



# *The Muslim 500*

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST  
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

2017



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❁ 2017 ❁

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The *Shabadatayn*  
Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

# INTRO- DUCTION



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

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# Foreword

**W**ELCOME TO THE EIGHTH annual issue of *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*.

There are approximately 1.76 billion Muslims in the world today, making up 23.85% of the world's population, or just under one-quarter 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 exclusive articles covering a wide range of issues from Islam and modern science to the plight of the Rohingya.

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 Mus-



lim 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 Generations for Peace on p. 112, A Common Word on p. 118,

the Marrakesh Declaration on p.125, Free Islamic Calligraphy on p. 133, Altafsir.com on p. 162, and a list of the Muslim medal winners in the 2016 Rio Olympics p.177.)

Our website [[www.TheMuslim500.com](http://www.TheMuslim500.com)] is a popular destination. We welcome your feedback and will take nominations for the 2018 edition through it.



The Holy Qur'an,  
*Al-Talaq 65, 12*  
*"Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge."*  
Calligraphy by Hasan Kanan

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# Introduction

## A Regional Survey

Prof. S. Abdallah Schleifer

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SO MUCH HAS CHANGED in one year. Aleppo, now the last Syrian city under rebel control, is at risk of falling to the Syrian Army and its allied fighting forces—above all, Russian war planes bombing with devastating effect those parts of Aleppo still under rebel control. Unless the U.S. and perhaps some NATO allies, France or perhaps the U.K., intervene in some drastic way that cannot but involve a direct clash with the Russian Air Force, or unless that very threat of war, however limited between Americans and Russians, forces both powers to enforce a ceasefire, Aleppo is doomed to fall. Perhaps its fall will be the price for Russia and America to sit down despite the combative verbal exchanges by both as the bombing of Aleppo intensified, and work out a political solution for Syria that takes into consideration a role for the greatly strengthened Bashar al-Assad.

This time last year this annual Regional Survey was reporting that the Assad regime in Syria was tottering. Indeed, one year ago the rebels were gaining on all fronts, Aleppo was firmly in rebel hands, and the Syrian Army was abandoning large portions of the Sunni heartland to defensively concentrate its forces in the centre of Damascus, and in Latakia. Russian warplanes had just arrived in Syria but everyone assumed they were in Syria on a defensive mission to save the Assad regime from collapse.

The issue at that moment was who would take Damascus and the concern was that it most likely would be—after some serious in-fighting within rebel ranks—either Jabat al-Nusra or, more likely DA'ISH. This past September, the Kremlin's spokesman justified the year-old Russian intervention by reminding the world that it had saved Damascus from just such a fate.

The Russian intervention wasn't limited to an

expansive air war against the rebels that destroyed 209 oil production and transfer facilities generating millions of dollars a day of revenue in sales for DA'ISH via Turkey; it also helped Syrian government forces retake 400 villages, towns, and cities and regain control of 10,000 sq km (3,800 sq miles) of territory.

What tends to be ignored is that the Russian intervention at the request of the government of Syria—included re-training and re-arming the Syrian Army as well as the engagement as advisers of a limited number of Russian special forces and artillery units—is no doubt as legitimate, however bloody, as a number of American military interventions during the Cold War at the invitation of government forces threatened by Communist rebellions or invasions. What is so shocking is that Russia which had seemed to acquiesce in its new status of a minor power following the collapse of the Soviet Union and then NATO advancing to its very borders no longer does so.

Our minds are so conditioned by the defeat of Communism and the transformation of Russia (which today, at least on an official basis is probably the most religious country in Europe with Putin bringing flowers to the shrines of Russian Orthodox Saints and being conspicuously present at the opening ceremonies of the large new Central Mosque in Moscow) that whenever Russia acts as the global nuclear power that it is, global media and particularly American media, is shocked.

Meanwhile DA'ISH has also been rolled back in Iraq, as much by the Kurds backed by American warplanes and Shi'a militias as by the Iraqi Army which has been retrained and re-armed by American advisers after its disastrous collapse in northern Iraq in the face of DA'ISH's sweep back into Iraq in 2014.

Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq and symbol of DA'ISH victories in 2014, is slowly being surrounded by Iraqi Army and Kurdish forces and Iraq's prime minister, Haider al-Abadi predicts the

final push to take the city to begin by the end of October. But what few people are talking about is the humanitarian crisis that can be expected on the eve of its fall. As many as a million people are expected to flee the city when the Iraqi government backed by American warplanes and special forces begins to retake the city. Aid workers in northern Iraq have told *The New Yorker's* particularly perceptive reporter Dexter Filkins that “they do not have anywhere near the resources, money, or manpower to deal with the expected human tide...Ultimately much of Mosul is likely to be destroyed” (*The New Yorker*, September 23, 2016).

Dexter, reporting from the Debaga refugee camp outside of Erbil notes that this camp is one of many spread across Iraqi Kurdistan, where a million and a half refugees from other parts of Iraq and from Syria are already gathered in tents, schools, and mosques. The camp is designed to accommodate twenty-eight thousand people and now has nearly forty thousand with further desperate families fleeing the fighting turning up every day. The camp is a picture of squalor with families sleeping on the ground and children playing in an open sewer thirty feet wide. The stench is overpowering.

According to Dexter, Iraqi officials, including Abadi, have brushed off concerns about refugees

and civilian deaths, and have given blithe assurances that everything will be fine. That those fleeing Mosul will be overwhelmingly Sunni in religious identity may have something to do with Abadi's indifference. But the director of the International Rescue Committee in Erbil says “it's a nightmare, a disaster heading our way”.

Muslim and Christian holy places continued to be destroyed in areas controlled by DA'ISH. In Aleppo, once a great Syrian centre of Sufism, 90 percent of all Sufi shrines and centres have been destroyed. This process of desecration and destruction staged by various groups of Salafis, dates back to the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011 and occurred in a number of Arab and other Muslim countries. They have been noted in our section on ‘Destruction of Religious and Ancient Sites’ (pp 241 ??)

Over the past few years there have been many direct victims of Takfiri-Jihadi terrorism, mostly in the Muslim world but also in Europe and America as described in detail later in this Introduction, but there have also been indirect victims—I am referring to those European Muslims and in particular those American Muslims who have been intimidated and at times their mosques attacked as Islamophobia and hate crimes have increased over the past two years.



Syrian city of Aleppo  
GEORGE OURFALIAN / AFP

According to the Centre for the Study of Hate and Extremism at the San Bernardino campus of California State University, hate crimes against American Muslims were up by 78 percent over the course of 2015 the highest level since the reaction to the 9/11 Al-Qaeda attacks in 2001. Curiously hate crimes against all other all other minority groups in America—including blacks, Hispanics, Jews, and homosexuals of one form or another have declined, which might suggest that innate racism or prejudice in America is on the decline.

So it is obvious that those hate crimes and the Islamophobic speech that fosters hate crimes are a response to attacks staged by DA'ISH or lone wolf terrorists who publically declared their allegiance to DA'ISH in the West. That response has been stimulated by the ravings of Donald Trump in both his primary and presidential campaigns. "We're seeing these stereotypes and derogatory statements become part of the political discourse," says Brian Levin, director of the California State University centre.

And while Muslims have been among the many victims (particularly the attack in Nice, France, where perhaps a third of the victims were Muslims) the overwhelming majority of the victims in the West are clearly non-Muslims. All Americans and Europeans—a category that is overwhelmingly non-Muslim are the obvious targets of these attacks and Takfiri-Jihadi justification for such attacks date back to Osama bin Laden's infamous two-decade old fatwa calling upon Muslims to kill Christians and Jews in the West whenever and wherever possible.

To ignore this factor, as some writers do and attribute it instead to some innately Western racism, reflects an unhelpful ideological blindness to the horrendous effects of Takfiri-Jihadi terrorism in the West.

However, the brunt of Islamist extremism has been felt most in the Muslim world and the fact that Takfiri-Jihadis have killed far more Muslims than non-Muslims is not particularly well known among non-Muslims in the West.

DA'ISH has launched several murderous attacks against Turkey, particularly against Kurdish Turks whom have provided support for those Syrian Kurds living close to the Turkish border who have successfully driven DA'ISH fighters from a number of Syrian border villages. More than 200 Turks have been killed in these suicide bomber attacks and nearly 600 wounded. DA'ISH has also targeted

Turkey because the government in Ankara has seriously curtailed DA'ISH's previous ability to secure supplies in Turkey, and use Turkey as a route for foreign volunteers to make their way into DA'ISH controlled territory in Syria. Turkish war planes have also attacked DA'ISH's forces operating in Syria as part of the international coalition.

Turkey has also suffered the trauma this past July of a faction of the Turkish Armed Forces attempting a coup against President Recep Erdogan (see bio on page 52) and his government. During the very brief and very inept attempted coup over 300 people were killed and more than 2,000 injured. Mass arrests followed with at least 6,000 people detained including at least 2,839 soldiers and 2,745 judges. Some 15,000 educational staff were suspended and the licenses of 21,000 teachers working at private institutions were revoked. Over 100,000 people have been purged from various sectors. Erdogan accused his one time ally Fethullah Gulen (see bio page 99) of organizing the coup and has demanded that the United States extradite Gulen back to Turkey. Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein (see bio on page 104) raised concerns at the scale of the crackdown, but he had no sympathy with the plotters of the attempted coup who sought to topple Erdogan's democratically elected government.

Donald Trump's successful campaign for the Republican nomination has been the most recent and major factor in the polarization of American politics; intra-party as well as inter-party polarization. One particularly relevant aspect of that polarization is found in how the respective Democratic and Republican party platforms voted at the nominating conventions that both parties held in the summer.

In past elections the official Republican and Democratic positions on Israel and the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were largely identical, thereby ensuring that perhaps the most emotional of all issues in foreign affairs would not become a partisan issue in the United States.

That changed this past summer. The Republican platform which Trump and others have described as the 'most pro-Israel of all Time' diverges from the Democratic from its counterpart sharply. The Democratic platform simply stated its opposition to the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement; the Republicans described BDS as "one of several alternative forms of warfare" being waged against Israel, and went on to reject "the false notion that Israel is an occupier." Along with other



differences the Republican platform contains no reference to the establishment of a Palestinian state while the Democratic platform urges that “Palestinians should be free to govern themselves in their own viable state, in peace and dignity.”

As one prominent pro-Israeli American activist sees it, the Republican platform backs Israeli “territorial rights in the West Bank and even goes beyond stating the obvious that Judea and Samaria are properly Jewish territories.” One member of the committee that drafted the platform, South Carolina State Representative Alan Clemmons in a speech to the committee declared that “the false notion that the Jewish state is an occupier is an anti-Semitic attack on Israel’s legitimacy.” The Republican platform is more aggressive in its language than the Israeli government.

The final irony is that this extreme platform position is probably not so much aimed at a few million Jewish Americans, the majority of whom support the two-state solution and the Democratic Party, but at the estimated 20 or so million predominantly Evangelical ‘Christian Zionists’ who for their own convoluted theological reasons support the most extreme elements in Israel and reportedly contribute more money to Israel than the American Jews.

Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah is ranked as the ninth most influential Muslim in the world with “his influence derived from his scholarship, piety and preaching.” This past year Sheikh bin Bayyah, sponsored by Morocco’s King Muammed VI, led some 250 renowned Muslim leaders in a three-day summit in Marrakesh entitled ‘The Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities.’ With Takfiri-Jihadis killing the followers of other religions in the name of Islam and some Salafi sheikhs stirring up Muslim villagers in the Upper Egyptian countryside to attack their Christian neighbours and burn down their churches, Sheikh bin Bayyah considered it imperative that the leading Muslim *ulema* meet and denounce that violence as well as affirm the full rights of religious minorities in the Muslim world. Rights, which according to Bin Bayyah and the other *ulema*, that go back to the original Charter of Medina drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

This was not the first time Sheikh bin Bayyah had convened a meeting of the *ulema* to deal with this issue, but the Marrakesh Declaration is the most explicit and detailed affirmation of minority rights

to be published in the contemporary Muslim world.

Some in the Muslim world have wondered why so much more attention was paid in Western media to DA’ISH’s attacks in Paris and Brussels compared to the attacks in Turkey as well as several other Muslim countries. The most obvious reason is that Western media, like any media, will always be more sensitive to disturbing events in their own countries or region than elsewhere.

But it is also significant that as American and European war planes have contributed to DA’ISH loss of territory, DA’ISH will strike out at Western targets in retaliation and also to remind the world and particularly its followers, that despite an increasing number of setbacks in Syria and Iraq, it is still very much alive and active. As it continues to lose territory and fighters, these attacks will probably accelerate, and for the time being it will retain the mantle as the most successful Takfiri-Jihadi organization in a succession of terrorist movements that stretch back nearly five decades.

This past September was the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 Al-Qaeda hijacked airliner attacks that levelled New York’s World Trade Center and smashed into the Pentagon in Washington killing nearly 3,000 people (approximately 2,100 American civilians, and almost 400 civilians from over 90 other countries). It changed the world in many ways.

It altered global perception of the danger of Takfiri-Jihadi terrorism. This was not Al-Qaeda’s first attack against America: That entry in the history of contemporary Islamist terrorism goes to Al-Qaeda’s suicide bombing of two American embassies in Africa in 1998. That operation managed to kill more Muslims than any other national or religious category and in the years that followed—in particular the most recent years of DA’ISH and Al-Qaeda operations in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Yemen, Egypt, Mali, and Afghanistan—it has consistently been the rule.

Nor was 9/11 the first Takfiri-Jihadi operation in America. The first bombing of the World Trade Center (WTC) occurred on 26 February 1993 when a van loaded up with 660 kilos (1,336 pounds) of high explosives was detonated in the underground public parking area of the WTC’s North Tower. The tremendous blast was supposed to topple the North Tower into the South Tower, bringing both down in an attempt to kill more than 10,000 people. That did not happen. All of the parking area was totally destroyed as were two other underground levels,

but the building held and since only six people were killed (more than a thousand were injured) the relatively small number of deaths tended to lessen in public consciousness what should have been grave national concern.

The mastermind of the operation—Kuwaiti-born, with a Pakistani father and a Palestinian mother, Ramzi Yousef—had trained at one of the Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. But he was one of many Arab and Asian Muslims who received terrorist training at an Al-Qaeda camp without joining Al-Qaeda. His colleagues recall him as relatively indifferent to Islamic practice but equally passionately pro-Palestinian and anti-American. Ramzi claimed the operation in the name of ‘The Liberation Army’ in a communiqué sent to New York City newspapers and then fled New York for Pakistan only a few hours after the blast. Ramzi was subsequently arrested in Pakistan and brought back to America where extensive investigations indicated there was no direct connection between Osama bin Ladin and this attack. But in the murky world of Takfiri-Jihadis there are cross-over associations, or even—as we will see when considering the origins of DA’ISH, direct lines of descent between what are generally considered and appear to be separate organizations.

A pause to consider terminology. DA’ISH the Arabic acronym for the so-called Islamic State, so one does not have to keep typing ‘so-called’ nor honour a movement committed to mass murder with a title that implies some sort of legitimacy. As for using ‘Takfiri-Jihadi’ instead of Salafi-Jihadi even though the latter is a more recognizable and theologically comprehensive word—*Takfir* is the practice of labelling a Muslim who does not follow one’s particular understanding of Islam as an apostate (for any number of reasons) and therefore worthy of death. Denounced as a doctrine by orthodox or traditional *ulema*, it has been used by terrorists to brand as apostate an individual, or head

of state, or his government, or an entire people, or the entire Muslim world save for those who accept the Takfiri’s understanding of Islam, which is invariably an extreme Salafi understanding—generally an extremely harsh rather than merciful and compassionate interpretation of Islam, the Quran, the Prophet’s sayings and doings which are for Muslims a living commentary upon the Quran. Like the radicalism of the 17th Century British militant Puritan and Regicide Oliver Cromwell, the Salafi tend to be deeply suspicious of beauty, the spiritual path of the Sufis, the reality of Sainthood, and the *baraka* (spiritual grace) that surrounds them, be they alive or dead.

