra satellite channel, an Islamic TV channel presenting programmes on everyday life problems concerning spiritual, cultural, social, and economic issues from a modern Islamic perspective.

Suwaidan, Sheikh Dr Tareq

Tareq Suwaidan is the CEO and owner of Gulf Innovation Group in Kuwait and was the General Manager of Al-Resalah Satellite TV. An entrepreneur and TV personality (his shows ranking among the highest in the Middle East), Suwaidan is also prominent as a motivational speaker and author of books on Islam.

LEBANON

Jaber, Dr Ali

Dr Ali Jaber is a prominent figure in Lebanese and Arab media. Jaber has held several significant positions in the world of Arab media and participated in the launch of several important television channels. He is also Dean of the Muhammad bin Rashed College for Media at the American University in Dubai. Currently, Jaber is one of three panel judges on *Arabs Got Talent*, a smash hit program showcasing talent from all over the Arab World.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Khanfar, Wadah

In 2006, Khanfar became Al Jazeera's Director-General. During his eight-year tenure at the helm, the network transformed from a single channel into a media network. During this period, the Arab world witnessed historic transformation including the Arab Awakening. Khanfar, who resigned from the network in September 2011, has been named as one of *Foreign Policy's* top 100 global thinkers of 2011 as well as one of *Fast Company's* Most Creative People in Business of the year. Khanfar has a diverse academic background with postgraduate studies in philosophy, African studies, and international politics.

Omer, Mohammed

An award-winning journalist, Mohammed Omer has been credited with reporting on the crisis in Gaza for major media outlets. He was raised in the Rafah refugee camp and despite calamities faced by his family—his father was imprisoned, his teenage brother was killed, his mother was injured in a demolition—he dedicates himself to journalism and reporting on the crisis. He is the recipient of the 2008 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism.

QATAR

Al-Ruwaini, Nashwa

Al-Ruwaini worked for Qatar TV and MBC before establishing her own production company, Pyramedia Ltd. Pyramedia is one of the largest and most successful production companies in the region, producing some of the highest rated TV shows including the *Million's Poet* and *Prince of Poets* TV competitions on Abu Dhabi TV and her self-titled *Nashwa* talk show on Dubai TV. On 9 April 2014, ISO awarded Nashwa Al Ruwaini the title of Quality Knight.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Alawadhi, HE Najla

HE Najla Alawadhi is a former Member of Parliament (the Federal National Council) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and a distinguished media pioneer in the Middle East. She is one of the first women in the history of the UAE to become an MP and also holds the distinction as the youngest parliamentarian in the UAE. During her four-year parliament term she served on the education, youth, media, and culture committee. Najla Alawadhi is also the first Arab woman to hold a chief executive post in a state-run media

organization. With a particular focus on television, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of Television Channels at Dubai Media Incorporated.

Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Mohseni, Saad

Mohseni is a successful businessman and the founder and head of the Moby Group, Afghanistan's largest media company, which has interests in television, radio, print, production, online news services, directories, IT&T, and retail. He was named as one of the 100 most influential people by *Time* in 2011.

INDONESIA

Mohamad, Goenawan

Goenawan Mohamad is a writer, editor, activist and award-winning journalist. He is the founder and editor of *Tempo Magazine*, Indonesia's most widely circulated weekly.

PAKISTAN

Hamid, Zaid

One of the most influential television personalities in Pakistan, Zaid Hamid is a security consultant and strategic defence analyst by profession. He is also a popular political commentator, and is the founder of Brass Tacks, a Pakistani think tank on global politics. Hamid also hosts *BrassTacks with Zaid Hamid* on News One channel. Although he has been deemed by some as a conspiracy theorist, he maintains a substantial audience. In 2015, he was arrested by Saudi authorities whilst on pilgrimage.

Hussain, Aamir Liaquat

Aamir Liaquat Hussain has hosted some of the most popular Pakistani TV shows. Moving between rival media networks ARY and Geo TV (which hosts *Aalim Online*), he has appealed to the masses with his messages of non-sectarianism, anti-corruption, and love of the Prophet ﷺ, all of which have been wrapped up in a dynamic, professional, and emotional style. He is also the subject of much controversy concerning his academic qualifications, and his well-cultivated media persona. Prior to media fame he was involved in politics, but resigned from his post as a member

of the National Assembly and from his seat as the Minister of Religious Affairs in 2007. In June 2014, Aamir Liaquat Hussain was appointed President of Express Media Group.

Iqbal, Salman (new)

Mr Salman Iqbal owns the largest media network in Pakistan called ARY Digital Network available in Pakistan, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and many other regions of the world. He is recognized as a voice of independent media in Pakistan and one of the most powerful and influential media personalities in the Muslim World.

Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir

Shakil-ur-Rahman is the owner of the Independent Media Corporation, Pakistan's largest media conglomerate. He is also currently serving as president of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society. The Geo TV network and the Jang Group are both under this umbrella organization. Shakil-ur-Rahman is also the chief executive and editor-in-chief of the Jang Group, which publishes a number of newspapers and magazines in Urdu and English.

Europe

UNITED KINGDOM

Omaar, Rageh

Rageh Omaar is a television news presenter and writer who was stationed in Iraq and South Africa. He was the world affairs correspondent for the BBC from 1991 until 2006 when he moved to Al Jazeera English, where he presented the documentary series *Witness*, and hosted his own show called *The Rageh Omaar Report*. From January 2013, Omaar became a special correspondent and presenter for ITV News, reporting on a broad range of news stories, as well as producing special in-depth reports from all around the UK and further afield.

Salim, Ahmed (new)

Ahmed Salim, as producer and director of *1001 Inventions*, has produced highly successful educational and social campaigns which have engaged millions worldwide, and been used at venues such as the UN, UNESCO, and various leading museums around the world. His short film, *1001 Inventions and the Library of Secrets* starring Sir Ben Kingsley, has been down-

loaded 25 million times and won 27 international gold and grand prix awards. To support the UN International Year of Light 2015, he has launched a global campaign through science exhibits, festivals, school learning materials, competitions, and a short feature film starring actor Omar Sharif in what was his last acting role before his death in July 2015.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mohyeldin, Ayman

Mohyeldin is an Arab-American news correspondent for NBC. He has also worked for Al Jazeera and CNN. He was one of the first western journalists allowed to enter and report on the handing over and trial of Saddam Hussein. He covered the December 2008 Israeli airstrikes over Gaza and became the first journalist to report on the intricate network of tunnels. Mohyeldin also covered the 2011 Egyptian protests for Al Jazeera English and was recently named as one of the 100 most influential people by *Time* in 2011. His removal from reporting on Gaza during the Israeli invasion of July 2014 caused much controversy, forcing NBC to reassign him back to Gaza.

Musaji, Sheila

Sheila Musaji runs the influential *The American Muslim* (TAM) online publication in which she writes about and documents resources on a wide variety of issues. She is especially popular for her work dispelling misconceptions about Islam and her rebuttals of Islamophobes. A Muslim for over 40 years, she has always been active in the Islamic and interfaith communities and frequently speaks at churches, schools, service organizations, and synagogues about Islam.

Zakaria, Fareed

Fareed Zakaria is one of the United States' foremost public intellectuals. He hosts CNN's *Fareed Zakaria GPS*, is Editor-at-Large for *Time Magazine*, and a *Washington Post* columnist. He was editor of *Newsweek International* and of *Foreign Affairs* and has recently published *The Post-American World: Release 2.0*, an expanded version of his international bestseller. In 2013 he became one of the producers for the HBO series *Vice*, serving as a consultant.

CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

Middle East and North Africa

JORDAN

Al-Hussein, HRH Prince Ali ibn

His Royal Highness Prince Ali, son of late King Hussein and brother of Jordan's King Abdullah, has been the Vice President of FIFA for Asia since January 2011. He played a major role in lifting FIFA's ban on the hijab in women's football. In Jordan he successfully took the youth team to the FIFA World Cup finals in 2007 and also took three Jordanian national teams to the Asian finals in 2010. He is Chairman of the Asian Football Development Project (AFDP). Prince Ali assisted in enhancing the educational and cultural values of sports by spreading football centres across the Kingdom. Prince Ali holds the rank of Brigadier in the Jordanian Armed Forces, where he served as a pathfinder and earned his military freefall parachute wings.

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Assaf, Mohammed

Mohammed Assaf won first place in the popular TV programme, *Arab Idol 2013*, after his final performance of the national *Ali al-Keffiyeh* (Raise Your Keffiyeh) song, a Palestinian nationalist anthem which has now garnered over 20 million views. Raised in the Khan Yunus refugee camp in the Gaza strip, he has become the face and voice of Palestinian youth and the epitome of its peoples suffering. Assaf became UNRWA's Goodwill Ambassador, was also named ambassador of culture and arts by the Palestinian government and was given a position with diplomatic standing by the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. He has 4.3 million fans on his Facebook page

Sub-Saharan Africa

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Touré, Yaya

Touré is one of the world's best footballers and currently plays for Manchester City. He has previously played for elite clubs like Monaco and Barcelona. When awarded the traditional bottle of champagne for a match-winning performance, he gave it away stating that as a Muslim he didn't drink alcohol. This prompted a review of such awards, and he now receives shields for his awards. In October 2013, Touré joined a campaign against elephant poaching, becoming a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Environment Programme. Touré was also nominated in the Personality of the Year category at the 2014 MTV Africa Music Award.

SOUTH AFRICA

Amla, Hashim

Amla is a South African cricketer. In 2004 he became the first South African team player of Indian descent. As a devout Muslim, he has actively campaigned to remove all alcohol-promoting logos from merchandise and playing gear. He was named one of the Wisden cricketers of the year in 2013.

Europe

FRANCE

Zidane, Zinedine

Zinedine Zidane is a French footballing legend of Algerian descent. Born in a poor neighbourhood of Marseilles, he went on to become one of the greatest footballers ever, winning all major prizes at personal, club and country level. His modest character has endeared him to the wider public. He remains active in the footballing world and he regularly contributes to charity events.

GERMANY

Ozil, Mesut

One of the German 2014 football World Cup winning team, the Arsenal playmaker is of Turkish descent and was awarded the Bambi award in 2010 for being a prime example of successful integration into Ger-

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ali, Muhammad

Muhammad Ali is a legendary three-time world heavyweight boxing champion who was crowned Sportsman of the Century in 1999 by *Sports Illustrated*. He was an extremely important figure in the civil rights movement in the United States, using his talent and wit to draw public awareness to the inequality in American society. He has remained a figure of great influence, commenting on injustices where he sees them. As a testament to Muhammad Ali's humanitarian work, the United Nations named him a messenger of peace. He was awarded the presidential Medal of Freedom, as well as Amnesty International's lifetime achievement award. In 2005, he and his wife Lonnie opened the Muhammad Ali centre in Louisville, Kentucky. In retirement, Ali still travels and lends a hand to causes that are important to him.

Bey, Yasiin

Formally known as Mos Def (born Dante Terrell Smith), Bey is a hip-hop artist who has recently become more popular for his acting career where he received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations to go along with his six Grammy award nominations. He is noted for his socio-conscious music which often discusses US foreign policy as well as the plight of the poor and oppressed. In July 2013, Mos Def appeared in a short film, released by the human rights organization Reprieve, depicting the forced feeding methods used at the Guantanamo Bay detention camps. This occurred after a document containing military instructions for the procedure was leaked. He has almost 2 million fans on Facebook.

man society. He has a massive social media following and recently received plaudits for donating his world cup winnings to children undergoing surgery in Brazil. The player is a well-recognized Muslim who has stated that he recites the Qur'an before matches, prays regularly, and fasts.

UNITED KINGDOM

Farah, Mohamed

Mohamed "Mo" Farah has won Olympic, and successive World Championship gold medals in the 5,000 and 10,000 metres track events, making him one of UK's most successful athletes ever. Born in Somalia but raised in the UK from the age of seven, Mo has captured the hearts of the British public with his hard work, success, smile, and warm personality. He was awarded a CBE in 2013. His winning celebration is mimicked internationally.

Malik, Zayn

Malik, a British-Pakistani, is a former member of the popular music group One Direction. The band has a massive following and has topped charts around the world as well as being involved in a number of charitable causes. Malik himself has over 16 million twitter and 20 million facebook followers and has publicly tweeted about his faith.

Oceania

NEW ZEALAND

Williams, Sonny

Sonny Williams is an international rugby player, and current heavyweight boxing champion of New Zealand. Williams converted to Islam in 2008, and is the first Muslim to play for the legendary All Blacks. In 2013, he was judged the world's best rugby league player at the annual RLIF Awards.



Celebrating with a Sajdah

TOP EXTREMISTS



1. Al-Baghdadi, Abu Bakr

Country: Iraq

Born: 1971 (age 43)

Influence: Leader of da'ish which controls large parts of Syria and Iraq and is threatening neighbouring countries.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is the leader of DA'ISH. He is self-proclaimed Caliph of the Muslims, something denied and derided by virtually all Muslims. His appearance as leader as well as the rapid gains of DA'ISH in Syria and Iraq have been largely unexpected and his backers still unknown. The DA'ISH has been responsible for numerous massacres and atrocities. They have spared none who disagree with them, but their attacks on religious minorities have received particular media attention. There are no confirmed reports of his background, but some reports say that Abu Bakr was born near Samarra, Iraq and holds a PhD in Islamic Studies from the University of Islamic Sciences in the Baghdad suburb of Adhamiya.



2. Al-Zawahiri, Ayman

Country: Egypt

Born: June 19, 1951 (age 63)

Influence: Leader of Al-Qaeda

Ayman al-Zawahiri is now the leader of al-Qaeda following the killing of Osama bin Laden. An alleged radical since the age of 15, he went on to become the leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad, which he merged into al-Qaeda in 1998, becoming bin Laden's personal advisor and physician where he was credited for serving as the "real brains" of al-Qaeda. With the rise of DA'ISH, the influence of al-Qaeda has started to wane.



3. Shekau, Abubakar

Country: Nigeria

Born: Approx. 1974 (age approx. 40)

Influence: Leader of Boko Haram

Shekau is the head of Boko Haram, a terrorist group in Nigeria which has carried out a number of atrocities. He speaks Hausa, Arabic, and English, and claims to have had a theological education. He has appeared in videos posted online, most notably after the kidnapping of over 200 schoolgirls in April 2014. In March 2015 Boko Haram pledged allegiance to DA'ISH and have stepped up their terror attacks including a massacre of over 150 Muslims praying in mosques during Ramadan



4. Bashir, Abu Bakar

Country: Indonesia

Born: August 17, 1938 (age 76)

Influence: spiritual head of Jemaah Islamiyah (also known as JI).

Abu Bakar Bashir is an Indonesian Muslim cleric and leader of the Indonesian Mujahedeen Council (MMI). He was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment at his third trial in June 2011 on charges of planning and encouraging terrorist operations. He has pledged allegiance to DA'ISH.



5. Al-Maqqdisi, Abu Muhammad

Country: Jordan

Born: 1959 (age 55)

Influence: Spritual leader of Al-Nusra Front.

Abu Muhammad al-Maqqdisi (born Isam Mohammad Tahir al-Barqawi) is a Jordanian-Palestinian Salafi leader who was a mentor for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (the initial leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq). Al-Maqqdisi is a writer and uses the internet to spread his ideas. Al-Maqqdisi was recently found guilty on terrorism charges and sentenced to five years in prison by a Jordanian court.

Summary of 450 New Ins

Scholarly:

- Shaykh Salih bin Fawzan al Fawzan
- Ebrahim Moosa
- Shaykh Dr Mohammad Akram Nadwi
- Professor Khaled Abou El Fadl
- Qamar-ul Huda

Political:

- Lt. Gen. Prabowo Subianto
- HE Mohammad Javad Zarif
- General Raheel Sharif
- Aida Hadzialic
- Farhana Khera

Administration of Religious Affairs:

- Grand Mufti Muhammad Hussein
- Shamim Mohammed Afzal
- Grand Mufti Saidmukarram Abdulkodirzoda

Preachers and Spiritual Guides:

- Sheikh Tahir Usman Bauchi
- Abdul Hadi Awang

- Shaikh Hamid Slimi

Social Issues:

- HRH Prince Feisal ibn Al-Hussein
- Imtiaz Amin
- Sufyan Ismail
- Dr. Yasir Qadhi
- Linda Sarsour

Business:

- Raja Al-Gurg
- Nemat Shafik
- Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Bin Hashim

Arts and Culture:

- Majid Majidi
- Laila Lalami
- Khaled Hosseini
- Hafiz Hamidun
- Dato' Siti Nurhaliza
- Dame Zaha Muhammad Hadid

Media:

- Ahmed Mansour
- Salman Iqbal
- Ahmed Salim

❧ The ❧
OBITUARIES



HM King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

Top 50

KSA

1/23/2015

King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud was the sixth king of Saudi Arabia. His influence came from being the absolute monarch of the most powerful Arab nation and was manifested by the role Saudi Arabia plays in three critical areas: 1. having the two holy cities of Makkah and Madina, which millions of Muslims visit throughout the year; 2. exporting crude oil and refined petroleum products, which ensures its central international role, and 3. propagating Islam through its huge da'wa network, which makes its influence felt in all Muslim countries. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz passed away on 25 January 2015 at the age of 90.



Dr Al-Zuhayli, Wahbi

Scholarly

Syria

8/8/2015

Dr Al-Zuhayli was a leading scholar of Islamic law and legal theory and was noted for his extensive scholarship. He was also considered an expert on Islamic international law and was Chairman of Islamic Jurisprudence at the College of Shari'ah at Damascus University. Al-Zuhayli was a popular preacher and a proponent of traditional orthodox Sunni Islam. He passed away on 8th August, 2015.



Mazrui, Dr Ali Al'amin

Scholarly

Kenya

10/12/2014

Dr Mazrui was a prominent scholar of African and Islamic studies and an outspoken commentator on Islam. Noted for his stance on the applicability of Sharia law within a democratic system and his denunciations of violence in the name of religion, he was a widely-respected academic. A prolific writer, Dr Mazrui was an Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities and the Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at the State University of New York at Binghamton. He passed away on 7 October 2014 at the age of 81.



Al-Dari, Harith

Political

Iraq

3/12/2015

Al-Dari was the leader of the Sunni Ulema Union, the largest association of Sunni Muslim scholars in Iraq, as well as the leader of the Zoba' tribe. He was a key figure in the movement to expel foreign troops from Iraq, a position that had run through his family as both his father and grandfather played a key role in expelling British troops from Iraq in the 1920s. He was also a fierce critic of Al-Qaeda for their senseless brutality and the Al-Maliki government which he perceives as "striving to establish a State of one man, one party, and one denomination". He resided in Amman, Jordan with other key members of his association. Al-Dari passed away on 12 March 2015 at the age of 74.



Mat, Dato' Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik
 Political
 Malaysia
 2/12/2015

Dato' Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat was a Malaysian politician, an Islamic scholar and was the chief minister of the State of Kelantan for 20 years. He held the position of Mursyidul Am—the religious guide—within the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS). As the religious guide of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, Nik Mat was the spiritual leader of Malaysian Islamic politics. Nik Mat's party had close to one million members and still enjoys strong support from the northern rural and conservative states such as Kelantan and Terengganu. Dato' Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat died on 12 February 2015 at his residence and over 100,000 people attended his funeral at the Masjid Tok Guru, his local Mosque.



Mohamed, Imam Ustaz Musa
 Administration of Religious Affairs
 Nigeria
 2/05/2015

Imam Mohamed was the chief imam of the Abuja National Mosque in Nigeria. As the leading imam of the national mosque of Nigeria, Imam Mohamed was often the spokesperson for Islamic religious affairs in the country. He passed away on 2 May 2015.



Mahfudz, Sahal
 Administration of Religious Affairs
 Indonesia
 1/24/2014

Mahfudz was chief of the consultative body (syuriah) of the Nahdlatul Ulama, his third term since 1999. He was also head of the Indonesia Ulema Council, which comprises both the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's most influential Islamic organizations. Besides being a Dean of Nahdlatul Ulama Institute, Jepara, Sahal also managed Maslakul Huda, a Pesantren that actively supports the economic development of the surrounding neighbourhood through its microfinance program. He passed away on 24 January 2014.



Maizar, Hisham
 Administration of Religious Affairs
 Switzerland
 5/15/2015

Hisham Maizar was president of the Federation of Islamic Organizations of Switzerland. The FIOS was established as an umbrella organization for Islamic movements in Switzerland and has member organizations representing over 100 ethnic groups including Swiss, Albanians, Arabs, Bosnians, Turks, and Africans. Switzerland has approximately 465,000 Muslims and is considered to have some of the most anti-Islamic sentiments in Europe. Maizar died on 15 May 2015.



Abdur Rahman, BS

Business

India

1/7/2015

BS Abdur Rahman was perhaps the most important Tamil-Muslim billionaire business magnate and philanthropist. He was worth \$10 billion US dollars in 2010. He had a range of business interests in the UAE and India (in Tamil Nadu) including maritime shipping, real estate, insurance etc. Abdur Rahman founded numerous schools, colleges, and even a university and also promoted many social and health organizations. He died on 7 January 2015 at the age of 87.



Abdul Kalam, Dr APJ

Science & Technology

India

7/27/2015

An engineer by profession, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam was a former president of India. Before becoming president, Kalam was the Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and Secretary of India's Defence Research and Development Organization from 1992 to 1999, during which he led the weaponization of strategic missile systems and nuclear testing in collaboration with the Department of Atomic Energy. This moved India from being a state with nuclear technology to a state with nuclear weapons. Kalam was also author of India 2020, which presented his vision of an Indian superpower by the year 2020. Kalam passed away on the 27 July 2015, due to cardiac arrest which made him collapse during a lecture he was delivering at the Indian Institute of Management Shillong. His funeral was attended by over 350,000, including the Prime Minister, the governor of Tamil Nadu and the chief ministers of Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return"

The Holy Qur'an,

Al-Baqarah, 2: 156

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 Guest 

CONTRI-
BUTIONS

Contents

- 184 Kurdistan: Pivot of West Asia?
by Dr Robert D. Crane
- 189 Notes on Religion and Culture
by Dr Caner K Dagli
- 192 In Search of the Right Synergy between Technology and the Sharia for the Sake of a Healthy Umma
by Dr Osman Bakar
- 195 When Worldviews Collide: The Encounter of Traditional and Modern Worldviews
by John Herlihy
- 200 Science and religion: why setting new foundations for the dialogue should matter for Muslims.
by Bruno Abd-al-Haqq Guiderdoni
- 204 The Refugee Crisis: Europe's Humanitarian Imperative
by Farah El-Sharif
- 206 What is Islamic Music?
by Sami Yusuf
- 209 The Year of Living Dangerously: Canada's Conservative Government panders to fears by Targeting Muslims
by Faisal Kutty
- 212 America's Oldest Muslim community: exploring the contributions of African American Muslims
by Muddassar Ahmed
- 214 The Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
by Maha Akeel
- 216 British Muslim Stars Rising
by Shenaz Bunglawala
- 218 Getting Married: British Muslim Style
by Dr Fauzia Ahmad, Mizan Raja, Dr Mustafa Omar
- 223 Issues of the Day

KURDISTAN: PIVOT OF WEST ASIA?

I. The Role of Nations and Confederations in a World of States

THE ERUPTION OF THE oxymoronic Islamic State and related engines of destruction in desperate response to the abject failure of the Arab Spring has produced under Saudi leadership the paradigm of an all-inclusive Arab Confederation not only against a revolt from below but against the even greater threat of “the Persian and Turkish empires”.

Two key variables in this vision of the future are the power of Israel to protect its vision of the future by keeping the three postulated empires fighting against each other in a clash of civilizations, and the role of nations, especially Kurdistan, in a world of imperial states.

Global strategy requires the art of paradigm management, which requires the definition and application of ideas and entire frameworks of thought.

This fourth in a series in the Muslim500 on global long-range forecasting and planning addresses the paradigmatic re-assertion in both academia and public policy of national identity conceived independently of state sovereignty. This involves three definitional issues, “what is a nation”, “what is a state”, and “what are the past, present, and future of the modern construct known as the “nation state”. Their mutual incompatibility has been a major cause both of terrorism and of the development of international law whereby states increasingly are recognizing group rights though not to the extent of being bound by them.

The easiest to define, simply because it has been the center of primordial civilization for millions of years, is a nation. This is a large community of people, including what nowadays are called indigenous nations, with the same sense of their past, the same values in the present, and the same hopes for the future. The challenge is to develop for nations both the vision and a common language of group rights.

In more philosophically essentialist terms a nation shares the trinity of ultimate reality, consisting of: 1) the same ontology or sense of origin of reality as a source for absolute truth and power; 2) the same epistemology or methodologies in the search for knowledge of the truth, including both prose and poetry; and 3) the same axiology or art of translating this wisdom into practice through a holistic system of purposeful principles of compassionate justice.

Thomas Jefferson, who was perhaps the most advanced spiritual leader of America’s Founders and annotated his own copy of the Qur’an, defined a nation holistically when he stated, “A people can remain free only if they are properly educated. Proper education consists of teaching and learning virtue. A people can remain virtuous only if every individual’s personal and public life is infused with awareness and love of Divine Providence”. Like almost all the other Founders of America, Jefferson did not believe in Deism, which teaches that God created the cosmos and then disappeared from the scene. Instead he was a profound Theist in his conviction that God both created and sustains the universe and everything in it and that therefore it is human nature to think holistically of both the transcendent and the immanent.

The next issue is what is a confederation of nations? Nations in such a confederation each seek identity through pride in the best of their culture so that they can learn from each other. This is what Ibn Khaldun called the good *asabiya* as the opposite of the bad *asabiya* of religious tribalism, which seeks identity by looking down in hostility toward others in a zero-sum game whereby all lose.

The next critical issue is defining the modern state as a paradigm of thought? As I learned at Harvard Law School when I was the founding president of the Harvard International Law Society in 1958, a sovereign state refers to whatever force can impose its will on more than half of any given territory. This concept was invented at the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to end the Thirty Years War between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism by dethroning God as the ultimate source of truth and justice and replacing the transcendent by man as the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong.

The paradigm of progressive statism as a fine art was first developed by Robert McNamara when he was Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam War and then as head of the World Bank, when he refined top-down decision-making in political economy, in contrast to the paradigm and principle of subsidiarity, as the ultimate in a bestiary of paradigmatic malware.

Finally, what is nation-building? This is the destruction of organic or natural nations in order to build an artificial state or states either by: 1) splitting nations, like the Kurds, the Vietnamese, and the Pushtuns, also known as Taliban, who traditionally inhabited the largest part of both Afghanistan and Pakistan and therefore posed a threat to British control of what was known as the Pivot of Asia in the Mackinder Doctrine and in Owen Lattimore's book by that name published shortly after World War II as the Communists were consolidating their power in China; or 2) combining nations on behalf of an artificial state, like the Cyrenaicans and Tripolitarians in the Italian invented state of Libya, the French invented state of Mali, and the Egyptian and Saudi invented state of Yemen. A third strategy of statism is to invade and detach part of a nation, as when Ethiopia as a "south-south" colonial power, with U.S. support, occupied and incorporated the northern third of Somalia, known as The Ogaden.

The classic case of failed "nation-building" in a world of states is Libya, where each of the two component nations sees domination of the other as the only way to achieve its own independence.

Kurdistan is perhaps the best example of an organic nation that chose not to dominate others as a means of survival. By historical rights dating back a thousand years it would have been a leader of West Asia, which is why it was victimized by the European imperial powers after World War One, who split it among five states and simultaneously incorporated the remaining rump into the artificial state of Iraq.

In May, 2015, Saudi Arabia's leading global-strategist in a widely distributed think-piece opined that, as a leader in combating DA'ISH (ISIS) and marginalizing more general radicalization throughout the Arab Confederation, Kurdistan might liberate one

third of the new "Turkish Empire's" home territory.

II. The Islamic Concept of Organic Nations

The decision-tree of purpose in classical Islamic thought is explained by identifying four principles of guidance and four of application.

The four of guidance are the duties to respect: 1) *haqq al din*, divine revelation, including freedom of religion; 2) *haqq al nafs*, the sacredness of the human person, including the Just War doctrine; 3) *haqq al nasl*, the derivative sacredness of the family and the community at every level, including nations and entire civilizations; and 4) *haqq al mahid*, the physical environment within the paradigm of *tawhid*.

The four irreducible purposes or principles of application require respect for: 1) *haqq al hurriyah*, political self-determination, including recognition that economic democracy is essential for the political democracy of representative government; 2) *haqq al mal*, economic justice based on the rights of private property in the production of wealth as a universal human right of every human being; 3) *haqq al karama*, dignity and honor, especially through gender equity; and 4) *haqq al 'ilm*, knowledge through freedom of thought, dissemination of thought, and assembly.

The ontological, aesthetic, epistemological, and normative premises of Islamic jurisprudence, and the source of their authority for principles of governance, raise the question whether there is a natural law of nations distinct from a positivist law of states, and whether there is a natural law of national unity and regional integration.

As explained in the three-volume textbook, *Islam and Muslims: Essence and Practice*, issued by my new Holistic Education Center for Civilizational Renewal, and peer-reviewed over a period of several years with the help and co-authorship of the first Pakistani mayor of a town in America, Muhammad Ali Chaudry, the entire history of Islamic thought and civilization can be summarized as either conflict or cooperation among the three sources of truth, namely, *haqq al yaqin* or divine revelation, '*ain al yaqin* or physical science, and '*ilm al yaqin* or

rational thought to understand the coherence or *nazm* of the first two sources and of the Qur'an.

The *raison d'être* or vision and mission of this Holistic Education Center, like that of Shaykha Moza when she founded the world's largest think-tank, the Qatar Foundation many years ago, is to bring together the best of all civilizations and religions in order to universalize their spiritual awareness and plurality of wisdom by interfaith cooperation in pursuing the vision of peace, prosperity, and freedom through the interfaith harmony of transcendent and compassionate justice for everyone, so that this wisdom can be returned to the world as it was during the flowering of the Islamic civilization a thousand years ago.

The challenge for interfaith cooperation is to develop a common language of human rights for both persons and communities or nations based on the scriptures of the world religions and on the natural law or Sunnat Allah that they all share. One of the biggest issues is whether Islamic jurisprudence, known as the *maqasid al shari'ah*, can contribute to such a common language.

III. Developing the Architectonics of Transcendent Justice

The architectonics of harmony through compassionate justice consists of three elements: 1) an infrastructure of basic premises or characteristics, 2) a hierarchical architecture of purpose, and 3) a methodology for their application. Together these three can produce a universal language for all civilizations.

Islamic jurisprudence, known as the *maqasid al shari'ah*, is primarily a system of holistic education designed to guide individual persons and communities in the pursuit of compassionate justice. To the extent that Islamic law has to be enforced, the entire system has failed. This is the precise opposite of Western law in secular states, where law is considered to exist only to the extent that it is enforced by coercion through the penalties of civil or criminal law.

The reason for this holistic nature of Islamic jurisprudence is that its higher purpose is to pro-

vide guidance in understanding and applying the universal responsibilities and rights inherent in the essence of Islam, namely, truth, love, and justice.

God tells us in Surah An'am 6:115, "The Word of your Lord is fulfilled and perfected in truth and in justice". The highest motivation for action is love, as shown in the favorite prayer of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: *Allahumma, asaluka hubbuka wa hubba man yuhibbuka wa hubba kulli 'amali yuqaribuni ila hubbika*, "O Allah, I ask You for your love, and for the love of those who love You, and for the love of every action that will bring me closer to Your Love".

This is why the classical Islamic scholars and their followers today emphasize the *janib al wujud* or positive and constructive principles of affirmative action rather than the *janib al adami* or negative approach based on existential fear and punitive reaction.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "For every day on which the sun rises, there is a reward for the one who establishes justice among people".

The higher guidance within the double wisdom of affirmative purpose and personal virtue was spelled out by two of the greatest Islamic scholars, Shamsuddin ibn al Qayyim (who died in 748 A.H., 1347 A.C.) and his mentor Imam Ahmad ibn Taymiyah (d. 728). Ibn Qayyim wrote: "The Islamic law is all about wisdom and achieving people's welfare in this life and the afterlife. It is all about justice, mercy, wisdom, and good. Thus any ruling that replaces justice with injustice, mercy with its opposite, common good with mischief, or wisdom with nonsense, is a ruling that does not belong to the Islamic law".

In the classical hierarchical system of Islamic jurisprudence as a paradigm of holistic *tawhid* the five *maqasid* (*al dururiyat al khamsah*) or *huquq* (sing. *haqq*) of Al Ghazali in the 4th Islamic century were the protection of *din* (faith and religion), *haya* (life), *mal* (private property), *karama* (dignity and honor), and *'ilm* (mind and knowledge). Later scholars, especially Al Shatibi, added *nasl* or *nasab* (family and community) and *hurriyah* (self-determination or political freedom). Some twenty-first century scholars have

added an eighth *maqṣad*, known as *ḥaqq al maḥid* or respect for the physical environment, which was simply assumed throughout Islamic history.

The perspective of holistic *tawḥid* relevant to the future of Kurdistan as a balancing wheel against extremism from both above and below gives rise to the question whether there is a natural law of nations distinct from an un-natural law of states and whether there is a natural law of national unity and regional integration.

This raises the prior question whether there is such a thing as natural law that must be discovered, as distinct from the positivist law that human beings create. This was the basic issue in the founding of the United States of America.

Almost all of America's Founders were familiar with the so-called contract theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, who taught that the authority of government comes from a contract among people, but all of America's founding men and women rejected this as the ultimate source of political legitimacy. Instead, they based their so-called Revolution, which actually was a reformation, almost entirely on the teachings of their real mentor, Edmund Burke, who led the minority Whig Party in England. He supported the American colonists' demands for reform and taught that the source of legitimacy both in England and in its colonies comes from a contract between man and God, for Whom both persons and their communities can serve only as stewards. In Islamic jurisprudence, this is known as *khilāfa*, which is the first of the four goals or requirements (*ḥajjiyat*) of political justice (*ḥaqq al ḥurriyah*), the other three being *shurah*, *ijma*, and an independent judiciary.

The ultimate in illegitimacy, according to Edmund Burke, was the French Revolution, which denied all transcendent authority and was a perfect model of a so-called sovereign state based exclusively on the principle of might makes right.

At the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention in 1789, Benjamin Franklin was asked, "What have you created?" He replied, "We have created a republic, if we can keep it". He regarded the Great American Experiment in Self-Determination as just that, an open-ended experiment.

The essence of a republic, as distinct from a mere majoritarian democracy, is the reliance of the legislative branch of government on the divine source of its ultimate guidance. Simply put, a republic by definition is based on natural law.

What, however, is natural law? In the modern terminology developed in the 19th century, natural law is exclusively what one can observe in the physical world. This definition is designed to exclude any higher dimension of reality, including God.

This modern definition is the exact opposite of the traditional Christian teachings and of the Islamic teachings on the Sunnat Allah or the Way of God, as well as those of every world religion to the extent that it has maintained its purity against popular superstition.

IV. Qur'anic Dialectics of Community Harmony

Every person is created with a need and a corresponding intuitive capability to seek and to know transcendent reality and to submit lovingly to God in thought and action. This is why throughout history since the era of the first cavemen human beings have entered into community not primarily to hunt animals more effectively for mere physical survival but primarily to fulfill this transcendent need. The primordial purpose of law as a positive paradigm of compassionate justice is to give meaning to everything man can observe. And meaning comes from God, Who gives purpose to everything He has created.

Throughout divine revelation, but most insistently in the Qur'an, we are encouraged to appreciate the symbolic value of contingent reality, namely, of the physical world. The first order of symbolism is the coherent diversity of Creation, which points to the Oneness of its Creator. This is the essence of *tawḥid*.

The coherent unity in diversity is perhaps shown best in the pairing of opposites as the basis of reproduction in animal and plant life. In Surah Ya Sin 36:36, we read, "Limitless in His glory is He Who has created opposites (*zawjain*) in whatever the earth produces, and in men's own selves, and

in that of which they as yet have no knowledge”.

The term *zawjyah* means harmony in the mutual interdependence of opposites. This is shown in the positive and negative charges of electrons in modern quantum physics and perhaps even in the existence of parallel universes as a solution to the enigma of string theory. This dialectics of natural law is the foundation of the universe.

Another primary instinct in human nature is not only to form pairs but out of them to grow ever larger communities. This too is part of the structure of the universe, ranging from bees to galaxies. In Surah An'am 6:38 we read, "There is no beast that walks on the earth and no bird that flies on its two wings that is not a community like yourselves". In Surah al Dhariyat 51:47-49 God tells us, "And it is We who have built the universe (*sama'a*) with Our creative power, and verily it is We Who are steadily expanding it".

Of course, the natural and positive attraction to unity in diversity competes with a natural attraction to exclusivity. This is why the Qur'an again and again urges persons and communities to use their freedom of thought and action to compete constructively rather than destructively. In Surah al Ma'ida 5:48 we are warned, "To each of you have We prescribed a law and an open way. If Allah had so willed it, He would have made you a single people, but His plan is to test you in what He has given you; so strive as in a race in all virtues".

The term for "law" here is *shira'ah*, which means "universal ethics", and the term for "open way" is *minhaj*, which means "universal process toward truth and justice". The term *shari'ah* is a more restrictive term applying only to Muslims and valid only for them.

We are given the reason for diverse communities and even diverse religions in Surah al An'am 6:38, "We made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other", whereby the purpose of knowledge is to cooperate for mutual benefit. This is the purpose of Ibn Khaldun's differentiation between bad *asabiyah* based on exclusivist loyalties to oneself at the expense of others and good *asabiyah* based on pride in the best of one's own community as a means to cooperate in bringing

out the best of all communities.

This good community solidarity is based on the Islamic view of human nature expressed in the term *infaq*, which is the inclination to give rather than take in life. The human being is believed to be naturally virtuous, as distinct from burdened with original sin, but this good nature must be supported and shaped by a culture of holistic education and prayer.

V. Developing a Global Paradigm of Regional Integration

All aspects of human life, especially the permanent things in humanity's past, present, and future, are covered from all angles in the Qur'an. The coherence of the Qur'an as revealed over a period of twenty-two years in different contexts is one reason why Muslims regard the Qur'an as a miracle.

The twin purposes and roles of traditionalist religions are the spiritual well-being and happiness of every person and the maintenance of consensus on the responsibilities and rights necessary to live in an ordered society. The purpose of every individual is to become the person that one was created to be, because that is one's true identity. Therefore the greatest challenge in life is to become the person that one already is. The purpose also of every community from the nuclear family to the village and nation and on to entire civilizations as the highest form of group identity is the same.

As Charles LeGai Eaton has put it, this contrasts with the ultimate "false god", the shadowy presence behind all others, namely, the human ego with its pretensions to self-sufficiency. This is the cardinal sin of every rigorously secularist paradigm in public policy.

Islam as a religion is a holistic product of truth, love, and justice. The broad purpose of public policy in the Islamic view of life is to encourage creative thought designed to identify and solve problems and to educate the citizens of a polity in pursuing good order, general prosperity, and freedom through responsible self-determination.

In conclusion, peace, prosperity, and freedom require respect for the organic human nation, based

on its individual members' sense of a common past, common values in the present, and common hopes for the future, as well as respect for a global paradigm of shared sovereignties both vertically and horizontally based on regional integration of nations both within and beyond the modern secular state.

This requires a regional confederation of polities in West Asia, not a clash of civilizations. This, in turn, requires a common language of compassionate justice, based on *haqq al nasl* or respect for family and community, as well as on all seven of the other human responsibilities and corresponding human rights as developed over many centuries by some of mankind's greatest scholars and wise persons as paths to harmony and peace.

The centerpiece of such a regional confederation might be in its center, as recommended in my article, *The Metalaw of Holistic Haqq: Building an Abraham Federation in the Holy Land*, delivered in Vancouver, Canada, in April, 2014, and published in the Summer 2014 issue, No. 33, of *Sacred Web*.

The organic nations and diverse religious communities of the world have the opportunity to lead a spiritual renaissance and revival of all faiths leading to the harmonious transformation and integration of the entire world for the good of all humankind.

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NOTES ON RELIGION AND CULTURE

“RELIGION” IS NOT SIMPLY a set of propositions and actions, a list of beliefs and rituals. Religion unlocks the nature of reality for us, and then provides us a way to live in accordance with that reality. True religion offers us a metaphysics, which tells us what is real and therefore possible, but also an ethics and aesthetics, which tells us what is good among those possibilities. Moreover, religion provides not only verbal abstractions, but also a concrete embodiment of them. In Islam, the embodiment of the metaphysics and ethics of the Quran is the Prophet and his way of life, his *sunnah*, which is then transmitted through the *ummah* in a multitude of manifestations.

As for “culture,” it is not simply a concrete embodiment of the way people do things: customs, habits, and artifacts that are simply *there* like some neutral fact of the matter. To say “culture” is to imply that a people consider some things worth repeating and others not worth keeping, some admired and others reviled, some cherished and others thrown away. And by logical necessity what one considers

to be good implies that one has an idea of what is possible, and having an idea of what is possible implies having an idea of what reality *is*. There is no ethics or aesthetics without an ultimate worldview (a metaphysics), whether that root is acknowledged or not.

So in some sense religion and culture overlap and intertwine: one's ultimate beliefs will filter down into one's everyday judgments, and one's everyday judgments are illuminated by (or exist in the shadows of) one's ultimate beliefs.

There is something absolute and intrinsic to culture. Imagine 10,000 saints and sages, steeped in learning and nourished by the Quran and Sunnah, being placed on a tropical forest to create a civilization, versus 10,000 criminals and fools placed in an identical place. What would happen in a hundred years? If the two groups begin from the same set of conditions it is hard to imagine that the same culture would result. We intuitively understand that the answers to questions such as, “What is a human being?” “What is the nature of reality?” “What is the moral structure of the world” have a concrete effect on how we live.

But there is also something relative and extrinsic in culture. Imagine the same group of 10,000 saints and sages from the example above, only this time

placed in a desert environment instead of a tropical forest. Is there any doubt they would produce a different culture? Factors like climate, resources, political context, inherited skills, all have a determining effect on what is possible and hence what is good.

When Muslims are careful to make a distinction between what is “religious” and what is “cultural” they are often trying to differentiate between the absolute and the relative, the essential and the accidental, the universally valid and a particular manifestation, the intrinsic and the extrinsic. For all Muslims, what is absolute in Islamic civilization and in various Islamic cultures is to be found in the Quran, in the Sunnah of the Prophet, and what is relative comes from other sources.

At its best, a “culture” is valuable insofar as it transmits to us the best of things. That is what makes them worthy of preservation, because no human being can achieve cultivation and refinement alone. One must recognize and repeat what is good, and not presume the ability to discover everything anew through trial and error. Imagine having to constantly arrive at the best recipe for baking bread! The great Islamic cultures that have gone before us and which in some ways are still with us arose from the diligent exercise of judgment by human beings who not only chose certain ways of

doing things but went to the trouble of discarding the wrong ways of doing things.

Muslims follow the Sunnah of the Prophet not only because God chose the Prophet Muhammad and commanded us to follow him, but also because we understand that his Sunnah is a manifestation of his own virtues, and we want to attain these same virtues ourselves which the Prophet possessed perfectly. Who waits until a child can understand the meaning behind “please” and “thank you” before they teach them to do it? Similarly, we adopt the ways of the Prophet hoping to grow into and understand the human qualities that produced them. God Himself refined and cultivated the Prophet, who then did the same for His Companions through teaching and serving as an example. That generation did the same for the subsequent generation, and so on until now.

Generations before us worked to apply the Quran and Sunnah to all aspects of life, found ways to nurture the spiritual life, to create beautiful objects, to live harmoniously with one another and with the world of nature, to maintain and transmit the virtues. They not only found the good, but discarded the bad when they encountered it. One can conceive of Islamic civilization as a repository of expertise about how to do and make things well, as a record of what was left after bad ways and bad

ides had been discarded. This enables one to act and do well, and make things beautifully, without having to go through the process of invention and improvisation, which can consume huge amounts of mental and physical energy.

Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*) has always recognized the place of ‘urf or “custom”, not as something merely allowed by the law, but as a living and indispensable part of the law. For example, Islamic law stipulates that a husband must maintain his wife financially, but what is considered adequate main-



tenance will vary from locality to locality, and it is the customs of the place that determine what is enforceable under Islamic Law. The *Shari'ah* thus both shapes and is shaped by culture.

But the power of the Quran and Sunnah in influencing culture goes much deeper than rules and legal institutions and the cultivation of personal qualities. The revelation in the Book and Sunnah also affects how people wear clothes, design buildings, and create art. Human beings are surrounded by human artifacts: clothes, furniture, houses, markets, mosques. These objects are not neutral. They are possibilities amongst possibilities, chosen because their makers deemed them to be good and worth making at some level.

Just as a chisel or brush or pen's shape determines in a sense the form of the product, the "shape" of the soul determines what it will fashion. The Quran and Sunnah shape the soul like a calligrapher carving his pen or the painter shaping his brush. The Quran nourishes the soul morally, aesthetically, and intellectually, giving it a sense of relation, or proportion, of hierarchy, of silence and expression, of expressability and ineffability.

To use an example from Islamic art, it is no accident that the intricate patterns that adorn Quran covers and mosques exhibit a quality of finding the center everywhere, of interlacing lines, of a motif repeated over and over but in a slightly different way, of each ending of a line being the beginning of another line, of an implied endless expanse of pattern as you reach the end of the rectangle that circumscribes the pattern. These patterns are a crystallization of the very structure of the Quran itself, which re-states *tawhīd* (the Oneness of God) again and again, never in exactly the same way, with Divine Names repeated and connected with all aspects of life, in a Book that can be recited beginning anywhere and ending anywhere, whose very grammatical structure of elision and changing perspective (called *iltifāt* in Arabic) implies a limitless truth that cannot be fully captured.

Thus an important dimension of Islamic culture—and one might say, an extension of the Sunnah—is the spontaneous creative activity of souls given life and nourishment by a revelation and way

of life: "Quranized" souls making what they deem to be beautiful and harmonious and in this way prolonging the truth of the Quran in stone, ink, cloth, and rhyme. When we experience this culture we do not only see and hear pretty things, but also the way in which Islam enabled oneness to manifest in multiplicity to create harmony and beauty in forms. All beauty has an intelligibility that communicates something of the view of the truth of who created it. The beauty of the world of nature are signs of God Himself. But in human culture this beauty (or lack thereof) transmits the metaphysics of its makers insofar as the culture represents a set of choices among possibilities.

Of course we should also always remember that Islamic cultures are also the result of extrinsic conditions, and what was good for them might not actually be good for us. Moreover, cultures are always subject to decay and error. The Quran does not look kindly upon the argument that one does something simply because one found one's father doing it. No collectivity is infallible and by their fruits will you know them. But what is wrong with Muslims that so many of us think that we can just throw away over a thousand years of culture because we think we can find what we need in the Quran and Sunnah alone? How can we be so naive as to believe that living immersed in the forms produced by a materialistic civilization guided by a mechanistic worldview will not affect our ability to see and appreciate the true nature of things? Muslims should refine all aspects of their lives wherever they are, but we should also be wise enough to benefit from the treasures left by those who went before us. Far from being a luxury, culture can be a key to unlock dimensions of the truth and provide added means for souls to grow closer to God.

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IN SEARCH OF THE RIGHT SYNERGY BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND THE SHARIA FOR THE SAKE OF A HEALTHY UMMA

Introduction

FINDING THE DESIRABLE AND precise role of technology in society is a challenging intellectual task. The task is intellectual in nature, since first and foremost it pertains to ideas and their conceptual interrelationships. The specific ideas in question as referred to in the title of this article, are the notions of technology, sharia, and community (*umma*). The task is also challenging, because as we shall soon see, these are fundamental concepts dealing with man's terrestrial life that have given rise to diverse and conflicting understandings and positions. Each concept presupposes an underlying belief system and a philosophy that is influenced by many factors and to which many different sources contribute. We are therefore confronted with diverse and competing philosophies of technology, philosophies of law, both religious and secular, and philosophies of social organization. As for the challenge at hand, it comes primarily from the complex nature of man's cultural systems, both each in itself and in its relations with each other.

Perspectives on Technology

We will first discuss the issue of technology. Technology is perhaps the most dominant and the most impactful of all the cultural systems ever created by man. It is the main shaper of his built environment and in modern times we observe that it is also a major shaper of the natural environment. As a result, the idea of an integral ecology that embraces concerns with both layers of the environment becomes increasingly important in contemporary society. In a sense, technology is everything to man. It is with

technology that he builds his home. It is with technological products that he surrounds himself within his home. It is also with technology that he utilizes and harnesses the natural environment. Moreover, it is with technological inventions and innovations that he keeps on introducing new modes of material production, especially with the view of meeting his expanding economic needs and propping up his increasingly sophisticated way of life.

In modern culture, technology has become ever more refined and sophisticated purportedly to quench the thirst of modern man for rapidly changing materialistic life styles. In this cultural development not just the forms of technology are changing. Even more profoundly changing is the nature of the relationship between man and technology and by implication the relationship between him and the natural environment. In the course of the development of modern technology man the producer of technology himself has changed. Consciousness-wise, man the producer of traditional technology is not the same as the man who produced modern technology. They have different visions and appreciations of the world of technology and its relationships with the rest of societal life, in particular with religion. Consequently, the idea of interdependence between man and technology does not have the same meaning and significance in traditional and modern societies. In contemporary culture, which is largely continuous with the modern one,¹ man's dependence on technology has reached new levels that have not been seen before in the history of his own species. In the light of this overdependence on technology in human life some critics of modern technology have gone to the point of asserting that instead of serving humankind this technology has actually enslaved them.

In its most general sense, technology refers to every tangible object that man makes for the pur-

¹ Postmodernism, as distinct from modernism, is generally sympathetic to the traditional indigenous cultures inclusive of their respective scientific and technological worldviews. However, the sympathy is generated more by the strand of current thought that is attracted to the idea of ethnic and cultural pluralism than by a traditional worldview such as that of Islam, which affirms unity in diversity in all domains of human life and thought.

pose of fulfilling certain needs in his earthly life. However, there is a big difference between traditional and modern technology not only in terms of scale of production and application but also in form and spirit. Traditional technology is shaped and governed by three main ideas, namely truth, utility and beauty, which are harmoniously balanced and intertwined. Modern technology, on the other hand, has been primarily guided by the spirit of utilitarianism alone. After having marginalized if not entirely dispensed with the traditional dimensions of truth and beauty or equivalently with integral epistemology and aesthetics this technology developed solely along utilitarian lines. Without being adequately restrained and constrained by the elements of integral epistemology, aesthetics, and moral and ethical considerations as viewed in their totality it is not difficult to see why modern technology developed the way it did. The pursuit of technological power that is unhindered by spiritual and moral-ethical concerns, which is best illustrated by the quest for the state of the art in modern military technology, could only be described as an inevitable consequence of the exclusively utilitarian approach to technology.

Islamic technology, the most developed form of technology prior to modern times, is traditional in the sense defined above. It shares with other traditional technological cultures its characteristic concerns with truth, utility and aesthetics in its foundation and development. However, it differs from them in at least two main respects. First, there is difference in worldview, and second in scale of production. Like other aspects of Islamic life and thought Islamic technology is based on a worldview in which the idea of Absolute Divine Unity is held supreme. The Islamic worldview affirms the theological idea of the unity of Divine Attributes and Qualities and the human need for a Sacred Law (*Sharia*). Its core elements are none other than the twin ideas of the unity of all domains of reality derivable from the idea of Divine Unity and the balance and harmony of the human social order. The emphasis on the idea of unity in the Islamic worldview is beyond comparison. It is this spirit of unity or *tawhid* as it is termed in

Arabic that permeates the whole body of Islamic civilization of which technology is an integral part.

The Islamic worldview also pertains to the idea of the most preferred human actions and the most perfect human social order and how it ought to be organized. It affirms the unique place and role of the Divine Law as the most fundamental and the most potent organizing and governing principle of human society. The Sharia is basically concerned with the proper relationships of forms in the human world. It seeks to organize, govern, and regulate them in such manner as to help secure a balanced and just social order. That there is a divine preference for a certain kind of social order by virtue of which a sharia is prescribed is made clear in the Qur'an. The Qur'an describes such a social order as *ummatan wasatan*, meaning "the middle or balanced community."² In this connection it also speaks of the idea of the best community (*khayr ummah*).³ In view of its comprehensive and pervasive societal role the Sharia is called upon to organize and regulate the pursuit of technology as well. In fact, especially in the creative period of Islamic history, the Sharia served as an extremely important cultural context for Islamic technology, thereby demonstrating its creative dimension that was often eclipsed by its regulative dimension. This means that there is a preferred technological order or system that is worth pursuing.

The difference in worldview has thus helped make Islamic technology distinguishable from other traditional technologies in both form and spirit. The difference in scale of production, which distinguishes classical Islamic technology from its contemporaneous forms, is a particular aspect of their formal differences. The "modernity" of Islamic sharia was an important explanatory factor why Islamic technology became far more developed than the other traditional technologies. Now, traditional Islamic perspectives on technology are being challenged by modern technology. However, old issues remain. The crux of the issue at hand is the ques-

² *The Qur'an*, 2:143

³ *The Qur'an*, 3:110

tion of appropriateness of technological forms for human consumption if a healthy society is indeed what we aspire to have. In our understanding, the healthy society is synonymous with the balanced community to which we have earlier referred. Notwithstanding the pitiful state of technological development in the contemporary Muslim world traditional Islamic perspectives on technology remain relevant to our discussion on the present and future technological orders.

The form and spirit of Islamic technology may be further explained by references to other ideas related to the Islamic worldview. The Islamic worldview also affirms the idea of man as a theomorphic being and the idea of the cosmos as a theophany or God's Self-Disclosure. By the latter idea we mean that God reveals about Himself in the cosmos, that is, about His Names and Qualities. From all these ideas we derive lesser principles that have important implications for Islamic technology. Essentially, what these three ideas mean for technology is that let us be aware of the divine model of creation whenever we are thinking of making, creating and producing new things. As a model of human creation, technology should attempt to conform itself to the divine model of creation in the best way possible and to remind ourselves of our theomorphic qualities. The tripartite principles of truth, utility and beauty are of course inspired by and conform to the divine model of creation. The Qur'an refers to these three principles in many of its verses. It speaks of God as having created the cosmos or its parts in truth (*bi'l-haq*).⁴ It refers to God as having subjected (*sakhhara*) everything in the heavens and on earth to man's use,⁵ particularly the sun and the moon, the night and the day,⁶ and created many things that are of utility to man such as for transportation purposes.⁷ It also speaks of God as having created the heavens (*zayyanna*)⁸ and the human soul (*sawwa*) beautifully.⁹ In the above

discussion we find some of the most important guiding principles that the Qur'an has provided to enable human beings to pursue technology in a holistic and healthy manner.

Technological System and Maqasid al-Sharia

In discussing technology we may understand it as referring either to individual technological objects such as cooking utensils, weapons, transportation vehicles or food products or to the totality of these technological products which are valued by a particular society according to some order of appreciation. Most of the religious responses to modern technology have the first understanding of technology in mind. In fact, this is the popular understanding of technology. In Muslim societies this popular kind of response refers to the jurisprudential or *fiqhi* position. It is interested in determining whether a particular technological product is religiously permissible (*halal*) or prohibited (*haram*). The concept of sharia-compliance for technological products is also generally used according to this



popular understanding.

However, when we are thinking of technology in the second sense, that is, as a total system, then the meaning of sharia-compliance has to be understood at a higher level. The health of our technological system is a good indicator of the state of health of our community or society. It cannot be determined through the *fiqhi* approach, which is basically piecemeal in nature. When it comes to our assessment of a technological system viewed as a whole we need the help of a superior approach that is far more embracing. The body of knowledge traditionally

⁴ See, for example, *The Qur'an*, 15:85

⁵ *The Qur'an*, 31:20

⁶ *The Qur'an*, 43:13

⁷ *The Qur'an*, 14:33

⁸ *The Qur'an*, 15:16

⁹ *The Qur'an*, 91:7

known as *maqasid al-sharia* (“the purposes of the sharia”), which may be viewed as a philosophy of Islamic Law, is epistemologically fitting to provide the necessary criteria to determine the health of the total technological system, nationally as well as globally. The details need to be worked out. However, the important point to be noted is that we need to take our critique of contemporary technology viewed as a system to a higher level where the role of *maqasid al-sharia* becomes totally relevant.

Towards a Better Health of the Umma through a Healthier Technological System

We have explained the meaning of a healthy society, albeit briefly, which we identify with the Qur’an’s “balanced community.” Every society needs technology, which it either produces by itself or buys from other societies. Much more important to a society than merely having a collection of technological items in its possession, even if these are plentiful including with the most up-to-date and

the most sophisticated is the issue of whether or not it has in place a total technological system that is well-defined and healthy. In the Islamic perspective, given the centrality in societal life of both the Sharia and technology as we have defined them a healthy relation between them is most desirable. Consequently, each Muslim society is in great need of a good national technology policy and a well-conceived as well as well-managed technological system. It is the task of the scholars of the Sharia to articulate its role in addressing the challenges that technology has posed to Muslim societies. It is worth repeating that in appealing to the role of the Sharia in question both *fiqhi* and *maqasid* approaches must be given their due place. Otherwise, that role would hardly be effective.

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WHEN WORLDVIEWS COLLIDE THE ENCOUNTER OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN WORLDVIEWS

“WORLDVIEW? WHAT’S THAT,” MY colleague asked in mock humor when I used the word recently over lunch in polite company, as if he had never heard the word before and didn’t have a clue what it meant. The rest of the academics looked on with studied detachment, not wanting to get involved in the discussion and give themselves away. Silence is golden and hides a multitude of sins. His gallows humor, as in the death of worldview, wasn’t lost on my modern-day sensibility, not to mention sympathies. Here was a successful academic, a professor teaching Chemistry in the Chemical Engineering Department at a respected university who was uncomfort-

able with the term. Like the word “world class”, people use the term for effect without realizing its true implications and how it affects the way we think.

In my classes, I always drop the word *worldview* among other random tidbits to entice my students to give themselves away through ignorance, disinterest, or disdain; but they never do. They always nod approvingly, not to suggest that they know its meaning and implications, but as if to suggest how important it is that we have a worldview that informs our behavior and shapes our lives. What would students find if they did a Google search to enlighten themselves? The first link to show up on a routine Google search comes from none other than Wikipedia, the ubiquitous website that everyone loves to hate and hates to use but secretly does. It is enough that it provides a definition that people can latch onto if they want to know everyman’s version of the definition of the word. A comprehensive

world view is the fundamental cognitive orientation of an individual or society encompassing the entirety of the individual or society's knowledge and point of view.

Now that's plain scary, I thought to myself, using words that make no real sense, much less lend clarity as a definition. Cognitive orientation? Encompassing the entirety? Society's knowledge? What might that be? Just about the only word worth salvaging in this want-to-be definition is "orientation" since it captures an essential fragment in the mosaic of meaning that could make up a true sense of what an inspiring, living and universal worldview might look like in plain words on a page. Are we going to tackle the ignominious challenge to pen a definition that could fill a thimble full of ideas that might distinguish this elusive concept? Not likely, except to suggest perhaps the following, framed within the language of the traditional perspective that traces its sources of knowledge back to revelation within the main world religions as the prevailing inspiration of our time.

A worldview is a body of knowledge, a grand mosaic if you will, comprehensive in its scope and universal in its depth, that finds its source and takes root within a concept of universal revelation from the higher consciousness of a Supreme Being, a worldview that orients the society at large who have accepted and hold dear its framework, towards those principles and doctrines with the force and power to give shape and color to our knowledge base, our cognitive and intuitive thinking processes and our behavior toward ourselves and others within the contours of a humanistic and pluralistic civilization.

Ultimately, knowledge that forms the foundation and substance of a worldview must reflect a universal whole; a complete reality must be a manifestation of an organic and holistic reality; the universe must be what it is, namely an ordered and harmonious totality that we see outwardly reflected in the harmony and lawfulness of the celestial spheres. The elements found in the natural order must be related to the whole, partly in order to understand their meaning and purpose, and partly to preserve the integrity of their own individual *raison d'être*

which relies on the harmony and balance of the Whole. "The science of our time knows how to measure galaxies and split atoms, but it is incapable of the smallest investigation beyond the sensible world, so much so that outside its own self-imposed but unrecognized limits it remains more ignorant than the most rudimentary magic."¹ Modern science presents a vast accumulation of detailed knowledge which no one could hope to grasp in its totality, partly because modern science does not accept a perspective of totality that satisfies its demand for physical proof, and partly because the accumulated facts simply do not add up to a complete and unified theory in the scientific sense, a totality and a unity (*al-tawhid*) in the Islamic sense of the term.