To the degree that Salafi sheikhs preach obedience to the Muslim ruler and do not *takfir* their fellow Muslims they remain a trend, however harsh, within a broad traditional or Orthodox Islam. Not every Salafi is a Takfiri by any means, but nearly all Takfiris are Salafis. One prominent Takfiri who

was probably not a Salafi in any strict sense was Sayyid Qutb the Egyptian literary and social critic and the Muslim Brotherhood’s leading spokesman in the politically turbulent early 1950s. Qutb adopted the concept from the Indian-Pakistani Islamist Maulana Maududi and popularized the

word and the concept in Islamist circles, though it already existed as a working concept but not as a word in a ferocious 18th and early 19th century Arabian Salafi movement. Maududi had applied the term to Indian Muslims who attended and perhaps participated in Hindu festivals. Sayyid Qutb applied it to his torturers—to Nasser and his ruling circle, the State Security officers during Nasser’s rule, and presumably any Muslim who actively opposed Qutb’s vanguard—a term borrowed from Marxism—which would overthrow existing regimes and impose an Islamic state.

But back to the first attack on the World Trade Center: The operation was modestly financed by Ramzi’s uncle Muhammed Sheikh Muhammed,



People hold a banner reading “Daesh, off you go, Brussels isn’t for you!”  
THIERRY CHARLIER / AFP



A sign reading in Arabic: "Shooting range"  
Omar haj kadour / AFP

then an independent Takfiri-Jihadi. He would go on to refine an idea of Ramzi's, that would in its final form turn hijacked planes into deadly weapons in their own right capable of taking out buildings like the World Trade Center. And Muhammed Sheikh—who took this concept to Osama bin Laden—would play a major role in the conception and planning of Al-Qaeda's attack nine years later.

However Ramzi's key contact in America was the blind Jihadi sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, who preached at two mosques—one in Brooklyn, New York and one in New Jersey where his Arab-American followers were concentrated. Sheikh Umar introduced Ramzi to those of his followers singled out to become Ramzi's co-conspirators. Sheikh Omar—a graduate of Al-Azhar but considered by the Azhari faculty as a bizarre and unorthodox figure—had served as the religious guide of the Gamaat Al-Islamiya which had initially been a purely political and cultural—even mainstream Muslim student organization that rose in its earliest form at Cairo University to combat the Marxist-Left Nasserist tendency among students. They were supported by Egypt's then new President Anwar Sadat following the death of Gamal Abdul Nasser. Sadat was opposed by the Left Nasserist tendency that had assumed that one of its own would inevitably inherit the leadership after Nasser, even though Sadat was Nasser's Vice-President.

After the 1973 War the Gamaat radicalized, which is when Sheikh Omar, as an Islamist, and an admirer of Sayyid Qutb—the Lenin of radical Islamism—rose in the leadership. In Cairo the post-1973 Muslim Brotherhood dominated the Gamaat in those earliest years, but outside of Cairo and

particularly in the more radical Upper Egyptian universities, individuals secretly affiliated with the underground Al-Jihad group often assumed leadership. By 1980 Sheikh Omar had become the leader of the Gamaat and briefly led the group into an alliance with Al-Jihad, one of whose leaders was Ayman Al-Zawahiri, now the leader of Al-Qaeda.

Although the alliance did not last, Sheikh Omar did provide Al-Jihad with a *fatwa* that would justify the assassination of Anwar

Sadat which they carried out on 6 October 1981. Both Zawahiri and Sheikh Omar were arrested after the assassination and both got off quite lightly. The assassination was not carried out by Zawahiri's own Al-Jihad cell and he claimed that he did not even know of the plan to assassinate Sadat until a few hours before the attack. He kept his cell away from participating in any operation in what was supposed to be an armed Islamist uprising immediately following the assassination. As for Sheikh Omar he argued in court that his *fatwa*—which stated that a heretical leader of a Muslim country could be killed—did not mention Sadat by name or allude to him.

Although Sheikh Omar was on a State Department terrorist list, he managed to secure a visa to America sometime after his release from prison and ended up at the Brooklyn and New Jersey mosques where he openly preached a Takfiri-Jihadi understanding of Islam. When tried in America after the first World Trade Center attack carried out by his followers, he was identified as the mastermind of a new plan to attack the United Nation's headquarters in New York, as well as other landmarks in the city and the tunnels that link the city's different boroughs together.

It is significant that early on Osama bin Laden called upon the US government to release Sheikh Omar. Years later, reflecting the hardening of attitude Zawahiri, who had become Bin Laden's deputy and later the leader of Al-Qaeda, would call upon Egyptians to kidnap Americans and ransom them off in exchange for the release of Sheikh Omar. And not to imply that Egypt's former President and now prisoner Muhammed Morsi, a high ranking figure in the Muslim Brotherhood is a Takfiri-

Jihadi, nevertheless it is also significant that Morsi upon assuming the Presidency also called upon America to release 'the Blind Sheikh' in what one scholar suggested was intended as a gesture to his right flank—more militant members of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as his Salafi allies. Whatever, Sheikh Omar is considered by many Jihadis and scholars as 'the spiritual guide of 9/11'.

Zawahiri had already served on two occasions as a short-term volunteer doctor for the Pakistani Red Crescent treating the Mujahidin wounded, during two visits to Pakistan following the Soviet invasion of neighbouring Afghanistan. At the same time, Bin Laden was fund-raising in Saudi Arabia for the Mujahidin and shuttling back and forth on weekends from Jeddah to Peshawar, the Pakistani city close to Afghanistan, and where young Arabs arriving in Peshawar to join the Jihad against the Communist regime in Afghanistan supported by Soviet troops would be hosted by Bin Laden. It was in either city that Zawahiri met Bin Laden and would eventually lead what remained of Al-Jihad into Al-Qaeda.

The spiritual hardening and radicalization of these men—Zawahiri, Bin Laden, and Sheikh Omar—and their respective organizations, whose paths would cross is a complex story; not to mention how Bin Laden shifted his vision of Al-Qaeda as a mobile army of Jihad confronting enemy forces like the Soviet soldiers (whom he barely fought) to a relatively small tight knit group of terrorists out to kill non-combatant Christians and Jews in the West. It is brilliantly reported on in Lawrence Wright's Pulitzer Prize winning book *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*.

It is also significant that while Bin Laden, operating comfortably in Taliban dominated Afghanistan in the immediate pre 9/11 period, did not establish a state but instead went through the motions of swearing allegiance to the Taliban leader Mullah Umar. Al-Qaeda nevertheless had an obvious territorial presence resembling a state within a state and thus were closest at that moment to DA'ISH and its territorial conquests, had the highest rate of volunteers flocking to its banner as is proving to be the case with DA'ISH—though as its Syrian and Iraqi territory shrinks, the number of foreign volunteers flocking to its banner has been declining.

To the above list of leading Takfiri or Salafi-Jihadi luminaries we must now add the name of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi.

He was in spirit the founder of DA'ISH, and set what is now perceived of as DA'ISH'S style of video-taped beheadings, attacks upon the Iraqi Shi'a and their mosques, gangland mass executions of Shi'a prisoners of war, the advocacy of an extreme Salafism, and the dispatch of terrorists from Syria and Iraq with deadly results in Amman, Casablanca, and Istanbul—just as DA'ISH has done in Paris, Brussels, and Istanbul—while leading a brutal, well-armed, uniformed fighting force on the ground in Iraq. He is the mutually uncomfortable short-lived link between Al-Qaeda and what would emerge as DA'ISH (more about Zarqawi later).

From the perspective of Al-Qaeda the most significant result of 9/11, which followed upon their rapid defeat as an elite fighting-force for the Taliban by American and allied anti-Taliban Afghan forces invading Afghanistan, was the decision by US President George W. Bush to go on and invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein and his Baathist regime. However irrelevant to tracking down Bin Laden and whatever then remained of Al-Qaeda, the invasion was strongly advocated by the very pro-Israeli as well as influential neo-conservative circles around George Bush's Vice President, his Secretary of Defense and neo-conservative publications in Washington and New York. Not just to invade Iraq, but to do so and then to occupy Iraq with something like half the number of troops with which the US armed forces (along with allied Arab armed forces) had driven Saddam's army out of Kuwait in 1991. And then to dissolve the Iraqi Army, whose humiliated Sunni ranks became the first foot soldiers and more noticeably the officers for the Iraqi Sunni Resistance. 'Sunni' because the dominant Iraqi political forces which replaced the Baath were increasingly sectarian Shi'a in nature bent on revenge upon the Arab Sunnis for what they considered to be many decades of Arab Sunni domination.

There were no Jihadis in Iraq prior to the American invasion. Zarqawi briefly maintained a small, irrelevant camp in the Kurdish controlled mountains of northern Iraq—but this was ungoverned guerrilla turf which was nevertheless part of US protected Iraqi Kurdistan since 1991 and thus untouchable by Saddam. But after the American invasion, Takfiri-Jihadis flooded into Iraq from neighbouring states.

They were welcomed as dedicated and, in some cases, seasoned fighters by the Sunni tribes in revolt against the American occupation and the new re-



gime in Baghdad. This was particularly the case with Zarqawi, who like many of the European Muslim youths to be recruited by DA'ISH a decade later, was a marginalized figure before flourishing first as a mujahid in Afghanistan where he acquired his particularly brutal version of Salafism.

A Jordanian high school drop-out, gang member, heavy drinker, bootlegger, and petty criminal—then after a brief turn in prison—Zarqawi became a reborn Muslim, but not yet the extreme Salafi that he soon would be. Leaving for Afghanistan to fight the Afghan Communist government abandoned by the Soviet Union, he met—among the many foreign Islamists who had also come to fight alongside the Afghan mujahidin (many of whom, like most other Afghans, were by no means Salafi)—a fellow Jordanian, the militant Salafi preacher and writer, Sheikh Abu Muhammed al-Maqdisi, who became his mentor.

Returning to Jordan with Maqdisi, they formed an underground group and began to acquire arms with the intent of overthrowing the Hashemite Monarchy and establishing a Salafi Islamist state. Discovered by the authorities Zarqawi, Maqdisi, and a number of their followers were arrested, tried, and sent to prison. There Zarqawi emerged as a popular leader with Maqdisi as his religious adviser, recruiting Islamist and other prisoners into his group known then as Jund Al-Shems. He reportedly considered those prisoners outside his group as *kuffar*—heretics or unbelievers. Articles written largely by Maqdisi but also by Zarqawi were smuggled out of the prison and put online for the world-wide attention of Salafi readers (For considerably more and fascinating details: 'The Short Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi' by Mary Anne Weaver in the July/August 2006 issue of *The Atlantic* and available online).

In 1999 Zarqawi, Maqdisi and other members of his group were released in a general amnesty. Within months he had revived his group Jund Al-Shams and was plotting to bomb the Radisson SAS Hotel in Amman on New Year's Eve. The plot was discovered but Zarqawi had fled to Pakistan before he could be arrested. From there he crossed back into Afghanistan. By now he was just prominent enough in Takfiri-Jihadi circles to have come to the attention of Osama bin Laden and he met with him and other Al-Qaeda officials.

According to eye-witness accounts, they did not particularly get along. But after protracted discus-

sion within the Al-Qaeda leadership, Bin Laden agreed to provide Zarqawi with \$5,000 to start a training camp of his own in Herat, Afghanistan near the border with Iran. After setting up the camp with only a few dozen followers, it swelled to nearly 3,000 within months, including the families of many of Zarqawi's fighters. Most of Zarqawi's lieutenants by this time were Syrians who had fought in Afghanistan, and most of these men were members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood. For that reason the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's exiled leadership, which at the time was largely based in Europe, played an extremely important role in recruiting for the Herat camp, according to Mary Anne Weaver's impressive sources.

A number of times Bin Laden called upon Zarqawi to take an oath of allegiance—to make *bayat*—to Bin Laden, but he always refused. But in October 2001 when the US began its invasion of Afghanistan with air attacks Zarqawi and his fighters joined up with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. In December following the collapse of the Taliban and accompanied by a few hundred of his fighters, Zarqawi crossed over from Herat into Iran, basing himself in part in Iran while also setting up his camp in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan. During this time he also travelled to Syria and to a Palestinian refugee camp in the south of Lebanon, where he recruited more fighters. He also expanded his network in the Sunni triangle of Iraq. The Iranians, at the time, reportedly saw they would be in a struggle with the Americans for control of Iraq after the Americans deposed Saddam. And for that phase and only that phase Zarqawi would be useful.

Three months after US forces invaded Iraq in March 2003, Zarqawi and his fighters moved into the Sunni Triangle. He was by now well known, indeed to the whole world, for when US Secretary of State Colin Power sought UN support at the Security Council shortly before the invasion, he declared that Zarqawi was the link between Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. This was but one of the many faulty pieces of 'intelligence' presented to the world by the Bush administration, but while inaccurate, it boosted Zarqawi's prestige.

Within weeks after returning to Iraq, Zarqawi launched his infamous attacks—first a car-bomb attack upon the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad, and less than two weeks later the monstrous attack on UN headquarters in Iraq, killing 22 people, including the UN secretary general's Special Iraqi Envoy

Aergo Viera de Mella. By now Zarqawi had renamed his group Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad—Monotheistic Unity and Jihad—with its trademark black banner, which more than a decade later was flown more conspicuously than ever by DA'ISH. Indeed it is the repeated image of truck loads of DA'ISH fighters waving black banners and chanting Takfiri-Jihadi hymns that have had such a powerful impact upon the foreign youth watching this basic scene repeated with slight variations in DA'ISH propaganda videos broadcast via the Internet.

In August Zarqawi staged a car bombing just outside of Shi'a Islam's most holy shrine in Najaf, killing more than 100 people, including the popular Iraqi Ayatollah Muhammed Baqr al-Hakim. By March 2004, he was bombing Shi'a shrines in Karbala and Baghdad, killing nearly 200, and car bomb attacks in the holy cities in Najaf and Karbala in December 2004. There were also suicide and more conventional bombings of civilians in Shi'a neighbourhoods, often at shrines and neighbourhood mosques and open markets, which continue to this day.

But it was in May 2004 that that Zarqawi taped the first theatrical beheading of an American civilian, Nicholas Berg, wearing the now familiar orange jump suit with five men dressed in black with their faces covered, standing behind the kneeling hostage. One of them steps forward and with a long knife cuts off Berg's head. This was the first in a series of taped beheadings of hostages. A decade later, this same scene of an American civilian in an orange jump suit with his masked killer dressed in black with face covered would become a DA'ISH video spectacular. As for his targeting of the Shi'a and their shrines, Zarqawi was not just implementing his hatred for Shi'a Muslims, whom he considered apostates, he was also trying to provoke a Shi'a- Sunni Iraqi civil war, which would lead to an increase of Sunni recruits.

For all of his activities in Iraq, Zarqawi had never abandoned his hope of overthrowing the Jordanian monarchy. In 2002, while briefly operating in Syria, he sent a gunman to Amman to kill the American diplomat Lawrence Foley. In 2004, Jordanian intelligence disrupted a Zarqawi plot to blow up the headquarters of the Jordanian intelligence services with a truck that was to be loaded with a massive amount of explosives capable of killing hundreds if not thousands of people.

Finally in October 2004, after months of nego-

tiations, Zarqawi swore his allegiance to Osama bin Laden. His organization again changed its name. In a shortened version it was now known as Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Zarqawi declared that he was now to be known as the Amir of Al-Qaeda in the land of Mesopotamia. Neither Bin Laden nor Zarqawi had changed their respectively negative first impressions, but Bin Laden needed a formal Al-Qaeda presence in Iraq, and Zarqawi as Al-Qaeda's Amir in Iraq would strengthen his support among Iraqi Sunnis.

Less than a year later, Zarqawi exercised the operational independence he had negotiated with Al-Qaeda by sending suicide bombers to Amman to take out three hotels. The most grizzly attack was at the Radisson SAS Hotel, where there was an almost bizarre demonstration of the AQI's perverse interpretation of Islam. Two members of AQI, a single man and a single woman, were married in Iraq before travelling to Amman because, according to Shari'a, a man and a woman who are not directly related to each other may not travel together—and indeed their assignment was to travel together to Amman and blow themselves up at a large wedding party composed almost entirely of Jordanian and Palestinian non-combatant civilians which included many women and children.

Zarqawi's tribe, the Al-Khalayleh took out half page ads in Jordan's three main newspapers, declared their homage to King Abdallah and to Jordan, and denounced Zarqawi and all of his actions. 'We sever links with him until doomsday'.

A similar drama would be played out ten years later when DA'ISH burnt to death a captured Jordanian pilot, and when none other than the Salafi-Jihadi sheikh and former mentor and comrade of Zarqawi, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi denounced DA'ISH quoting the Prophet that 'No one punishes with fire save the Lord of the fire'. Maqdisi had already broken with Zarqawi at the time of the suicide bombings at the three hotels in Amman.



Recapturing Sharqat from DA'ISH  
AHMAD AL-RUBAYE / AFP

A little more than six months later, Zarqawi was killed when a US Air Force jet dropped two 230 kilo (500 pounds) bombs on an isolated safe house in Iraq.