If the traditional knowledge of metaphysics lacks sufficient proof from the scientific point of view, then it could be affirmed that from the metaphysical perspective, modern science lacks significance and the means of achieving a comprehensive meaning to the facts it uncovers that would amount to a universal cosmology regarding the origin and fate of the universe. It is not worth gathering together an extensive body of knowledge of the physical world, only to lose the essential knowledge of the soul of man and the Spirit of God as an unwanted consequence of the accumulated discoveries of physical nature. It is not worth the sacrifice of a traditional knowledge that belongs to a higher order of understanding with the power of unifying the multiplicity of all knowledge and of unifying the wide diversity of the manifested world into a single Whole, for the sake of an analytic knowledge that knows everything about the facts of the universe, but that understands nothing about the significance and meaning of the universal and metaphysical truths.

The prevailing attitudes of modern science have not always been the established standard in earlier, more traditional societies. In addition, science has not always been modern. History portrays western science as having gone through a far more traditional era when the meaning of the term "science" itself reflected the metaphysical and spiritual roots

¹ Frithjof Schuon, *In the Tracts of Buddhism*, tr. Marco Pallis, London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1989, p. 40.

of knowledge that found its ultimate source in the sacred scriptures of the various religions, an essential knowledge that addresses the grand questions of humanity, including the questions of origin, destiny, and final end of humanity within the context of the universe as we know it. The traditional sciences were considered "a knowledge, which, while not pure metaphysics, is traditional, that is, related to metaphysical principles, and though a science in the sense of organized knowledge of a particular domain of reality, it is not divorced from the immutability which characterizes the principal order."² In this regard, knowledge draws its doubt or its certitude from the acceptance of the principle of revelation as the ultimate source of the essential knowledge. The tradition of a pursuing science of the physical laws of the universe was left to the relatively lower-level understanding of science as we know it in the modern world.

Another notable difference between traditional knowledge and modern science lies in the meaning of their application in life. Modern science applies its knowledge to the benefit and enhancement of the quality of life on the physical, practical, and sensorial levels of experience. This is not surprising since it is only interested in the physical plane of existence as the sole expression of true reality. The traditional sciences, on the other hand, understand themselves to be applications of a metaphysical doctrine that gains entrance to a different order of reality and integrates this knowledge into a unity through synthesis and full integration into a person's behavior and action. Thus, the way a person is provides a direct reflection of the way he/she acts and behaves. The traditional sciences prepare the way for a higher expression of the essential knowledge and offers a pathway leading toward that knowledge.

In today's world, scientists describe the universe in terms of two basic theories, relativity and quantum mechanics, considered to be the two great intellectual achievements of the twentieth century. The theory of relativity now dominates the field of

astronomy by describing the force of gravity and the large-scale structure of the universe. Quantum mechanics, on the other hand, deals with phenomena on very small scales within the quantum world. Not surprisingly, astronomy as the macrocosmic field of the infinitely large³ and quantum physics as the microcosmic field of the infinitely small⁴ are beginning to create cracks of denial in the wall of scientific truth that has always accompanied the scientific attitude concerning higher levels of reality. The findings of both astronomy and physics have begun to hint at the possibility of domains that are actually "trans-physical", domains that virtually transcend the purely physical plane of existence.

The sciences of physics and astronomy also point to another astounding insight: They both contain their own distinct worlds and suggest the possibility of more undisclosed insights that are different from anything we perceive directly with our senses; as such they seem to follow their own distinct laws. We live between two worlds, the one macro and the other micro in dimension and orders of magnitude, just as from the traditional point of view, we live in the continuum of time within the envelope of eternity. As regards the linear progress of time, time's continuum seems directional and timely, moving forward at a rate that coincides with the ticking of a metronome and the beating of our hearts. Outside the linear progress of time, time's continuum seems like a pause between two eternities, a single breath of humanity that has had its moment only to fall back into the ocean of the Spirit. Our lives are but fragments, a parenthesis that opens the envelope of the space/time continuum and closes out the eternal now. Between the infinitely large and infinitely small worlds of astronomy and physics lies the meso world of the intelligible and the understandable, the meso-world of everyday phenomena. This middle

³ The general theory of relativity describes the force of gravity and the large-scale structure of the universe, sizes on a scale as large as a multiplicity of millions (1 with twenty four zeros after it) miles, which is the size of the observable universe.

⁴ Quantum mechanics deals with phenomena on extremely small scales, such as a millionth of a millionth of an inch, leading to a technology of the miniscule that we now call nanotechnology.

² S. H. Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science*, Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993, p. 95.

land is reminiscent of the "middle way" of Islam. We experience directly a meso-world with our senses and are expected to follow the middle way, a path that not only reflects the reality of the natural order in which nature is beautiful because it symbolizes and reflects beauty, but also because the middle way represents the way of measure and balance that we hope to achieve in our lives as a reflection of the Islamic principles.



For centuries, western science has insisted on observing the natural order directly while, at the same time, it has systematically refused to believe in anything that was perceived indirectly, from behind a symbol or a veil as it were, such as the truths of the traditional world that were

perceived indirectly through myth, symbols, and metaphor. It wanted to find its truth in the atoms and molecules of every drop of water and every grain of sand. Now, however, with the discoveries of quantum physics, modern science has turned a corner, only to arrive at a kind of black hole in its study of the physical universe. It has discovered to its surprise that matter cannot always be substantiated and form cannot always be visualized. In fact, modern science is now reaching beyond its traditional domain of the physical world into areas that are difficult to imagine even for scientists, much less visualize or listen to for verification through the senses. For example, physicists are forced to ask themselves: Is a neutron a particle or a wave? Physicists no longer know since it behaves as both a particle and a wave and its behavior is characterized by unpredictability.

In the traditional perspective, people were accused of believing, without coming to a true understanding of the physical world around them. With regard to some of the latest findings of quantum physics, scientists find themselves understanding their theories, but without actually believing them, because they point towards border areas into which

science has been forbidden to venture. "The normal reaction to a first exposure to relativity is: 'I think I understand it; I just don't believe it.' Normally it takes a physicist about five years of contact with the ideas before he feels comfortable with them – not because they are complex or obscure, but just terribly strange."⁵ Now quantum and astro-physics are exploring the frontiers of these borderlands with an intensity and thoroughness that it always brings to its investigations, and these scientific disciplines are beginning to make some startling discoveries and some inescapable realizations that could possibly lead to a breakthrough in the way the traditional and modern scientific worldviews interact with each other.

The time has come when we must reflect within ourselves the interrelatedness and unicity that scientists are slowly beginning to discover within the basic elements of the phenomenal world. The time has come to use the great achievements of modern science, together with traditional knowledge, to provide a consistency of perspective and philosophical depth to the knowledge that is being made available to people during this time period. We need to leave behind with finality all preconceived notions concerning the unknown mystery, in order to open ourselves to the full view of a new and unexplored horizon that begins within humanity as a realization that the origin and final end are one and the same. The aim of knowledge is not the discovery of some ultimate proof that will prove all our scientific theories to the detriment of metaphysical knowledge. The aim of knowledge is but a return to the Origin of all things which lies at the heart of humanity, within the nucleus of the atom, and at the Absolute Center of the universe. To have knowledge of our origins and our final end is to know from where we originate and therefore the destination to which we will ultimately return.

Whether it is the recent findings of modern science in the fields of biology, chemistry and physics that have revolutionized the entire intellectual framework and enriched the storehouse of modern

⁵ Robert March, *Physics for Poets* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), p. 128.

knowledge as never before, or the wide diversity and profound scope of the traditional knowledge whose fullness reaches down from Heaven to enrich the earth and whose extent spans across all races and cultures, one thing must become clear. The deeper a modern and contemporary person explores either the rational or intuitive perspective, the more that person must realize the existence of a unique similarity of aim and purpose between the two contemporary paradigms of knowledge. A bridge of opportunity is beginning to emerge that may span the divide that exists between scientific and traditional knowledge that would be too important to ignore by right thinking individuals.

Science needs a perennial philosophy of universal truths in order to substantiate the facts and the findings that it uncovers on the physical plane of manifestation, and in order to give them accessibility and meaning to the people of our time. Traditionally, the world religions, and the religion of Islam in particular, have accomplished this feat with considerable success by offering a sacred philosophy of life and practical wisdom to help fulfill life's purpose in a manner that is comprehensible to everyone. The science we envision would have to be a "sacred science" rather than an exclusively "empirical science" such as we have now, a science that holds the door open to permit the higher, metaphysical realities to reveal themselves within the natural order as the universal principles that they truly are.

Neither science nor religion can continue into the new millennium as islands unto themselves. Nor can either modern science or the great world religions suffer a fatal compromise at the expense of the other perspective. The world cannot afford to lose either the incredible quality or depth of the traditional knowledge or the incredible precision, accuracy and range of the knowledge of modern science. They both need to integrate themselves into a comprehensive theory of knowledge that the adherents of these two perspectives would be willing to believe in and act upon. Each perspective needs to exhibit a new consciousness that complements the incredible breadth of knowledge and possibility that these valid and alternative fields of vision encompass. They both need to be inclusive rather than

exclusive, inviting dialogue and exchange between related fields of interest to bridge their differences and frames of reference. It is not for nothing that the Messenger of Islam is quoted as having said: "Seek knowledge⁶ (of science), even unto China," which was a form of Arab hyperbole to suggest that the knowledge of science was so important one should seek it even unto "the ends of the earth". No doubt, the Prophet of Islam was thinking of a traditional knowledge that found its source in the headwaters of revelation that flowed through him to his companions, and ultimately the world we now live in.

The sources of traditional knowledge will continue to inspire the minds and hearts of humanity. The night sky will always be the "city of God" and the vast cosmic universe will always be a magnificent universal book and a mirror reflection of the Divinity. The traditional scale of the universe fully establishes the value of the qualitative experience behind the cold face of quantity. It weaves an intricate web of purpose and a hierarchy of meaning that permits humanity to find their place in the universe precisely because the essential elements of the universe exist within the human being, namely knowledge, intelligence, existence, life, and consciousness. The mystery of cosmic genesis and the knowledge of a true beginning lie hidden within the mystery of a transcendent consciousness that has proclaimed as an eternal remembrance: "I was a hidden treasure and wanted to be known. Therefore, I created the world."

John Herlihy

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6 Etymologically, linguistically, and historically, science in its root meaning was always considered knowledge and knowledge understood as science, expressing or implying possibly a difference in degree, but not in kind.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION: WHY SETTING NEW FOUNDATIONS FOR THE DIALOGUE SHOULD MATTER FOR MUSLIMS.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, A video featuring a Saudi cleric, Sheikh Bandar al-Khaibar, created a buzz on the internet. In a lecture in the United Arab Emirates, this Islamic scholar attempted to disprove the motion of the Earth with updated versions of arguments already present in Aristotle's works. Many web surfers and social media activists, including Muslims from all around the world, later showed the folly of this cleric's arguments.

The video popped up after the release of two series of breath-taking images of ground-breaking astronomical observations that also created a buzz: the close-up images taken by the ESA Rosetta probe and the landing of Philae on Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko in November 2014, and the first fly-by of Pluto by the NASA probe New Horizons in July 2015. In both cases, sophisticated devices reached their very distant targets, after about a ten year travel through the solar system, on the strength of elaborate calculations of the motions of bodies in gravitational fields that involved not only the Galilean law of inertia that our sheikh seems to have forgotten (if possibly he has been taught it), and the laws of Newton, but also the trajectory corrections based of Einstein's General Relativity. The probes reached their destinations with exquisite precision, and transmitted images of these distant lands. The knowledge utilized by modern scientists about the world and the position of this Saudi cleric posed a striking contrast.

Sheikh Bandar's video is another example of the difficult and chaotic relationship of many Muslims, whether clerics or laymen, to modern science. We could cite many examples that have had a much greater impact on Muslims than this short clip. If one searches the phrase "*Islam and science*" on Google, many of the top sites that are returned claim to refute the theory of the Big Bang with argu-

ments that show the superficiality of the knowledge of the field. Other sites accept the Big Bang theory, that is, cosmic and geological evolution, but deny any type of biological evolution. Still other sites claim that modern science is consistent only with Koranic revelation and not with the Bible, and that the Big Bang theory is proven by the text of the Koran. Countless low-cost books and brochures on the same topics can be found in Islamic libraries.

I can assess the impact of such messages through the lecture courses I give in various parts of the Islamic world, and to various kinds of audience, including Muslim clerics, university students in science or in theology, and high-school teen-agers. What strikes me most is not so much the attempts to discuss scientific theories or to propose philosophical interpretations of those theories, but rather the scientific and philosophical illiteracy of these discussions and interpretations, as well as the presumptuous tone with which they are proposed. Unfortunately, by attempting to refute science with (poor) religious proofs, or to support religion with (poor) scientific proofs, and with so little scholarly apparatus, Muslims do much damage not only to the way their readers could understand science, but to their ability to understand the spiritual meaning of revelation, and to build a solid theological reflection on all of the knowledge at our disposal.

Sheikh Bandar would have upset 'Ali Qushi, the astronomer of the 15th century who worked in central Asia and later in Istanbul, and who discussed Aristotle's classical arguments against the motion of the Earth, disproved them, and was led to the conclusion that the motion of the Earth through space was possible. If 'Ali Qushji was able to do so, it was because he was sceptical about the power of Aristotelian philosophy to describe nature, and he was willing to consider arguments from empirical data and from philosophy separately.¹ During the Middle Age —the golden period of Islam—, Muslim thinkers, and especially theologians, criticized the Aristotelian version of causality in which

1 F. Jamil Racep, « Copernicus and his Islamic predecessors: some historical remarks », *Filozofski Vestnik*, vol. xxv, n° 2, 2004, p. 125

effects happen necessarily when the natural causal antecedents are present. These Muslim critics of Aristotle argued that God creates the world anew at each instant and thus viewed regularities in nature (*‘ādāt*) as a consequence of God’s will rather than the powers of natural substances. On this view, the human mind can contemplate natural phenomena as God’s signs (*āyāt*) and reflect upon them and their meaning. In spite of, or perhaps *because of*, their theological commitment to God’s presence as the “first cause,” they could see secondary causes as a tribute paid to the perfection of a renewed creation: “No want of proportion will you see in the creation of the Most Gracious. So turn your vision again: do you see any flaw?”² The contribution of Muslim astronomers to science has been recently submitted to a revised evaluation by internationally-renowned scholars. The translation into Arabic of almost all non-literary texts during the period of the early Abbassid caliphate at the end of the 8th and beginning of the 9th centuries, was due to a strong appetite for all kinds of knowledge, according to the saying of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: “Seek for knowledge even in China.” For Dimitri Gutas, “the Graeco-Arabic translation movement of Baghdad constitutes a truly epoch-making stage, by any standard, in the course of human history. It is equal in significance to, and belongs to the same narrative as, I would claim, that of Pericles’ Athens, the Italian Renaissance, or the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.”³ Muslim scientists corrected the errors in the original manuscripts, accumulated astronomical observations, made catalogues of all kinds of objects, and invented new technical instruments as well as new mathematical tools to describe the world.

So why don’t Muslims just continue on this way, and pursue the quest for knowledge in all its aspects, that is, not only religious knowledge, but also knowledge of the world, as they are prompted to do so by so many Koranic verses and sayings of the Prophet, and by the examples of their forefathers?

² Koran, 67, 3.

³ Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, Routledge, 1998.

When I talk with imams and young Muslims to whom I give lecture courses to make them more familiar with these topics, I frequently get the following response: there is a prejudice according to which modern science as it is currently practiced would necessarily lead to atheism.

It is true that “atheists” may use science to support an updated version of philosophical ideas that originally developed in Greece more than 25 centuries ago. Maybe one of the most striking examples of this use of science is given by Stephen Hawking’s book, *The Grand Design*, where this famous scientist proposes a complete worldview allegedly based on physics, in which science, after having taken the place of philosophy, concludes that there is no place for God. In a nutshell, according to Hawking, the laws of physics are able to explain why the universe appeared out of nothing, without the need for a Creator. “Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist.”⁴ This book was welcomed by Richard Dawkins, another famous author, who uses evolutionary biology to promote atheism. But, it was largely criticized too, by many scientists who considered that contemporary science is not able to provide a complete and consistent account of reality, by philosophers who criticized Hawking’s philosophical naivete, and by religious thinkers who underlined Hawking’s theological illiteracy. If we assume that the universe actually appeared from the law of gravity and Quantum Mechanics, where does the law of gravity and Quantum Mechanics, as well as the quantum vacuum, which are *not* nothingness, come from?

In his essay *Al-Munqidh min-ad-Dalal*, in which he examines the various ways towards knowledge, Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, one of the most famous Islamic thinkers in the history of Islamic theology, philosophy and spirituality, condemned “those who believe they defend Islam by rejecting the philosophical sciences”, and “actually cause much damage

⁴ Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design*, Bantam Books, 2010, p. 180.

to it.” However he also identifies two risks in the practice of rational inquiry: On the one hand, because philosophers are too proud, and too sure of themselves, they often venture beyond the field where reason applies, making statements about God and religious matters which are not sound. On the other hand, common believers, after seeing the excesses of these philosophers, are led to reject rational knowledge indiscriminately.⁵ These considerations were written almost one thousand years ago about philosophers, but they are still applicable today when it comes to the work of scientists such as Hawking or Dawkins, who venture to affirm final statements about the “grand design”.

Muslim thinkers could easily be inspired from the lessons of the past, and, as Al-Ghazali did for the knowledge of his times in the 11th century, engage and indeed provide leadership in contemporary sciences in order to discriminate between theories, speculations, philosophical interpretations, and the oversimplifications so common in public discourse. The answer to those who attempt to hijack science in order to support a given philosophical worldview is not ignorance or contempt, but knowledge of science and philosophy that will help us develop sound theological reflections by combining the reading of the *naql*, that is, the holy texts that are the spiritual legacy of Islam, with the practice of the *ʿaql*, that is, the rational inquiry which is mindful of reasons limits. Indeed science has identified fundamental limits of the rational inquiry from within itself. The theorems of incompleteness proposed by Gödel, Turing or Chaitin, are probably the most striking examples of the power of science that is able to prove that some mathematical statements are neither provable nor disprovable. And last but not least, the failed attempts by scientists (such as S. Hawking or R. Dawkins) to provide a full and final explanation for the universe and its workings, are lessons on the power and limits of the human mind to grasp a reality that unveils and veils itself. All that is of great interest for a religious thinker.

⁵ Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalal*, edited and translated by Farid Jabre, Librairie de l’Orient, Beirut, 1969.

It is true that science challenges some of the traditional interpretations of the holy texts. But Muslim theologians have to consider these challenges as a purification of the ideas we have about God’s action in Creation. God does not cease to act, but not as other created agents act. He is different from His creatures and His absolute transcendence makes His presence in the world possible without any alteration of His transcendence. “There is nothing whatever like unto Him, and He is the One that hears and sees”.⁶ From the dialogue between science and faith, we can address fundamental issues on metaphysics, and question our views on ontology.

There are also more practical incentives that would encourage the interest in science. Science influences societies through technology, and gives birth to new things and new possibilities, as well as to new ethical issues that theologians have to address. We cannot live in a modern society without understanding how things work. Considering technical devices are mere black boxes that make our lives simpler is not a good attitude. It is just “magic thinking”. We collectively need to become more educated, so that we can develop reflective ethical positions on whether a given technology is really useful for society.

In this context, the dialog between science and religion is a way of renewing the interfaith dialogue, by prompting us to talk together not only on the majesty and beauty of the Creator appearing from the beauty and majesty of His Creation, but also on our common patrimony, our planet Earth now endangered by severe environmental issues. These issues are discovered and identified by science, with its ability to measure and model complex systems, and are connected to technology, whose improper use produced the current unbalance, but whose proper use might help solve the issue. As a matter of fact, in their deep origin, environmental issues are intimately linked to spirituality. The outer desertification process parallels the inner deserts that harm our hearts. What is at stake is our vision of the cosmos as created by God, and our responsibility as God’s “vice-regents on Earth”. These fundamen-

⁶ Koran, 42, 11.

tal Koranic teachings are recalled by the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change issued by a group of Muslim scholars⁷ that echoes the recent encyclical *Laudato Si* published by Pope Francis.⁸

As a conclusion, it is imperative that Muslims participate in the dramatic challenges of the 21st century. We thus must set the foundations of a

philosophical and theological reflections should now be made with this challenge in mind. Problems are worldwide and solutions have to be worldwide. Here again, any initiative that would not converge into a *collective* effort to address this daunting challenge would be of little use. So Muslims should rather open their minds, and work with all the



renewed dialogue between science and religion in the Islamic thinking, inspired by the lessons of the past. Of course, this endeavour, because of its technicalities, has to be a collective effort, in which scientists and theologians, in their field of expertise, talk and work together with respect and modesty. And, for sure, it would seem highly desirable that the agenda and the topics for this revived dialogue should be fixed “by Muslims, and for Muslims”. But there is here a strong caveat: what is at stake now is simply the survival of the human-kind during the 21st century, in a context of growing environmental threats, resource exhaustion, loss of biodiversity, pollution of lands and soils, and increase of population, as it is reminded in the above-mentioned Christian and Islamic references. Contemporary

people of good will.

In the current state of the world, there is no easy way to be taken in order to reach this goal, neither theoretically, nor practically. We have to avoid self-pride and vainglory in front of the problems, and we must start with humility. The situation seems to be difficult, but there is also a great hope that the current turmoil may provoke a new awareness. *Wa-Llahu a'lam.*

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⁷ Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change, 2015, retrieved from <http://islamicclimatedeclaration.org/islamic-declaration-on-global-climate-change/>

⁸ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si. Encyclical Letter on care for our common home*, Libreria Editrice Vaticano, 2015.

THE REFUGEE CRISIS: EUROPE'S HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVE

DUBBED THE WORST HUMANITARIAN crisis since World War II, masses of refugees – mostly from Syria, Afghanistan and Kosovo – have taken to border authorities in several Central European countries at great risk to their lives in attempt to reach safer lands. An estimated nine million refugees are reported to have fled their homes in Syria since 2011. The image of the lifeless body drifted ashore of the Syrian toddler Aylan Kurdi, who drowned on the coast of Turkey along with his mother and brother in an attempt to flee his war torn town of Kobani, sent shockwaves around the world and came to symbolize the height of the tragic plight of displaced refugees seeking asylum in neighboring and Western countries.

European receptions to the thousands of vulnerable refugees have been mixed, ranging from plain unwelcome, to reassuring bouts of hospitality as exhibited – for example – by scores of Austrians and German citizens who took to the streets to welcome tens of thousands of Syrian asylum seekers to their country with “Refugees welcome” signs and bottles of water in August of 2015. It is no wonder that Angela Merkel has been portrayed as a champion of a relative open-door policy for refugees and somewhat of a darling among disenfranchised and weary asylum seekers. In a similar display of humanity, Finland’s prime minister responded by offering his residence to refugees. A far cry from Germany’s neo-Nazi and right-wing groups like PEGIDA, who have seized on the issue, organizing demonstrations outside homes for asylum seekers and triggered more than 200 arson and other attacks on facilities for refugees. Even for the relatively friendlier welcome by Germany, the costs of providing adequate shelter and care for such a large number of people for years to come, coupled with a right-wing anti-Islam animus that rings throughout the continent, one wonders just how welcome and

integrated Syrian refugees communities will truly feel in Europe, and for how long.

Europe’s reaction to the humanitarian crisis – four or more years in the making – revealed just how unprepared the continent is for shouldering its share of the crisis’ repercussions. Razor-wire fences have been raised along borders in Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary and France. Poland and Slovakia will only accept a few hundred refugees; on the condition that they be Christians only. In Hungary, thousands of desperate migrants were stranded for days until they were finally allowed passage to Austria in early September. Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary warned that “Europe’s Christian roots” were being threatened. In the Czech Republic, immigration police label refugees’ arms with numbers using permanent marker; an image eerily reminiscent of the tattoos the Nazis put on Jewish concentration camp inmates. Denmark placed anti-refugee ads in Lebanese newspapers, to dissuade aspiring asylum seekers to come to Europe. Most central European countries, strongly opposed the automatic allocation of refugees quota proposed by Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European



Drawing by Tasneem bint Ghazi



Commission.

The massive refugee crisis is a timely test for the soul of the flourishing and powerful European continent in the 21st century. It is painfully ironic, that a continent who saw its fair share of anguish and suffering on a mass scale in the World Wars, would give the cold shoulder to those fleeing horrors of war and destruction in hopes of a better and brighter future for themselves and their children today. The commendable position of Pope Francis is one that truly exemplifies the “Christian” spirit of Europe so many nationalists are keen on preserving: in a statement he made on the crisis, he called on parishes across Europe to take in refugees. The Vatican itself has housed two refugee families. The Pope warned European Christians of their duty towards the displaced by saying: “it is violence to build walls and barriers to stop those who look for a place of peace. It is violence to push back those who flee inhuman conditions in the hope of a better future.” Because the flow of refugees shows no signs of abating any time soon, it is a moral and humanitarian imperative for EU countries to do their best in extending their capabilities towards absorbing this global crisis through a consistent and fair policy consensus on the status of asylum seekers.

Yet, whatever solutions the EU proposes, asylum seekers in the continent will have to deal with major obstacles such as racist backlash, poverty, unemployment and successful integration in hostile societies. The most tenable solution is the need to set up well-equipped prefab cities where refugees can remain in integrated safety until the conflicts in

their homeland are resolved. Though far from ideal, tent cities allow for families to remain together and facilitate a safe return for the displaced when a peaceful resolution to the conflict is set in place.

Though selective images of Europe’s reaction to the crisis have flooded world news outlets in August of 2015, little global attention has been paid to the efforts of Jordan, a country that has been at the helm of absorbing the humanitarian crisis since the conflict started in March 2011. The small arid desert kingdom absorbed about 1.5 million refugees, and set up a tent city for another 700,000, while in oil-rich Gulf states like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the refugee intake is zero. Europe and other countries can take a lead from Jordan in its hospitable policy towards displaced asylum seekers, and the international community should work together to reach long term solutions to protect refugees and grant them dignified and havens of safety, but perhaps more importantly, to work towards stopping the fighting in Syria, so that the millions can return have a safe eventual return to their homeland. As the Somali poet Warsan Shire aptly reminds us: “no one puts their children in a boat unless the boat is safer than the land.”

Farah El-Sharif

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WHAT IS ISLAMIC MUSIC?

OUR CURRENT POPULAR CULTURAL trends approach music primarily as a form of entertainment and enjoyment. The faster the beat and the more outrageous the words, the more listeners seem to be entertained and enjoy their musical experience. Yet somehow with the loudest sounds there also comes a great hollowness in the human soul. The Muslim listener rightly asks what the relationship is between his or her faith and music.

It seems that these days the two most common responses to the question of Islam and music tend towards the extremes. One side sees only the misuses of music and rejects it completely. The other approves of any sort of music as long as it is branded 'Halal', as if Islamic phrases can simply be copy-pasted over the music of the day, whatever its form. Yet the reverberations of centuries of diverse musical traditions that we hear today from around the Islamic world lead us down another path, in a quest to understand music that is authentically Islamic. This search is no simple venture. It requires that we both forge a profound connection with the musical traditions that have been passed down to us and open our souls to the deeper mysteries of the heart.

The center of the Islamic soundscape is undoubtedly the recitation of the Qur'an, which while not being considered 'music' is undeniably musical. Along with the *adhan*, the rhythms and cadences of the Qur'an have left an indelible imprint on the souls of Muslims throughout the centuries, deeply influencing musical traditions as well as the poetry that is sung to this music. The Qur'an reverberates audibly in many musical genres, from songs of praise to the Prophet and recitations of *du'a* to the traditions of chanted *dhikr* in Sufi khanqahs and *zawiyas*.

However, the diverse traditions from Morocco to Indonesia and South Africa to the Central Asia show us that it is not necessary for music to be recognizably Qur'anic in its outward form for it to be Islamic. Traditional Islamic music encompasses a multiplicity of sounds and influences as diverse as

Arabic *Muwashshah* and *Qasida*, *Qawwali* and *Kafi* from the Indian subcontinent, the Persian *dastgah* system, the Turkic *maqam* musics, and numerous folk traditions. Yet despite this diversity, all Islamic music reflects the One. The diverse types of traditional Islamic music breathe in an ambience that is *tawhidi*, constantly reminding us of God's Oneness and bringing us back to the harmonious state of the *fitrah* in which we were all created. Though the intensity of the presence of the sacred in different forms of Islamic music varies, it is always present, like an all-pervading fragrance of paradise. And this is true even if there is no explicit mention of religious themes, as we see in so many Islamic folk traditions in which the passionate yearning of a lover raises the beloved to near-divine proportions, giving a reminder of the Divine and of the nature of true love to those of us who know how to listen.

The spirit and outlook of traditional Islamic music are embedded within the notes themselves, in scales that exploit the vast expressive possibilities of microtonality, using notes not used in Western music. Found in innumerable permutations across traditions, and even differing among masters of a single tradition, the melodic frameworks of traditional Islamic music allow for the communication of an infinite variety of human emotions and spiritual attitudes. Yet even more important than the notes themselves are the ways in which their understanding is passed down from master to disciple.

Education in traditional Islamic music is permeated by the presence of a certain etiquette, or what we often hear in Islamic parlance as *adab*. The concept of *adab* has various dimensions: it can refer to the manner one sings, plays an instrument, and communicates with the audience, one's way of showing humility and reverence towards elders, or even the intention to revere God and His Messenger. *Adab* beautifies our outward behavior, and by doing so, our inward substance. Music, or indeed any work of art, when practiced with *adab*, is not only a matter of performance and the entertainment of an audience, but a method of *educating* one's self and the individual souls of the audience members. In this sense music shares a great deal with the practice of *dhikr*, the repetition of the Divine Names

and Qur'anic formulas in spiritual practice. The repetition of certain words, the way one breathes, and even one's dress while chanting are all significant, imprinting and ingraining moral qualities on the practitioner's soul, as do the way one holds an instrument, the notes that are played, and the inner attitude of the musician. The goal is not so much a passing state of the soul as a permanent transformation in its very substance.

The human voice and the instruments of Islamic music are treated as a trust, an *amanah*, in the hands of the singer who has gone through years of training at the feet of a master, who also instructs him or her in purifying the self (*nafs*) and proper Islamic etiquette, passing on scales and melodies crafted by masters who lived in times much more deeply imbued with the Sacred than the world we live in today. When learned in this way, from heart to heart and with proper reverence, the inner world of the disciple is literally transformed by the music, becoming a vessel for centuries of expression and contemplation, yet also being able to manifest the spirit of this music using the unique gifts that God has given that musician, in the moment and space that he or she has been placed.