Meanwhile the man the world now knows as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, Zarqawi's eventual successor as commander first of AQI and then of DA'ISH but who reverted to his birth-name when he introduced himself in Mosul's Central mosque as the Caliph Ibrahim, the false living deputy of the Prophet and head of the supposedly revived Islamic State (the very vision of a 'state' absent from Arabia and most of the rest of the world at the time of the Prophet—the 7th century.

Al-Baghdadi, the False Khalifa would be hailed—after his dramatic appearance in the central mosque of Mosul—by his murderous and rapist followers—as the 'Commander of the Faithful', until then an honourable title borne by the kings of Morocco and by that 19th century epitome of the true and chivalrous Mujahid, the Algerian Abdul Qadir Al-Jazeera, Sheikh of both his tribe and the Qadari *tariqa*. Abdul Qadir never committed or ordered an atrocity during his many years of fighting the often vicious French invaders and indeed demonstrated great kindness to his French Prisoners of War. (See: *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el Kader - A Story of True Jihad* by John W. Kiser)

Born in Samara, Baghdadi's family reflected that curious mixture of religious and socio-political currents that could characterize Iraqi life until the post-Saddam Hussein period of sectarian politics introduced by the American administrators effectively ruling Iraq, leading to ethnic cleansing on both sides—of Sunnis in Shi'a majority areas and of Shi'a in predominantly Sunni neighbourhoods throughout Baghdad and other cities. Baghdadi's father was not just active in the religious life of his community, teaching at the local mosque, but was reportedly a Salafi—as were several other family members. The family claimed descent from the Prophet but the family tree that proclaimed this Sharifian status included well-known Shi'a ancestors in Samarra from a much earlier time. (The biographical data for Baghdadi is sketchy—most of what we know has been compiled for the Brookings Institution by William McCants, a fellow at Brookings Institution's Center for Middle East Policy.)

Some members of this religious family joined the ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party which might

seem peculiar given the party's militant secularism which Saddam Hussein shared and cultivated. Two of Baghdadi's uncles served in Saddam's security forces and one of his brothers became an officer in the Iraqi Army. But following the long war with Iran and the confrontation in 1990-91 with America over the invasion and occupation of Kuwait, Saddam suddenly cultivated a religious image, adding 'Al-lahu Akbar' to the Iraqi flag while posters of him in a turban at prayer soon circulated not only in Iraq but across the Muslim world. Though even well before this switch to Islamic imagery, it was pro forma that anyone holding or seeking a government job joined the Baath party.

Baghdadi had left Samarra to attend the University of Baghdad, but because of his poor high school grades he failed to qualify for the law school, so he took up Qur'anic studies there instead. He went on in 1996 to do graduate work at the recently established Saddam University for Islamic Studies—an academic monument so-to-speak to Saddam's new image as defender of Islam. It is significant that his dissertations for both the MA and the PhD were in Qur'anic Recitation, which besides being a skill he reportedly excelled in, also enabled him to avoid theological studies, where his extreme Salafi views would have put him into open conflict with more mainstream perspectives. Yet as the holder of a PhD in Islamic studies, he would acquire a misleading public authority for theology.

Baghdadi lived with his growing family in a poor neighbourhood of Baghdad near the Haji Zaydan mosque where he could pursue his two passions—playing football for the Mosque's team and teaching the recitation of Qur'an to the neighbourhood children as well as making the call to prayer from the mosque.

He also began to develop an increasingly radical political sensibility. A paternal uncle who was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood recruited Baghdadi to join. There he rapidly drifted into a radical faction among the many Salafis in the Iraqi Brotherhood who referred to themselves as Salafi-Jihadis.

In the chaos that followed the fall of Baghdad in 2003, the disbanding of the Iraqi Army and the bitterness among Sunnis who considered themselves victims—as many indeed were of a vast vindictive de-Baathification program approved by the US government but implemented by the new Shi'a rulers of Iraq—Baghdadi organized his own Salafi-Jihadi

military unit that fought against US troops and their Iraqi allies.

In February 2004 he was arrested in Fallujah while visiting a friend who was on an American wanted list of insurgents. Baghdadi, keeping as ever a low profile, was not on that list. So he was taken simply as a 'civilian detainee' not as a Jihadi. During the ten months he remained in custody at the detention centre known as Camp Bucca in southern Iraq, where he avoided giving the Americans any indication of his militant status, Baghdadi devoted himself to leading prayer, giving the *khutba* on Friday, conducting religious classes for fellow-prisoners, and playing football, where he was a star. He became a mediator between rival groups of prisoners and between the prisoners as a whole and the camp authorities, acquiring still more status.

Many of the several thousand Sunni inmates at Camp Bucca had served in Saddam's military or in his intelligence services. Baghdadi cultivated them. As McCants notes, "If they weren't jihadists when they arrived, many of them were by the time they left. Radical jihadist manifestos circulated freely under the eyes of the watchful but clueless Americans. Bucca was a factory. The prisoners dubbed the camp 'The Academy' and during his ten months in residence, Baghdadi was one of its faculty members."

A few months before Baghdadi's release, Zarqawi had—with the blessing of Bin Laden—renamed his insurgent group Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). Baghdadi made contact and was welcomed into AQI as a rare (among Salafi-Jihadis) academically trained religious scholar and was assigned as a jihadi equivalent of a commissar to ensure that AQI online propaganda conformed with the extreme Takfir-Jihadi theology that AQI professed.

Zarqawi intended to announce his plans to establish a so-called Islamic State which Bin Laden considered premature. Zarqawi's immediate successor, the Egyptian Abu Ayyub al-Masri went ahead with the plan, dissolving AQI and declaring that the former AQI militants were now fighters for DA'ISH. Al-Masri put an Iraqi, Abu Umar into the position of a figurehead Emir or leader of DA'ISH. The new leaders privately pledged their individual loyalty to Bin Laden, but officially they declared that DA'ISH was an independent movement.

Meanwhile Baghdadi was rising through the ranks. Because of his scholarly credentials he was put in charge of the group's religious affairs, but since at that time DA'ISH didn't control any territory

Baghdadi, continued in his role as a religious commissar, but now was also making sure that DA'ISH fighters implemented the extreme Salafi policies that Zarqawi had initiated, including the execution of whoever opposed their program as apostates. By now Baghdadi had also finished his dissertation and acquired his PhD which increased his prestige within the leadership, and along with the post of supervisor of the Shari'a Committee, made him the head enforcer of DA'ISH's twisted, brutal version of Shari'a law. Al-Masri also named Baghdadi to the 11-member Consultative Council, the highest body governing DA'ISH.

Then in April 2010 a US-Iraqi force learned where the two top DA'ISH leaders were hiding and Al-Masri and Abu Umar blew themselves up rather than surrender.

The head of DA'ISH's military Council, Hajji Bakr ignored Bin-Laden's instructions to send him a list of possible candidates for the leadership. As a former officer in Saddam's Army, Bakr knew it was not viable for him to assume the leadership. But he probably assumed, correctly as it were, that Baghdadi would be less loyal to Bin-Laden and his deputies who constantly complained from Zarqawi's time onwards about first AQI's and then DA'ISH's particularly brutal ways, especially towards the Shi'a. Bakr convinced the majority of the Consultative Council to vote for Baghdadi as the new emir, and proceeded to discredit or assassinate whatever opposition there was within the leading cadres of DA'ISH.

As American forces killed or captured Zarqawi's previous field commanders, their replacements were often former prisoners from Camp Bucca cultivated by Baghdadi and, like Bakr, also former officers in Saddam's military or intelligence service. As McCants and others have observed, such men would prove to be most useful in training the typical DA'ISH recruits into disciplined and capable fighters as well administering what would soon become a new emerging totalitarian state.

Baghdadi and Bakr decided that to revive the fortunes of DA'ISH and secure protection from US-Iraqi raids, like the one that had led to the death of the initial successors, they would have to seize territory and declare the Caliphate. As McCants notes by 2011—the year of the Arab Spring—the growing unrest in Syria provided them with their greatest opportunity. Initially the Syrian rebellion against the Assad regime was non-violent, but one



of Baghdadi's Syrian operatives was sent back to Syria to organize a secret branch of DA'ISH to introduce violence into the uprising and set such chaos into motion that DA'ISH would be able, as a disciplined fighting force, to start seizing land. This DA'ISH started to do, soon acquiring extensive territory in eastern Syria. The Syrian branch was named Jabat al-Nusra, which not only would in a short time split from DA'ISH but most recently changed its name—to Jabhat Fatah al-Sham.

To prevent confusion I will refer to Jabhat al-Nusra now known as Jabhat Fatah simply as Jabhat since they are one and the same organization. Jabhat means 'Front' and of course there are other rebel groups whose names begin with Jabhat, but since we are not directly concerned with them, my convenient use of the name Jabhat will not be confusing.

The split from DA'ISH and more recently the change of name go back to a tactical adjustment. In part on Jabhat's own initiative and in part from guidance it was receiving from Al-Qaeda's new leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who had replaced Bin Laden after he was killed by the US Navy Seals in May 2013, and who believed it was wiser for Jabhat to secure popular support in Syria before establishing a territorial state, by cooperating with the many other armed rebel groups fighting to oust Assad—be they secular Muslim brigades, many led by Sunni defectors from the Syrian Army, to a variety of Islamist groups that were in some cases affiliated or led by members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, but in all cases were not Salafi-Jihadis as in the DA'ISH and Jabhat sense. There are literally hundreds of these brigades, some numbering as few as fifty to one hundred fighters.

Baghdadi disagreed with Zawahiri to whom he had already pledged a private oath of allegiance. He believed as McCants so aptly put it that "there was already an Islamic State; it just needed to be made real by territorial conquest in Syria. The Jabhat's increasing cooperation with the other Sunni rebels was thwarting that plan."

Baghdadi ordered his subordinates in Jabhat to comply with his strategy. They refused. Baghdadi responded by announcing that Jabhat was part of DA'ISH and renamed DA'ISH as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The Jabhat leader responded by renouncing Baghdadi's authority and publically pledging his own direct allegiance to Zawahiri who accepted this oath and ordered Baghdadi to concern himself only with Iraq which Baghdadi refused.

So DA'ISH started to seize large parts of eastern Syria, pushing out the other rebel groups including Jabhat. Zawahiri countered by expelling DA'ISH from Al-Qaeda which he did in February 2014. In the subsequent in-fighting with Jabhat, DA'ISH not only had the upper hand but it recruited many of Jabhat's foreign fighters because, according to McCants, those fighters were more interested in establishing a territorially defined Islamic State than trying to topple Assad's regime.

With little or no attention to a thousand years of traditional Islamic jurisprudence which fleshed out the various mitigating circumstances that limited the severity of the well-publicized Shari'a punishments—by Salafi-Jihadists and many other Islamists on one-hand as well as their opposite numbers—those of the Islamophobia industry in the West. If brutality characterizes one side of this weird convergence of opinion, conscious stupidity characterizes the other.

Early in 2014, DA'ISH forces which had lined up alongside the Sunni tribes in Iraq revived the fight against the Shi'a dominated government ruling Iraq. Baghdadi sent his fighters to join up with the tribesmen and Baathist secularists and, by early 2014, were making steady gains in western Iraq. The American trained and lavishly equipped new Iraqi Army riddled by corrupt, incompetent high ranking officers chosen for their Shi'a sectarian loyalty rather than military skill collapsed as the DA'ISH offensive gathered momentum. Wherever policemen and soldiers resisted, DA'ISH rounded them up and taped their deaths in brutal mass executions. Those video tapes which made their way onto YouTube or Salafi-Jihadi websites terrified many Iraqi Army soldiers and security forces.

Units disintegrated and fled, and DA'ISH harvested a rich supply of American equipment including tanks, armoured cars, troop carriers, rocket launchers, artillery, and huge amounts of small arms and ammunition, not to mention control of some of Iraq's oil fields, as it had done in eastern Syria, providing until fairly recently extraordinary wealth. In June 2014, DA'ISH, launched a lightning attack on Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, and captured it with great ease as the demoralized and terrified (by the videos) soldiers fled before the far inferior numbers of DA'ISH fighters who stormed the city.

As for Jabhat, it had harvested a much smaller amount of American arms provided to different rebel groups of very small numbers, who were trained,

equipped, and sent into Syria. These rebel groups were quickly ambushed by Jabhat forces, who relieved them of their arms—and even accepted some defectors into their own ranks. So the US got out of recruiting, equipping, and training its own rebel units and instead has shifted to supplying favoured, existing rebel units already in the field.

The problem is that, whether the rebels have been fighting Assad's Army and the Lebanese Hizballah and Iranian Revolutionary Guards fighting alongside the Syrian Army, the best fighters in this loose and shifting rebel alliance has been the Jabhat. But the US ranks Jabhat with DA'ISH as terrorists, which they certainly were in their earliest appearance as DA'ISH's initial operation in Syria.

The US started talking with Russia about a cease fire between the Syrian Army and rebel forces in 2016. Russia's bold and dramatic intervention on the side of Assad's largely exhausted forces in 2015 shifted the balance in the fighting. Where rebel forces including the Jabhat had been steadily gaining ground as the Syrian Army abandoned much of the Sunni countryside in order to bolster and secure their stronghold in central Damascus as well as Latakia, with its high proportion of Alawites—the nominal Shi'a community that Bashar al-Assad and his long ruling late father Hafez al-Assad, are part of along with many of the senior officers in the Syrian Army and intelligence services.

But the cease fire excluded the Jabhat as well as DA'ISH. This was unsettling a number of the rebel brigades who were undertaking campaigns against both Assad's forces and DA'ISH. Jabhat units were valued as allies by many of the rebel units because of Jabhat forces superior fighting skills.

In the hope of changing that situation and to strengthen their non Salafi-Jihadi rebel allies arguing their case, the Jabhat officially broke with Al-Qaeda and symbolized that break by abandoning its original name Jabhat al-Nusra for its new name as Jabhat Fatah al-Sham. So the one remaining significant force of fighters that were part of the Al-Qaeda franchise in the Syrian-Iraqi battle fronts abandoned Al-Qaeda, which is now at its weakest situation since its post 9/11 revival in Iraq and Syria.

Over the past year and beginning with the counter-offenses in 2015, DA'ISH has lost approximately half the territory it had acquired in Iraq and Syria. As its territory has begun to shrink, DA'ISH has unleashed deadly terrorist attacks in Western Europe and Turkey. The most dramatic and highly

publicized attacks occurred in Paris and its northern suburb of St. Denis outside of the stadium in St. Denis during a football match followed by suicide bombings and shootings in Parisian cafes, restaurants, and at a concert hall during the performance of a metal rock band appropriately named Eagles of Death. The other most dramatic attack staged by DA'ISH in Europe occurred in Brussels on 12 March 2016. Two coordinated two suicide bombings at the Brussels airport and another at Maalbeek metro station killed 32 people and wounded more than 300.

But the equally if not more troubling phenomena was that of 'Lone Wolf' attacks where individuals, some with vague connections to DA'ISH, and in other cases claiming allegiance to DA'ISH without any known association or contact with them. The motives of the 'Lone Wolves' are difficult to determine. There is always a personal issue; a deep discontent, a soul consuming anger, or a record of mental illness involved. By their very nature they are untrackable since they usually have no association at all with any terrorist network.

However, DA'ISH has called upon any unknown sympathizers in Europe and America to initiate such attacks. One of the most bloody of such attacks was staged by Omar Mateen, who killed 45 people and injured more than 230 people in an attack on a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida in June 2016. During the attack Mateen declared his allegiance to DA'ISH although he had no known contact. He was killed by Orlando police. An earlier attack in December 2015 occurred in San Bernardino, California when 14 people were killed and 22 injured in a terrorist attack at a Christmas party by a married couple who were later killed by police, but not before the wife declared via the internet that they supported DA'ISH.

In the French resort of Nice a Tunisian resident in the city used a massive refrigerator truck to run down and kill 83 people and injure another 307 walking along the Promenade des Anglais in Nice when he ploughed through the crowds celebrating Bastille Day.

The rise of western ultra-right wing political parties and organizations are feeding off the tragedies in a Schadenfreude frenzy. Indeed, even mainstream politics finds traction in capitalizing on the fear of Islam, as in the United States with Donald Trump, representing the Republican Party, calling for Nazi-esque laws by which all Muslims in the country would need to register in a government database.

Trump supporters would like to go further with deportations and immigration bans of Muslims. Sadly, these ideas echo across the Atlantic throughout Europe, who are overwhelmed with a refugee crisis—largely from Muslim countries—on a scale that has never been seen in history. Although there are a number of social, economic, and political problems stemming from a variety of causes, right-wing politicians across the continent use anti-Muslim rhetoric to push agendas and rally support for their policies. Many of these are counter to the democratic basis of Europe's constitutions. Recent elections throughout Europe have all shown gains to right-wing parties—notably Austria's Freedom Party gaining over a third of the vote—and all have used Muslim migration and Islamophobia as rallying points.

As mentioned before, the true brunt of Islamic extremism has been felt in Muslim countries. In the same month as the Paris attacks, DA'ISH detonated two suicide bombs in the Beirut suburb Bourj el-Barajneh, killing forty-three people. In the same month in Egypt, DA'ISH attacked a hotel in the coastal city of Al-Arish. Two militants gained access to the hotel, killing seven people with gunfire and a suicide bomb. Two judges supervising Egypt's parliamentary elections were among the dead. Also that month in Tunis, a DA'ISH suicide bomber attacked a bus carrying Tunisian presidential guards in Tunis, killing twelve people. In September 2016, DA'ISH was responsible for a double suicide car bombing at a popular shopping mall in downtown Baghdad, killing forty people and injuring sixty people.

In Africa, DA'ISH has taken on the form of Boko Haram since its leader Abubakar Shekau (see bio on page 176) formally pledged allegiance in March 2015. Although supposedly defeated, they claimed responsibility for a double female suicide bombing which killed twenty-two people praying in the Molai-Umarari mosque on the outskirts of Mai-

duguri, the birthplace of the armed wing of Boko Haram. One of the women disguised herself as a man to gain access, detonating her bomb during prayers. The second detonated her bomb outside as people fled the mosque.

Most of the extremists' attacks in Africa were carried out by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). In Mali in November 2015, they attacked the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, taking over 170 hostages. Malian commandos raided the hotel, freeing the hostages. Twenty hostages were killed in the incident. In Burkina Faso in January 2016, AQIM attacked the Cappuccino restaurant and the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou. The extremists took 176 hostages. After a government led counter-attack, thirty people died, including former Swiss MPs Jean-Noël Rey and Georgie Lamon, and fifty-six people were injured. Three attackers were killed in the gunfight. A fourth attacker was killed after fleeing to the nearby YIBI Hotel. And in Ivory Coast in March 2016, AQIM attacked the Étoile du Sud beach resort in Grand-Bassam, killing eighteen people and injuring thirty-three people. The extremists were killed by police forces after reaching La Paillote Hotel.

While Africa suffers under the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, South Asia suffers under the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In Pakistan in October 2015, they killed seven people and injured thirteen in a bomb targeting the political office of Pakistan Muslim League MNA Sardar Amjad Farooq Khan Khosa, who was not present at the time. In January 2016, two TTP extremists fired upon Bacha Khan University near Charsadda, killing twenty-two people and injuring over twenty more. Over 200 students fled the campus. The two extremists were killed by security forces. In March 2016, the TTP were suspected of bombing a bus of government employees in Peshawar, killing fifteen people and injuring twenty-five people. Also that month, they killed seventy-five people and injured over 340 people in a suicide bombing at the main entrance of Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park in Lahore. The attack targeted Christians who were celebrating Easter. However, the majority of the victims were Muslim women and children. Continuing their targeting of Christians in September 2016, the TTP attacked a Christian colony near the town of Peshawar, killing one, and detonating a suicide bomb in a district court in the town of Mardan, killing eleven people and injuring forty-one people. A total of four suicide bombers



A minute of silence held for the victims of the Bastille Day attack in the city of Nice

JEAN CHRISTOPHE MAGNETEN / AFP

entered the colony, but local civilian guards and security forces responded quickly, preventing further loss of life.

On the legal side on the fight against Islamic extremism, the International Criminal Court tried Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi, leader of the *Hesbah of the Ansar Dine* and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, for the destruction of Timbuktu's 15th-century Sidi Yahya Mosque, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The trial marks the first time that the destruction of a world heritage site is classified as a war crime. On 27 September 2016, Ahmad al-Mahdi was found guilty and sentenced to nine years imprisonment. The Sidi Yahya Mosque has since been restored, and at the dedication ceremony for the reinstallation of the mosque's sacred gate, the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, stressed the importance of renovations and the community by stating: "The reinstallation of the sacred gate, a religious and cultural landmark of Timbuktu, marks a new and decisive step in Mali's reconstruction and peace building work. This—along with the reconstruction of the mausoleums of Timbuktu and the trial of those responsible for their destruction at the International Criminal Court—sends strong message to all extremists".

Also on the legal front this last year, Radovan

Karadžić was found guilty of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and sentenced to forty years imprisonment. He was found guilty of genocide for the Srebrenica massacre, which aimed to exterminate the Bosnian Muslim community. He was also convicted of persecution, extermination, deportation, ethnic cleansing, and murder in connection with his campaign to drive Bosnian Muslims and Croats out of villages claimed by Serb forces. While the guilty verdict sent a warning to those who would commit genocide in the future, many Bosnians did not feel the sentence was harsh enough with many calling for life imprisonment—or even capital punishment. Since Karadžić is seventy-one years old and must serve nineteen more years in prison, many argue that it is unlikely that he will live to finish his sentence.

Another old legal case that has received justice concerns Hissène Habré, the former leader of Chad. The Extraordinary African Chambers found Habré guilty of rape, sexual slavery, and ordering the killing of 40,000 people during his tenure as Chadian president and sentenced him to life in prison. The verdict marked the first time an African Union-backed court convicted a former African ruler for human-rights abuses and the first time that the courts of one country have prosecuted the former



Chilcott Report  
Dan Kitwood / POOL / AFP



ruler of another country for crimes against humanity. It also signalled to the world that justice does not originate from the West; that justice may come from within.

Justice may also come in admission to long past mistakes. In this case, in admitting that the Iraq War in 2003 was based on falsities. In July 2016, seven years after UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced the inquiry, *The Iraq Inquiry* was published. Sir John Chilcot published a public statement in which he stated that Saddam Hussein did not pose an urgent threat to British interests, that intelligence regarding weapons of mass destruction was presented with unwarranted certainty, that peaceful alternatives to war had not been exhausted, that the United Kingdom and United States had undermined the authority of the United Nations Security Council, that the process of identifying the legal basis was "far from satisfactory," and that a war in 2003 was unnecessary. The report is available under an Open Government Licence. The response to the report by the Americans was simply to ignore it, as John Kirby, the US State Department spokesperson, noted, "We're not going to go through it, we're not going to examine it, we're not going to try to do an analysis of it, or make a judgment of the findings one way or the other". Tony Blair took responsibility for the political decisions made at the time but stated that the report made "real and material criticisms of preparation, planning, process, and of the relationship with the United States." However, many conclude that Tony Blair was not to blame directly for the UK's participation in the Iraq War, but that he was deceitfully led into the war by politicians wanting the war. The hope is that politicians and the public that elects them will become more introspective about their policies concerning war and military actions—not in shying away from such things, but in making sure that rightful, just cause is used.

At the end of August 2016, an Islamic conference of Sunni scholars met in Grozny, Chechnya to discuss what defines a Sunni—or more specifically an *Ahla Sunnah wa Jama'a*. The Grand Mufti of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad al-Tayyeb (see bio on page 36), defined the Sunni community (*Ahla Sunnah wa Jama'a*) as those who follow Imam Abul-Hasan Al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi and the scholars of Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i jurisprudence, as well as the moderate scholars of Hanbali school. He also included the Sufis fol-

lowing in the way of Imam al-Junayd. While some criticised the conference for excluding some Muslim countries—particularly those states identifying closely to Salafi and Wahhabi thought—that fact in itself has become a point of discussion. Already within some circles of Muslims—especially in the West—there are signs of growing interest in traditional Islamic sciences, especially the *aqeedah* of Al-Ash'ari and Al-Maturidi. One might hope that this knowledge of traditional Islam will fight radicalization of Muslims more than the democratic civics and secularization courses some western countries are demanding.

As DA'ISH loses more and more of its territory—most imminently Mosul and eventually even its strong hold and de facto capital in Raqqa, Syria—both types of terrorist attacks that have plagued Europe and the United States, as well as Turkey and Indonesia are likely to increase as retaliation for its defeat on the ground in Syria and Iraq. What is incredible is how slow it has taken and the unwillingness of the Arab League of States, or the Muslim equivalent, to form a large expeditionary force of infantry, assisted by the revived New Iraqi Army, the rebels in Syria and the most effective fighters against DA'ISH—the Kurds of Iraq and the Kurds of Syria with logistical support from the West to coordinate air cover for the ground forces.

But what is most troubling of all is that the murderous ferocity of the procession of Takfiri-Jihadi groups, increases with each new formation. That is a disturbing thought as we consider the imminent demise of DA'ISH and wonder about the next manifestation.



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

 The   
HOUSE  
OF ISLAM

# I. The House of Islam

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(with the exception of President Obama's speech)

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.'<sup>1</sup>*

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*’.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

### 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:<sup>4</sup> 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

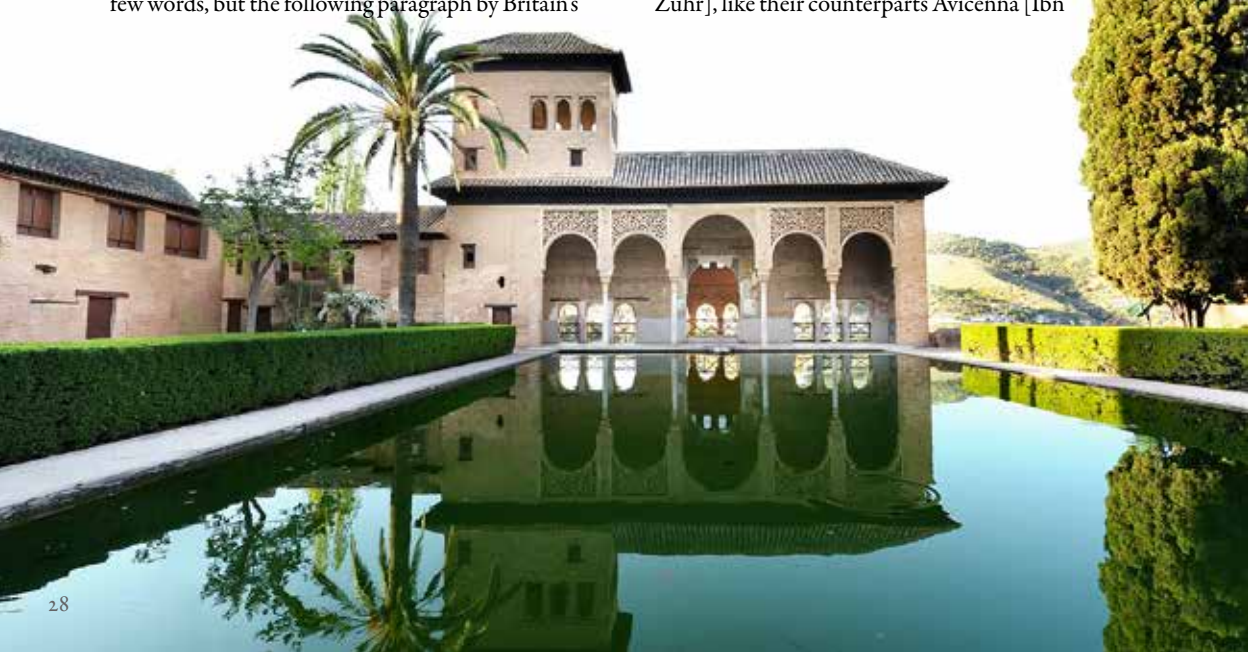
It is evidently not possible to do justice to the role of Islam in world history, thought and civilisation in a few words, but the following paragraph by Britain's



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 (it self 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.’<sup>5</sup>

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.’<sup>6</sup>

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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 Orthodoxy<sup>1</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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

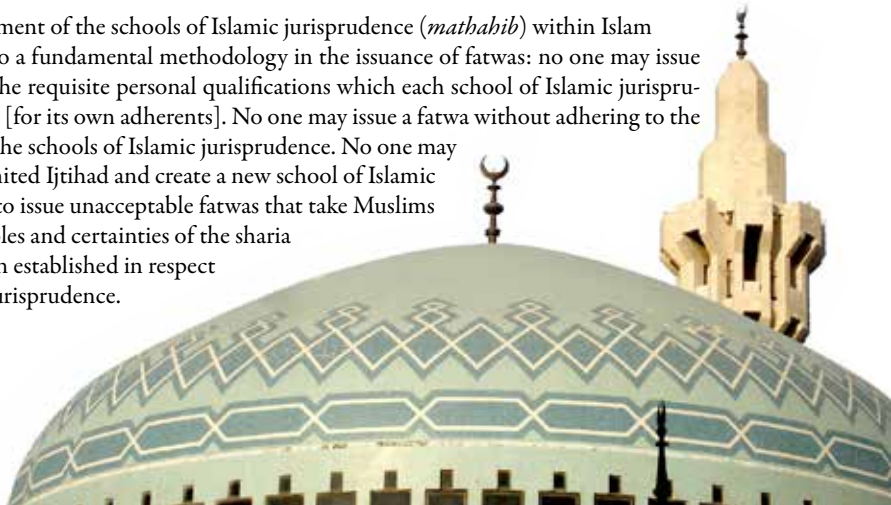
Orthodoxy in Islam is based on verse 2:285 of the Holy Qur'an, and has been best defined by the historical 2005 international Islamic consensus on the 'three points' of the Amman Message, these points being:

(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 Ibadī 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 ❧

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# The Top 50

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

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



**Country:** Egypt

**Born:** 1946 (Age 70)

**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

**2011 Rank:** 7

**2012 Rank:** 8

**2013 Rank:** 1

**2014/15 Rank:** 2

**2016 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.



*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. But even before this 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.

Tayyeb has been active in trying to diffuse the influence of DA'ISH, organizing many initiatives and conferences. He has also tried to improve foreign relations and accepted an invitation to meet Pope Francis in the Vatican in May 2016.

**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 Sheikh

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. On 29 August 2016 during the World Islamic Conference held in Grozny, Chechnya, Sheikh Tayyeb, defined the Sunni community (Ahla Sunnah wa Jama'a) as those who follow Imam Abul-Hasan al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and the scholars of Hanafi, Maliki, and Shafi'i jurisprudence, as well as the moderate scholars of Hanbali school. He also included the Sufis following in the way of Imam al-Junayd.

**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. The graduates of Al-Azhar have great respect as religious leaders within the Muslim community, and this makes the head of al-Azhar an extraordinarily powerful and influential person.



**Country:** Jordan

**Born:** 30 Jan 1962 (Age 54)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Lineage

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

<b>2011: 4</b>	<b>2012: 7</b>	<b>2013: 4</b>
<b>2014/15: 4</b>	<b>2016: 1</b>	

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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*

❧ 2 ❧

*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: 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 Shia 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 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 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 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 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 pedigree 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 Sanhour, 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 goodwill 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 43), 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](http://www.altafsir.com)). He also founded the new World Islamic Sciences and Education University in Jordan ([www.wise.edu.jo](http://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. 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](http://www.acommonword.com)). He was also the initiator and

driving force behind the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution (see [www.worldinterfaith-harmonyweek.com](http://www.worldinterfaith-harmonyweek.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 *akhira*. 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:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 31 December 1935 (Age 80)

**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

**2016 Rank:** 3

“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<sup>BIL</sup>**

King's post-coronation giveaways

**\$265<sup>MIL</sup>**

for a Yemen relief centre



© Hassan Ammar / AP

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*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.

**Key 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 remarkably smooth. 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. Another surprise was the appointment of Adel Al-Jubeir, someone who is not a member of the Saudi royal family, as Foreign Minister.