The spirit of *tawhid*, the cultivation of *adab*, and the inner return to the *fitrah* are all missing from non-traditional music and represent much of what is most valuable and must be preserved within Islamic musical traditions. We live in a world in which music is so often used as a means to manipulate the emotions or to provide a means of escape from the troubles of daily life. Traditional Islamic music also contains profound emotional content, perhaps experienced most profoundly in traditions of love poetry set to music, yet the emotions are directed to a higher purpose, as the intensity of love is raised to such heights that we realize it is only the Infinite Beloved that can be its true object. Rather than escapism, Islamic music is fundamentally a means of remembrance, of the limitless Peace or the passionate Love of the Real.

In this way, whereas nearly all contemporary music, classical or popular, is horizontal, bringing forth interminable benign or even harmful emotional responses in the soul, traditional Islamic music

is vertical. It is like the sacred *alif* of the Divine Name, discussed at great length for centuries by Muslim mystics and philosophers alike. It points us towards the transcendent, towards the Life beyond this life, and inculcates in us the yearning for the Beloved from whom we have been separated. And sometimes it even lifts us in celestial ascent towards the Beloved Himself.

In many ways, the qualities of Islamic music that we have been discussing are common to all Islamic arts: imbued with the spirit of the Qur'an, passed on through traditions of cultivation of the soul from master to disciple, and crafted to bring us back to the remembrance of God. Yet Islamic music possesses another characteristic that distinguishes it from arts such as the architecture of the mosque or the recitation of the Qur'an, and which is deeply significant for the world we live in today. Islamic music has a unique power to speak to all members of humanity, regardless of faith. The wisdom of Islamic music springs from and speaks to a wordless harmony that is found in the depths of the souls of all people, the *fitrah* itself. Because of this common harmony, Islamic music has always absorbed those pre-Islamic musical traditions that were in conformity with its deeper spirit, be it in Persia or Indonesia. The integrity of the transmission of Islamic musical traditions and the living presence of masters who embody the values of these traditions make Islamic music an outstanding representative of the values of spiritual cultivation, the remembrance of the transcendent, and the ability to live in harmony with our environment. These are values that humanity cannot bear to live without in a world that is growing ever more disharmonious and forgetful of its Origin.

My own musical journey, the gradual deepening of awareness of what makes our music truly Islamic, has been nothing short of a journey of growth and cultivation personally. I have tried my best to inculcate my humble work with the qualities described above to the best of my understanding and ability at each stage in my quest. But more importantly, it has been my intention to remind my listeners of these elements, to help them also to value the thought and reflection that goes into creating a work that

carries within it that resonant Qur'anic spirit. It is undoubtedly an ongoing journey of discovery and a great distance remains to be traversed. Much more work remains to be done, both academically and artistically -- an endeavor I hope is taken seriously if we wish to preserve our heritage and deepen our art for the present and future generations.

Young Muslims of today need to have humility when entering this field if they are truly eager to call their music 'Islamic'. They must understand that the sincere apprenticeship to our traditions and the assimilation of their spirit must come before innovation and *da'wah* (proselytizing), no matter how good the intentions may be. Truth must never be mixed with error, for all this will do is create the tribulations of *fitnah* and confusion. Being a "Halal" 'alternative' to the latest pop sensation does not qualify music as being Islamic. This trend of distorting our traditions to suit the passing fancies of the times can only lead to a loss of not only what has been passed down to us but also our sense of who we really are.

Authentic Islamic music is not and cannot be indifferent to either its own form or its content. It is fully conscious of its Origin and Source, which is the Truth, the One and only Reality, Allah. Whether

this awareness is reflected in explicit terms that are drawn from the Qur'an or drawn in other dimensions of our human existence, it remains graceful and dignified; the form of the music itself reflects the harmonious inner spirit of its message. The intention is for the listener and the composer to be drawn back to the depths of their own being, at the heart of which is the sacred presence of the All-Compassionate. Islamic music neither settles for frivolous lyrics that corrode our minds nor empty beats that only stimulate our impulses rather than our deeper thirst for joy and for life. Music is a gift sent from heaven as a sacred trust to remind us of the Truth. Let us continue as our forefathers did in absorbing the wisdom, knowledge and unbelievable repertoire passed onto us and, with humility, 'innovating' with the musician's unique God-given voice. Only then will what we create be a unique and yet nonetheless authentic and Islamic music, which ultimately brings about the remembrance of Allah — the Centre of all.

Wa'Llahu A'lam.

Sami Yusuf

Sami Yusuf is a world famous British singer-songwriter, composer, and producer.



Photo by Peter Sanders

THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY: CANADA'S CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT PANDERS TO FEARS BY TARGETING MUSLIMS

THE PAST YEAR HAS been a very active one for the anti-Islam industry in Canada. Leading the charge is none other than Prime Stephen Harper who – in gearing up to the elections in October 2015 -- has been stoking Islamophobia by pandering to public unease about Muslims. In addition to going after Muslim charities and organizations (defaming NCCM for instance), and even religious symbols, his jihad against “radical Islam” and search for terrorists under every Muslim bed has profoundly altered the Canadian legal landscape.

Indeed, the bastion of multiculturalism and tolerance witnessed a slew of legislative and policy directives – overtly or covertly – targeting Muslims and Islam. Sadly, even the justice system has not pulled through in some instances. Given space limitations this article cannot address all developments and decisions of concern, but it highlights about nine legislative initiatives and cases that have impacted or will impact the Muslim population.

1) On May 29, 2015, a controversial provision of the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act* (which had become law back in June 2014) came in effect. The provision allows the government to revoke Canadian citizenship from anyone who was born outside the country, or born in Canada and holds another nationality or are eligible to obtain another nationality. All of this can be done unilaterally without any involvement by a judge or other independent arbiter.

As the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association notes:

“Currently, citizenship can be taken away mainly on the basis of crimes that are considered threats to Canada’s national security, like terrorism or espionage, or demonstrations of disloyalty to Canada, like treason. But le-

gal experts warn that the list of offences that could lead to the removal of citizenship might be expanded in the future. Additionally, Bill C-24 punishes criminal activity with exile – a practice abandoned hundreds of years ago that has no place in today’s democracy.”

Muslims are already disproportionately represented among those whose citizenships have been revoked.

2) The Anti-terrorism Act, 2015 (known as Bill C51) was enacted on June 18, 2015 amidst major controversy. The legislation raises a plethora of issues and significantly alters the security landscape: It gives the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) powers beyond intelligence gathering (to actively target threats and derail plots); creates new offences (criminalizing “terrorist propaganda” and the “promotion of terror”); lowers the legal threshold to trigger detention to those who may carry out an offence from the existing standard of will carry out to may carry out; extends preventive detention for “suspected” terrorists from three days to seven days (inconsistent with the constitutional presumption of innocence); legally entrenches a no fly list; and grants government agencies explicit authority to share private information with domestic and foreign entities. All of this it does without any independent oversight.

The government has skirted around the issue when asked how these powers would improve the “war on terror” and labelled opponents as “soft on terror”. In fact, the leader of the Official Opposition New Democratic Party (NDP), Thomas Mulcair, pointed out that all of the recent anti-terror busts were achieved under existing legislation.

What does “promote terrorism” mean? This terminology threatens dissent and free speech. In fact, this new offence is too broad and it will capture all kinds of innocent speech. Indeed, without the requirement of an actual terrorist purpose, it can be used against teachers, activists, columnists, etc.

CSIS was created in 1984 as a civilian agency (with oversight and review) to address abuses of power that occurred when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) handled both intelligence

and law enforcement. The legislation blurs the line again. Why does a secretive security agency need police powers without the attendant accountability? As the *Globe and Mail* editorialized, the bill enables CSIS and law enforcement to target anything its political masters label behind closed doors as a threat. Indeed, Greenpeace even pointed to a leaked RCMP report that called anti-pipeline activists as "anti-Canadian petroleum movement". Moreover, CSIS' own documents reveal that they now deem "sympathisers" as threats as well.

The radical restructuring of CSIS into a "kinetic" service while its oversight has been dissolved or starved of resources is troubling. A core maxim of national security is "trust but verify". Given the powerful and secretive nature of the entities involved, this is an almost impossible task as it is. As retired former CSIS chief of counterintelligence, Geoffrey O'Brian, noted, "fundamental changes are occurring at a time when Parliament has come under criticism for lax scrutiny of spying". This is simply irresponsible.

Should law enforcement agencies be trusted with greater access to private information that they can share with others? The Arar Commission findings that faulted Canadian authorities for sharing information with foreign agencies resulting in the torture of Maher Arar have faded from Canadian memory. Now added concerns about information being shared between agencies should give pause for concern.

3) On June 18, 2015, Parliament also passed the *Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act*. The law on close reading appears to mirror the "anti-Sharia" bills introduced (and passed in some states) in the US. On its face the law appears neutral by raising the age of marriage, criminalizing forced marriages and banning "honor" killings. As the Bridge Initiative at Georgetown University notes, far from being innocuous:

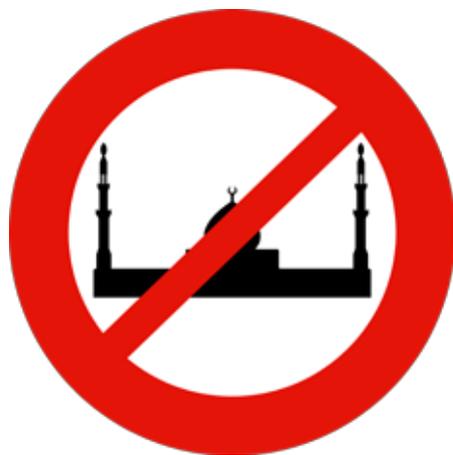
“...a closer look at the text of the law, and the rhetoric surrounding its creation and passage, leads us to question its intent and consequences... Like the anti-Sharia laws, the “barbaric practices” act offers solutions to

problems that don't exist, and focuses unwarranted attention on Muslims while ignoring concerns posed by other groups.”

Indeed, as *Toronto Star* columnist Thomas Walkom, opines, its provisions on "honor" killings, polygamy and the focus on immigrant "Muslim" practices clearly point to political pandering. It is all the more absurd given that forced marriages, "honor" killings and polygamy are already illegal under existing laws.

4) On June 19, 2015, the Conservatives also tabled another bill known as the Oath of Citizenship Act which mandates that citizenship applicants must show their face during the Oath of Citizenship ceremony. The legislation came a few days after the province of Quebec introduced Bill 62 known as the Religious Neutrality Bill which seeks to ban face-covering religious garments for public servants and citizens who wish to use government services. Though the real impetus for the federal legislation was the Federal Court of Canada decision ruling that it was "unlawful" for Ottawa to order new citizens to remove their face-covering veil or niqab when taking the oath of citizenship.

The Federal Court decision came in the case filed by Mississauga resident Zunera Ishaq, who came to Canada from Pakistan in 2008 and successfully passed the citizenship test in 2013. She brought the Constitutional challenge upon learning that she had to unveil (under a new policy directive introduced in 2011) during the actual ceremony. She was prepared to unveil in private for identification purposes



but this was not enough for the government.

The Bill has not passed yet, but a government spokesperson told the *Toronto Star*: "It is one of a series of bills being introduced now, which will together form a substantial legislative agenda after the election."

5) Earlier this year, the province of Quebec was in the news when Rania El-Alloul was told by a Montreal judge that her case would not be heard until she removed her hijab. According to an audio recording made public by CBC News, Judge Eliana Marengo told Rania that the courtroom was a secular place and that she is not suitably dressed. "Hats and sunglasses for example, are not allowed. And I don't see why scarves on the head would be either," said the Judge.

Annie-Claude Bergeron, spokesperson for the chief judge of the Quebec Court, said she was aware of the case, but that it's "up to the judge to apply or interpret the law the way they see it." Rania has filed a legal action seeking clarity on religious freedom in Quebec Courts.

The foregoing incomplete picture makes it abundantly clear that the legal landscape with respect to issues affecting Muslims and human rights in The Great White North leaves much to be desired. Fortunately, there were a few glimmers of hope as well.

First, earlier this year Canadian citizen Benamar Benatta quietly settled his lawsuit against the government for turning him over to U.S. officials without any due process in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. He spent nearly five years in U.S. custody until a U.S. Judge ordered (in a harshly worded decision) that all charges against him be dropped. Canada refused to apologize or compensate him for his ordeal until he sued and forced this resolution.

Second, in May 2015, an Alberta Court of Appeal granted bail to Canadian Omar Khadr while he appeals his conviction in the United States. Khadr was detained in Afghanistan at the age of 15 and held in detention for more than 13 years, most of it in Guantanamo Bay. Human Rights groups had long criticized his detention and conviction. He was transferred to a Canadian jail from Guantanamo Bay while he appealed his conviction for throwing a grenade and killing a US soldier during a firefight.

Third, in July 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada also rendered its decision in the case of *Javed Latif v. Bombardier Inc.* Bombardier had refused specialized flight training to Mr. Latif because of a false security designation by U.S. authorities. Though Javed was unsuccessful on his appeal to the SCC for other reasons, the SCC did clarify in a unanimous decision that under human rights law a company cannot "blindly comply with a discriminatory decision of a foreign authority without exposing itself to liability."

Fourth, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) also came though on September 1, 2015 and laid a charge in absentia against a Syrian intelligence officer accused of torturing Maher Arar. This is indeed a good development, but raises the question, whether they will also investigate and go after those within the Canadian government, intelligence and law enforcement establishments responsible for colluding with the Americans to send him to Syria in the first place.

Many of the new initiatives will initially affect Muslims (as noted by leading former jurists) disproportionately but they will eventually impact all Canadians.

This government must understand that the majority of Muslims, who are neither secular nor ultra-orthodox, hold the key to any serious and productive bridge-building. If government agencies believe they can win the "war on terror" by undermining front-line soldiers, they had better think again.

Rushed and poorly conceived responses to terrorism and radicalization – real or imagined -- can be counterproductive and may alter the fabric of Canadian society. Indeed, sometimes such initiatives play into the hands of Islamophobes and extremists alike, by fueling resentment, marginalization and by perpetuating the conditions to bring about the self-fulfilling prophecy.

Faisal Kutty

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AMERICA'S OLDEST MUSLIM COMMUNITY; EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSLIMS

ALTHOUGH MUSLIMS HAD VENTURED into the Americas before Columbus and with him in 1492, the arrival of Muslims in mass to the American shores was due to the dreadful saga of American slavery. When the first Africans survived the horrific Atlantic Ocean crossing, stacked upon one another like cargo in the year 1501, Islam had been established in West Africa for over 700 years. The great Islamic and African empires of Songhai, Ghana, and Mali flourished, as did the great city of learning, Timbuktu.

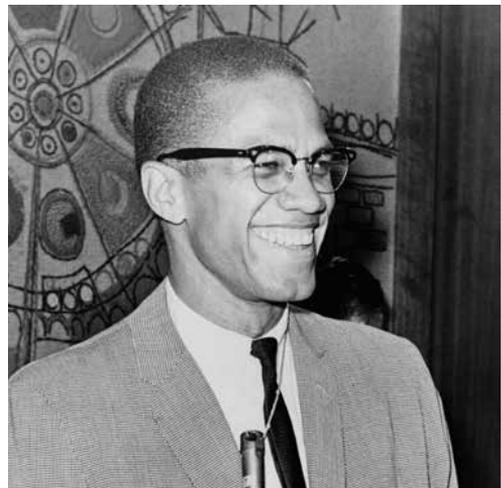
The extensive works of Allen Austin (*African Muslims in Antebellum America*) and Sylviane Diouf (*Servants of Allah – African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*) document the lives of over 100 African Muslims who were subjected to the horrendous American slave system in spite of being literate, urbane, skilled, and religious, in many instances. Of the 3,000,000 kidnapped Africans who survived the 3-4 month Atlantic crossing from 1501 till 1808 and landed on the North American shores, 10% to 20% (300,000-600,000) were Muslims. After arrival, slaves were bred to give birth to slave children to perpetuate generations of victims for the worst kind of servitude.

At first, the Muslim slaves were highly regarded because their shared language, values, and skill sets made them more productive than other slaves in the rigors of collective plantation work. But soon these same traits became regarded as negative attributes that catalyzed and enabled slave revolts and escapes. African Muslims were separated, treated more harshly, tortured, broken, or killed to offset these threats and tendencies. It also became necessary to depict Africans, in general, as savages, beasts, heathens, and even cannibals to depreciate any objections that White abolitionists may have raised.

Although both Austin and Diouf have docu-

mented numerous individual African Muslims who amazingly survived and navigated through the inhumanity of American slavery, the adverse circumstances and conditions imposed upon the slaves in general and Muslims in particular, appeared to have eradicated any collective practices of Islamic traditions. Yet, after slavery and Reconstruction, Islamic voices began to be heard and movements arose among the slave descendants such as Edward Blyden, who wrote “Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race” in 1888, Marcus Garvey (United Negro Improvement Association), and Noble Drew Ali (the Moorish Science Movement). Upon their work came Elijah Muhammad and his Nation of Islam, which attracted so many African Americans to its pseudo-Islamic tenets that that religious scholar and author of “Black Muslims in America”, Dr. C. Eric Lincoln, argued that all African-Americans had within them “a genetic memory of Islam”.

Upon that “genetic memory” the oldest Muslim community in America evolved to embrace the universal beliefs, practices, and traditions of Islam, while radiating a fresh and vibrant spirit and perspective too often missing in many recent immigrant Muslim communities. This energy is quite observable at almost any of these mosques. The people are smiling; the women are present and involved; there’s a cadre of youth engaged; the sermon (Khutbah) is Islamic and relevant; there’s accessibility; visitors are welcomed; the space is clean; there’s enthusiasm, sincerity, humour, friendship,



hospitality, generosity, compassion, and Tauhid (Oneness of God). It is a space where the Prophet ﷺ would feel right at home.

It is not coincidental that the oldest Muslim American community has impacted America far beyond their numbers and has out-performed the rest of the American Muslim communities in numerous categories: the only two Muslim United States Congressmen, the Hon. Keith Ellison and the Hon. Andre Carson come from this community. Al Hajj Malik al Shabazz, aka Malcolm X, is known and quoted almost as widely as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and was quite influential throughout the Civil Rights Movement, as was Imam Jamil Al-Amin, aka H. Rap Brown. Many of the giants responsible for the legacy and international acclaim of America's only native music, Jazz, are African American Muslims, such as John Coltrane, Art Blakey, Ahmad Jamal, and Yusef Lateef. Even today's Hip-Hop genre is a showcase of Muslim talent, such as Mos Def, Ice Cube, Akil, Akon, Rakim,



and Native Deen.

Muhammad Ali, perhaps the most well-known and loved person in the world today, is a product of the African American community. Ali sacrificed his fame and fortune in the prime of his career to stand-up for his faith and against war, racism, and hypocrisy. He also opened the door and inspired

six other African Muslims to become heavyweight and light heavyweight champions of the world, including Mike Tyson. The list of Olympians, professional basketball and football players, actors, and musicians, from the community is quite extensive.

This legacy of involvement and influence within America is certainly not limited to the famous and high profiled. It is not uncommon to find within the African Muslim community police officers, firefighters, postal workers, lawyers, judges, neighbourhood activists, counsellors, and various types of public servants, with the overwhelming majority of them openly and proudly proclaiming and living their religion. This is another distinguishing factor. The slave experience, the freedom struggle, and the conversion (or reversion) of faith, have each influenced the African American Muslim to consistently live in a single identity, whereas, oftentimes immigrants and minorities tend to cater to the majority's image and expectations of them at work and in the public, reserving their real selves to the secure confines of home environments.

Imam Warith Deen Mohammed (ra), who passed in 2008 and was responsible for the Islamic transformation of the Nation of Islam, with Allah's Help, Mercy, and Guidance, and also contributed so much to the growth, development, and balance of Muslim Americans through his 33 years of profound leadership. He said: "America cannot belong to those not claiming shares in her, and those who claim shares must be responsible. The United States of America is the property of every citizen. We must have a sense of ownership and get rid of the old slave ghost."

The African American Muslim community can arguably claim to be amongst the most influential Muslim communities in the world and I've found that they have such a unique human and Islamic experience that we would do ourselves a tremendous disservice, as Muslims and as human beings, to not learn from the great gifts Allah, swt, has bestowed upon them.

Muddassar Ahmed

Muddassar Ahmed is Managing Partner of Unitas Communications, a leading British Public Relations Company working with Governments, NGO and Businesses. .

THE OIC: MORE NECESSARY THAN EVER

THE BOND OF *UMMAH* HAS ALWAYS been strong, though it has taken different shapes for different times. In our age, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) provides an effective model to translate the Muslim world's desire to work more closely together, even as it grows to meet the needs, challenges and opportunities of an increasingly interconnected world.

Founded in 1969 after an attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the OIC includes 57 member states across four continents. As the collective voice of the Muslim world, the OIC advances the interests of the Muslim world in a spirit of peaceful and respectful dialogue. This is accomplished through three primary organs: The Council of Foreign Ministers, the Islamic Summit and the General Secretariat, headed by the 10th OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani.

The Council of Foreign Ministers gathers Foreign Ministers on an annual basis to discuss issues of common concern; in 2015, the Council met in Kuwait to discuss the Rohingya refugee crisis and violent extremism, among other issues. The Islamic Summit, the organization's supreme authority, is composed of the heads of state from member states, and convenes every three years. The OIC's executive organ, the General Secretariat implements decisions reached by the Council and Summit.

But while the OIC first convened to institutionalize international Muslim solidarity, improve economic cooperation between Muslim nations, defend the Palestine cause and protect Muslim holy sites in Palestine, its mission has evolved. In 2005 the OIC adopted a ten-year program of action to address Islamophobia and extremism - largely through the Istanbul Process, an international effort led by the OIC, the European Union and the United States, to combat religious hate speech. In 2008, the OIC expanded its charter to include concerns over economic inequalities, the lack of political and social mobility and health and environmental

issues facing member states.

As then OIC Secretary-General Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu warned, "When these issues are not addressed properly," an opening exists for extremists. Today, under Secretary-General Iyad Ameen Madani, the OIC is more committed than ever to combatting the threat of violent extremism. This year's Council of Foreign Ministers placed countering violent extremism, and the need for a coordinated response, front and center. Subsequent to the Council, the OIC has worked to develop collaborations between religious scholars, Muslim youth and media to broadcast this message.

But Secretary General Madani and the OIC recognize that, in addition to creating a coordinated strategy between member states to combat extremist rhetoric and recruitment, we must consider the greater social forces that give violent extremism its momentum and appeal. To address violent extremism we must also focus on social mobility, political participation, cultural production, and the hard work of building strong identities and resilient societies.

The Muslim world faces real, systemic challenges: The world refugee population is higher now than it has been for decades. Some eighty percent are Muslim, and OIC member states such as Turkey and Pakistan host the greatest number of these refugees.

While the world's Muslim population is already some 1.6 billion, that number is expected to rise past 2 billion within decades. Much of this population growth will occur in OIC member states; some that are already strained by the demands of rising populations. This will present significant challenges and cannot be addressed except through long-term cooperation and mutual assistance. If the OIC does not facilitate such partnerships, it is likely violent extremists will exploit the ensuing socio-political fallout.

But these same challenges can be turned into opportunities, if only the political will is present. There, too, the OIC will be invaluable. A rising and young Muslim population can be a driver for economic growth. The need to find new sources of energy in the various climates and conditions of OIC member states can, in turn, facilitate the

production of cutting-edge technologies. Growing Muslim populations outside the OIC can, in turn, help build bridges of tolerance, understanding and mutual appreciation, which can help fight Islamophobia and encourage trade, tourism and other forms of investment. What is sometimes called a “brain drain” could instead be a bridge between cultures and peoples.

The OIC can and will help convene and encourage such initiatives. After all, the OIC has exhibited such aspirations before; in the creation, for example, of the Islamic Development Bank, which presents \$150 billion in authorized capital to assist Muslims across the globe. Likewise, the OIC has established the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to accelerate cooperation across these spheres and between and across member states. Its numerous subsidiary specialized and affiliated organs and institutions across various fields - from arts, media and religion to statistics, trade, science and higher education attest to the wide and diverse interest of the OIC.

In furtherance of a commitment to charity, the OIC is now also working with USAID. This partnership connects relief agencies in emerging crisis zones and areas of long-term instability, from West Africa to Southeast Asia. This is important evidence of what the OIC is capable of, and can and will contribute. But these issues, as necessary as they are to the Ummah’s future prosperity, are not necessarily the OIC’s biggest contributions.

Those, rather, reference a far more significant reality.

The OIC hosts official envoys from Britain, France, Italy, Australia, and Germany amongst countries, reflecting the importance and success of the OIC’s ongoing work with major powers. It also hosts an official envoy from the EU and also the United States, through whom America has sought to accelerate cooperation and dialogue with the Muslim world. With these two Western powers, and the United Nations, the OIC has worked diligently to implement the Istanbul Process to combat religious hate speech. This critical and unprecedented global deliberation has seen the OIC take the lead on highlighting, defining and addressing the urgent need

to combat Islamophobia, and other religious hate-speech, at the international level. The OIC knows first hand the connection between dehumanizing hate speech and violent oppression - for example in the Bosnian civil war, against Myanmar’s Rohingya and Iraq’s Yezidi community.

By working with institutions of global significance and reach, the Muslim world is directly rejecting the clash of civilizations thesis. The OIC believes, and seeks to model, a respectful form of global engagement. The world must learn to accept that different peoples may have different values, but that the best to reconcile our perspectives is through respect, dialogue and consultation. The Istanbul Process represents the OIC’s commitment to that process, and the patient and detailed work it takes to arrive at lasting diplomatic solutions. This is an invaluable commitment on the international stage, even as it models for the Muslim world a more fruitful approach to difference.

In our age, many Muslim societies struggle with sectarian and ethnic rifts, the pressures of growing numbers, and rapid global transformations. There have been two very different responses to these pressures. A minority of Muslims has attempted, through violence and intimidation, to impose unity, unleashing great violence in the process. The OIC represents an opposite approach: unity emerges horizontally, through cooperation between sovereign member states, consultation, dialogue, and discussion. This means the OIC moves slowly. But it also means it moves responsibly. The world should know that dialogue and cooperation are the routes chosen by the Muslim world —not extremism or violence.

And we will carry this spirit forward.

With our Ummah larger now than it has ever been before, and growing larger everyday, the OIC is more necessary than ever.

Maha Akeel

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BRITISH MUSLIM STARS RISING

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT that in the year that the number of British Muslim parliamentarians almost doubled, Muslim Londoners would also face the joyous prospect of having two Muslims compete in the upcoming London Mayoral election? Could there be a better signal of the strides made in British Muslim achievement and integration?

The candidacy of Sadiq Khan, current Labour MP for Tooting, and Syed Kamall, an MEP for the London region and Leader of the Conservative Party in the European Parliament, for the Mayorship of London says something about the growing ease with which minorities navigate the world of politics and the confidence London exudes as a melting-pot city.

While Muslims committing acts of terrorism, at home or abroad, command the majority of media attention, there is a different British Muslim visibility on the rise. One which actually does represent the majority of British Muslims and coheres with the faithful rendering of their religious belief; to do good for the benefit of oneself and one's society.

Muslims did not feature heavily in the election debates this year, foreign policy was notably absent from public debate and not all party leaders were as receptive to the idea of visiting a mosque and engaging Muslim voters. Moreover, not all the party manifestoes addressed specific commitments on tackling Islamophobia or the problem of media bias and better press regulation. The Labour and Liberal Democrat parties were more forthright in presenting a vision of inclusion and integration. Nevertheless, the election outcome saw the number of Muslim MPs rise from 7 to 13. A huge turnaround given how slow political parties have historically been to address the privileged pathways to politics and the under-representation of BME individuals in safe seats.

The increase in the number of Muslim women MPs in 2015, with the arrival of Nusrat Ghani and Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh, is also to be marked. And not just because the two women represent the

broadening of political representation; representing the Conservative Party and the Scottish National Party respectively. With the 2015 parliament showing an increase in the number of female MPs (up 7% to 29%) and BME MPs (up 2.4% to 6.6%), it is pleasing to note Muslims make up a (small) proportion of both. As politics strides towards greater inclusiveness and representation, it is hoped Muslim representation will stay on par too. The early indications are not as satisfying as they could be, but the trend is moving in the right direction.

Then there is the spectre of Muslim sportspeople whose inclusion in national or premiership teams are a source of immense pride given the role of sport in defining and representing the nation and the people.

The number of Muslim footballers playing for Premier League clubs has attracted negative and positive coverage. Headlines about footballers rejecting the customary bottle of champagne for being crowned 'Man of the Match' recede in the face of news about football clubs accommodating Muslim players and supporters with the use of, for example, prayer room facilities. Feature pieces on how Muslim footballers cope with gruelling training exercises during Ramadan often conveys the essence of the month of fasting; faith, discipline, and fortitude, in a way some scholars would struggle to get across to non-initiates.

And then there is the culture of inclusivity evinced by club supporters who have rounded on those malcontents who have posted photos of Muslims praying during matches. It is great to see the language of sport build bridges and heal divisions.

The appointment of the first British Muslim female to the Football Association's Council is another milestone achievement. Rimla Akhtar of the Muslim Women's Sport Foundation, like the England cricketer Moeen Ali and Olympic-winning athlete, Mo Farah, show that sports, like business, politics and media, can transform the way minorities are viewed. While challenges certainly remain in tackling diversity and discrimination in sport and indeed in the visibility of Muslim women in public life, what these examples offer is a means by which to transcend the negative portrayal of Islam and

Muslims by presenting the subject in ways which the dominant narrative often ignores. Muslims being the ‘best of British’ is a trope seldom seen or heard.

Take, for example, analysis of media coverage of Mo Farah whose Olympic Gold winning performances have entranced Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Research done by academics at Lancaster University on the media coverage of Mo Farah during the London Olympics found 330,000 words used in articles published in the print media in August 2012, but only 23 mentions of ‘Muslim’. When one thinks of the premium Farah himself has placed on his Muslim faith, and his British identity, the absence of this in media coverage is a disservice to him and a silent nod to the prevailing depiction of Muslims as disloyal to Britain.

It would seem an innocuous thing, to make prominent an athlete’s religious identity but when Muslims consider the foregrounding of the racial or religious characteristics of those engaged in criminal behaviours, is it unfair to seek the representation of Muslim champions as ‘Muslim’ champions?

The burden of representation in a climate of intense suspicion around Muslims and Islam can be something of a double-edged sword for Muslims in the public eye; whether politicians or sportsmen. Do they have to carry the weight of their communities on their shoulders to prove that the majority of their co-religionists are just like them? And who is seeking the assurance – the Muslim community, grateful to have someone whom others celebrate as one of their own, or the majority society, who find in these examples affirmation of their tolerance and the opportunities advanced by society to people from minority backgrounds?

Fraser Nelson in a column for the Daily Telegraph once wrote of Britain’s Muslims being “truly one among us” stating that Muslims were modern Britain’s “success story”. The affinity British Muslims display towards the British state and to a British only national identity is undisputed. Their pride in being British is evident in statistics as wide-ranging as opinion polls and census data.

But if British Muslims are “truly one among us” would we be fishing around for evidence of Muslims

advancing in political office, or Muslims being the most generous among charity donors, or Muslims representing their nation in competitive sports to prove this “success story”?

There is a danger in celebrating outliers as representative of the normal distribution. Muslims making strides and becoming more visible in the public sphere for the right reasons should not eclipse our assessment of the condition of the many. At a time when 1 in 3 Britons professes to harbouring racial prejudice and analysis of data from the British Social Attitudes survey by academics at Manchester University shows that while other forms of prejudice toward minority groups is falling, anti-Muslim prejudice is going the other way, we would be naïve to judge a “success story” based on the illustrious examples of the few. We would be equally myopic to judge Britain’s “success story” against the condition of Muslims in France or Germany. With historical factors, nationalisms and state structures being so different as to present a variable geometry, simple assessments over burqa bans or restrictions on headscarves and long skirts in state schools on the European continent and the comparable absence of these illiberal measures in the UK doesn’t really stack up to a “success story”.

A Muslim Mayor of London would be a marvellous, awe-inspiring achievement. Sadiq Khan himself has said the election of a Muslim mayor in the capital would send a clear message to “show the haters in Iraq and the haters in Syria what sort of country we are: a beacon”. I would like to hope such a message would travel near, and far. Celebrating a Muslim Mayor of London, indeed celebrating all those whose visibility in the public sphere attests to the confidence with which British Muslims assert their faith in their personal and professional lives, should not be something we do with an eye on those who make it to the top but with an eye on all those who should, rightfully, be able to follow their lead.

Shenaz Bunglawala

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GETTING MARRIED – BRITISH MUSLIM STYLE

MARRIAGE REMAINS A SIGNIFICANT and aspirational feature for British Muslims and is frequently referred to as ‘half the *deen*’ (faith). However, getting married and staying married are one of the biggest personal dilemmas facing second and third generation British Muslims. How and where to look for a spouse are no longer the sole preserve of parents and family networks with hundreds of matrimonial agencies offering their services through online services or planned events. Younger British Muslims, who make up nearly 45% of the British Muslim population according to the most recent Census data, are upwardly mobile, and have high expectations for prospective partners.

The British, and international, Muslim matrimonial scene has undergone a period of rapid commercialisation with a noted shift from parental introductions to individualised online Muslim matrimonial sites, organised events, and now Tinder-like mobile applications. Here, we discuss how a pioneering community-based organisation has responded to some of the challenges British Muslims face when trying to get married.

For religiously minded Muslims, both the shift to digitally-based communication directly between potential spouses and face-to-face meetings additionally, requires an ideological re-framing of what constitutes a *halal* and therefore Islamically sanctioned form of contact between unmarried men and women, as well as a re-evaluation of the role of family and culture.

Muslim Marriage Events

Muslim Marriage Events was established 13 years ago as part of Islamic Circles, a community-based project in London that focused on organising weekly study groups addressing a range of topics related to Islam. The marriage service was a response to facilitate what was a noticeably obvious and urgent need for the creation of a ‘halal space’ where young

like-minded Muslims could meet for the purposes of marriage. Mosques were not fulfilling this need and families were limited in their social networks. Muslim Marriage Events emerged in 2002 and has since mushroomed into one of the largest Muslim matrimonial events services in Europe, with approximately 50,000 clients in an international database. The majority of our clients are British born second and third generation Muslims of varying ethnicities and statuses. We hold between 4-6 events each month accommodating on average 80 people, as well as a number of larger free events geared for around 500 people in partnership with a charity in order to support their fundraising activities. Thousands of marriages have taken place since the inception of the service.

The basic format for the events is as follows. All participants are required to complete a profile form with basic biographical information as well as space for them to add what they hope to offer a potential spouse and what they are looking for. Each individual is assigned a numbered badge to enable clear identification. In order to create an environment that is consistent with Islamic principles, the format of our events is carefully managed to minimise unnecessary ‘free-mixing’ while ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be introduced. While some Muslim marriage events have chosen to replicate Western styles of ‘speed-dating’ based on one-to-one meetings lasting 2-3 minutes, we have developed an alternative method based on a group rotation that allows for all participants to meet within initial small groups where, with the help of a group facilitator, participants are encouraged to introduce themselves and offer responses to a series of ice-breaker questions. These questions were initially suggested by ‘*Ulamā*’ and tended to focus on serious issues concerning marriage expectations. However, in practice it was found that many individuals were shy to engage in the serious nature of the group discussions and appeared more relaxed if we inserted some light-hearted questions. After introductions in small groups, the women remain seated while men are asked to move onto the next group and continue introductions and rotations until all participants have been introduced. Peo-

ple are encouraged to make note of anyone they are interested in speaking to further. The second part of the event focuses on facilitating one-to-one meetings between interested parties where they are free to exchange contact details if they choose to. *Mabrams* are strongly encouraged to attend, though interestingly, the majority of participants appear to attend events unaccompanied.

Observing British Muslim marrying preferences and practices not only highlights important issues around Muslim identities and how these relate to ethnicity, but also reveals much about the impact of Western post-modernity on the lives of young Muslims. For instance, despite expectations that the role of ethnicity when choosing matrimonial partners would decrease with an increase in an Islamic identity, especially in the post 9/11 and 7/7 eras, we have seen that ethnicity still remains a significant factor in marital choice with many young people wishing to choose partners from similar cultural backgrounds. We therefore cater for Muslims from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Arab backgrounds, which make up the majority of Britain's Muslim communities. Events are also held for those wishing or open to marrying Muslim converts. Demography, professional status and religious inclination are often significant factors and some of our events cater specifically for those who pertain to a particular age range or prefer to identify as 'professional' or 'practicing'.

However, there are some interesting, if not depressing dynamics that are significant to note, particularly in relation to Muslim women. As a community-led organisation, we have to recognise and respond to the ways our communities are developing and some of the challenges people face in meeting suitable partners.

Divorce is becoming an increasing reality for many with some estimates suggesting that divorce rates among Muslims (based on the numbers of lone parent households, see Muslim Council of Britain, 2015) are reaching similar levels to that of the wider UK population (around 42% at present, Office of National Statistics, 2013). To help address this we hold regular events focusing on those who may be divorced or widowed. Similarly, marrying

ages, especially amongst women, are increasing, so to address this dynamic we hold events geared towards those over 30. A number of our clients are female doctors who face particular problems with regards to finding time to meet potential partners. Despite the high status accorded to those working in the medical profession, many women doctors find that in reality, few men (and their families) are willing to accept their demanding workloads, or that their parents insist on their only marrying others within the profession. This has resulted in an unusually high number of unmarried female doctors.

As part of a concerted effort to stimulate debate and reflection on some of these challenges, we have held topical discussions with guest speakers on a range of issues surrounding marriage and gender roles, together with marriage workshops aimed primarily at couples. An online matrimonial service was launched in 2013 to supplement the existing events, and provide a safe and secure space for like-minded Muslims who are seeking marriage.

Muslim Marriage App

As well as pioneering a contemporary format for the creation of halal spaces for Muslims to meet and an online service, we recently developed a *Muslim Marriage App* for use at events, which operates on a similar principle to the Tinder app, allowing criteria-based searching for partners. We recognise that this is a commercial response to the many ways in which technology has become embedded in our everyday lives. Other organisations providing similar services have now started to develop their own mobile Muslim marriage apps.

Muslim Women, Relationships and Marriage

In 2011 we were joined by the sociologist Dr Fauzia Ahmad, who was a research fellow between 2010-2011 at the Aga Khan Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations based in London. She has been looking at how second and third generation British Muslim men and women are re-conceptualising marriage and has since become an active part

of the team. Her research adds some interesting context to what has been witnessed at events, and provides us with much needed research on experiences of the marriage process and on some of the self-defeating patterns exhibited by both men and women when looking for a spouse.

The research also challenges particular stereotypes about Muslim women, agency and relationships, and marriage. Some common stereotypes of Muslim marriages present them as 'forced marriages', often to uneducated first cousins from villages 'back home', or link them with growing '*Islamism*' among young Muslims. At the other end of the spectrum, some media and academic articles would argue that higher education has an overall secularising effect on Muslim women causing them to reject their religion and culture for Westernised lifestyles - drawing on common stereotypes of Muslim women leading secret 'double lives'. Instead, Fauzia's research has shown the opposite - religious identities for second and third generation Muslim women are enhanced by their higher education experiences. These findings have been supported by several other independent studies.

While the possession of a degree is viewed as an 'insurance policy' against precarious job markets, it has also been viewed by many Muslim women and their families as a necessity in order to attract suitably educated and professional matrimonial partners, and to ensure that women are able to support themselves should future difficulties arise in marriage or financial circumstances (Ahmad, 2001 and 2006).

Contrary to expectations, many British Muslim women are experiencing difficulties in attracting suitable matrimonial partners expressing concerns around their own perceived lack of desirability, concerns over increased ages while studying and then working, being 'over-qualified' and high achieving thus 'pricing themselves out of the marriage market', negotiating and contending with 'male egos', the lack of emotional maturity among Muslim men, and questioning the efficacy and quality of existing and emerging matrimonial networks (Ahmad, 2012).

These concerns have been compounded by the perceived tendencies among some Muslim men of

either choosing to marry outside their religion and culture, or relying on parental matches with partners from their country of origin, and for expressing preferences for younger women or those who may be less career oriented. As a result, Muslim women often complain about a lack of suitably educated and professionally employed men on matrimonial websites and at the various matrimonial events that are now held across the UK, Europe and North America.

Marrying ages among educated Muslim women in Britain (and internationally) are increasing, and while this is sometimes attributed to a deliberate desire to delay or eschew marriage in order to further careers, Fauzia's research suggests that their single status is the result of a more complex interplay of factors and not necessarily an active choice. Some commentators have described the rise in the numbers of single, professional Muslim women, as the "Muslim spinster crisis" (Mohammed, *The Guardian*, 2012), or more generally as the 'myth of the happy celibate' (Imtoul and Hussein, 2009), referring to the very possible reality that some women may not marry at all. Given the significance of marriage and family among Muslim communities, there are considerable emotional consequences experienced by Muslim women associated with perceptions of 'rejection' and 'failure', increased age, spinsterhood and potential childlessness, and this is one of the areas that is currently being researched.

Some community activists have suggested that difficulties finding suitable Muslim male suitors are leading some women to consider becoming 'second wives'. This has naturally attracted considerable media interest with numerous hyped up stories about the growth of polygamy among British Muslims. Some have claimed that as many as 20,000 Muslim marriages in the UK are polygamous (Stewart, *The Daily Telegraph*, 2014), though it is difficult to verify such claims. From time to time we do receive requests from both men and women for polygamous marriages, and while these are not legally recognised in the UK, as long as both parties are consenting, we try to facilitate such unions where possible and appropriate. Here again, some of the personal stories behind why some British

born Muslims are choosing polygamous marriages confound many of the stereotypes the media present around 'Shariah-compliant' marriages; namely, that these are reflective of growing extremism among British Muslims and a rejection of 'British values'. Our experience is that in reality, personal circumstances are often far more significant.

A key research question, therefore, is why, despite the wide choice of online matrimonial services and events, are British Muslim men and women finding it so difficult to meet suitable matrimonial partners?

Where parents and extended family networks once played key roles in matrimonial matters, the loss or weakening of these networks, coupled with a growing professionalisation and individualisation among second and third generation British Muslims, and the rapid growth and commercialisation of online Muslim matrimonial sites and events, have led to changing concepts of what contemporary Muslim relationships represent, and a need to revise taken-for-granted tropes such as 'arranged marriages' often described in academic accounts of Muslim families. Many parents recognise the limitations of their own networks and assume that the education and professional status of their children mean that they are better equipped to find their own partners and will meet potential partners either at university or work.

Rapid social change, marked by high educational and employment aspirations has led to high expectations when choosing a life partner. As a result, younger Muslims are becoming increasingly individualised in their matrimonial choices and marital relationships. Rather than assist in marriage, greater

options and greater choice have instead led to a higher level of criteria-based searching, which in turn, leads to greater indecision and confusion. Although we now employ the Muslim Marriage App at our events, it has raised a number of pertinent questions around how professional Muslims select potential partners and how this may be encouraging an individualised 'checklist mentality' that prolongs rather than assists marital searching.

The internet brings its own set of problems. Some, fearful of face-to-face events and the potential for 'rejection' or not being chosen, 'hide' behind the anonymity gained by online searching and begin to form attachments through emails and phone conversations without meeting, only to be met with disappointment if a meeting does take place due to misrepresentations made by the other party. Women in particular have been subject to inappropriate comments from men as well as being misled by married men pretending to be single.

Many religiously-minded young Muslims are not encouraged to socialise with members of the opposite sex, yet are expected to make significant decisions on their life partner based on limited meetings, and often without the support or advice of a parent or married relative or friend. Without adequate pre-marital support, young Muslims are reliant on romanticised notions of what relationships and marriage entail. Consequently a checklist mentality becomes a priority when choosing a partner and this is often unrealistic or based purely on superficial characteristics.

Findings also suggest that men and women also seem to approach marriage with differing priorities. Muslim women are more likely to be aware of the boundaries between religion and culture, which translates into greater autonomy when choosing matrimonial partners, and a greater awareness of their marital rights and responsibilities. Employment brings financial independence, which adds to their confidence in asserting their rights. However, Muslim men in comparison, remain relatively uninformed of their responsibilities beyond the role of breadwinner and cultural expectations. While most attending Muslim marriage events will all agree that a partner who is strong in their *Īmān* is



a key priority, there remain significant differences between men and women's expectations. In the words of one female participant, "Women are looking for companions while men are looking for wives".

The research has clearly highlighted an urgent need for extra support services such as pre-marital coaching for single Muslims looking to get married, and several respondents have spoken of a desire for a return in some ways, to the more personalised marriage services that were historically offered by 'matchmakers' or 'Aunties' as those from South Asian backgrounds would call them. Preliminary findings have been disseminated at a number of academic and community events, with the latter firmly focused on aiming to feed back the research conclusions in order to encourage Muslims looking to get married to think carefully about how they go about choosing a spouse. The research has also raised a number of significant and pressing questions that require further investigation. However, at present we are limited by a lack of resources and are currently seeking funding to continue this important work.

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Issues of the Day

LIBYA: RETURN OF THE KING?



Crown Prince Sidi Mohammad Al-Sanussi

FOUR YEARS AFTER THE fall of the Qaddafi dictatorship, it is painfully clear that Libya is not better off than it was five years ago. Indeed, its security and economic conditions are much worse. Factionalism—and now barbaric Da'ish affiliates—are racking up an ever greater death toll; causing unspeakable misery to civilians; destroying the economy; tearing apart what remains of Libya's institutions and threatening to tear apart the country itself as a unified entity. It is even threatening Libya's neighbours and indeed international security. The Arab Spring, for all its early euphoria, has failed Libya miserably.

Possibly for want of another viable solution in the foreseeable future, a grass roots movement in Libya that supports the restoration of the 1951 Libyan Constitution has sprung up. The 1951 Libyan Constitution was for a constitutional monarchy and lasted until the coup in September 1969.

Perhaps the first tangible sign of this to the outside world was the Libyan Foreign Minister's state-

ment at an Arab League meeting in 2014 publicly calling for the return to the constitutional monarchy¹. He called for the “return of the constitutional monarchy as a uniting symbol for the country”. The Foreign Minister named Prince Mohammed el Hasan el Senoussi² as the heir to the throne, consistent with the rules of succession within the 1951 Constitution itself and the Royal Order.³

Around that time, there was also an interesting article in *The National Interest* entitled “The Case for Monarchy in Libya”⁴. The article explains that “the Western intervention in Libya...came at the price of emboldening some of the least democratic elements in the Arab world. A return to the past could help...thanks to their considerable influence, the Senussis found the common denominator between the various strains of Islam and the multitude of Libyan tribes....What's more, they have maintained their clout to the present day, as many tribal leaders are open to the idea of establishing a constitutional monarchy”.

More recently, there were further signs that this movement might be gaining traction:

1. In August 2015, 10 members of the CDA, the committee tasked with writing a constitution, signed a petition urging their colleagues to adopt the 1951 constitution and calling for the return of constitutional monarchy⁵. The petition cited “deep disagreements” inside the CDA as a reason for their move, explaining that the return to monarchy is the only solution to the current crisis.
2. Again in August 2015, *Al Arabia Al-Hadath* wrote

¹ <http://goo.gl/jrww4l>

² <http://www.mohammedelsenussi.org>

³ <http://www.24dec1951.com>

⁴ <http://goo.gl/IwOvRP>

⁵ <https://goo.gl/hNt6jJ>

about the demand of members of the Constitution Committee to return to the constitutional monarchy of 1951, noting that they believe it to be the best solution for Libya under the current conditions and referring to a large movement on the ground in Libya supporting this idea.⁶

The article noted that "Members of the committee for the preparation of a new Libyan constitution demanded the return to the monarchy that ruled Libya prior to Qaddafi's era...they added that the current situation in Libya, with its many divisions and deteriorating security conditions, prevent the committee from writing a new constitution and also prevent the Libyan people voting on it....(this) demand of the members of the Constitution Committee is not the first... there is a large movement in Libya calling for the return to a constitutional monarchy."

1. Billboards appeared in mid August 2015 across Zliten City (160 kms east of Tripoli) calling for the return to a monarchy in Libya⁷.
2. The Mayor of Al-Baidha who is a prominent Libyan in a city where a major tribe is based (and where the internationally recognized Libyan government has its offices) has officially issued a letter to the internationally recognized parliament declaring his support for the 1951 independence constitution⁸. Referring to the "civil war" in Libya and the "killing of Libyans by Libyans", he concluded by saying: "I see the necessity to return to constitutional legitimacy by reinstating the independence constitution and returning to what the country was in August 31, 1969 as a starting point for re-establishing a constitutional country."
3. Then, later in August, there was another statement, this time by the Federal Bloc in Eastern Libya, a prominent political bloc encompassing a number of important tribes and serving parliament members, that endorsed a return to the 1951

Constitution and a constitutional monarchy⁹. Alwasat reported that the President of the Federal Bloc said: "a return to the unamended 1951 Constitution is the best solution and the only one that can allow Libya to get out of this difficult phase and to reunify the country which has been split into cities, tribes and governments. He repeated the demand for the return to a constitutional monarchy."

4. There are currently numerous social media references to a grass roots organisation in every major city called the "Movement for the return of the Constitutional Monarchy" backed by local businessmen and the local population via donations).

What does this all mean?

All of this points to a gathering national movement supporting the return of a constitutional monarchy in Libya. The goal of the movement is not a personality cult but unity, stability and prosperity for the Libyan people through a concrete symbol: a constitutional monarchy. With no other solution in sight, and things getting still worse, Libya may yet see the return of the King.

ANWAR IBRAHIM

Anwar Ibrahim is currently a prisoner of conscience. He is being held in solitary confinement in Sungai Boloh prison in Malaysia. He is serving a five-year sentence handed to him at the end of a criminal trial that has been roundly condemned by human



Anwar Ibrahim

⁶ <http://goo.gl/R52sKc>

⁷ <https://goo.gl/N6cmKj>

⁸ <https://goo.gl/Ok3w7g>

⁹ <http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/85676/>

rights groups inside Malaysia and around the world. His jailing proves how important it is for countries to have strong institutions of governance, judicial independence and a free media. Anwar Ibrahim is in prison today because he is fighting for these things in Malaysia.

Anwar Ibrahim was deputy prime minister of Malaysia from 1993 to 1998, is a former member of parliament for the People's Justice Party and until April this year was leader of the opposition. He is respected around the world as a leader and statesman committed to principles of justice, fairness and the rule of law. We have recognized Anwar Ibrahim in this annual list in the past not only for his success as a Malaysian politician but also for his vision as a Muslim democrat who has done much to bridge the widening gap between Islam and the West.

Anwar spent six years in solitary confinement from 1998-2004 after being accused of sexual misconduct and corruption while serving as the Deputy Prime Minister. That trial was roundly condemned by the international community. The trial was plagued by judicial misconduct, fabricated evidence, intimidation of witnesses and manipulation of public opinion through government-controlled media. His incarceration and beating at the hands of the police force sparked a nationwide movement for reform in Malaysia called Reformasi which continues to influence Malaysian reformers today.

In June 2008, just months after making historic gains in Malaysia's 12th General Election, Anwar was charged again with sexual misconduct. This time his accuser was a former intern who, in the days before filing a police report against Anwar, had private meetings with police officers who had been involved in the fabrication of evidence against Anwar in the 1998 trial. This individual also met with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, who was then Deputy Prime Minister. The ensuing trial was similarly riddled with judicial misconduct, prosecutorial misconduct, police misconduct and fabrication of evidence. Initially, Anwar was acquitted of all charges in January 2012. But the acquittal was overturned on appeal and Anwar was finally convicted and sentenced on February 10 2015. His prison conditions are difficult and his health has

suffered. His family has limited opportunity to visit him.

Anwar Ibrahim had the option to live in exile. But when asked about his willingness to face another lengthy prison sentence, he said he remains committed to fighting for reform in Malaysia. Having secured 53% of the popular vote in elections that took place in May 2013, Anwar Ibrahim has demonstrated his message for reform resonates with a majority of the people in his country. If he fled, Anwar said, what example would that leave for other Malaysians who dream of a better future.

MASSACRE OF THE ROHINGYA MUSLIMS

According to the UN, the Rohingya Muslims are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world, and have been described: "among the world's least wanted". Living in the state of Rakhine (Arakan) in western Myanmar (Burma) where they account for about five percent of Myanmar's population of nearly 60 million, they are a people who nobody wants.

The Myanmar government classifies them as stateless Bengali Muslims, and the Bangladesh government refuses to acknowledge them. Many have fled to refugee camps in Bangladesh (where they receive no aid), or along the Thai-Myanmar border (there have been reports of boatloads of Rohingya being abandoned in the open sea). They have been subject to all kinds of persecution and recently they have become targets of violence by Rakhine Buddhists. The Burmese army and police have been



Rohingya: the most persecuted refugees in the world

accused of targeting Rohingya Muslims through mass arrests and arbitrary violence. A number of monks' organizations that played a vital role in Burma's struggle for democracy, have taken special procedures to block any humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya community. The scale and viciousness of the attacks has increased in the past few years and has finally prompted some statements from the Dalai Lama and from human-rights champion Aung San Suu Kyi (of Myanmar). Strangely, the Myanmar government, while doing nothing to stop these massacres and ethnic cleansing, has been feted by the US and other governments who see the country as an economic and strategic (i.e. against China) opportunity. President Obama visited the country in 2012, and hosted President Thein Sein in 2013.

This last year has seen more international media exposure to the plight of the Rohingya with international conferences being held about their plight, and with a high-profile letter by several Nobel peace prize winners calling the situation of Rohingya in Burma "nothing less than genocide".

JERUSALEM

Since the very beginning of the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, the holy sites of the Old City of Jerusalem have been under attack, particularly Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, one of Islam's three holiest sites. The explicit goal of these attacks and violations is to build the 'third temple' on the site of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa.

Attacks & Violations

In recent years economic, social, political and physical attacks on Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa have intensified. Calls for the demolition of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, once the preserve of extremists and fundamentalists, have now become pervasive, commonplace and to be found even in mainstream media. This, coupled with an almost daily violation of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa by violent settlers and their ilk make the partition or even destruction of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa a distinct possibility. The partition of the Ibrahimi

Mosque into Jewish and Muslim parts in neighbouring Hebron in the early 1990s is the blueprint for these ambitions for one of Islam's most holy and sacred sites.

Breaking of a Taboo

On 28 February, 2012, during a meeting for the Arab League in Doha, Qatar, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas made a plea for Muslims to visit Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. On April 18, 2012, HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan, accompanied by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Goma'a, broke what had been, in some parts of the Islamic World, a 45-year taboo by visiting Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in order to pray there and support the beleaguered Jerusalemites. The visit was viewed as controversial in Egypt, but set off a change of public opinion in the Islamic World. During the trip to Jerusalem, the Prince and the Grand Mufti also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This visit was much appreciated by the Christian community of Jerusalem.

Palestinian-Jordanian Agreement on the Holy Sites of Jerusalem

The Agreement signed between His Majesty King Abdullah II and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on the Holy Sites, signed on March 31st 2013, reaffirmed the following:

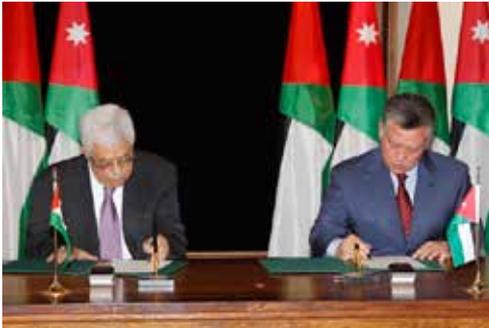
His Majesty King Abdullah II is the Custodian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem, and has full right to exert all legal efforts to safeguard and preserve them, especially Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, defined as the entire al-Haram al-Sharif (of 144 Dunums).

Historic principles upon which Jordan and Palestine are in agreement as regards Jerusalem and their common goal of defending Jerusalem together, especially at such critical time, when the city is facing dramatic challenges and daily illegal changes to its authenticity and original identity.

The status of East Jerusalem is Palestinian sovereign occupied territory, and that all post-1967 occupation practices or aggressions against Jerusalem are not recognized by any international or legal entity.

Hashemite Custodianship of the Holy Sites

started in 1924, and Jerusalem was physically part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan from 1948 until 1967, and legally until 1988, when Jordan severed ties with the West Bank (excepting only the Holy Sites and the Awqaf or Religious Trusts). Thus from 1988 until 2013, there was some ambiguity as to the status of the Holy Sites. After Palestine became recognised as a state in November 2012, a treaty between Jordan and Palestine became absolutely necessary not merely to avoid any disputes between Jordan and Palestine, but more importantly, to enable Jordan and Palestine to jointly legally protect the Holy Sites in Jerusalem against Israeli (official or unofficial) incursions, physical destruction and illegal annexation.



Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and his Majesty King Abdullah II to sign an agreement to defend Jerusalem and its Islamic and Christian holy sites

Road to Jerusalem Conference

An international conference, ‘Road to Jerusalem’, comprising leading religious scholars, academics, politicians and various other leaders was held in Amman, February 2014. The conference rejected the fatwa of Shaykh Qardawi banning Muslims from visiting occupied Jerusalem. It issued the following communiqué:

1. Exerting efforts to achieve the unity of the Arab and Muslim Ummah and at the very least agree together on the constants, the most important of which are the protection of the Ummah’s holy sites and religious antiquities in Jerusalem; and continuing to defend the rights of the Palestinians and the justness of their cause; for under division and fragmentation, none of the Ummah’s substantive goals can be achieved.
2. Reminding the Ummah that financial and personal sacrifices must be made to defend the Ummah’s religious holy sites and religious antiquities, its land and its people.
3. Supporting Jerusalemite institutions, be they educational, medical or social, in a manner that guarantees that they continue to be sustainable and steadfast.
4. Supporting the projects of Jerusalemites related to housing, religious endowments (awqaf) and their upkeep; and supporting committees for zakat (required alms giving) and for social, medical and economic welfare.
5. Supporting the projects of the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration and Maintenance of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Noble Dome of the Rock.
6. Supporting the efforts to care for Christian holy sites and protect them from Judaisation and confiscation.
7. Calling on the scholars of the Muslim Ummah and its khutabaa’ (preachers) and its du’aat (those who invite to the faith) to discuss the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque in their sermons, particularly their Friday sermons, and to supplicate for its freedom away from occupation and to ask the Almighty for the gift of praying in it for Muslims.
8. The conference pays tribute to the struggle of the state of Palestine and its insistence on Jerusalem being the capital of the Palestinian state; and its insistence on Palestinian sovereignty over all the occupied territories of Palestine including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the holy sites.
9. The participants pay tribute to His Majesty King Abdullah’s speech before the UNGA in which he clarified that the Blessed Al Aqsa Mosque is a sacred Islamic waqf as important as the Blessed Kaa’ba and that any invasion or division of the site of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa would be viewed, not only as a breach of Israel’s obligations, but as

profound aggression against 1.7 billion Muslims, one quarter of the world's population.

10. The participants pay tribute to the role of Christian churches and the heads of Christian churches in Jerusalem for preserving the Pact of Omar and their holy sites and for rejecting the occupation. The conference urges the heads of churches in Jerusalem and around the world, through their influence and representation in the international forums and media, to defend the Pact of Omar and the historic relationship between their Jerusalem churches and Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Islamic Waqf.
11. Thwarting the Jewish narrative that aims to Judaize Jerusalem, its holy sites and all of Palestine in international arenas including academic and educational forums, international organisations, media institutions and social networking channels. As an offshoot of the Road to Jerusalem Conference, a committee shall be established that will be dedicated to monitoring the Jewish narrative on all fronts and will prepare counter-studies that will refute it.
12. The conference calls on the universities and schools in the United States of America, the European Union countries, among others, to revise the exclusivist Judaisation narrative of the history of Jerusalem and Palestine in many school and university books.
13. The conference absolutely and categorically rejects the support of the occupation government and its implementation of the plans of Jewish extremists for spatial or temporal division of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. The conference calls upon His Majesty King Abdullah, the custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem, to defend the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque in all Arab, Islamic and international arenas, forums and organisations.
14. Reiterating the religious importance of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy sites, particularly among the young; and repositioning the cause of occupied Palestine as a prominent topic in educational curricula in the schools and

universities of the Arab and Muslim worlds.