**Country:** Iran

**Born:** 17 July 1939 (Age 77)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative

**Influence:** Supreme Leader of 77.7 million Iranians

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

**2011 Rank:** 5

**2012 Rank:** 6

**2013 Rank:** 3

**2014/15 Rank:** 3

**2016 Rank:** 4

“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*

27

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

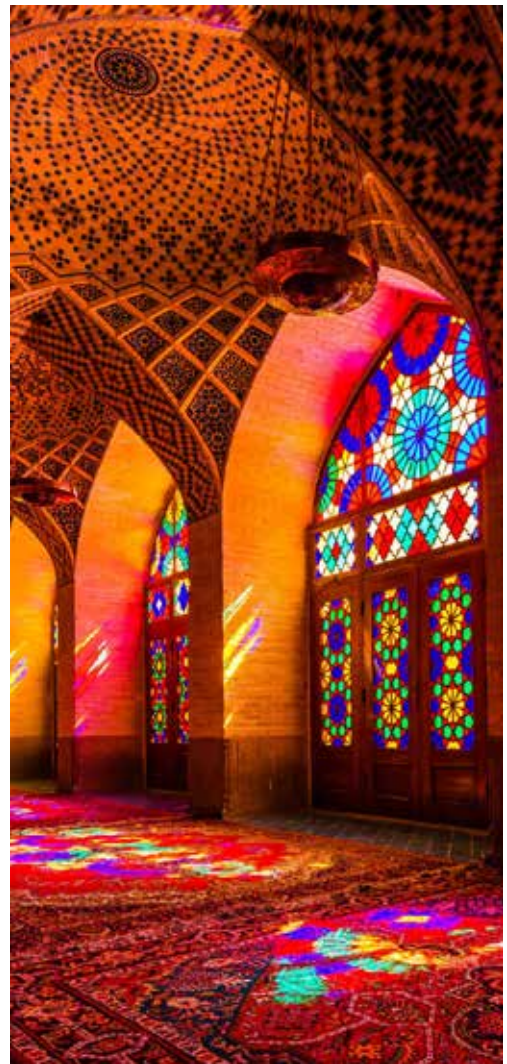
Grand Ayatollah Khamenei is the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He was born in Mashhad, and studied in the leading Iranian religious seminary in Qom, before becoming involved in the struggle with the Pahlavi Regime in the sixties and seventies. He was a key figure in the revolution in 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 a 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 53)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative, Development

**Influence:** King with authority over 32 million Moroccans

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Maliki

**2011 Rank:** 2

**2012 Rank:** 3

**2013 Rank:** 5

**2014/15 Rank:** 5

**2016 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*

# 385

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 (PBUH) 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 (PBUH). 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 Is-

lam through West Africa.

**The Marrakesh Declaration:** The King invited hundreds of the Islamic world's leading scholars to gather for a 3-day summit in Marrakesh in January 2016 to address the question of the treatment of religious minorities in Muslim-majority communities. Basing themselves on the Charter of Medina, also known as the Constitution of Medina, which was drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself, they issued calls for majority-Muslim communities to respect minorities' "freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defense." HM King Mohammed VI of Morocco delivered the inaugural address and pointed to the history of Islam's co-existence with other religions. This showed how Islam has enshrined the rights of religious minorities, and promoted religious tolerance and diversity. (see page 49)

**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 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:** Pakistan

**Born:** 5 October 1943 (age 73)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

2011 Rank: 32

2012 Rank: 32

2013 Rank: 25

2014/15 Rank: 19

2016 Rank: 22

“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<sup>TRIL</sup>**

The current worth of the global Islamic financial services market.

**10,000**

The number of students at Darul Uloom, Karachi.



❧ 6 ❧

*His Eminence Justice*  
**Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani**



# His Eminence Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani

## Deobandi Leader

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.

**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. He has authority to teach hadith from Sheikhul Hadith Moulana Zakariya Khandelawi amongst others, and he traversed the spiritual path of Tasawwuf under the guidance of Sheikh Dr. Abdul Hayy Arifi, a student of the founder of Deoband, Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi. 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 Dehlvi.

**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 Insti-

tutions (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.

**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.

**New Works:** He is directly supervising *The Hadith Encyclopedia*, a compilation which will provide a universal number to each Hadith in a manner that will make referencing any Hadith as easy as it is to refer to an Ayat of the Quran. The Encyclopedia will be over 300 volumes.

A second major work being undertaken is entitled *The Jurisprudence (Fiqh) of Trade*. The Book concludes with a proposed Code of Islamic Law of Sale of Goods and Transfer of Property, that serves as a powerful “Call to Action” for regulators and standard setting organizations alike.



**Country:** Iraq

**Born:** 4 Aug 1930 (Age 86)

**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

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

**2012 Rank:** 13      **2012 Rank:** 13

**2013 Rank:** 8

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

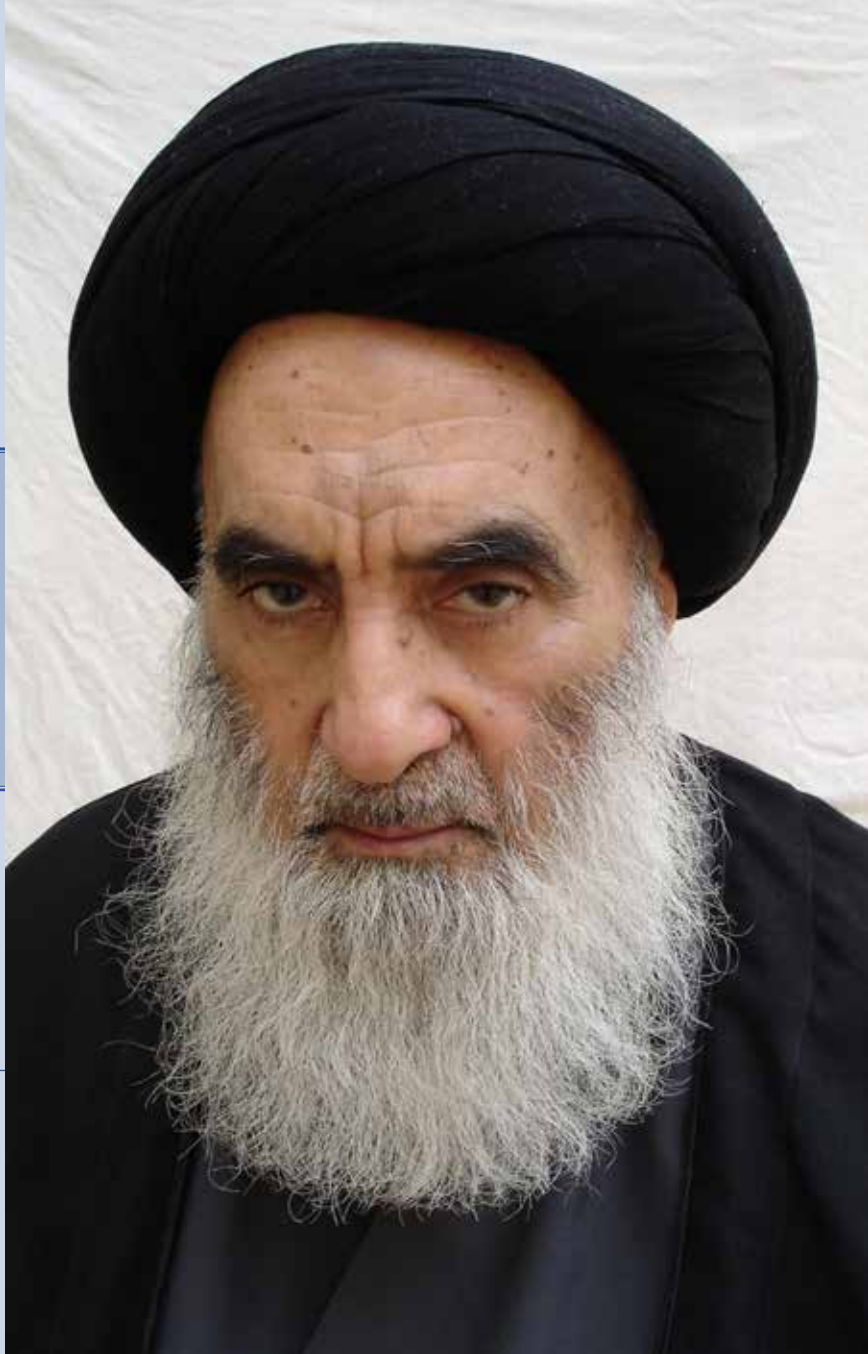
*Ayatollah Sistani*

**50,000**

The number of students that Sistani supports in Iran.

**24**

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



7

*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 common 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:** Turkey

**Born:** 26 Feb 1954 (age 62)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of 75.7 million Turkish citizens

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2011 Rank:** 3

**2012 Rank:** 2

**2013 Rank:** 6

**2014/15 Rank:** 6

**2016 Rank:** 8

“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.

**2.7 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. He has lost support from key members of his own party, and been criticized for cracking down on the media.

**Failed Coup Ramifications:** The failed coup of July 15, which led to about 200 deaths, has led to huge ramifications as Erdogan looks to root out all those involved. He has squarely laid the blame of orchestrating the coup on Gulen, and has led an all-out attack on Gulen's organisations and supporters.

There has been a major crackdown on many sectors with about 70,000 civil servants being dismissed in various state institutions, with over half from the education sector. Also, 20,000 people remain in detention with this number continually rising as authorities press ahead with regular raids.

**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.

**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. This was most recently demonstrated when Turkish tanks and special forces (backed by Turkish air power) crossed the border to push DA'ISH fighters out of the last village on the Syrian – Turkish border. It quickly became clear that the Turkish intervention was to prevent a Syrian Kurdish fighting force which was on the verge of taking the village from doing so and the Turkish air force attacked Kurdish forces approaching the village as well the DA'ISH fighters inside the village. Since then the Turkish armed forces and a Syrian Arab rebel group it has armed and trained have expanded the campaign against the Syrian Kurdish fighters.

**Challenges:** Erdogan has been forced into a number of u-turns on both national and international issues; on its relationship with Israel, on its partnership with Russia, on how to contain DA'ISH, on how to deal with the Gulen movement, and on dissent within his own AKP movement. His dealings with these issues as well as the security of Turkey in the face of terrorist attacks are the major challenges facing him now.



The Blue Mosque in Turkey

**Country:** Mauritania

**Born:** 1935 (age 81)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Maliki)

2011 Rank: 31

2012 Rank: 29

2013 Rank: 23

2014/15 Rank: 20

2016 Rank: 23

“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*

102

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.



9

*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 aqaliyyaat*.

**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'.

**The Marrakesh Declaration:** Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah led around 250 Muslim religious leaders, in addition to approximately 50 non-Muslim religious leaders, in a three day summit in Marrakesh entitled: 'The Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities: Legal Framework and a Call to Action'. The summit used the original Charter of Medina, drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself, as a basis for addressing the current crisis of religious minorities in parts of the Muslim world. With extremists committing violence in the name of Islam against other religions, as well as against most Muslims, it was necessary to voice the position of normative Islam vis-à-vis religious minorities through a gathering of its leading scholars. The summit concluded with the release of the 750 word Marrakesh Declaration (see page 57)

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





**Country:** Pakistan

**Born:** 1923 (Age 93)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Administrative

**Influence:** Leader of an international organisation.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni, Hanafi

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

**2012 Rank:** 17      **2016 Rank:** 10

**2013 Rank:** 13

“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<sup>MIL</sup>

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:** Oman

**Born:** 18 Nov 1940 (Age 76)

**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Political, Development

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Ibadi

2011 Rank: 9

2012 Rank: 12

2013 Rank: 9

2014/15 Rank: 8

2016 Rank: 6

“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*

# 366

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

# 8<sup>TH</sup>

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



# 11

*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 55)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative, Development, Philanthropy

**Influence:** Military and political leadership.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2011 Rank:** 18

**2012 Rank:** 15

**2013 Rank:** 10

**2014/15 Rank:** 9

**2016 Rank:** 7

“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<sup>MIL</sup>**

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

**\$773<sup>BIL</sup>**

Abu Dhabi is the richest city in the world.



❧ 12 ❧

*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:** Indonesia

**Born:** 21 June 1961 (age 55)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** Leader of 252 million citizens and residents of Indonesia

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2014/15 Rank:** 11

**2016 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.



# 13

*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, re-vamping 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.

# 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 57)  
**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 31.

**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 31)  
**Source of Influence:** Political  
**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

14

*His Royal Highness*

Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud



**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Born:** 1943 (Age 73)

**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

**2011 Rank:** 14

**2012 Rank:** 18

**2013 Rank:** 14

**2014/15 Rank:** 12

**2011 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, 51 years ago.



© Hassan Ammar / AP

15

*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 *Hadiith*, 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 61)

**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

2016 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.



16

*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.



**Country:** Nigeria  
**Born:** 17 December 1942 (age 74)  
**Source of Influence:** Political  
**Influence:** President of Nigeria  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2016 Rank:** 20

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

*President Muhammadu Buhari*

1.15<sup>BIL</sup>

allocated for poverty reduction programme annually.

12<sup>TH</sup>

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



17

*His Excellency*

President Muhammadu Buhari



# HE President Muhammadu Buhari

## 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:** Egypt

**Born:** 3 Mar 1953 (Age 63)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Political

**Influence:** Legal authority for 87 million Egyptian Muslims

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2011 Rank:** 12

**2012 Rank:** 14

**2013 Rank:** 12

**2014/15 Rank:** 15

**2016 Rank:** 16

“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,”