15. Studying the suggestion to make a percentage of the proceeds of Hajj committees and trusts in the Muslim world a religious endowment (waqf) that goes towards the financial support of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and the people who are steadfast within it.
16. Holding the United States of America responsible for the continuing arrogance that Israel has displayed; and for the aggressions committed by Jewish extremists against the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and Muslim and Christian holy sites and religious antiquities, actions which could lead to a religious war. The United States uses its veto power at the UN Security Council whenever it is invited to veto vote on decision that requires Israel to implement resolutions of international legitimacy.
17. Forming a "Palestine Committee" in every Arab and Muslim parliament to monitor violations against holy sites and religious antiquities and finding ways to resist them.
18. The conference praises the following fatwa issued by the scholars from all over the Muslim world who participated in the Road to Jerusalem Conference:

First: The scholars participating in the Road to Jerusalem Conference see that there is no difficulty in religion (*la haraj*) for the following segments to visit the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem:

 1. Palestinians wherever they may be, in or out of Palestine and regardless of their nationalities.
 2. Muslims with passports from countries outside the Muslim world.

Second: In all cases, the following conditions must be observed:

 1. That it does not lead to normalisation with the occupation which may cause harm to the Palestinian cause.
 2. That the visit supports and assists Palestinians and not the occupiers; and here we affirm that any

transactions including buying, selling, dealings, accommodations and transportation undertaken must benefit the Palestinians and the Jerusalem-ites and none other than them.

3. That visitors enter with Palestinian or Jordanian tourist groups and stay clear of programmes run by the occupier.
4. It is preferred that trips to Al-Aqsa be within the routes of Umra and Hajj trips as much as possible and in an effective and collective manner that achieves the significant religious benefit of this; and in a manner that supports the Palestinian economy and particularly, the economy of Jerusalem; and politically with the aim of protecting Al Aqsa and the religious antiquities.

Amman, 29th Jumada Al Akhira, 1435 AH / 29th April, 2014 AD

PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

On Friday 23 September, 2011 at the UN headquarters in New York, President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority submitted a request for formal recognition of a Palestinian state along pre-1967 lines. Most responses have been overwhelmingly in favour of Abbas' move, with 133 (68.9%) of the 193 member states of the United Nations having recognised the State of Palestine. On 29 November 2012, the UN General Assembly passed a motion changing Palestine's "entity" status to "non-member observer state" by a vote of 138 to 9, with 41 abstentions.

In May 2015, The Vatican became the third country in Europe to officially recognize Palestine, following Iceland (2011) and Sweden (2014). There are now over 130 countries worldwide officially recognising Palestine, but with the USA still strongly backing a right-wing Israeli government which has publicly declared that there will be no Palestinian state, and with the growing onslaught of settlement activity in the occupied West Bank, many commentators feel that the two-state solution is dead.

GAZA

The Gaza Strip, bordering Egypt and Israel, covers approximately 25 miles by 4–7 miles and has a population of 1.7 million people. Israel withdrew its occupying force in 2005, but the Gaza Strip has been subject to a crippling economic blockade since 2007. Attempts by international peace activists to break the blockade have led to fatal confrontations with the Israeli Defence Force. Border skirmishes between the Palestinians and Israelis happen consistently, and have in 2008–2009, and in 2012, and in 2014 led to massive destruction and killing in Gaza by the combined might of the Israeli air, navy and ground forces. The 2008–09 conflict saw approximately 1,400 Palestinian and 13 Israeli deaths. There was international outcry at the number of civilians, particularly children, who were killed, and there was much evidence of the use of banned weapons (white phosphorous) by Israeli forces. The 2014 onslaught was even worse than the previous ones, and there was much international condemnation, including large public demonstrations worldwide, over the number of Palestinian civilian deaths (over 2,000) and casualties, particularly children.

The PNA has now joined the International Criminal Court and in June handed in its first submission of evidence of Israeli war crimes in what is the first step for a full ICC inquiry into abuses committed during last year's Gaza conflict. The onslaught in Gaza has also given impetus internationally to the BDS (Boycott Divestment and Sanctions) movement against Israel.

DESTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS AND ANCIENT SITES

The past few years have seen a troubling trend of systematic grave desecration and destruction of religious places carried out by various Wahhabi groups in Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Libya, Mali, and Egypt. With the fall of ruling powers resulting from the Arab Spring many Wahhabis have decided to utilize power vacuums that opened up in Libya and subsequently Mali to ravage these lands

by destroying all signs of their holy sites, which according to their puritanical view are heretical, pagan-like places of grave worshipping, despite the fact that the vast majority of Sunni scholars throughout history have held them to be valid and even praiseworthy to maintain. Spurred on by extremist preachers, the destruction of centuries old heritage continues to spread to other countries despite it being condemned by all other Muslims as sacrilege. DA'ISH have continued and widened the scope of the destruction to include ancient sites and relics as well. The destruction over the last few years includes the following:

Iraq

- June 2014: The shrine of Fathi al-Ka'en is bulldozed.
- July 2014: The tomb of Prophet Younis, or Jonah, in Mosul, is blown up; the shrine of Imam Sultan bin Asim Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab (grandson of Umar ibn al-Khattab), in the Makhmour area southeast of Mosul, is destroyed by IEDs.
- September 2014: Al-Arba'een Mosque in Tikrit, containing forty tombs from the Umar era, was blown up.
- Other sites destroyed in 2014 include: the shrine of Arnaout, the shrine of Ahmed al-Rafa'i, the famous Sunni Sufi saint, and the shrine of Sheikh Ibrahim, all in the city of Tal Afar.
- Prominent Shia sites destroyed in 2014 include: al-Qubba Husseiniya Mosque and the shrine of al-Imam 'Awn al-Din (one of the few structures that survived the 13th-century Mongol invasion, destroyed by DA'ISH in July 2014), both in Mosul, as well as Jawad Husseiniya Mosque, Saad bin Aqeel Husseiniya Shrine, Qaddo Husseiniya, and the Mosque of the Martyr of Lashkar-e-Mullah, all in Tal Afar.
- January 2015: DA'ISH bombed large parts of the Nineveh Wall in al-Tahrir neighbourhood.
- February 2015: DA'ISH blows up the 12th century



Khudr Mosque in central Mosul; burns books from Mosul libraries; destroys ancient artifacts at the Mosul Museum and the archeological site at Nimrud, a city that dates back 13 centuries BC.

- March 2015: The Hamou al-Qadu Mosque in Mosul, which dated back to 1880, is bulldozed to the ground.
- June 2015: The Tomb of the Girl, in Mosul, bulldozed.

Between the fall of Mosul in June 2014 and February 2015, DA'ISH has damaged or destroyed at least 28 historical religious buildings. During the time period spanning June 2014 to August 2015, DA'ISH had destroyed eight churches in Iraq. Iraq has also been particularly hard-hit by large scale looting of historical artifacts: at least nine major sites have been affected.

Syria

- 2011: The tomb of Sheikh Rih, a prominent Sufi sheikh, was demolished in Azaz, northern Syria.
- March 2013: Ammar ibn Yasir's shrine in al-Raqqah was destroyed.
- April 2013: The minaret of the great Umayyad Mosque of Aleppo was destroyed and looted.
- October 2013: Mosque of Sheikh Ajjan Al-Hadid shelled.
- Other sites destroyed in 2013 include: the shrines of Sheikh Aqeel in Manbej, Sheikh Ma'badi, Sheikh Abdullah, Sheikh Badawi, Sheikh Hilal, and Muhammad al-Na'san, all in or around Aleppo.
- March 2014: Uwais al-Qarni's grave destroyed (while the surrounding mosque was destroyed)

entirely in May 2014); Al-Saliheen Mosque in Yalda damaged and looted; a stone that is said to have had the footprint of the Prophet Ibrahim was removed.

- January 2015: The grave of Sheikh Muhammad al-Nabhan in Aleppo was destroyed and exhumed; the school and houses next to it were also damaged.
- May 2015: ISIS destroyed the Lion of al-Lat and other statues at the historical site of Palmyra (Tadmur).
- June 2015: The graves of Mohammed bin Ali, a companion of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib, and Nizar Abu Bahaa Eddine, a well-known Sufi scholar whose tomb was built 500 years ago.
- July-August 2015: The temples of Baalshamin and Bel at Palmyra as well as three of the best preserved tower tombs, including the Tower of Elahbel, were destroyed by ISIS.
- Reports by the Directorate of Antiquities in Aleppo indicate that 90 percent of Sufi shrines have been destroyed. At least five major archaeological sites were destroyed or looted, including: Palmyra, the Mar Elian Monastery, Apamea, Dura Europos, and Mari. In total, at least 23 sites have been damaged by shelling, six by looting, and 14 by armed occupation.

Egypt

- April 2011: The tomb of Sidi Abdel Rahman in Qalyoub, as well as five other tombs, were destroyed.
- May 2011: The shrine of Sheikh Zuweid was bombed by an unknown group.



- August 2013: The tombs of Sheikh Hamid Abu Jarir in central Sinai and Sheikh Salim Al-Sharif Abu Jarir in the Bir El Abd area were destroyed using IEDs.
- DA'ISH's leader, al-Baghdadi, referred to the destruction of the pyramids and Sphinx as a religious duty upon Muslims.

Libya

- October 2011: The Sidi al-Masri Mosque in Tripoli was vandalized and damaged extensively.
- January 2012: The cemetery of Sidi Ubaid in Benghazi was wrecked and 31 corpses were stolen.
- August 2012: The tomb of a 15th-century scholar Abd as-Salam al-Asmar in Zliten, about 160km (100 miles) southeast of Tripoli, was destroyed along with burning of the neighbouring library, which housed a huge number of books and manuscripts dating back centuries; al-Shaab al-Dahman Mosque in Tripoli, named after the Sufi scholar Abdullah al-Shaab, who fought the Spanish colonialists, and which contained many graves, was bulldozed; the grave of the grand Sufi sheikh, Ahmad Zarruq was exhumed.
- March 2013: The al-Andalusi Mausoleum in Tajora, a national monument that dates back more than 500 years, was destroyed.
- May 2013: The Hamid Hudairi tomb in Sebha was extensively damaged.
- March 2015: Sufi shrines near Tripoli destroyed by sledgehammers and bulldozers.
- Other sites destroyed include: the tomb of Sidi Mahmoud (d. 955 CE) in 2012.

Tunisia

- According to officials, Islamists in Tunisia have attacked almost 40 tombs, the most prominent being:
- January 2013: The tombs of Sidi Bou Said (in the village named after him), Sidi Baghdadi in Monastir, and Sidi Amor Bouzid in Awlad Chamakh,

were damaged by arson.

- February 2013: Sidi Bin Abd al-Jabbar's tomb in Jammal, was damaged by arson.

Mali

- Timbuktu is known as the "the city of 333 saints" and has many ancient mosques and tombs, and hence, UNESCO has placed the city on its list of endangered world heritage sites.
- June 2012: Ansar Dine fighters completely destroyed the mausoleum of Sidi Mahmoud Ben Amar, the tombs of Sidi El Mokhtar and Alfa Moya, and thirteen other sites.
- July 2012: The doors to Sidi Yahya's Mausoleum were broken down; the shrines of Sidi Elmety, Mahamane Elmety, and Sidi Mahmoudou were destroyed with hoes and chisels.
- September 2012: The mausoleum of Cheik El-Kebir was destroyed.
- Other sites destroyed include the tomb of Almirou Mahamane Assidiki in Goundam in 2012.

Somalia

- Early 2010: The tomb of Sheikh Ali Mumin was destroyed and exhumed.
- the tomb of Sheikh Ali Tairi
- March 2010: The tombs of Sheikh Mohammed Bimalo, leader of the Qadiriyyah order in the early 20th Century, Sheikh Mohyiddeen Ali, and Sheikh Hassan Muallim Mumin, founder of the Idrisiyyah order in Somalia, were destroyed and exhumed.

Pakistan

- April 2011: At least 41 persons were killed and more than 100 injured when two suicide bombers blew themselves up outside the shrine of Sufi saint Ahmed Sultan, popularly known as Sakhi Sarwar, in Dera Ghazi Khan District of Punjab.
- July 2010: At least 40 persons were killed and

175 others injured when three suicide attackers blew themselves up inside the shrine of Lahore's patron saint Syed Ali Hajwairi popularly known as Data Gunj Bakhsh.

- Since 2010, a month rarely passes in Pakistan without a suicide bombing taking place. Some of these attacks target mosques and shrines.

Yemen

- February 2015: The 800-year-old tomb of Sufyan bin Abdullah in al-Hota town, Lahij province was destroyed. Bin Abdullah was famed for having fought for Saladin in 1187 CE, when he ousted the Crusaders from Jerusalem.

Bahrain

- 2011: At least 43 Shia mosques, including the ornate 400-year old Amir Mohammed Braighi mosque, and many other religious structures were destroyed.
- In addition to this destruction, one can add the tragic assassination in August 2012 of Said Afandi, the Muslim Sufi leader of Dagestan. An outspoken critic of Wahhabism, the leader was murdered by a female suicide bomber.

INTERFAITH

While most media coverage of interfaith deals with interfaith conflicts there have been significant progress in interfaith dialogue. Amongst the more prominent projects are the following: A Common Word (ACW) The ACW started as an open letter written in 2007 from a group of 138 Muslim scholars and clerics addressed to Christian leaders everywhere. The ACW has become the catalyst behind a global bridge-building effort between Christians and Muslims. ACW focuses on the common ground between both religious communities, highlighting points of commonality found in the commandments to love God and one's neighbour; (see: www.ACommonWord.com).

The Catholic-Muslim Forum:

This is one of the public fruits of the ACW initiative. It is a meeting of prominent Catholic and Muslim religious leaders and scholars to be held every three years. The first Catholic-Muslim Seminar was held in the Vatican in 2008, and included an audience with HH Pope Benedict XVI. The second forum was at the Baptism Site of Jesus Christ in Jordan in November 2011. The third forum was held at the Vatican in November 2014 and included an audience with HH Pope Francis. The meeting's final statement was titled "Working Together to Serve Others". It recalled that the Forum focused on three questions in particular: working together for the benefit of the young, boosting interreligious dialogue and serving society

THE WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

Extending the principles of A Common Word to include people of all faiths, and those with no faith, King Abdullah II of Jordan in his address to the UNGA 2010 proposed 'Love of God and Love of Neighbour', or 'Love of the Good and Love of Neighbour' to designate the first week of February, every year, as a World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW). A month later, the resolution, a brainchild of HRH Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to HM King Abdullah II' was adopted. The first week of February is now observed as an official week and has seen hundreds of events each year in dozens of countries with up to 50,000 attendees at the events. The second annual week, held in February 2012, saw a large increase



His Majesty King Abdullah II attends H.M. King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize

in gatherings. The third WIHW in 2013 saw the inauguration of the WIHW Prize (\$50,000 in total) Established by the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought. Three prizes are on offer for the best events held. The 2015 winners were announced as follows:

First Prize: Universal Interfaith Peace Mission (Dr Allama G R Chishti) of Pakistan.

Second Prize: Mrs Gisela Jahn and Dr. Beatrix Jakubicka of Germany

Third Prize: World Interfaith Harmony Week Toronto Steering Committee of Canada

More information: Download RISSC's A Common Word: Between Us & You, 5th Anniversary Edition for free at <http://www.ACommonWord.com>. To learn more about the WIHW visit their website at: www.WorldInterfaithHarmonyWeek.com.

THE INTEGRAL CHAIRS

The International Initiative for the Islamic Integral Professorial Chairs.

The sciences of traditional Islamic knowledge are very poorly understood in the Islamic World, and taught only in selective, abbreviated versions. Fundamentalism increasingly rules the mosques while secular academic methodologies rule the institutes of learning in the Islamic World. Even in the West, though Muslims have donated hundreds of millions of dollars to create professorial chairs and academic centres in leading western universities, these chairs and centres are invariably run or occupied by non-Muslims (or secular Muslims), and so the centres and chairs—funded by Muslims!—wind up being hostile, or at least unhelpful, to traditional Islam. This situation is leading to intellectual and spiritual impoverishment in the Islamic World, a rise in fundamentalism, and ironically, at the same time, a rise in secularism. The purpose of this initiative is to restore knowledge and teaching of traditional Islamic orthodox high culture and scholarship in philosophy, theology, mysticism, jurisprudence, Qur'anic exegesis, sociology, history and Arabic language and grammar in the Islamic World in combination with traditional Islamic teaching and

preaching methods. The goal of this initiative is to set up around 50 Integral Chairs in the Islamic World each as a waqf (religious endowment) in mosques and universities combined, occupied by practicing Muslim scholars, and dedicated to the intellectual and spiritual legacy of the greatest Muslim scholars and sages. Thereafter, an international institute to connect and support their activities must be established. The Integrals Chairs project, the brainchild of HRH Prince Ghazi, the Chief Advisor for Religious and Cultural Affairs to HM King Abdullah II, was officially launched on January 30, 2012 in honor of the 50th birthday of HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, under whose name the waqfs for the first two chairs were established:

- The first chair, The Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Ghazali's Work at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University formally launched in January 2013 with Professor Mustafa Abu Sway as the first Integral Chair.
- The second chair, The King Abdullah ibn al-Hussein Waqf for the Integral Chair for the study of Imam Fakr al-Din al-Razi's Work at the King Hussein bin Talal Mosque, the University of Jordan and W.I.S.E. University launched in 2014 with Professor Farouk Muhammad Arif Hasan. For further information see www.rissc.jo.

THE 'LOVE INITIATIVE'

HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad and the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought co-organized—together with Rev. Prof. Paul S. Fiddes, Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Oxford and Director of Research, Regent's Park College, Oxford—a two-day open symposium on 'Love in Three Abrahamic Religions' at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, celebrating the fifth year of the issuing of *A Common Word*, on October 12-13th 2012.

This led to the establishment of a fellowship at the RPC, University of Oxford, dedicated to the study of Love in Religion, co-funded by RABBIT. The fellowship post is to be held by a Muslim Hafith

of the Qur'an and a Christian clergyman alternatively. It will be the first fellowship dedicated specifically to the study of love as such in a major university for centuries, and God willing, the beginning of many such fellowships in major universities all over the world.

GIFT OF LOVE

In celebrating the World Interfaith Harmony Week's 5th Anniversary, the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought (Amman, Jordan) produced, in collaboration with Sami Yusuf and Andante Records, the World's first Interfaith Anthem, *The Gift of Love*. The lyrics of the song are based on the Two Commandments of "Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour."

The message of *The Gift of Love* and the World Interfaith Harmony Week is not one of syncretism and theological unity. Rather, we remain, as people of all faiths, distinct and free in the practice of our individual faiths and religions. Theological differences do not preclude loving one another. All religions order loving one's neighbours and being kind to them. In the age of globalization, the world is a village and all its inhabitants are our neighbours.

The filming took place with a cadre of world-class talent. A R Rahman from India contributed to the musical side. Siros Kerdouni, a world-class director from Los Angeles, flew into Amman to direct production. Sourcing staff, filming, using aerial shots (including shots taken from helicopters over the immaculate Wadi Rum in Southern Jordan), and handling logistics were all handled in a record amount of time and on a tight budget.

Filmed on location in Jordan and in East Jerusalem, the video beautifully captures some of the symbolic sites in Jordan, including the King Hussein Mosque in Amman, the Citadel, the Holy Baptism Site, Petra, and Wadi Rum, with exclusive shots also filmed in Jerusalem. The idea of the video draws on all faiths, no matter the belief, in coming together to express the message of love.

Major
EVENTS

EVENTS TIMELINE

Date	Country	Individual	Description
01/09/2014	Turkey, Syria		Syrian refugees flee from DA'ISH to Turkey. DA'ISH kill a second western hostage.
01/09/2014	Yemen		The Houthis took advantage of instability in Yemen, and enter the capital city of Sana and seize the city and the major governmental buildings.
10/10/2014	Pakistan	Malala Yousafzai	17-year-old Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani activist for female education and human rights, became the youngest Nobel Prize laureate ever. Two years ago, she was shot in the head by the Taliban for her efforts to promote education for girls in Pakistan. Since then, after recovering from the surgery, she has taken her campaign to the world stage.
31/10/2014	Burkina Faso		Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaoré resigns after widespread protests in response to the attempt to abolish presidential term limits.
04/11/2014	Iran, Iraq		This date marked the beginning of Ashura mourning for the Shi'a Muslims, which is a commemoration of Imam Hussein's martyrdom in Karbala along with his seventy two companions.
13/12/2014	Pakistan		Taliban attacks a military school in Pishawar (Pakistan) and kill 145 people, including 100 children.
19/12/2014	Central African Republic		Christian militias in Central African Republic have carried out ethnic cleansing of the Muslim population during the country's ongoing civil war, but there is no proof there was genocidal intent, a United Nations commission of inquiry has said.
01/01/2015	Egypt		Three journalists working for Al-Jazeera English - Australian Peter Greste, Egyptian-Canadian Mohamed Fahmy, and Egyptian Baher Mohamed, were tried for the news channel's remote studio. The trio stood for re-trial on 1 January 2015 before the Cairo Court Of Cassation.
01/01/2015	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan		The Eurasian Economic Union comes into effect, creating a political and economic union between Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.
03/01/2015	World		The Prophet Muhammad's birthday (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).
03/01/2015	Nigeria		A series of massacres in Baga, Nigeria and surrounding villages by Boko Haram kills more than 2,000 people.
03/01/2015	Jordan		Jordanian pilot burned alive: Muath al-Kasasbeh is burnt alive by his DA'ISH captors.
07/01/2015	France		Charlie Hebdo shooting.
22/01/2015	Yemen		After Houthi forces seize the presidential palace, Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi resigns after months of unrest.
23/01/2015	Saudi Arabia	King Abdullah of KSA	King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud passed away. He was preceded by King Fahd and succeeded by King Salman, both his half brothers.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
29/01/2015	Egypt		Militants from the Sinai Province militant group launched a series of attacks on army and police bases in Arish using car bombs and mortars. The attacks, which occurred in more than six different locations, resulted in 32 confirmed deaths including army personnel and civilians. It was reported that on 6 February 2015 Egyptian security forces attacked the Sinai Province group, killing 47 Islamic militants in Northern Sinai.
26/02/2015	Iraq		DA'ISH released a video showing the destruction of various ancient artifacts in the Mosul Museum. The affected artefacts originate from the Assyrian era and from the ancient city of Hatra. The video in particular shows the defacement of a granite lamassu statue from the right side of the Nergal Gate by a jackhammer. The statue remained buried until 1941 when heavy rains eroded the soil around the gate and exposed two statues on both sides.
16/02/2015	Egypt		The Egyptian military begins conducting airstrikes against a branch of the Islamic militant group ISIL in Libya in retaliation for the group's beheading of over a dozen Egyptian Christians.
March 2015	Burma		A draft ceasefire agreement is signed between the government and 16 rebel groups.
05/03/2015	Iraq, Syria		The ancient city sites of Nimrud, Hatra and Dur-Sharrukin in Iraq are demolished by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.
12/03/2015	Nigeria		The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant becomes allies with fellow jihadist group Boko Haram, effectively annexing the group.
25/03/2015	Yemen, Saudi Arabia		A Saudi Arabia-led coalition of Arab countries starts a military intervention in Yemen in order to uphold the Yemeni government in its fight against the Houthis' southern offensive.
02/04/2015	Kenya		148 people are killed, the majority students, in a mass shooting at the Garissa University College in Kenya, perpetrated by the militant terrorist organization Al-Shabaab.
02/04/2015	Egypt		An attack on an army checkpoint resulted in the death of 15 soldiers, 2 civilians and 15 attackers. As a response to the attack, the Egyptian army launched an operation the following day allegedly killing 100 militants.
10/05/2015	Burma, Bangladesh, Thailand		Boats carrying nearly 600 Bangladeshi and long-persecuted Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar washed to shore in western Indonesia, some after captains and smugglers abandoned the ships, leaving passengers to fend for themselves, survivors and migrant experts said. Thousands more are believed to be stranded at sea.
16/05/2015	Egypt	Mohamed Morsi	Morsi was among over 100 men sentenced to death on Saturday for allegedly escaping prison during the 2011 uprising that toppled Morsi's predecessor, Hosni Mubarak.
22/05/2015	Saudi Arabia		A suicide bomber detonated explosives hidden under his clothes, killing himself and 20 others during the Friday prayers at a mosque in the Qatif province.
24/05/2015	Burma, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Thailand		Mass graves and suspected human-trafficking detention camps have been discovered by Malaysian police in towns and villages bordering Thailand, the country's home minister said on Sunday.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
29/05/2015	Saudi Arabia		Four people died after a suicide bomber targeted a Shia mosque in Saudi Arabia's eastern province.
03/06/2015	Burma, United States		Burma brought ashore more than 700 "boat people" it had kept at sea for days aboard a seized vessel, as the United States on Wednesday called on the country to help solve a migrant crisis by recognizing the rights of its Muslim Rohingya minority.
07/06/2015	Turkey		The Turkish general election took place in all 85 electoral districts of Turkey to elect 550 members to the Grand National Assembly. This was the 24th general election in the history of the Turkish Republic, electing the country's 25th Parliament. The result was the first hung parliament since the 1999 general election, with unsuccessful attempts to form a coalition government resulting in a snap general election being called for November 2015.
16/06/2015	Egypt	Mohamed Morsi	An Egyptian court has upheld a death sentence against the ousted president Mohamed Morsi in a trial stemming from his escape from prison during the 2011 uprising that forced Hosni Mubarak from power.
18/06/2015	China		Civil servants, students and teachers prevented from fasting and restaurants ordered to remain open in Xinjiang region.
18/06/2015	World		Beginning of Ramadan.
22/06/2015	Gaza, Israel		A United Nations inquiry into the 2014 Gaza war has accused Israeli and Palestinian factions of multiple potential violations of international law including suspected war crimes.
25/06/2015	Syria, Tunisia, Kuwait, France		DA'ISH claim responsibility for four attacks around the world during the Ramadan: Kobani massacre: DA'ISH fighters detonate three car bombs, enter Kobani, Syria, and open fire at civilians, killing more than 220. Sousse attacks: 22-year-old Seifeddine Rezgui opens fire at a tourist resort at Port El Kantaoui, Tunisia, killing 40 people. Kuwait mosque bombing: A suicide bomber attacks the Shia Mosque Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq at Kuwait City, Kuwait, killing 27 people and injuring 227 others. In France, the victim was decapitated and mutilated at a US-owned gas company.
29/06/2015	Egypt		Hisham Barakat was the Prosecutor General of Egypt. He was responsible for thousands of controversial prosecutions, including several widely deemed as politically motivated resulting in death sentences for hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood members and supporters of deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi.[1] He was assassinated in a car bombing.
June-August 2015	Syria		On 27 June 2015, DA'ISH demolished the ancient Lion of al-Lāt statue in Palmyra. Several other statues from Palmyra reportedly confiscated from a smuggler were also destroyed by DA'ISH. On 23 August 2015, it was reported that DA'ISH had blown up the 1st-century Temple of Baalshamin. On 30 August 2015, DA'ISH demolished the Temple of Bel with explosives. Satellite imagery of the site taken shortly after showed almost nothing remained.
July-August 2015	Burma		Floods affect much of low-lying parts of country, killing 100 people and displacing a million others.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
01/07/2015	Egypt		On 1 July 2015, DA'ISH-affiliated Sinai Province militants group launched one of the largest attacks ever, since the insurgency began in 2011, on multiple Egyptian army checkpoints in the Sinai Peninsula, killing 21–64 soldiers. The attack also targeted Sheikh Zuweid police station. Reinforcements from the Second Army Zone stationed in Ismailia have been deployed to Sheikh Zuweid, and F-16 fighter jets were spotted targeting militants in the city. Militants have reportedly killed several civilians who refused to allow them onto their rooftops to target security forces
03/07/2015	Gaza, Israel		The United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution condemning Israel over the UN report into the Operation Protective Edge in Gaza.
15/07/2015	Iran		Iran agrees to long-term limits of its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.
17/07/2015	World		Eid al-Fitr celebrated.
20/07/2015	Iran		Iran Nuclear Deal: United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 was on Nuclear program of Iran, setting out a strict watching process and schedule for performance, while paving the plan for the lifting of United Nations restrictions against Iran. Without exception, the 15-nation body endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action autographed in Vienna by the five unchanging representatives of the Council, added to Germany, the European Union and Iran.
24/07/2015	Turkey, Syria		July 24 - Turkey begins a series of airstrikes against DA'ISH targets after the 2015 Suruç bombing
31/07/2015	Pakistan		Pakistan's CERN Membership: Pakistan becomes the first Muslim country to join CERN. After signing a cooperation agreement in 1994, it finally became an associate member in 2015.
31/07/2015	Central African Republic		Amnesty International warned that many Muslims continue to suffer from oppression and forced conversions. Being effectively illegal for Muslims to pray, some are converting to Catholicism.
06/08/2015	Egypt	Pres El-Sisi	Egypt launches Suez canal expansion.
8/6/2015	Saudi Arabia		A suicide bomber killed at least 15 people in an attack on a mosque used by members of a local security force in southwest Saudi Arabia.
8/29/2015	Egypt, Canada, Australia		Mohamed Fahmy was sentenced to three years in prison, Baher Mohamed was sentenced to 3-and-a-half years in prison and fined £5,000 (\$640), and Peter Grete was sentenced in absentia to three years in prison at a sentencing hearing in Cairo.
8/30/2015 8/30/2015	Egypt		Italian energy group Eni says it has found one of the world's largest natural gas fields off Egypt's coast. Italian energy group Eni says it has found one of the world's largest natural gas fields off Egypt's coast.
03/09/2015	Syria, Germany, other	European and Middle East Refugee crisis	Taking advantage of the warmer summer temperatures, many refugees risk their lives escaping the nightmare that has become their reality. The plight of a particular Syrian family made first-page news across the Western news media when their three-year-old son's body was washed ashore after the family raft capsized. His brother is believed to have died at sea as well. Germany took the leading role in supplying asylum for refugees from Syria in particular. A number of Muslim refugee seekers from Afghanistan and Iran are converting to Christianity in order to increase the likelihood that their plea for asylum will be accepted.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
10/09/2015	Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria	Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi	Al-Qaeda leader al-Zawahiri declares war on DA'ISH 'Caliph' al-Baghdadi
11/09/2015	Saudi Arabia		A crawler crane in al-Masjid al-Haram in Makkah toppled over, killing 111 people and injuring 394. Many of those who died were pilgrims preparing for Hajj.
12/09/2015	Saudi Arabia, Syria		Saudi Arabia has said reports about its response to the Syrian refugee crisis are "false and misleading" and it has in fact given residency to 100,000 people as war rages in their country.
14/09/2015	United States		Ahmed Mohamed, an American seventh-grader, brought a home-made clock to school which one of his teachers thought was a bomb. Ahmed was detained by police for questioning. A huge wave of social media support poured forth in the form of the @1supportAhmed hash tag online. He received an invitation from the White House, met international dignitaries at the UN, and received a number of honours and awards, including recognition from Microsoft and Google.
14/09/2015	Egypt, Mexico		Egyptian Army aircraft hunting for militants in the desert mistakenly bombed a convoy of mostly Mexican tourists, killing 12 people and wounding 10, authorities said on Monday.
16/09/2015	Yemen		Masked arsonists torched St Joseph, a Roman Catholic church in the central Crater neighbourhood of Aden.
16/09/2015	Yemen		Yemen's Prime Minister Khaled Bahah, along with seven other ministers from his cabinet, have returned to Aden on Wednesday in order to run the affairs of the country.
16/09/2015	Turkey, United States	Pres Erdogan, Gulen	Police have detained 11 people in central Turkey, including executives of a conglomerate and university officials, in an operation targeting supporters of a US-based cleric accused by President Tayyip Erdogan of plotting a coup, CNN Turk television said on Wednesday.
19/09/2015	United Arab Emirates	Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum	Sheikh Rashid bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the son of the ruler of Dubai, died of a heart attack at age 33. Three days of mourning were declared.
23/09/2015	Makkah, World		Muslims around the world witness the Day of Arafah, the single most important day of the Hajj ritual.
24/09/2015	World		Eid al-Adha celebrated.
24/09/2015	Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Iran		In the deadliest Hajj tragedy in 25 years, over 700 people died and 1000 were injured during a stampede that started when pilgrims could not reach the Jamarat, or stoning sites, at Mina. Nigerian and Iranian officials were particularly critical of Saudi Arabia as their citizens suffered the greatest fatalities.
29/09/2015	Nigeria	Muhammad Buhari	Tijjani Damagum, a major Boko Haram kingpin, is arrested by Nigerian forces. Another, well known Boko terrorist is killed during the attack.