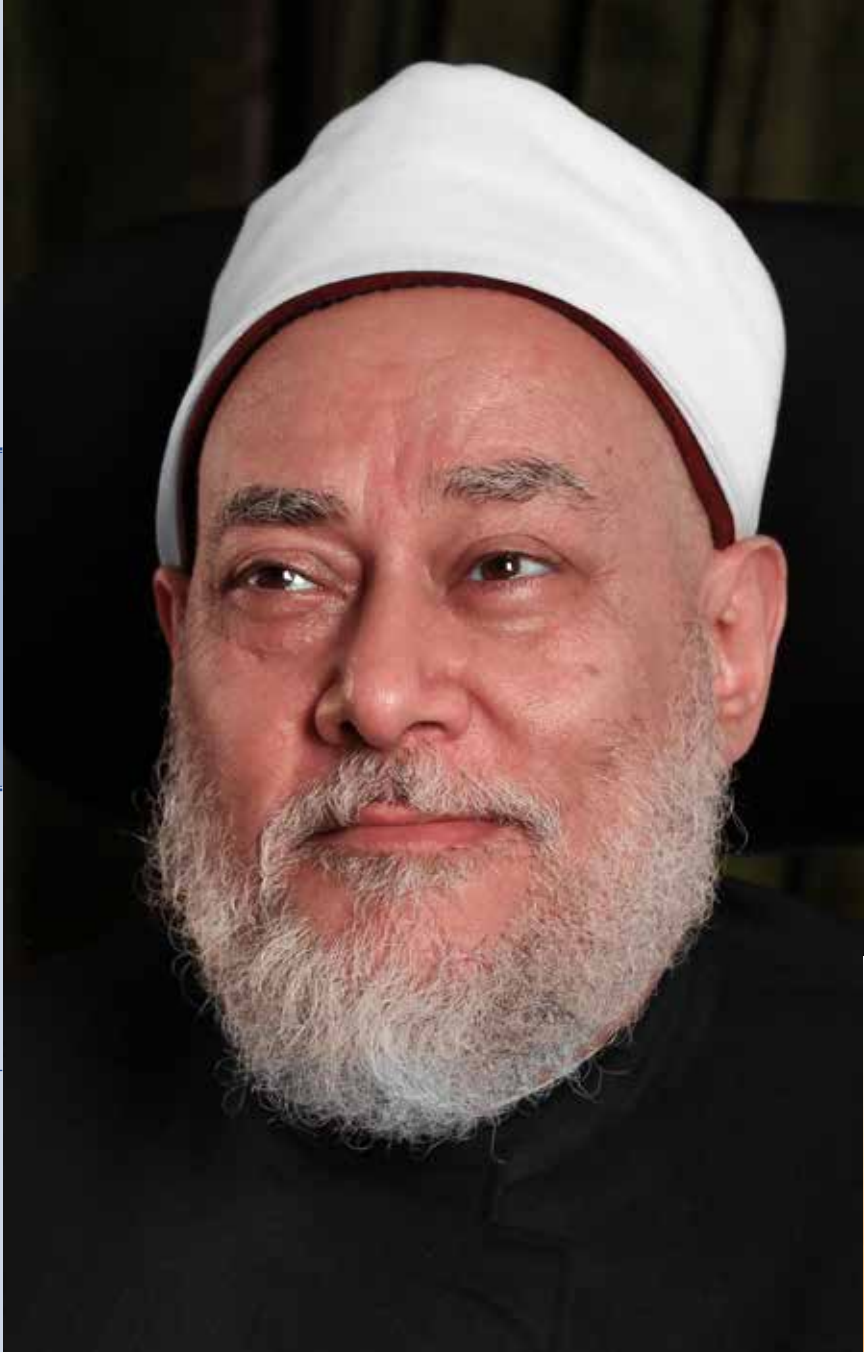
*Sh. Dr Ali Gomaa*

# 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.



# 18

*His Eminence*

Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa

# 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.

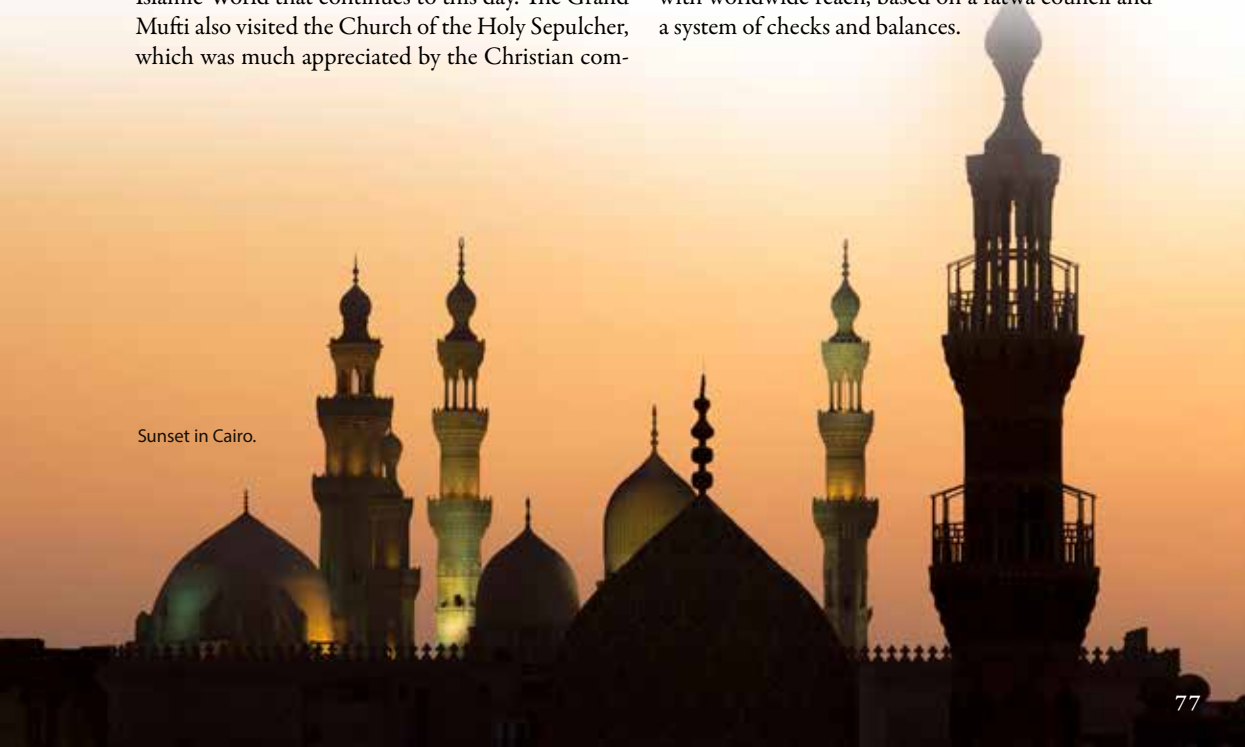
**Visit to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Controversy:** On April 18th, 2012, Sheikh Ali Goma'a, with HRH Prince Ghazi of Jordan, broke what had been a 45 year taboo in some parts of the Islamic World (propagated notably by Qatar based Sheikh Al-Qaradawi) and visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to pray there 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 com-

munity 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, as well as also making him a target for the extremists. He recently escaped an assassination attempt on his life outside a mosque in Cairo.

**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 61)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Media

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

**School of Thought:** Moderate Salafi

2011 Rank: 19

2012 Rank: 20

2013 Rank: 16

2014/15 Rank: 16

2016 Rank: 17

“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*

6.2<sup>MIL</sup>

Number of followers on his Facebook page with an additional 9.8 million followers on Twitter at the time of publication.

53

The number of his publications.



19

*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 9 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 63)

**Source of Influence:** Administrative, Political, Education

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2011 Rank:** 17

**2012 Rank:** 19

**2013 Rank:** 15

**2014/15 Rank:** 17

**2016 Rank:** 18

“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<sup>MIL</sup>

The estimated number of members in the NU.



20

*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) 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.

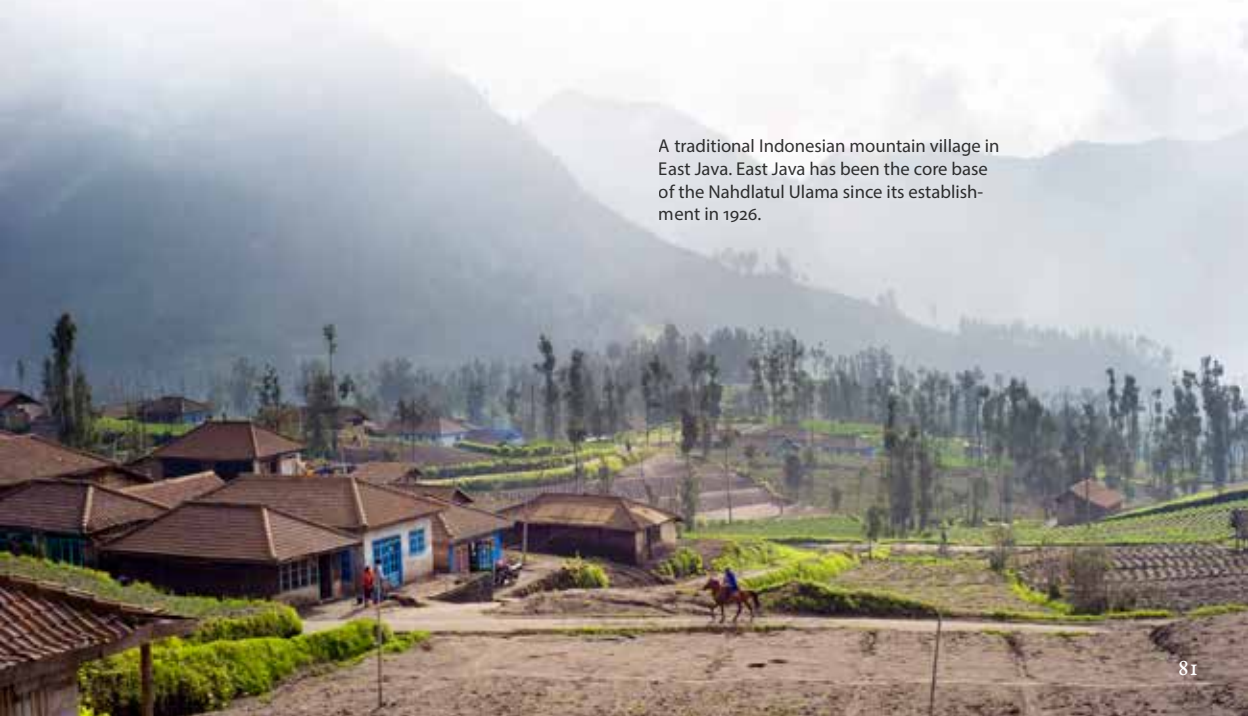
**Model of Traditionalism:** With a mainly rural membership base, the *Nahdlatul Ulama* distinguishes itself from other Islamic organizations in Indonesia by positioning itself as a premier organization of traditional Islam—with an emphasis on education and political engagement based on Islamic principles.

**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: 62)

**Source of Influence:** Political

**Influence:** President of Egypt

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

**2013 Rank:** 29

**2014/15 Rank:** 24

**2016 Rank:** 19

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

*Abdel Fattah Saeed Al-Sisi*

26<sup>MIL</sup>

The number of signatures supporting his candidacy for president

37

Number of years he served in the Egyptian army.



21

*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. 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:** 24 Aug 1956 (Age 60)

**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

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

**2012 Rank:** 22      **2016 Rank:** 24

**2013 Rank:** 18

“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

# 22

*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 85.5 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.

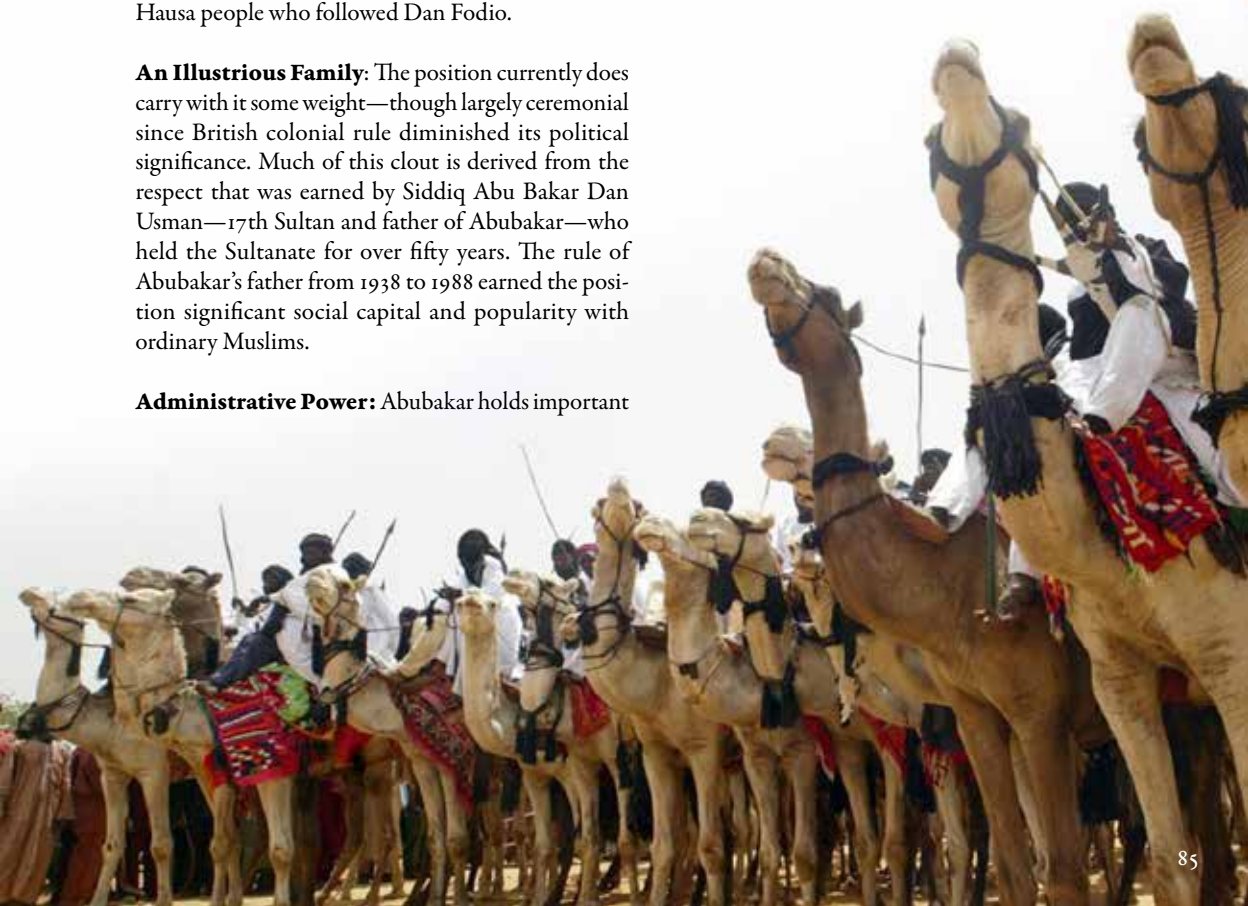
**Lineage Back to Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio:** The Sultan of Sokoto is the spiritual leader of Nigeria's enormous Muslim community. He gains this position by lineage. Abubakar is the 20th heir to the two-century-old throne founded by his ancestor, Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio. Dan Fodio (1754-1817 CE) was a scholar, 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 73)

**Source of Influence:** Political, Administrative, Lineage, Philanthropy

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

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

**2011 Rank:** 28

**2012 Rank:** 26

**2013 Rank:** 22

**2014/15 Rank:** 22

**2016 Rank:** 25

“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*.



23

*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 (PBUH) often expressing this through devotion to a holy personage (who is part of an unbroken chain reaching back to the Prophet (PBUH)), visits to tombs of saints, and use of *hamds* and *naats*. To their critics these practices represent the cardinal sins of *bida* (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.





**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** 1917 (age 99) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Source of Influence:** Lineage, Scholarly

**Influence:** Imam of 10 million Zaidi Shi'a in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

**School of Thought:** Traditional Zaidi (Fiver) Shia

2011 Rank: 30

2012 Rank: 30

2013 Rank: 24

2014/15 Rank: 24

2016 Rank: 26

Sanaa, Yemen was long the centre of Zaidism in Yemen.

“I advise you with what I advise myself: Do not ever forget Allah.”

*H.E. Mohammad Al-Mansour*

1073

The number of years that the Zaidis ruled Yemen. It came to an end in 1970.

92

The number of years he has lived since becoming blind at the age of 7.



24

*His Eminence*

Mohammad bin Mohammad Al-Mansour

# His Eminence Mohammad bin Mohammad Al-Mansour

## Imam of the Zaidi Sect of Shia Muslims

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.



**Country:** Yemen

**Born:** born 27 May 1963 (age 53)

**Source of Influence:** Scholarly, Spiritual leader and Preacher, Lineage

**Influence:** millions of traditional Muslim followers globally

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Shaf'i, Ba-Alawi Sufi)

**2011 Rank:** 37

**2012 Rank:** 36

**2013 Rank:** 28

**2014/15 Rank:** 28

**2016 Rank:** 28

“‘Sternness” with disbelievers refers to remaining firm on one’s religion, not that one is harsh or hard in one’s relations; nor that one upholds anything but excellence in dealings... Never did the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) ever frown at anyone, nor insult, nor revile anyone... even his enemies

*Habib Umar bin Hafiz*

15

At the age of 15, Bin Hafiz began to teach, while continuing to study and receive lessons. [

360

Tarim a city known for the large number of mosques



25

*Habib*

Umar bin Hafiz



# Habib Umar bin Hafiz

## Director of Dar Al Mustafa, Tarim, Yemen

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. Many of the graduates have gone on to become leading figures worldwide. 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'wah* 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.

**Ba'Alawi Tariqah:** The Ba'Alawi have been centred in the region of Hadramaut, Yemen, for over a thousand years. They have produced outstanding figures of scholarship and piety and are well known for their missionary work, particularly in Malaysia and Indonesia. The Tariqah has now spread to all parts of the world and is famous for using the *Ihya Uloom ad-din* of Imam Ghazali as a basis of their teachings.

Habib Umar bin Hafiz teaching in Dar al-Moustafa







## Her Eminence Sheikha Munira Qubeysi Leader of the Qubeysi Movement

**Country:** Syria  
**Born:** 1933 (Age 83)  
**Source of Influence:** Scholarly  
**Influence:** More than 75 thousand students in Damascus alone.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2011 Rank: 24  
 2012 Rank: 21  
 2013 Rank: 17  
 2014/15 Rank: 18  
 2016: 21



## Rached Ghannouchi Tunisian Politician

**Country:** Tunisia  
**Born:** June 1941 (age 75)  
**Influence:** Political, Scholarly.  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

2014/15: 450  
 2016: 30

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 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.

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.

**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.



His Highness Emir  
Sheikh Tamim bin  
Hamid Al-Thani  
Emir of Qatar

**Country:** Qatar  
**Born:** 3 June 1980 (age 36) in Doha, Qatar  
**Influence:** Political.  
**School of Thought:** Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

2013: 43  
2014/15: 42  
2016: 42

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 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.



Dr Amr Khaled  
Preacher and Social Activist

**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 5 Sept 1967 (Age 49)  
**Influence:** Media, Youth. Popular multimedia preacher with highly visited website and social network following.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2011: 21  
2012: 34  
2013: 38  
2014/15: 30  
2016: 31

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 over 75 million views on YouTube, and he boasts 23.1 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.



**HE President  
Mahmoud Abbas**  
President of the Palestinian National Authority

**Country:** Palestine  
**Born:** 26 March 1935 (age 81) in Galilee, Palestine.  
**Influence:** Political. One of the founders of Fatah, and leading peace negotiator in the Palestine-Israel conflict.  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

2011: 36  
2012: 35  
2013: 30  
2014/15: 29  
2016: 29



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

**Country:** Qatar  
**Born:** 9 Sept 1926 (Age 90)  
**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

2011: 13  
2012: 16  
2013: 31  
2014/15: 31  
2016: 32

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.