Population Statistics

APPENDIX I

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Afghanistan	26,023,100	99.8	25,971,054
Albania	2,893,005	82.1	2,375,157
Algeria	39,500,000	98.2	38,789,000
American Samoa	55,519	< 0.1	< 56
Andorra	76,949	< 0.1	< 77
Angola	24,383,301	1	243,833
Anguilla	13,452	0.3	40
Antigua and Barbuda	86,295	0.6	518
Argentina	43,131,966	2.5	1,078,299
Armenia	3,006,800	< 0.1	< 3007
Aruba	107,394	0.4	430
Australia	23,880,400	1.9	453,728
Austria	8,602,112	5.7	490,320
Azerbaijan	9,636,300	98.4	9,482,119
Bahamas	Unknown	0.1	Unknown
Bahrain	1,359,800	81.2	1,104,158
Bangladesh	158,937,000	90.4	143,679,048
Barbados	285,000	0.9	2,565
Belarus	9,485,300	0.2	18,971
Belgium	11,248,330	6	674,900
Belize	368,310	0.1	368
Benin	10,315,244	24.5	2,527,235
Bermuda	64,237	0.8	514
Bhutan	764,320	1	7,643
Bolivia	11,410,651	< 0.1	< 11411
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3,791,622	41.6	1,577,315
Botswana	2,070,984	0.4	8,284
Brazil	204,825,000	0.1	204,825
British Virgin Islands	28,054	1.2	337
Brunei	393,372	51.9	204,160
Bulgaria	7,202,198	13.4	965,095
Burkina Faso	18,450,494	58.9	10,867,341
Burundi	9,823,827	2.2	216,124
Cambodia	15,405,157	1.6	246,483
Cameroon	23,344,000	18	4,201,920
Canada	35,749,600	2.8	1,000,989
Cape Verde	524,833	0.1	525
Cayman Islands	58,238	0.2	116
Central African Republic	4,900,000	8.9	436,100
Chad	14,037,000	55.7	7,818,609
Channel Islands	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Chile	18,006,407	< 0.1	< 18006
China	1,371,790,000	1.8	24,692,220
Hong Kong	7,298,600	1.3	94,882
Macau	642,900	< 0.1	< 643
Colombia	48,282,600	< 0.1	< 48283
Comoros	784,745	98.3	771,404
Republic of Congo	4,620,000	1.6	73,920
Congo	77,267,000	1.4	1,081,738
Cook Islands	14,974	< 0.1	< 15
Costa Rica	4,773,130	< 0.1	< 4773
Ivory Coast	22,671,331	36.9	8,365,721
Croatia	4,225,316	1.3	54,929
Cuba	11,238,317	0.1	11,238
Cyprus	858,000	22.7	194,766
Czech Republic	10,537,818	< 0.1	< 10538
Denmark	5,678,348	4.1	232,812
Djibouti	888,000	97	861,360
Dominica	71,293	0.2	143
Dominican Republic	10,528,000	< 0.1	< 10528
Ecuador	16,027,500	< 0.1	< 16028
Egypt	89,400,600	94.7	84,662,368
El Salvador	6,401,240	< 0.1	< 6401
Equatorial Guinea	1,430,000	4.1	58,630
Eritrea	5,228,000	36.5	1,908,220
Estonia	1,313,271	0.1	1,313
Ethiopia	90,076,012	33.8	30,445,692
Faeroe Islands	48,846	< 0.1	< 49
Falkland Islands	3,000	< 0.1	< 3
Fiji	859,178	6.3	54,128
Finland	5,486,084	0.8	43,889
France	66,186,000	7.5	4,963,950
French Guiana	239,648	0.9	2,157
French Polynesia	268,270	< 0.1	< 268
Gabon	1,725,000	9.7	167,325
Gambia	Unknown	95.3	Unknown
Georgia	3,729,500	10.5	391,598
Germany	81,083,600	5	4,054,180
Ghana	27,043,093	16.1	4,353,938
Gibraltar	32,734	4	1,309
Greece	10,846,979	4.7	509,808
Greenland	56,114	< 0.1	< 56

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Grenada	103,328	0.3	310
Guadeloupe	403,750	0.4	1,615
Guam	159,358	< 0.1	< 159
Guatemala	16,176,133	< 0.1	< 16176
Guinea	10,628,972	84.2	8,949,594
Guinea Bissau	1,844,000	42.8	789,232
Guyana	746,900	7.2	53,777
Haiti	10,911,819	< 0.1	< 10912
Vatican City	839	0	0
Honduras	8,725,111	0.1	8,725
Hungary	9,849,000	0.3	29,547
Iceland	330,610	0.1	331
India	1,276,370,000	14.6	186,350,020
Indonesia	255,461,700	88.1	225,061,758
Iran	78,599,500	99.7	78,363,702
Iraq	36,004,552	98.9	35,608,502
Ireland	4,609,600	0.9	41,486
Israel	8,371,600	17.7	1,481,773
Italy	60,753,794	2.6	1,579,599
Jamaica	2,717,991	< 0.1	< 2718
Japan	126,865,000	0.1	126,865
Jordan	7,595,000	98.8	7,503,860
Kazakhstan	17,541,200	56.4	9,893,237
Kenya	46,050,000	7	3,223,500
Kiribati	106,461	< 0.1	< 106
North Korea	25,155,000	< 0.1	< 25155
South Korea	51,448,183	0.2	102,896
Kuwait	3,268,431	86.4	2,823,924
Kyrgyzstan	5,944,400	88.8	5,278,627
Laos	6,802,000	< 0.1	< 6802
Latvia	1,980,700	0.1	1,981
Lebanon	4,104,000	59.7	2,450,088
Lesotho	2,135,000	< 0.1	< 2135
Liberia	4,503,000	12.8	576,384
Libya	6,278,000	96.6	6,064,548
Liechtenstein	37,370	4.8	1,794
Lithuania	2,900,787	0.1	2,901
Luxembourg	562,958	2.3	12,948
Macedonia	2,069,172	33.30%	689,034
Madagascar	22,434,363	1.1	246,778
Malawi	16,310,431	12.8	2,087,735

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Malaysia	30,689,800	61.4	18,843,537
Maldives	341,256	98.4	335,796
Mali	17,600,000	92.4	16,262,400
Malta	445,426	0.3	1,336
Isle of Man	84,497	0.2	169
Marshall Islands	56,086	< 0.1	< 56
Martinique	381,326	0.2	763
Mauritania	3,631,775	99.2	3,602,721
Mauritius	1,261,208	16.6	209,361
Mayotte	212,645	98.8	210,093
Mexico	121,740,000	0.1	121,740
Federated States of Mi- cronesia	101,351	< 0.1	< 101
Moldova	3,555,200	0.4	14,221
Monaco	37,800	0.5	189
Mongolia	3,032,606	4.4	133,435
Montenegro	621,207	18.5	114,923
Montserrat	4,922	0.1	5
Morocco	33,337,529	99.9	33,304,191
Mozambique	25,727,911	22.8	5,865,964
Burma (Myanmar)	Unknown	3.8	Unknown
Namibia	2,280,700	0.4	9,123
Nauru	10,084	< 0.1	< 10
Nepal	28,037,904	4.2	1,177,592
Netherlands	16,917,600	5.5	930,468
Netherlands Antilles	Unknown	0.2	Unknown
New Caledonia	268,767	2.8	7,525
New Zealand	4,612,250	0.9	41,510
Nicaragua	6,198,154	< 0.1	< 6198
Niger	19,899,000	98.3	19,560,717
Nigeria	182,202,000	47.9	87,274,758
Niue	1,613	< 0.1	< 2
Northern Mariana Islands	53,883	0.7	377
Norway	5,176,998	3	155,310
Oman	4,185,440	87.7	3,670,631
Pakistan	190,768,000	96.4	183,900,352
Palau	20,901	< 0.1	< 21
Palestinian territories	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Panama	3,764,166	0.7	26,349
Papua New Guinea	7,398,500	< 0.1	< 7399

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Paraguay	7,003,406	< 0.1	< 7003
Peru	31,151,643	< 0.1	< 31152
Philippines	101,974,400	5.1	5,200,694
Poland	38,484,000	0.1	38,484
Portugal	10,374,822	0.6	62,249
Puerto Rico	3,548,397	< 0.1	< 3548
Qatar	2,120,129	77.5	1,643,100
Reunion	Unknown	4.2	Unknown
Romania	19,942,642	0.3	59,828
Russia	146,567,880	11.7	17,148,442
Rwanda	11,262,564	1.8	202,726
Saint Helena	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Saint Kitts and Nevis	56,000	Unknown	Unknown
Saint Lucia	185,000	Unknown	Unknown
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	6,069	Unknown	Unknown
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	109,991	Unknown	Unknown
Samoa	187,820	< 0.1	< 188
San Marino	32,831	< 0.1	< 33
Sao Tome and Principe	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Saudi Arabia	31,521,418	97.1	30,607,297
Senegal	13,508,715	95.9	12,954,858
Serbia	7,114,393	3.7	263,233
Seychelles	89,949	1.1	989
Sierra Leone	6,453,000	71.5	4,613,895
Singapore	5,469,700	14.9	814,985
Slovakia	5,421,349	0.1	5,421
Slovenia	2,067,804	2.4	49,627
Solomon Islands	581,344	< 0.1	< 581
Somalia	10,787,000	98.6	10,635,982
South Africa	54,956,900	1.5	824,354
Spain	46,439,864	2.3	1,068,117
Sri Lanka	20,675,000	8.5	1,757,375
Sudan	38,435,252	71.4	27,442,770
Suriname	534,189	15.9	84,936
Swaziland	1,119,375	0.2	2,239
Sweden	9,793,172	4.9	479,865
Switzerland	8,256,000	5.7	470,592
Syria	23,356,226	92.8	21,674,578
Taiwan	23,461,708	0.1	23,462

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Tajikistan	8,354,000	99	8,270,460
Thailand	65,104,000	5.8	3,776,032
Timor-Leste	Unknown	0.1	Unknown
Togo	7,305,000	12.2	891,210
Tokelau	1,411	< 0.1	< 1
Tonga	103,252	< 0.1	< 103
Trinidad and Tobago	1,340,557	5.8	77,752
Tunisia	10,982,754	99.8	10,960,788
Turkey	77,695,904	98.6	76,608,161
Turkmenistan	4,751,120	93.3	4,432,795
Turks and Caicos Islands	31,458	< 0.1	< 31
Tuvalu	10,640	0.1	11
Uganda	34,856,813	12	4,182,818
Ukraine	42,823,188	0.9	385,409
United Arab Emirates	9,157,000	76	6,959,320
United Kingdom	64,800,000	4.6	2,980,800
Tanzania	53,470,000	29.9	15,987,530
United States	321,719,000	0.8	2,573,752
United States Virgin Islands	106,405	Unknown	Unknown
Uruguay	3,415,866	< 0.1	< 3416
Uzbekistan	31,022,500	96.5	29,936,713
Vanuatu	264,652	< 0.1	< 265
Venezuela	30,620,404	0.3	91,861
Vietnam	91,812,000	0.2	183,624
Wallis and Futuna	13,135	< 0.1	< 13
Western Sahara	510,713	99.6	508,670
Yemen	25,956,000	99	25,696,440
Zambia	15,473,905	0.4	61,896
Zimbabwe	13,061,239	0.9	117,551
Totals	7,183,231,998.00	23.82	1,710,698,079

Muslim population statistics from the 2011 report *The Future of the Global Muslim Population* by the Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life. The numbers have been adjusted for 2014 population statistics. Total world population was taken from Wikipedia.org.



The Holy Qur'an,
Ghafir 40:44
Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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❧ Social Media Statistics ❧

APPENDIX II

SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) run by Muslims
(All values are rounded to the nearest million.)

Name	Age	Country	Occupations	FB	FB Rank	TW	TW Rank	IG	IG Rank
Mesut Özil	26	Germany	Footballer	29m	1	10m	6	4m	1
Maher Zain	34	Sweden	Musician	25m	2	1m	36	1m	13
A.R. Rahman	48	India	Musician	21m	3	8m	7	< 1m	29
Zayn Malik	22	UK	Musician	20m	4	16m	1	< 1m	36
Mustafa Hosny	37	Egypt	Preacher	19m	5	2m	28	1m	10
Muhammad Alarefe	45	KSA	Scholar	19m	6	13m	3	n/a	
Amr Khaled	48	Egypt	Preacher	18m	7	5m	16	1m	16
Tamer Hosny	38	Egypt	Musician	16m	8	1m	34	2m	6
Aamir Khan	50	India	Actor	15m	9	15m	2	< 1m	31
Amr Diab	53	Egypt	Musician	14m	10	2m	26	1m	8
Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid Alafasy	39	Kuwait	Qur'an Reciter	13m	11	8m	8	1m	9
Ahmad Al Shugairi	42	KSA	Show Host	12m	12	12m	4	4m	3
Ahmed Helmy	44	Egypt	Actor	10m	13	2m	32	< 1m	21
Aidh Al-Qarni	55	KSA	Scholar	9m	14	10m	5	n/a	
Prabowo Subianto	63	Indonesia	Public Speaker	9m	15	2m	30	< 1m	34
Bassem Youssef	41	Egypt	Show Host	8m	16	5m	14	< 1m	24
Ahlam Mustaghanami	62	Algeria	Novelist	8m	17	1m	40	< 1m	27
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	61	Turkey	Politician	8m	18	7m	10	< 1m	20
Tareq Al-Suwaidan	61	Kuwait	Show Host	7m	19	5m	13	< 1m	33
Muhammad Assaf	26	Palestine	Musician	7m	20	1m	35	1	11
Sami Yusuf	35	Iran	Musician	7m	21	< 1m	41	< 1m	19
Moez Masoud	39	Egypt	Television Presenter	6m	22	2m	29	n/a	
Haifa Wehbe	39	Lebanon	Musician	6m	23	3m	24	2m	4
Khadija Ben Guenna	50	Algeria	Media	6m	24	< 1m	55	< 1m	37
Dr Mehmet Oz	55	USA	Show Host	6m	25	4m	21	< 1m	25
Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri	44	UAE	Scholar	6m	26	2m	27	< 1m	39
Mohammad Al Wakeel		Jordan	Media	5m	27	n/a		n/a	
Salman Al Ouda	58	KSA	Scholar	5m	28	7m	9	n/a	
Ahlam Alshamsi	46	UAE	Musician	5m	29	5m	15	4m	2

Name	Age	Country	Occupations	FB	FB Rank	TW	TW Rank	IG	IG Rank
HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah	45	Jordan	Royalty	4m	30	4m	18	1m	15
Ragheb Alama	53	Lebanon	Musician	4m	31	4m	22	1m	14
Bilal Phillips	68	Qatar	Scholar	4m	32	< 1m	46	< 1m	30
Abdullah Gym-nastiar	53	Indonesia	Preacher	3m	33	2m	33	< 1m	23
Shaykh-ul-Islam Prof Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri	64	Pakistan	Politician	3m	34	< 1m	54	n/a	
HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum	66	UAE	Royalty	3m	35	5m	17	1m	12
Yahya Hawwa	39	Syria	Qur'an Reciter	3m	36	< 1m	48	< 1m	28
Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad	90	Malaysia	Politician	2m	37	< 1m	50	n/a	
Mos Def	42	UK	Actor	2m	38	< 1m	49	n/a	
Habib Lutfi Yahya	67	Indonesia	Scholar	2m	39	< 1m	43	n/a	
Awal Ashaari	34	Malaysia	Actor	2m	40	2m	31	2m	7
Nouman Ali Khan	37	UK	Preacher	1m	41	< 1m	47		
Yusuf Islam	67	UK	Musician	1m	42	< 1m	42	< 1m	35
Mohamed ElBaradei	73	Egypt	Diplomat	1m	43	4m	23	n/a	
Muna Abu Sulayman	42	KSA	Show Host	1m	44	< 1m	44	n/a	
Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein	39	Jordan	Sports - Admin	1m	45	< 1m	45	n/a	
Mohammed 'Mo' Farah	32	UK	Athlete	1m	46	1m	37	< 1m	22
Imam Zaid Shakir	59	UK	Scholar	1m	47	< 1m	53	n/a	
Ali Gomaa	63	Egypt	Scholar	1m	48	1m	39	< 1m	38
Hamza Yusuf	55	American	Preacher	1m	49	< 1m	51	n/a	
Nabil Al Awadhy	45	Kuwait	Preacher	1m	50	6m	11	n/a	
Dr. Yusuf Al Qardawi	89	Qatar	Scholar	1m	51	1m	38	n/a	
Tariq Al Habeeb	48	KSA	Self-Help	1m	52	6m	12	< 1m	18
Faraz Rabbani	41	Canada	Scholar	< 1m	53	< 1m	56		
Najib Razak	62	Malaysia	Politician	< 1m	54	2m	25	< 1m	26
Suhaib Webb	43	UK	Preacher	< 1m	55	< 1m	52	< 1m	32
Fayez Maliki	46	KSA	Actor	< 1m	56	4m	19	2m	5
Mustafa Agha	56	Syria	Sports Journalist	< 1m	57	4m	20	1m	17

SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)
(All values are rounded to the nearest million.)

Name	Age	Country	Category	FB	Rank FB	TW	Rank TW	IG	IG Rank
Cristiano Ronaldo	30	Portugal	Footballer	106m	1	38m	9	31m	8
Shakira	38	Colombia	Musician	103m	2	35m	11	12m	21
Vin Diesel	48	USA	Actor	95m	3	n/a		11m	22
Eminem	42	USA	Musician	92m	4	20m	27	6m	30
Rihanna	27	Barbados	Musician	81m	5	51m	5	1m	60
Lionel Messi (Leo Messi)	28	Argentina	Footballer	80m	6	1m	65	25m	13
Michael Jackson		USA	Musician	76m	7	2m	59	< 1m	68
Will Smith	46	USA	Actor	75m	8	n/a		< 1m	70
Bob Marley		Jamaica	Musician	74m	9	1m	60	1m	56
Justin Bieber	21	Canada	Musician	73m	10	140m	2	40m	5
Taylor Swift	25	USA	Musician	73m	11	64m	4	49m	1
Katy Perry	30	USA	Musician	72m	12	147m	1	29m	10
Jackie Chan	61	Hong Kong	Actor	64m	13	1m	64	1m	62
Beyonce	34	USA	Musician	64m	14	14m	36	47m	3
Lady Gaga	29	USA	Musician	62m	15	51m	6	11m	23
Adele	27	UK	Musician	61m	16	23m	19	< 1m	66
Pitbull	34	USA	Musician	60m	17	21m	24	2m	50
Bruno Mars	29	USA	Musician	59m	18	23m	20	5m	36
Selena Gomez	23	USA	Musician	58m	19	33m	13	45m	4
David Guetta	47	France	Musician	56m	20	19m	31	4m	44
Neymar	23	Brazil	Footballer	54m	21	20m	28	32m	7
Avril Lavigne	30	Canada	Musician	53m	22	19m	29	2m	54
David Beckham	40	UK	Footballer	53m	23	n/a		13m	20
AKON	42	USA	Musician	53m	24	6m	54	2m	51
Adam Sandler	49	USA	Actor	53m	25	n/a		1m	59
Jason Statham	48	USA	Actor	52m	26	n/a		3m	46
Lil Wayne	32	USA	Musician	52m	27	24m	16	2m	52
Dwayne Johnson	43	USA	Wrestler	51m	28	9m	45	28m	11
Megan Fox	29	USA	Actress	51m	29	1m	61	2m	53
Enrique Iglesias	40	Spain	Musician	50m	30	9m	44	4m	39
Usher	36	USA	Musician	48m	31	10m	42	3m	47
Miley Cyrus	22	USA	Musician	47m	32	22m	22	29m	9
Jennifer Lopez	46	USA	Musician	45m	33	34m	12	28m	12
Barack Obama	54	USA	Politician	45m	34	64m	3	5m	33
Nicki Minaj	32	USA	Musician	42m	35	20m	26	35m	6
Chris Brown	29	USA	Musician	40m	36	15m	35	16m	16

Name	Age	Country	Category	FB	Rank FB	TW	Rank TW	IG	IG Rank
Britney Spears	33	USA	Musician	40m	37	43m	8	6m	29
Justin Timberlake	34	USA	Musician	39m	38	49m	7	16m	17
Wiz Khalifa	28	USA	Musician	38m	39	21m	25	8m	24
50cent	40	USA	Musician	38m	40	8m	49	6m	28
John Cena	38	USA	Athlete	38m	41	7m	52	2m	55
Demi Lovato	23	USA	Musician	37m	42	31m	14	24m	14
Snoop Dogg	43	USA	Musician	36m	43	13m	38	7m	26
Alicia Keys	34	USA	Musician	34m	44	22m	21	4m	41
Drake	28	Canada	Musician	34m	45	26m	15	13m	19
Ronaldinho Gaucho	34	Brazil	Footballer	32m	46	13m	39	7m	25
Taylor Lautner	23	USA	Actor	32m	47	n/a		n/a	
Ricardo Kakà	33	Brazil	Footballer	32m	48	24m	18	5m	31
Kesha	28	USA	Musician	31m	49	4m	58	1m	58
Emma Watson	25	UK	Actress	31m	50	19m	30	4m	42
Mesut Özil	28	Germany	Footballer	29m	51	10m	43	4m	43
Daddy Yankee	38	Puerto Rico	Musician	28m	52	9m	47	5m	35
Paulo Coelho	68	Brazil	Author	27m	53	11m	41	< 1m	64
Michael Jordan	52	USA	NBA	27m	54	n/a		4m	37
Kim Kardashian	34	USA	Reality Star	26m	55	35m	10	47m	2
Sachin Tendulkar	42	India	Cricket	26m	56	8m	50	< 1m	67
Christina Aguilera	34	USA	Musician	25m	57	15m	34	1m	57
Andres Iniesta	31	Spain	Soccer	25m	58	11m	40	7m	27
LeBron James	30	USA	NBA	22m	59	24m	17	14m	18
Amitabh Bachchan	72	India	Actor	22m	60	17m	32	< 1m	65
Jet Li	52	China	Actor	22m	61	n/a		n/a	
Celine Dion	47	Canada	Musician	22m	62	n/a		n/a	
A.R. Rahman	48	India	Musician	21m	63	9m	46	< 1m	71
Don Omar	37	Puerto rico	Musician	21m	64	4m	56	1m	61
Jay-Z	45	USA	Musician	21m	65	1m	63	< 1m	69
Ashley Tisdale	30	USA	Musician	21m	66	13m	37	5m	32
Mariah Carey	45	USA	Musician	21m	67	16m	33	3m	48
Kevin Hart	36	USA	Comedian	20m	68	22m	23	23m	15
Kobe Bryant	37	USA	NBA	20m	69	7m	51	4m	40
T.I.	34	USA	Musician	20m	70	6m	53	3m	45
Jessie J	27	UK	Musician	19m	71	8m	48	4m	38
Tiësto	46	Netherlands	Musician	19m	72	4m	57	3m	49
Madonna	56	USA	Musician	19m	73	1m	62	5m	34
Amr Khaled	48	Egypt	Preacher	18m	74	5m	55	1m	63

 The 
GLOSSARY

Ahl al-Bayt (or Aal al-Bayt): Literally, “the people of the house”; refers to the family of the Prophet Muhammad.

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah: Literally, people of the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim community.

Al-Fatiha: Literally, “The Opening”. This is the title for the first chapter of the Holy Qur’an which is recited as a fundamental part of Muslims’ daily prayers.

Allah: Arabic for God.

Aqida: Creed. This refers to theological and doctrinal beliefs of Muslims.

Ash’ari: Theological school of Sunni Orthodoxy named after the followers of the 9th century scholar Abu al Hasan Al-Ash’ari (874–936 CE).

Awqaf: Plural of waqf (see below).

Azaan/Adhan: The call to prayer.

Bid’a: Literally “innovation”; this refers to the act of creating superfluous, or non-prescribed traditions in the practice of Islam. It is used in common speech as a denunciation toward those not acting in accordance with the prescriptions of Islam.

Caliph: The head of the entire community of Muslims, either current or in the past. Is also used by certain sects to refer to their own leader.

Chador: A loose cloth traditionally worn by Muslim women which usually covers the body from head to foot.

Da’i/ Da’ee: Missionary.

Da’wa: Islamic missionary work; literally ‘making an invitation’ to the religion.

Emir (or Amir): A title accorded to a leader, prince, or commander-in-chief.

Fatwa: A religious ruling issued by a *mufti* (a top legal scholar) regarding particulars of an issue in Islamic law based on circumstances surrounding the question such as the time, place, people, and details surrounding the issue. It is only considered binding when all scholars of that time agree upon it, which is extremely rare indeed.

Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence. A branch of Sharia that deals mainly with the observance of rituals, morals, and social legislation in Islam.

Fiqh al-Aqaliyyat: Islamic legal rulings for Muslims living as minorities in foreign lands.

Ghazal: Poetry used for describing the beauty of the loved one as well as the emotions the poet has towards the beloved.

Hadith: Literally “sayings”. These are a set of references to the life of the Prophet Muhammad. There are numerous Hadith, and the practice of verifying them is an Islamic scholarly practice of its own that has been carried out since the life of the Prophet.

Hafiz (or Hafiza) al-Qur’an: A person who has committed the entire Qur’an to memory, and can recite the Qur’an at will. This is important in Islam because the Qur’an was originally revealed as an oral text.

Hajj: The pilgrimage to Makkah. It is mandatory for every Muslim who is able to perform and can afford it. Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. The pilgrimage occurs from the 8th to 12th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Islamic calendar.

Halal: Permissible. A term referring to actions or objects that are permissible according to Islamic law. Commonly refers to food items that are permissible for Muslims to eat.

Haram: In the context of a sacred precinct, like Makkah, Madinah, or al-Aqsa, this term means “inviolable”. In most contexts, this term means “forbidden”, and relates to actions that are impermissible according to Islamic law.

Hijab: Normally refers to the headscarf worn by Muslim women but refers to both the head cover and attire worn by Muslim woman to preserve their modesty. It obligatory by the consensus of all classical Islamic schools of thought.

Hijaz: The region along the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula.

Ibadi: The Ibadi school has origins in and is linked to the Kharijites, but the modern day community is distinct from the 7th century Islamic sect. It was founded after the death of Prophet Muhammad and is currently practiced by a majority of Oman’s Muslim population. It is also found across parts of Africa.

Ihsan: Virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God.

Ijaza: Certification given to a student for acquiring knowledge of a particular discipline under the authorization of a higher authority usually by face-to-face interactions, thereby enabling the student to transmit the knowledge the teacher has. This is performed under the supervision of a certified sheikh whose chain of narrations often leads to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Jtihad: Independent reasoning, or individual interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Imam: (1) In both Sunni and Shia Islam an imam is the leader of congregational prayers who may also deliver the Friday prayer (*jumu'ah*) sermon; more generally, a person of authority within the community. (2) In Shia Islam this exclusively refers to a series of people, descended from the Prophet Muhammad, who by lineage are considered divinely guided spiritual leaders.

Imamate: The position or institution, in Shia Islam, that is comprised of a series of divinely guided imams.

Iman: Faith in God.

Islam: Submission to God's will.

Isnad: The chain of narrators of the Hadith; it is the list of authorities who have transmitted the sayings, actions or approbations (Hadith) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) via one of his companions or a later authority (*tabi'i*). The reliability of the *isnad* is the main criteria in the validity of Hadith. Modern practices of scientific citation and historical method owe a great deal to the rigour of the *isnad* tradition of early Muslims.

Jihad: Literally, "struggle". An exertion of effort in any field, not just in war, in order to achieve good or prevent evil, done so for the sake of God's pleasure. The highest level of which is to overcome one's ego and lower self. It is considered a religious duty upon every Muslim.

Kaaba: The large cubic structure in the Grand Mosque in Makkah, adorned in gold-embroidered black fabric, referred to by Muslims as the "House of God". This structure marks the direction in which Muslims pray and is central to the Hajj pilgrimage.

Khat: Script. Refers to the Arabic calligraphy, which is the artistic practice of handwriting of Arabic alphabets depending on certain rules and principles.

Khateeb: Refers to the person who delivers the Islamic sermon (*khutbah*) during certain occasions such as the Friday prayers, or during Eid prayers. He is usually the imam or leader of the prayer.