**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 11th 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.

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

**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 Asad 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 46) 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

2011: 34  
2012: 37  
2013: 32  
2014/15: 32  
2016: 33

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 14 million views and a very popular website ([www.queenrania.jo](http://www.queenrania.jo)). She also has 5.3 million followers on Twitter and nearly 10 million likes on Facebook.



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

**Country:** USA

**Born:** 1 January 1960 (age 56)

**Influence:** Scholarly. Leading Islamic voice for English speaking Muslims

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

2011: 43  
2012: 42  
2013: 41  
2014/15: 35  
2016: 36

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.





**Sheikh Moez Masoud**  
Preacher and Televangelist

**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 4 July 1978 (age 38) in Cairo, Egypt  
**Influence:** Preacher.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2011: 450  
2012: HM  
2013: 37  
2014/15: 33  
2016: 34

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 Youtube videos (over 10 million views), Facebook (8 million likes) and Twitter (3 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 56)  
**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

2011: 23  
2012: 28  
2013: 27  
2014/15: 34  
2016: 35

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.



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

**Country:** UAE

**Born:** 16 April 1971 (age 45)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Lineage, Philanthropy. Reaches millions with his global teaching endeavors.

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

2011: 42  
2012: 41  
2013: 34  
2014/15: 38  
2016: 39

Tracing his lineage to the family of 'Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam and cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, 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 79)

**Influence:** Lineage, Administrative. Leader of 5–15 million Nizari Ismailis

**School of Thought:** Modernist Shia, Ismaili, Nizari

2011: 22  
2012: 31  
2013: 35  
2014/15: 39  
2016: 40

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.



His Eminence Sheikh  
Ibrahim Salih  
The Grand Mufti of Nigeria

**Country:** Nigeria  
**Born:** 1 January 1946 (Age: 70)  
**Influence:** Scholarly.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2014/15: 37  
2016: 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.



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

**Country:** India  
**Born:** 3 March 1964 (age 52)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Political, Administrative. 10 million members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind.  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

2011: 41  
2012: 40  
2013: 44  
2014/15: 43  
2016: 43

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 madrasa system.



Professor Dr Seyyed  
Hossein Nasr  
Philosopher and  
University Professor

**Country:** USA

**Born:** 7 April 1933 (age 83)

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

**School of Thought:** Traditional Shi'a

2011: 47  
2012: 44  
2013: 39  
2014/15: 36  
2016: 37

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.



Professor Dr M  
Din Syamsuddin  
Former Chairman of  
Muhammadiyah, Indonesia

**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 31 Aug 1958 (age 58)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Administrative, Development. Over 35 million members in the Muhammadiyah organization, including thousands of umbrella institutes.

**School of Thought:** Modernist Sunni

2011: 40  
2012: 39  
2013: 33  
2014/15: 27  
2016: 44

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.





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

**Country:** UAE  
**Born:** 12 July 1949 (age 67)  
**Influence:** Political, philanthropy  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

2011: HM  
2012: HM  
2013: 48  
2014/15: 46  
2016: 46

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-  
Sayyid Al-Azhari  
Scholar

**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 16 July 1976 (age 40)  
**Influence:** Scholarly  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2012: 450  
2013: HM  
2014/15: 47  
2016: 47

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-Atraki 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.



## Khaled Mashal

### Leader of Hamas

**Country:** Palestine

**Born:** 1956 (age 60)

**Influence:** Political. Leader of approximately 1,000 members in military wing of Hamas.

**School of Thought:** Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood

2011: 39  
2012: 48  
2013: 50  
2014/15: 40  
2016: 41

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.



## Habib Luthfi bin Yahya

### Preacher

**Country:** Indonesia

**Born:** 10 November 1947 (age 69)

**Influence:** Scholarly, Spiritual Guide

**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2014/15: 248  
2016: 48

Habib bin Luthfi is currently: Ra'is 'Amm of the Jam'iyah Ahli Thariqah al-Mu'tabarah 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 (PBUH) 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 (ijaaza) 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 zawiyahs in Indonesia, and has a following numbering millions. He emphasises spiritual practices, especially the recitation of litanies (awraad).



**Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi**  
**Leader of the Houthi**  
**Movement**  
**Country:** Yemen  
**Born:** 22 May 1979 (age 37)  
**Influence:** Political  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Shia

2016: HM



**Shaykh Mustafa Hosny**  
**Preacher**  
**Country:** Egypt  
**Born:** 8 August 1978 (age 38)  
**Influence:** Preacher  
**School of Thought:** Traditional Sunni

2016: HM

Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi Leader of the Houthi Movement 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'a 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 U, whom they call an Imam.

**Leader:** Abdul-Malik has made major changes in Yemen through tactical and strategic plans that have enabled him to reach the position where he is today. In 2007, he founded the Al-Minbar website and in March 23, 2012 he launched Al-Masirah TV channel.

**Taking Yemen:** Abdel Malik emerged as a leader after the February 2011 uprising. The Houthi authority seized control over Saada and Jawf provinces in March 2011. Then in 2014, the Houthis seized control over the Demag region in the Saada and Amran provinces and in September 2014 they stormed the capital Sana'a, seizing a large number of ministries and military facilities. He has driven Al-Qaeda out of the regions which the Houthis have taken.

**Humanitarian Toll:** Since 2015, they have been subject to aerial bombing by a Saudi led coalition of nine Arab states. This bombing of one of the world's poorest countries has led to 4,000 civilian deaths and a humanitarian crisis where over half the adult population are suffering from malnutrition.

Traditional Sunni Mustafa Hosny is a well known televangelist and Islamic preacher who presented his first show back in 2004.

**Changing careers:** Mustafa Hosny started his career in sales after obtaining a BA degree in Business from the Ain Shams University in Egypt. His career witnessed a great transformation when he successfully received a Certification from the Institute of training preachers, an affiliate of the Ministry of Awqaf (Egypt).

**Preacher:** Mustafa Honsy delivers sermons and lectures worldwide and currently presents more than 13 programs on TV and radio channels. He also delivers weekly sermons and lectures at Yousef El Sahaby and El Hosary mosques as well as delivering the Friday sermons at Al Bilal Mosque compound in Mokattam twice a month in Cairo.

**Humanitarian:** Some of his activities include combating drug addiction amongst youth. He is a supporting member for the Children's Cancer Hospital campaign in Cairo, and delivers seminars and campaigns for the "Life Clear of Smoking Association" in Egypt. He also supports blood donation campaigns.

**Social Media:** He has nearly 26 million fans on Facebook in addition to over 3 million on Twitter. He has a great following on social media where the combined followers and likes are over 34 million. His daily advice, closeness to the public and softly spoken words endear him to the public and account for his continued influence.



**Hodjaefendi  
Fethullah Gülen**  
Turkish Muslim Leader

**Country:** Turkey  
**Born:** 27 April 1941 (age 75)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Preacher  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

2011: 15  
2012: 10  
2013: 11  
2014/15: 14  
2016: 15



**Shaykh Mahmud Effendi**  
Turkish Scholar  
and Preacher

**Country:** Turkey  
**Born:** 1929 (age 87)  
**Influence:** Scholarly, Preacher  
**School of Thought:** Sunni

2016: HM

Fethullah Gülen is a preacher, thinker and educator, who assumed the leadership of the Nurcu religious movement—started by Said Nursi (1878–1960 CE). His popularity and authority in Turkey have been the driving force that brought about the social and, eventually, political changes which helped empower 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.

**Failed Coup Ramifications:** Gülen has been accused of orchestrating the attempted coup of 15 July 2016, and his organisations and supporters have borne the brunt of Erdogan's crackdown. Many of his followers and supporters in state institutions such as the police, judiciary and education have been targeted and removed from their posts (most estimates give the number at around 70,000). Turkey has formally asked the USA to extradite Gülen.

**Signs of Problems:** Two years ago, corruption allegations by Gülen against then Prime Minister Erdogan and his inner circle created a great rift between these former allies. Gülen was blamed for running a 'parallel state' and hundreds of his followers in the police and judiciary were removed amidst allegations of phone bugging and illegal audio recordings.

**Areas of Influence Included:** Interfaith centres in Europe and the US; charities, hospitals, and banks; around 300 schools in Turkey and hundreds more worldwide (including the largest network of Charter Schools in the USA); a TV and radio station, and daily newspapers.

Sheikh Mahmud Ustaosmanoglu, also known as Sheikh Mahmud Effendi, is one of the most popular Islamic teachers in Turkey today. He emphasizes the Sunnah and is well-known for having revived many of the Sunnah practices.

**Life:** Sheikh Effendi became a Hafiz (one who has memorized the Qur'an) at the tender age of 6. He then started studying Arabic and Persian at first, and then went on to study the Islamic Sciences. Sheikh Effendi was appointed imam of the Ismail Agha mosque in Istanbul in 1954, where he remained until he retired in 1996. He devoted three weeks per-year to teach people across Turkey and made several missionary and educational tours in several countries, including Germany and the United States.

**Students:** 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.





**Dr Aref Ali Nayed**  
Scholar and Libyan  
Ambassador to the UAE

**Country:** Libya

**Born:** 1962 (age 54), in Libya

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

**School of Thought:** Sunni

2011: 50

2012: 49

2013: 240

2014/15: 50

2016: 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.

## Summary of Top 50 New Ins

**46. Shaykh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi (new)**  
Leader of the Houthi Movement

**47. Shaykh Mustafa Hosny (new)**  
Egyptian Televangelist and Islamic Preacher

**49. Shaykh Mahmud Effendi (new)**  
Turkish Muslim Spiritual Leader

✧ Honourable ✧  
MENTIONS



**HE Grand Ayatollah  
Abdullah Jawadi Amoli**  
Scholarly

Country: Iran  
Born: 1933 (age 83)

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 Grand  
Ayatollah Mohammad  
Ishaq Fayadh**  
Scholarly

Country: Iraq  
Born: 1930 (age 86)

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 Shi'a population of South Asia.



**Sheikh Mohammed  
Ali Al-Sabouni**  
Scholarly

Country: Syria  
Born: 1 January 1930 (age 86)

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.



**Sheikh Muhammad  
Al-Yaqoubi**  
Scholarly

Country: Syria  
Born: 7 May 1963 (age 53)

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, denouncing its atrocities and showing that its actions are unIslamic. 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. As a teacher, he has trained several hundred Imams and teachers who work in the Arab World, the West, in the Far East and South Africa. As a spiritual guide he focuses on the spiritual well-being of Muslims and gives personal spiritual instruction to his disciples, of which he has a significant following in the UK and USA. 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 via his public talks, writings and numerous media appearances worldwide.



## Ambassador Ahmed Scholarly

Country: Pakistan  
Born: 15 January 1943 (age 73)

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.



## Professor Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad) Scholarly

Country: United Kingdom  
Born: 1960 (age 56)

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.



## Dr Ingrid Mattson Scholarly

Country: Canada  
Born: 24 August 1963 (age 53)

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.



## HE Masoud Barzani Political

Country: Iraq  
Born: 16 August 1946 (age 70)

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 Kurdish state. There are approximately five million Kurds living within the Kurdish region in Iraq, and they also make up roughly 10% of the populations of Iran and Syria, and 18% of Turkey.





## HRH Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad Al-Hussein

Political

Country: Jordan

Born: 26 January 1964 (age 52)

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 87)

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.



## Ismail Haniyah

Political

Country: Palestinian Territories

Born: 29 January 1963 (age 53)

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 latest bombardment of Gaza strengthened the popularity of Hamas, and especially Haniyah. Despite having his house blown up, he was still seen regularly leading prayers throughout the bombardment.



## HE Anwar Ibrahim

Political

Country: Malaysia

Born: 10 August 1947 (age 69)

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 in 2004, he was freed from jail and took up academic and other positions in the UK and USA. Once the term of his political ban had expired in 2008, he returned to Malaysia and was voted back into parliament. He was then charged with sodomy for a second time, but acquitted by the high court in 2012. In the 2013 elections, Anwar was re-elected to parliament and his coalition won 89 seats, losing to Najib Raza's BN party, which won 133 seats. 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 with 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.



**Mohamed Bechari**  
Political

Country: France  
Born: 17 December 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.



**HE Sadiq Khan**  
Political

Country: United Kingdom  
Born: 8 October 1970 (age 46)

Sadiq Khan, the son of a London bus driver, was elected the Mayor of London in May 2016, with a huge personal mandate. His journey to arguably one of the highest posts in the UK included being a human rights solicitor, chair of the human rights group Liberty, councillor for Wandsworth, and then MP for Tooting from 2005-2016. He is a member of the Labour Party and served as Minister in two posts in Gordon Brown's government as well as serving in Ed Miliband's shadow cabinet in more senior ministerial posts. Much has been made of his British Pakistani ethnicity as well as him being Muslim, but he has stressed that those parts of his identity merely strengthen his willingness to serve all parts of society. He has worked to build cohesion among London's diverse communities.



**Iyad Madani**  
Administration of  
Religious Affairs

Country: Saudi Arabia  
Born: 2 March 1946 (age 70)

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.



**Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi**  
Preachers and  
Spiritual Guides

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 16 July 1970 (age 46)

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 25 million followers on Facebook and almost 16 million on Twitter.



**Maulana Tariq Jameel**  
Preachers and  
Spiritual Guides

Country: Pakistan

Born: 1 January 1953 (age 63)

Tariq Jameel is a prominent Islamic scholar who is also one of the most popular preachers in Pakistan. He belongs to the Tablighi Jamaat group and his lectures focus on the subject of self-purification, avoidance of violence, observance of Allah's orders and to pursue the way of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He has been very effective in influencing all types of the community ranging from businessmen and landlords to ministers and sports 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 38)

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 two million likes on Facebook, 226,000 Twitter followers and over 21million YouTube video views for his Bayyinah Institute, Nouman is one of the most influential young western scholars.



## Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Sudais

### Qur'an Recitor

Country: Saudi Arabia  
Born: 10 February 1960 (age 56)

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. Additional Information: In 2005, he was named by the Dubai International Holy Quran Award (DIHQAA) Organising Committee as its 9th annual "Islamic Personality Of the Year" in recognition of his devotion to the Quran and Islam.



## Uthman Taha

### Arts and Culture

Country: Syria  
Born: 1934 (age 82)

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: 19 July 1980 (age 36)

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. He is also known for his extensive involvement in global charitable initiatives. His songs appeal to all age groups, ethnicities and beliefs across the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and North America, thus rightfully earning him the title of 'Islam's Biggest Rockstar'. He has about 8 million followers on Facebook.



## Mohamed Farah

### Sports

Country: United Kingdom  
Born: 23 March 1983 (age 33)

Winning the gold in the 5000m and 10,000m at the 2012 Olympic games in London and the 2016 games in Rio, Mohamed 'Mo' Farah is the only British athlete to have won four Olympic gold medals on the track. Born in Somalia but raised in the UK from the age of 7, Mo has captured the hearts of the British public with his hard work, success, smile and warm personality. He is a popular role model to follow for people from all over the world, especially in the Muslim world. He was awarded a CBE in 2013. His winning celebration, the 'mobot' is mimicked internationally.





The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-Talaq* 65:12

*"Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge."*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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**generationsforpeace**

## 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 ❧

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# THE LISTS

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- 1. Scholarly** page 115  
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 126  
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 134  
These agents of change are responsible for founding and/or directing institutions that influence the religious affairs of Muslims.
- 4. Preachers & Spiritual Guides** page 141  
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 147  
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 150  
These individuals address various social issues such as health, education, women's rights, the environment, human rights and conflict resolution.
- 7. Business** page 158  
These entrepreneurs head and direct key organisations in the business world pushing innovation and financial development forward.
- 8. Science & Technology** page 163  
These are the main figures from the world of science and technology.
- 9. Arts & Culture** page 166  
These are artists and cultural ambassadors whose work has become part of people's daily lives.
- 10. Qur'an Reciters** page 171  
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 172  
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 175  
These instantly recognisable figures have a huge public following due to their prominence in popular culture and sport.
- 13. Top Extremists** page 179  
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 Mustafa**

Professor Mustapha Cherif is a philosopher and researcher specializing in international relations and dialogue between cultures. Cherif has written numerous works on religion, civilization and dialogue between cultures. He has held many senior positions including minister of higher education and ambassador. 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.

#### **Amoli, HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi**

Read bio on page 106 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, which is 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](http://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, Najafi holds a position of immense authority. Najafi, originally from Pakistan, holds less sway amongst Iraq's population than the other maraji's but has significant clout in South Asia. His website ([www.alnajafi.com](http://www.alnajafi.com)) is available in five languages.

#### **Al-Qaradaghi, Prof. Ali Mohyi Al-Din**

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.