Khanqah: A building designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi brotherhood, or *tariqa*, and is a place for spiritual retreat and character reformation. It is also synonymous with the regional terms *ribat*, *tekke*, and *zawiya*.

Khawarij: A group of Muslims in early Islamic history who went against the larger community and became outsiders. A term used to describe political deviants.

Khums: Literally, "one-fifth" in Arabic; a religious tax of one-fifth of one's income owed by followers of Usuli Twelver Shia to a very senior cleric.

Madhabs: Traditional schools of Islamic legal methodology (e.g. Hanbali, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanafi, Ja'fari).

Madrassa: The Arabic word for "school". Can refer to a religious school.

Majlis al-Shura: Consultative religio-legislative body.

Marja'/Marja'iyya: The highest position of authority in the Usuli school of Twelver Shia fiqh whose authority lies after the Qur'an, prophets, and imams. Also referred to as *marja' taqlid*, meaning literally "one who is worthy of being imitated", they have the authority to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law for the adherers and less-credentialed clerics.

Masjid: Arabic for "mosque".

Maturidi: Theological school of Sunni Orthodoxy named after the followers of the 9th century scholar Muhammad Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (853-944 CE).

Melayu Islam Beraja: The concept of Malay Islamic monarchy.

Morchidat: Literally, "(female) guides". Refers to the Moroccan cadre of trained female preachers.

Mufti: A Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious matters.

Mujahid: Someone engaged in acts of jihad.

Muqri: Someone qualified to teach others proper recitation of the Qur'an.

Murid: Disciple of a Sufi guide or order.

Mursyidul Am: Malaysian term for religious guide.

Mushaf: A printing of the Qur'an, referring to the physical bound volume of the Holy Book.

Mutabarrik: Supporter or affiliate of a Sufi guide or order, someone less serious in treading the spiritual path than a *murid*.

Mu'tazili: An almost obsolete school of Sunni Islam, popular in the 8th century, that advocates the belief that the Qur'an was created—as opposed to the Orthodox Sunni view that it is eternal and uncreated.

Nasheed: Islamic song. Islamic vocal music, sung individually or by a group and sometimes accompanied by the *daff*, a shallow drum similar to the tambourine. The words sung may refer to religion, history, current issues, or anything related to Islam.

Pancasila: Indonesian concept of five basic, national principles: belief in the Oneness of God, just and civilised humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy, and social justice.

PBUH: An acronym for “Peace be upon him”.

Pesantren: The term for Islamic schools in Indonesia.

Qibla: The direction in which Muslims offer their five daily prayers; the direction of the Kaaba in

Makkah.

Ramadan: Holy month of fasting, ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

Salafi: A movement of Sunni Muslims that places great emphasis on literal interpretation of the Qur’an and Hadith, with skepticism towards the role of human intellect.

Salawat: A prayer of peace upon the Prophet ﷺ which has many unique formulas, often consisting of the basic *Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ala ahlihi wa sallim* (O God send your prayers and blessings be upon Muhammad and his family).

Shahadatayn: The two testimonies of faith: “There is no deity but God. Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” Stating these two sentences is sufficient to become a Muslim.

Sharia: Literally, “the way to the source”, this refers to Islamic law. Islamic law is not, as is widely perceived, a standard set of written rules, but is rather an unwritten text that is interpreted by legal scholars in specific instances, drawing on the Qur’an and other reliable religious sources relevant to the tradition followed.

Sheikh: (1) A position of authority granted to people who are respected in society. (2) A religious official.

Shia: The second-largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Shi’atu ‘Ali* or “party of ‘Ali”, the fourth caliph of Islam and first imam in Shiism.

Sunnah: Literally “the trodden path”, this refers to the ways and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. Reference to these practices can be found in the Qur’an and in the Hadith.

Sunni: The largest denomination of Muslims referred to as *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* or “people of the prophetic tradition and community”—with emphasis on emulating the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Tafsir: Interpretation of the Qur’an, either by commentary or exegesis.

Taqlid: The practice of following rulings without questioning the religious authority. This is a core tenet of the Shia *Usuli* school of Islamic law.

Tariqa: any particular brotherhood of Sufism (spiritual methodology) that leads to a path to the Divine. It consists of a group of seekers following their guide (spiritual leader), and through spiritual deeds and guidance one reaches the ultimate truth of knowing God.

Ummah: The collective Muslim community.

Umrah: The “lesser pilgrimage” to Makkah. It can be performed any time of the year and has fewer rites than the hajj.

Usul ad Din: The basic foundations of the Islamic religion, those of which represent creed, behaviour, and intellectual conduct and all are based on the rudiments of the Islamic faith.

Velayat-e-Faqih: A position of both spiritual and temporal powers in the Republic of Iran. Literally, “Guardianship of the Jurist”, referring to the fact that while the Mahdi (awaited one) is in occultation, the jurists should have guardianship over the earth.

Waqf: A religious endowment or charitable trust.

Zakat: The religious obligation to annually give one-fortieth of one’s income and savings to the poor and destitute.

Zawiya: See *khanqah*, above.

❧ The ❧
INDEX

Index

AFGHANISTAN

Ahmadzai, HE Ashraf Ghani 125
Haqqani, Sirajuddin 125
Hekmatyar, Gulbuddin 125
Hosseini, Khaled (new) 164
Joya, Malalai 149
Mohseni, Saad 171

ALGERIA

Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-
Nacer 137
Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif 137
Bouteflika, HE President
Abdelaziz 122
Brahimi, HE Lakhdar 122
Cherif, HE Ambassador Prof
Dr Mustapha 111
Mosteghanemi, Ahlam 163

ARGENTINA

Garcia, Prof Muhammad Isa 120
Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf 135

AUSTRALIA

Ali, Imam Afroz 152
Chowdhury, Shaykh Tawfique 152
El-Imam, Sheikh Fehmi 119
Husic, Ed 128
Yassine, Talal 158

AZERBAIJAN

Aliyev, HE President Ilham 125
Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji
Allahshukur Hummat 116
Qasimov, Alim 165

BAHRAIN

Al-Zayani, Afnan 154
Yaquby, Nizam 111

BANGLADESH

Abed, Sir Fazle Hasan 149
Hossain, Dr Hameeda 149
Nizami, Motiur Rahman 125
Sayeedi, Delwar Hossain 132
Shamim Mohammed
Afzal (new) 132
Wazed, HE Sheikh Hasina 126
Yunus, Mohammad 149

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa 102, 118
Karic, Dr Enes 118
Mahmutćehajić, HE Prof
Dr Rusmir 151

BRUNEI

Waddaulah, HM Sultan
Haji Hassanal Bolkiah
Mu'izzaddin 157

BULGARIA

Hadzhi, HE Mustafa Alish 134

BURKINA FASO

Aboubakary, Maiga 147
Dokori, Dr Abu Bakr 113

BURUNDI

Nkunduwiga, Haruna 147

CAMBODIA

Adam, HE Zakaryya 132

CANADA

Kutty, Faisal 152
Mattson, Dr Ingrid 102, 119
Nawaz, Zarqa 167
Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz 141
Slimi, Sheikh Hamid (new) 141
Valiante, Wahida 135
Wharnsby, Dawud 167

CHAD

Abakar, Sheikh Hussain
Hassan 131
Deby Itno, HE President Idriss 125

CHINA

Guangyuan, Imam Chen Chen 132
Kadeer, Rebiya 126
Noor Deen, Haji (Mi
Guang Jiang) 165
Tohti, Ilham 149

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba 147
Touré, Yaya 173

ECUADOR

Suquillo, Juan 136

EGYPT

Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar 137
Abulmagd, HE Prof Dr
Kamal 146

Al-Aswany, Alaa 163
Al-Ayyat, HE Muhammad
Morsi Isa 122
Al-Azhari, Sheikh Usama
Al-Sayyid 98
Allam, Shawki Ibrahim
Abdel-Karim 130
Al-Shater, Khairat 122
Al-Sisi, His Eminence President
Abdel Fattah Saeed 74
Al-Tayyeb, His Eminence
Professor Dr Sheikh
Ahmad Muhammad 40
Amer, Dr Ghada Mohammed 159
Badie, Dr Mohammed 130
Badreya, Sayed 163
El-Araby, HE Nabil 130
El-Baz, Farouk 159
El-Naggar, Zaghoul 159
El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed 163
Emara, Mohamed 111
Gomaa, His Eminence
Sheikh Dr Ali 68
Heikal, Mohamed Hassanein 170
Hosny, Mustafa 137
Hosny, Sheikh Mustafa 106
Howeidy, Dr Fahmy 170
Khaled, Dr Amr 90
Mansour, Ahmed (new) 170
Masoud, Sheikh Moez 92
Tablawi, Sheikh Mohammad 169
Youssef, Dr Bassem 170

ETHIOPIA

Idris, HE Hajji Omar 113

FRANCE

Al-Hussayni, His Royal
Highness Shah Karim 95
Bechari, Dr Mohamed 104, 128
Bencheikh, Sheikh Sohaib 118
Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno
Abd al Haqq 161
Sy, Omar 166
Zidane, Zinedine 173

GAMBIA, THE

Bensouda, Fatou 148
Jah, HE Ambassador Prof
Dr Omar 113

GERMANY

Hoffman, HE Ambassador,
Dr Murad 118

Köhler, Ayyub Axel 134
Ozil, Mesut 173

GUYANA

Shah, Ryhaan 168

INDIA

Abdul Kalam, Dr APJ
(deceased) 180
Abdur Rahman, BS
(deceased) 180
Ahmad, Sheikh Aboobackar 132
Al-Azhari, Mufti Muhammad
Akhtar Raza Khan Qadiri 86
Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibrahimul
Khaleel 132
Al-Mustafa, Allamah Zia 116
Azmi, H. Hazrat Allama Maulana
Qamaruzzaman 139
Azmi, Shabana 165
Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar 126
Khan, Aamir 165
Khan, Wahiduddin 116
Madani, Arsad 139
Madani, Maulana Mahmood 96
Nadvi, Rabey Hasani 116
Nadwi, Bahauddeen Muhammed
Jamaluddeen 116
Naik, Dr Zakir Abdul
Karim 107, 139
Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali 133
Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin 133
Prenji, Azim 144
Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin
Ajmal 144
Quadri, Professor Sayid
Ameen Mian 139
Rahman, Allah Rakha (AR) 165
Saifuddin, Syedna Mufaddal 139
Shuaib, Sheikh Dr Thaika 139

INDONESIA

Alawiyaah, Prof Dr Tuti 139
Bagir, Haidar 144
Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad
Mustofa 116
Gymnastiar, Abdullah Aa Gym 139
Indrawati, Sri Mulyani 157
Maarif, Syafii 116
Mahfudz, Sahal (deceased) 179
Matta, Anis 126
Mohamad, Goenawan 171
Muhammad, Husein 149
Mumpuni, Tri 160

Nadia, Asma 165
Rosa, Helvy Tiana 165
Shihab, Quraish 139
Siradj, Dr KH Said Aqil 72
Subianto, Lt. Gen. Prabowo 126
Sukarnoputri, Megawati 126
Syamsuddin, Professor
Dr M Din 97
Ulfah, Hajjah Maria 169
Widodo, His Excellency
President Joko 58
Yahya, Habib Luthfi bin 99

IRAN

Amoli, HE Grand Ayatollah
Abdullah Jawadi 102, 111
Ansari, Anousheh 154
Damad, HE Ayatollah Dr Seyyed
Mostafa Mohaghegh 111
Ebadi, Shirin 146
Ebtekar, HE Dr Masoumeh 122
Jafari, Major General
Mohammad Ali 122
Khamenei, His Excellency Grand
Ayatollah Sayyid Ali 44
Khatami, HE Sayyid
Mohammad 123
Majidi, Majid (new) 163
Nazeri, Shahram 163
Rashad, Prof Ali Akbar 130
Rouhani, HE President Hassan 123
Salehi, Dr Ali Akbar 159
Shirazi, HE Grand Ayatollah
Nasir Makarim 111
Sobhani, HE Ayatollah Jafar 111
Vaez-Tabasi, HE Ayatollah
Abbas 130
Zarif, Mohammad Javad (new) 123

IRAQ

Al-Dari, Harith (deceased) 178
Al-Khoei, Sayyed Jawad 143
Al-Najafi, HE Grand
Ayatollah Bashir 111
Al-Qaradaghi, Prof. Ali
Mohyi Al-Din 99
Al-Saadi, Sheikh Abdul Malik 123
Al-Sadr, HE Ayatollah Al Faqih
Seyyed Hussein Ismail 112
Al-Sadr, Sheikh Muqtada 123
Barzani, Masoud 104, 123
Fayyad, HE Grand Ayatollah
Mohammad Ishaq 103, 112
Hakim, HE Grand Ayatollah

Mohammed Said 112
Kubaisi, Sheikh Dr Ahmed 137
Sistani, His Eminence
Grand Ayatollah Sayyid
Ali Hussein 54

ISRAEL

Salah, Sheikh Raed 123

ITALY

Pallavicini, Imam Yahya
Sergio Yahe 134
Pallavicini, Sheikh Abd
al-Wahid 140

JAMAICA

Muhammad, Mustafa 135

JORDAN

Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal 154
Abu Rashta, Ata 123
Al-Abdullah, Her Majesty
Queen Rania 91
Al-Abdullah, HRH Crown
Prince Hussein 124
Al-Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir
Al-Fattal 163
Al-Hussein, His Majesty King
Abdullah II ibn 36
Al-Hussein, HRH Prince
Ali ibn 173
Al-Hussein, HRH Prince Feisal
ibn (new) 107, 146
Al-Hussein, Prince Zeid
bin Ra'ad 103, 124
Dajani, Prof Rana 159
Keller, Sheikh Nuh 137
Khasawneh, HE Sheikh
Abdul Karim 112

KENYA

Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed 131
Mazrui, Dr Ali Al'amin
(deceased) 178
Merali, Naushad 156

KOSOVO

Jahjaga, Her Excellency
President Atifete 97
Ternava, HE Sheikh Naim 134

KUWAIT

Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary
bin Rashid 169
Al-Bahar, Sheikhah 154

Al-Ghunaim, Maha 154
Al-Mutawa, Dr Naif 170
Al-Mutawa, Jassem 170
Al-Sabah, Sabah Al-Ahmad
 Al-Jaber 104, 124
Suwaidan, Sheikh Dr Tareq 170

LEBANON

Al-Sadr, Rabab 143
Assaf, Roger 163
Daouk, Amine M 143
Jaber, Dr Ali 170
Kassar, Adnan 154
Nasrallah, Seyyed Hasan 92
Qabbani, HE Dr Mohammad
 Rashid 112

LIBYA

Haftar, Khalifa 124
Nayed, Dr Aref Ali 100

MALAWI

Chabulika, Sheikh Dinala 148

MALAYSIA

Al-Akiti, Dato Dr
 Muhammad Afifi 116
Al-Attas, Dr Syed Muhammad
 Naquib 117
Al-Bukhary, Syed Mokhtar 144
Anwar, Zainah 149
Awang, Abdul Hadi (new) 139
Bakar, Dr Osman 117
Bin Hashim, Tan Sri Muhammad
 Ali (new) 157
Hamidun, Hafiz (new) 165
Ibrahim, Dato Mashitah 140
Ibrahim, HE Dr Anwar 105, 126
Kamali, Prof Mohammad
 Hashim 117
Mat, Dato' Haji Nik Abdul
 Aziz Nik (deceased) 179
Mohamad, Dr Mahathir 126
MrGlani, Sheikh Dr
 Mahmoud 140
Nurhaliza, Dato' Siti (new) 166
Raihan 166
Razak, Najib Tun 126
Shah, Sultan Abdul Halim
 Mu'adzam 127
Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar 160

MALDIVES

Saeed, Mohamed Shaheem Ali 133

MALI

Keita, Salif 164

MAURITANIA

Al-Haji, Sheikh Murabit 115
Bin Bayyah, His Eminence
 Sheikh Abdullah 82

MOROCCO

Abdurrahman, Prof Dr Taha 112
Al-Boutchich, Sidi Hamza
 Al-Qadiri 137
Al-Maghrawi, Muhammad 112
Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad 130
Bouhia, Hynd 155
King Mohammed VI, His Majesty
 Amir al-Mu'minin 46
Lalami, Laila (new) 164
Modghari, HE Dr Abd
 Al Kabir 130

MOZAMBIQUE

Cheba, Sheikh Muhamad
 Aboulai 131

NEPAL

Siddiqui, Mohammadi 150

NETHERLANDS

Aboutaleb, Ahmed 128
El Mouhandiz, Rajae 166

NEW ZEALAND

Ghani, Dr Anwar 135
Williams, Sonny 174

NIGER

Mindaoudou, HE Dodo
 Aichatou 148

NIGERIA

Abubakar III, Amirul
 Mu'minin Sheikh as Sultan
 Muhammadu Sa'adu 84
Ahmed, Dr Ibrahim Datti 115
Ajibola, HE Prince Bola 131
Ashafa, Imam Muhammad 148
Bauchi, Sheikh Tahir
 Usman (new) 138
Buhari, His Excellency President
 Muhammadu (new) 76
Dangote, Alhaji Aliko 157
Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa 138
Mohamed, Imam Ustaz

Musa (deceased) 179
Oloyede, Prof Ishaq
 Olanrewaju 131
Salih, His Eminence
 Sheikh Ibrahim 94
Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi
 Lamido 132
Zakzaky, Sheikh Ibraheem 115

OMAN

Al-Khalili, HE Sheikh Ahmad 112
Al-Sa'id, His Majesty Sultan
 Qaboos bin Sa'id 48

PAKISTAN

Abdul-Wahhab, Amir Hajji
 Muhammad 56
Ahmed, Dr Akbar 117
Akhtar, Dr Ahmad Rafique 140
Al-Qadri, Shaykh Dr Tahir 117
Atta-Ur Rahman, Prof 160
Awan, Ameer Muhammad
 Akram 140
Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba 140
Edhi, Abdul Sattar 145
Fazlur Rahman, Maulana 127
Hamid, Zaid 171
Hashmi, Dr Farhat 117
Hussain, Aamir Liaquat 171
Iqbal, Salman (new) 172
Ismail, Al-Haji Siddiq 166
Jameel, Maulana Tariq 106, 140
Jehangir, Asma 150
Khan, Dr Abdul Qadeer 160
Khan, Imran 127
Khan, Mawlana Saleemullah 133
Mushtaq, Chaudhary Faisal 145
Najafi, HE Grand Ayatollah
 Muhammad Hussain 117
Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed
 Sajid Ali 133
Parveen, Abida 166
Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad
 Ilyas Attar 140
Qadri, Muhammad
 Owais Raza 166
Rizvi, Prof Dr Adib 145
Saif, Umar 160
Shakil-ur-Rahman, Mir 172
Sharif, HE Nawaz 105, 127
Sharif, Raheel (new) 127
Ul-Haq, Siraj 133
Usmani, His Eminence Justice

Sheikh Muhammad Taqi 80
Yousafzai, Malala 150

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Abbas, HE President
Mahmoud 89
Abu Awwad, Khaled 146
Abu Elaish, Dr Izzeldin 146
Abu Sarah, Aziz 146
Abu Sway, Prof Mustafa 112
Al-Faqih, Judge Kholoud 146
Al-Rifa'i, Sheikh Muhammad
Said Al-Jamal 137
Al-Tamimi, HE Justice Sheikh
Dr Tayseer Rajab 112
Assaf, Mohammed 173
Haniyah, Ismail 105, 124
Hussein, HE Muhammad
Ahmad (new) 130
Khanfar, Wadah 171
Mashal, Khaled 95
Nusseibeh, Prof Sari 112
Omer, Mohammed 171
Sabri, HE Sheikh Dr
Ikrima Sa'id 130

PHILIPPINES

Misuari, Nur 127
Rasul-Bernardo, Amina 150
Rasul, Santanina Tillah 150

QATAR

Al-Ansari, Buthaina 155
Al-Missned, Her Highness Sheikhha
Mozah Bint Nasser 143
Al-Qaradawi, Sheikh Dr Yusuf 91
Al-Ruwaini, Nashwa 171
Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali 147
Al-Thani, HE Sheikhha Aisha
bint Faleh bint Nasser 147
Al-Thani, HE Sheikhha Al-
Mayassa bint Hamad 164
Al-Thani, His Highness Emir
Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid 96
Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal 137

RUSSIA

Gaynetdin, HE Sheikh Ravil
Ismagilovich 118
Kadyrov, HE President
Ramzan 128
Nasibullahoglu, Mufti Cafer 134

SAUDI ARABIA

AbuSulayman, Muna 143

Al-Ajmi, Sheikh Ahmad Ali 169
Al-Amoudi, Sheikh Mohammed

Hussein Ali 155
Al-Arifi, Muhammad 105, 131
Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Saleh Bin
Fawzan (new) 113
Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad
ibn Said 169
Al-Madani, HE Dr Ahmad
Mohamed Ali 143
Al-Madkhali, Sheikh Rabee
Ibn Haadi 'Umayr 113
Al-Mueaqly, Sheikh Maher
bin Hamad 169
Al-Namankany, Abeer 159
Al-Ouda, Sheikh Salman 70
Al-Qarni, Dr Aaidh 138
Al-Qarni, Dr Awad 138
Al-Rajhi, Sulaiman
Abdul Aziz 143
Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa 113
Al-Saud, His Majesty King
Salman bin Abdul-Aziz 42
Al-Saud, HM King Abdullah bin
Abdul-Aziz (deceased) 178
Al-Saud, HRH Prince Al-Waleed
bin Talal bin Abdul-Aziz 155
Al-Saud, HRH Prince
Mohammed Al-Faisal 155
Al-Saud, HRH Prince Muhammad
bin Naif bin Abdul-Aziz 64
Al-Saud, HRH Prince Muhammad
bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz 65
Al-Shatri, Sheikh Abu Bakr 169
Al-Sheikh, His Eminence Sheikh
Abdul-Aziz Aal 60
Al-Shugairi, Ahmad 138
Al-Shuraim, Sheikh Saud Ibn
Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad 169
Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul
Rahman 107, 169
Altwaijiri, HE Dr Abdulaziz
Othman 131
Bin Laden, Bakr 155
Madani, Dr Iyad 106, 131
Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed 147
Olayan, Lubna 155
Sindi, Hayat 159

SENEGAL

Cisse, His Eminence Sheikh
Ahmad Tijani Ali 62
Kane, Zeinaba 148
Mbacke, Serigne Sidi Al

Moukhtar 138
N'Dour, Yousseou 164

SINGAPORE

Rasheed, HE Zainul Abidin 127

SOMALIA

Abdi, Dr Hawa 148
Adan, Fowsiyo Yusuf Haji 125
Elmi, Asha Haji 148
Mohamud, Hassan Sheikh 125

SOUTH AFRICA

Amla, Hashim 173
Bhikha, Zain 164
Desai, Mufti Ebrahim 115
Esack, Farid 115
Hendricks, Sheikh Seraj 115
Moosa, Ebrahim (new) 115
Sooliman, Dr Imtiaz Ismail 144

SRI LANKA

Ismail, Jezima 150
Marsoof, Justice Saleem 150
Mufthi, MIM Rizvi 133

SUDAN

Al-Bashir, HE President Omar 124
Al-Mahdi, HE Imam Sayyed
Al Sadiq 124
El-Bashir, HE Dr Issam 131
Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed 'Mo' 155

SWEDEN

Hadzialic, Aida (new) 128
Mousa, Hassan 140
Zain, Maher 166

SWITZERLAND

Maizar, Hisham (deceased) 179
Ramadan, Dr Tariq 118

SYRIA

Al-Assad, HE President
Bashar 124
Alchaar, Dr Mohammed
Nedal 156
Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed
Ratib 113
Al-Sabouni, Sheikh
Mohammed Ali 102, 113
Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh
Muhammad 103, 113
Dr Al-Zuhayli, Wahbi
(deceased) 178

Hassoun, HE Sheikh Dr
Ahmad Badr Al-Din 113
Itr, Sheikh Dr Nuruddin 113
Qubeysi, Her Eminence
Sheikha Munira 78
Taha, Uthman 108, 164

TAJIKISTAN

Abdulkodirzoda, HE
Saidmukarram (new) 134
Rahmon, HE President
Emomalii 127

THAILAND

Dahlan, Prof Dr Winai 160
Sabur, M Abdus 151

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Ali, Imam Yacoob 135
Hosein, Sheikh Imran 142

TUNISIA

Djait, Hisham 113
Ghannouchi, Rached 90

TURKEY

Çagrıncı, HE Prof Dr Mustafa 118
Çelebi, Master Hasan 166
Davutoglu, His Excellency
Prime Minister Ahmet 88
Effendi, Sheikh Mahmud 106, 141
Erdogan, His Excellency
President Recep Tayyip 52
Görmez, Mehmet 134
Gülen, Hodjaefendi Fethullah 66
Kalin, Dr Ibrahim 118
Karaman, Prof Dr Hayrettin 118
Sabancı, Güler 157
Topba, Osman Nuri 141
Yalçın, Rabia 167

TURKMENISTAN

Berdimuhamedow, HE
President Gurbanguly
Mälikgulyýewiç 127

UGANDA

Mamdani, Mahmood 115

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-Abbar, Mohamed Ben Ali 156
Alawadhi, HE Najla 171
Al-Gurg, Raja (new) 156
Al-Hussein, HRH Princess
Haya 144

Al-Jaber, Fatima 156
Al-Jifri, Habib 'Ali Zain
Al Abideen 94
Al-Maktoum, His Highness
Amir Sheikh Mohammed
bin Rashid 98
Al-Nahyan, HH Sheikh
Khalifa bin Zayed 124
Al-Nahyan, His Highness
General Sheikh Mohammed
bin Zayed 50
Al-Qassimi, Sheikha Lubna 156
Al-Qassimi, Sheikh Dr Sultan
bin Mohammed 144
Lootah, Haj Saeed 156
Mattar, Dr Maryam 147

UNITED KINGDOM

Ahmed, Muddassar 151
Ahsan, Dr Manazir 135
Al-Banna, Dr Hany 145
Al-Hassani, Dr Salim 161
Amin, Imtiaz (new) 151
As-Sufi, Sheikh Abd al-Qadir 141
Farah, Mohamed 174
Hadid, Dame Zaha
Muhammad 167
Hasan, Mehdi 151
Islam, Yusuf 167
Ismail, Sufyan (new) 151
Kazmi, Nadeem 145
Khalid, Fazlun 151
Malik, Zayn 174
Motala, Hadhrat Sheikhu
Hadith Maulana Yusuf 119
Nadwi, Sheikh Dr Mohammad
Akram (new) 119
Nahdi, Fuad 152
Nakshawani, Ammar 141
Omaar, Rageh 172
Pirzada, Sheikh Muhammad
Imdad Hussain 119
Salim, Ahmed (new) 172
Shafik, Nemat (new) 157
Shah-Kazemi, Dr Reza 119
Siddiqui, Khwaja Pir Mohammad
Alauddin 141
Warsi, Lady Sayeeda 128
Winter, Professor Timothy
(Sheikh Abdal-Hakim
Murad) 103, 119
Yusuf, Sami 108, 167

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Abdullah, Dr Umar Faruq 119
Al-Alwani, Dr Taha Jaber 120
Al-Hibri, Dr Azizah 153
Ali, Muhammad 174
Amanat, Omar 161
Awad, Nihad 152
Bey, Yasiin 174
Carson, Andre 129
Crane, Dr Robert Dickson 135
El-Erian, Mohamed 158
El Fadl, Professor Khaled
Abou (new) 120
Elgamal, Taher 161
Ellison, Representative Keith 129
Friedlander, Shems 167
Ghazi, Drs Abidullah and
Tasneema 135
Gray-Henry, Aisha 167
Hanson, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf 93
Huda, Qamar-ul (new) 120
Hussain, Rashad 129
Jackson, Sherman 120
Kabbani, Shaykh Muhammad
Hisham 141
Khan, Mehmood 161
Khan, Nouman Ali 107, 141
Khan, Salman 153
Khera, Farhana (new) 128
Maghraoui, Sheikh Mokhtar 120
Majid, Imam Mohammed 153
Mogahed, Dalia 153
Mohyeldin, Ayman 172
Moore, Daniel Abdal-Hayy 167
Mujahid, Abdul Malik 153
Musaji, Sheila 172
Nasr, Professor Dr Seyyed
Hossein 93
Qadhi, Dr Yasir (new) 152
Sarsour, Linda (new) 153
Shakir, Imam Zaid 141
Siddique, Prof Teepeu 161
Wahhaj, Siraj 142
Webb, Imam Suhaib 142
Ying, Jackie 162
Zakaria, Fareed 172
Zakariya, Mohamed 167
Zewail, Dr Ahmed 162

UZBEKISTAN

Alemov, HE Usman 134

YEMEN

Al-Houthi, Sheikh Abdul-
Malik 104, 125

Al-Mansour, His Eminence
Mohammad bin
Mohammad 88

Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abd
al-Majid 138

Hafiz, Habib Umar bin 89

Karman, Tawakul 147

ZIMBABWE

Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa 132

Note on Format

- All dates are of the Common Era (CE) unless otherwise stated. The abbreviations CE (Common Era) and AH (Anno Hegirae: years after Hijra) are used for clarity with very old dates.
- Names are presented as individuals refer to themselves, or as they are most frequently used; therefore some professors and doctors do not have the honorifics Prof. and Dr in their title. This is except in the Top 50 where are titles are included. Royalty and nobility are accorded their traditionally used honorifics.
- The honorific His Eminence (H.E.) is given to figures of religious importance, such as state-level Muftis or Muftis of high stature, and also to Ayatollahs. His Royal Eminence is used for the Sultan of Sokoto, who has a combination of spiritual and regal honours.
- Other honorifics are presented where they apply, such as Ambassador, Representative, and Lady, among others.
- The title His/Her Excellency (H.E.) is accorded to heads of state, heads of government, and senior diplomats only—as per established usage of these terms. Rarely, individuals wish to avoid such titles, in such cases, we have adhered to the individuals' preference.
- Names are presented surname-first for ease of navigating and indexing, except in cases where first names are more relevant—such as for some royalty.
- Spelling of names is, where possible, as the individuals spell their own name. In other cases we have adhered to the most common usage.
- Specific terms in languages other than English have been italicized, and described.
- Further explanations for terms are presented in a glossary at the rear of this publication.
- For ease of reading we have adhered to the more widespread and straightforward transliterations of Arabic words into English, such as: Sheikh, Hadith, and Ayatollah.

اقْرَأْ بِسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمِ

The Holy Qur'an,
Al-Alaq, 96:1-5
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