**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 106 in Honourable Mentions

**Hakim, HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Said**  
Grand Ayatollah Hakim is one of the four maraji's 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 to 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. 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.

**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.

**PALESTINE**

**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 a list of Top 100 Public Intellectuals by *Prospect Magazine* (UK) and *Foreign Policy* (US).

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Salih Bin Fawzan**

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 com-

mittee 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 Quran radio channel, where a number of major scholars answer questions and give 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.

#### **Al-Shareef, Dr Hatim al-Awni (new)**

Dr Al-Awni is the General Supervisor of International Committee for the Support of the Final Prophet (ICSFP). He has also served in a number of academic and political capacities, including the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia for two separate terms. While his academic research includes dozens of publications, perhaps his greatest contribution is the awakening of Salafi introspection in Saudi Arabia. His widely-read articles have pointed out clear connections between militant extremism and core Salafi texts. He also writes extensively on rapprochement between Islamic schools of thought, particularly between Salafi and Traditionalist (Ash'ari and Maturidi) approaches.

### 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 106 in Honourable Mentions

#### **Al-Yaqoubi, Sheikh Muhammad**

Read bio on page 106 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 Kufaro. 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 was chosen by the Arab Institution for Studies and Publishing in Beirut as the Cultural Personality of the Year for 2016.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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### 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.

# 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.

## 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 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. 115). 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 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. In December 2015 the Nigerian Army raided his residence in Zaria, massacred hundreds of his followers and have held him under state detention.

## 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**

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. His interpretive 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. He is the author of *What is a Madrasah?* (2015). Moosa is also regarded as a prominent public intellectual. In 2007 he was invited to deliver the King Hasan Lecture (Darus Hasaniyyah) 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 coexistence. 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, Saniyasnain Khan, of Goodword, the popular publisher of children's books. He was conferred with a peace award in Abu Dhabi in 2015.

#### **Nadvi, Rabey Hasani**

Nadvi is an Islamic scholar and a bilingual author of around 30 books in both Arabic and Urdu. His influ-

ence emanates from being the fourth president of All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Rector of Darul-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and a founding member of Rabita Aalam-e-Islami, Makkah 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 languages. 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; 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, Syafi**

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 KFFAS Fellow in Islamic Studies, and a fellow at Worcester College. He is internationally acclaimed for his 2005 fatwa 'Defending the transgressed by censuring the reckless against the killing of civilians,' 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), Universiti 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 contributions towards serving Islam and Muslims. In Feb 2010, he worked on the new constitution of Somalia.

## PAKISTAN

### **Ahmed, Dr Akbar**

Read bio on page 107 in Honourable Mentions

### **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'iyaa and is one of only two ayatollahs from Pakistan.

## Europe

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

### **Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa**

Moustafa 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, Cerić 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, Cerić 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 Bosnian Congress, which connects Bosniaks, home and abroad.

#### **Karić, Dr Enes**

Dr Enes Karić 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 Karić has written extensively on the Qur'an and Islamic studies in English and Bosnian and delivered lectures worldwide.

#### 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

##### **Gaynutdin, Mufti Sheikh Ravil**

Mufti Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdin 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 presidents Council for Relations with Religious Associations, he is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population.

#### 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 also hosts a show on Press TV.

#### TURKEY

##### **Çağrıçı, HE Prof Dr Mustafa**

Mustafa Çağrıçı is the former 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 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**

Sheikh Dr Mohammad Akram Nadwi is one of the most important Islamic scholars in the Western world today. He has a doctorate in Arabic Language and has authored and translated over 30 titles on Arabic, Jurisprudence, Qur'an and Hadith. He travels extensively and his courses and lectures have a worldwide following. His biographical dictionary of women scholars in Islamic history (over 40 volumes) is now being published by al-Rabitah al-Muhammadiyah li al-ulama in Rabat. A revised edition of the English translation of the introductory volume 'al-Muhaddithat' was published in 2013. He is the subject of the best selling book 'If the oceans were ink: an unlikely friendship and a journey to the heart of the Qur'an' (2015).

### **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, which 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.

### **Winter, Professor Timothy (Sheikh Abdal-Hakim Murad)**

Read bio on page 107 in Honourable Mentions

## *Oceania*

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### 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*

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### CANADA

#### **Mattson, Dr Ingrid**

Read bio on page 107 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.

#### **El Fadl, Professor Khaled Abou**

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 U.S. 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

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 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 Suhrawardi Sufis". His studies and writings are geared towards examining comparative ethics, the language of violence, conflict resolution and non-violence in Islam which 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, and the Director of the Center for Islamic Thought, Culture and Practice (CITCAP) 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*.



The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-Ahqaf* 46:13

*"Indeed, those who have said, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."*

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# The Marrakesh Declaration

## **In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate**

Executive Summary of the Marrakesh Declaration on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities

25th-27th January 2016

WHEREAS, conditions in various parts of the Muslim World have deteriorated dangerously due to the use of violence and armed struggle as a tool for settling conflicts and imposing one's point of view;

WHEREAS, this situation has also weakened the authority of legitimate governments and enabled criminal groups to issue edicts attributed to Islam, but which, in fact, alarmingly distort its fundamental principles and goals in ways that have seriously harmed the population as a whole;

WHEREAS, this year marks the 1,400th anniversary of the Charter of Medina, a constitutional contract between the Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, and the people of Medina, which guaranteed the religious liberty of all, regardless of faith;

WHEREAS, hundreds of Muslim scholars and intellectuals from over 120 countries, along with representatives of Islamic and international organizations, as well as leaders from diverse religious groups and nationalities, gathered in Marrakesh on this date to reaffirm the principles of the Charter of Medina at a major conference;

WHEREAS, this conference was held under the auspices of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, and organized jointly by the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs in the Kingdom of Morocco and the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies based in the United Arab Emirates;

AND NOTING the gravity of this situation afflicting Muslims as well as peoples of other faiths throughout the world, and after thorough deliberation and discussion, the convened Muslim scholars and intellectuals:

DECLARE HEREBY our firm commitment to the principles articulated in the Charter of Medina, whose provisions contained a number of the principles of constitutional contractual citizenship, such as freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defense, as well as principles of justice and equality before the law; and that,

The objectives of the Charter of Medina provide a suitable framework for national constitutions in countries with Muslim majorities, and the United Nations Charter and related documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are in harmony with the Charter of

Medina, including consideration for public order.

NOTING FURTHER that deep reflection upon the various crises afflicting humanity underscores the inevitable and urgent need for cooperation among all religious groups, we

AFFIRM HEREBY that such cooperation must be based on a "Common Word," requiring that such cooperation must go beyond mutual tolerance and respect, to providing full protection for the rights and liberties to all religious groups in a civilized manner that eschews coercion, bias, and arrogance.

BASED ON ALL OF THE ABOVE, we hereby:

Call upon Muslim scholars and intellectuals around the world to develop a jurisprudence of the concept of "citizenship" which is inclusive of diverse groups. Such jurisprudence shall be rooted in Islamic tradition and principles and mindful of global changes.

Urge Muslim educational institutions and authorities to conduct a courageous review of educational curricula that addresses honestly and effectively any material that instigates aggression and extremism, leads to war and chaos, and results in the destruction of our shared societies;

Call upon politicians and decision makers to take the political and legal steps necessary to establish a constitutional contractual relationship among its citizens, and to support all formulations and initiatives that aim to fortify relations and understanding among the various religious groups in the Muslim World;

Call upon the educated, artistic, and creative members of our societies, as well as organizations of civil society, to establish a broad movement for the just treatment of religious minorities in Muslim countries and to raise awareness as to their rights, and to work together to ensure the success of these efforts.

Call upon the various religious groups bound by the same national fabric to address their mutual state of selective amnesia that blocks memories of centuries of joint and shared living on the same land; we call upon them to rebuild the past by reviving this tradition of conviviality, and restoring our shared trust that has been eroded by extremists using acts of terror and aggression;

Call upon representatives of the various religions, sects and denominations to confront all forms of religious bigotry, vilification, and denigration of what people hold sacred, as well as all speech that promote hatred and bigotry; AND FINALLY,

AFFIRM that it is unconscionable to employ religion for the purpose of aggressing upon the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries.

Marrakesh

January 2016 ,27th

## *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. Since suffering a stroke his physical health has deteriorated rapidly.

#### **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 Brotherhood now

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

### 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 "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 recently 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 Rohani 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 result 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 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, Mohammad Javad**

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 reemerged 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 parliament blocs, the Al-Sadr Bloc. Along with Grand Ayatollah Sistani, he

is one of the two most important Shia leaders in Iraq. Over the past few years he has spoken increasingly for Shia-Sunni unity and has become critical of the Al-Maliki government.

#### **Barzani, Masoud**

Read bio on page 107 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 Crown 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. Crown Prince Hussein became the youngest person to chair a UN Security Council meeting in 2015, and graduated from Georgetown University in 2016.

#### **Al-Hussein, Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad**

Read bio on page 108 in Honourable Mentions

### **KUWAIT**

#### **Al-Sabah, Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber**

Read bio on page 108 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 recently 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.

## PALESTINE

### **Haniyah, Ismail**

Read bio on page 108 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 July 9, 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. Approximately 400,000 people have been killed, 7 million displaced internally, and about 5 million have fled the country in a growing humanitarian crisis which is also having a destabilising influence on neighbouring countries. Claims of atrocities and misinformation abound on both sides. With deep animosity between the different parties; the strong support of Assad by Russia, China, and Iran; and the presence of Al-Qaeda and DA'ISH amongst the rebels it has been hard for Western countries to develop a case for attacking 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.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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## 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. He is current chair of the African Union.

## SOMALIA

### **Adan, Fowsiyo Yusuf Haji**

Fawsiyó'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 September 10, 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-Shabab 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 the 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.

#### **Akhundzada, Mullah Haibatullah (new)**

Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada was named as Taliban leader after a US drone strike killed the previous leader Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour. Akhundzada is known primarily as a religious leader who ran religious schools from which many Taliban have graduated. He has recently spoken about the need for national reconciliation.

#### **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

mujahedeen force against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Since then, it has continued fighting, first against other mujahedeen 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**

#### **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 Mother's 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 (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 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**

Prabow 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 mostly by Muslims. She is the current head of the opposition party despite losing three presidential elections (2004, 2009, 2014).

## MALAYSIA

### **Ibrahim, HE Dr Anwar**

Read bio on page 108 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 of the agricultural-based economy of Malaysia into a newly industrialised 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 liberalisation, 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 DiPertuan 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 organisation 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 109 in Honourable Mentions

### **Sharif, Raheel**

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 the terrorist groups. He is due to retire at the end of 2016.

## PHILIPPINES

### **Misuari, Nur**

Nur Misuari is a revolutionary leader of the Bangsamoro and 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 Emomali**

HE President Emomali 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 Mälikgulyýewiç**

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 religious 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*

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## FRANCE

### **Bechari, Dr Mohamed**

Read bio on page 109 in Honourable Mentions

## KOSOVO

### **Jahjaga, Atifete**

Jahjaga became not only the youngest, but also the first female Kosovan president in 2011, serving until 2016. 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.

## 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 mas-



sive reconstruction of Chechnya, mainly from money from Moscow.

## TURKEY

### **Davutoğlu, Ahmet**

Ahmet Davutoğlu was Prime Minister of Turkey from 2014, before differences with President Erdogan saw him resign in 2016. He is a political scientist academic who was appointed ambassador, chief advisor to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and then Prime Minister in rapid succession. Davutoğlu is considered to be the most important figure for redefining the new framework of Turkish foreign policy under the AKP's rule.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### **Khan, Sadiq (new)**

Read bio on page 110 in Honourable Mentions

### **Warsi, Lady Sayeeda**

Baroness Warsi was Britain's first Muslim Cabinet Minister. 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. Baroness Warsi chaired the Government's Task Force for Islamic Finance and was responsible for the issuance of Britain's first *Sukuk*, Islamic bond. She resigned from her post in August 2014 citing her disagreement with HM Government's policy over the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict. Baroness Warsi is now involved in a number of charities and educational institutions and remains a powerful voice on the issue of Islamophobia.

## Oceania

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## 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

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## CANADA

### **Nanshi, Naheed (new)**

He is the mayor of Calgary, the most popular politician in Canada (until the election of Justin Trudeau), and was elected "World Mayor of the Year" in 2014. He is the first visible minority mayor and first Muslim mayor in Canada. He has publicly defended Muslims, including the right of an immigrant woman to wear niqab during her citizenship ceremony in 2015. He has been attacked by the political and religious right for being a Muslim and has been susceptible to the usual Islamophobic attacks. He has made a huge impact on creating a positive image for Muslims in Canada.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### **Abedin, Huma (new)**

Huma Abedin is currently vice chairwoman of Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign for President. She has worked for Clinton in different posts (deputy chief of staff, traveling chief of staff) since starting as an intern in the White House in 1996. She is regarded as the closest aide Clinton has, and this accessibility to the likely next President of the USA makes her influential.

### **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 memorised the entire Qur'an), playing a key role in advising the American President on US-Muslim world affairs.

### Khera, Farhana

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 U.S. 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 September 11, 2001.



The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-Hajj, 22:40*

*"Our Lord is Allah"*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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## Free Islamic Calligraphy

FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com is a new and rapidly-growing website that is doing much to make high quality Islamic calligraphy available to the masses.

Having noticed that the Divine Names, key Qur'anic verses and sacred formulas were not available free online in the most perfect and beautiful styles of Arabic calligraphy, the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought commissioned prize-winning calligrapher Mothana Al-Obaydi and other calligraphers to draw them and digitize them onto JPG, vector files and 'Word document' files so that they can be adapted, coloured and printed out by anyone according to their taste from the website. Thus, instead of paying for decorating their home with drawings or Western posters, or instead of paying for expensive name-brand calligraphy, any Muslim in the world can adapt the most beautiful pieces.

FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com is a non-profit website owned by the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought, an Islamic charity (waqf) set up by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal in 1433 AH / 2012 CE. of calligraphy and decorate his or her home with it for the price of a piece of a paper. This, God willing, will not only make people's homes more beautiful, but also their lives more beautiful as they see and remember God's Name more often.

The calligraphy pieces featured in this publication are used courtesy of [www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com](http://www.FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com).

# 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 Gomaa). 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 thirteen other senior Muslim Brotherhood members.

#### **El-Araby, HE Nabil**

Nabil El-Araby is an Egyptian diplomat who was the Secretary-General of the Arab League until mid-2016. 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.

### 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.

### PALESTINE

#### **Hussein, HE Muhammad Ahmad**

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

#### **Altwaijiri, HE Dr Abdulaziz Othman**

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijiri 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

(FUTW). Dr Altwajiri is an accomplished academic with a keenly holistic vision for human civilization development, a senior lecturer and an eminent writer and poet. Dr Altwajiri played a vital part in the development, supervision and launch of sixteen 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 Altwajiri is also a staunch advocate of dialogue of cultures and alliance of civilizations.

**Madani, Iyad**

Read bio on page 109 in Honourable Mentions

## *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 about the disease, 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

**Ahmad, Abdrahman Olanrewaju (new)**

Shaykh Abdrahman Olanrewaju Ahmad is the National Missioner of Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria and Overseas, which is a 93 year old Muslim organization established for the purpose of the educational development of Muslims and also as a body to enhance the moral and social development of the Muslim community. Membership of the organisation is measured in millions and its achievements in Nigeria span across faiths and ethnicity.

**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. He is also the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin. He is the Executive Secretary of National Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) and also the 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

#### **Sayedee, Delwar Hossain**

Sayedee 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 1996 and 2001. In 2009 Sayeedee 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**

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 Aboobacker**

Sheikh Aboobacker Ahmad is the General Secretary of the All India Muslim Scholars Association and founder and Vice Chancellor of Jamia Markus Ssaquafathi Sunniyya (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 Shaikh Muhiyudheen Abdul Khadar Jeelani Award in 2009. Aboobacker 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 (Non-Political Religious Organisation) in Mumbai, India. Under his leadership this 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 Owaisi**

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 Owaisi's stewardship, the party won seven Assembly seats each in 2009 and 2014. An outspoken parliamentarian, 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.

### INDONESIA

#### **Nasir, Dr. KH. Haedar (new)**

Dr. KH. Haedar Nasir was elected as Chairman of the Muhammadiyah movement in 2015. He had served in various other positions in the organisation, which has approximately 30 million members. It focuses on promoting moral and spiritual ideals through its various social activities. It strongly opposes syncretism, but promotes interfaith relations.

### MALDIVES

#### **Saeed, Mohamed Shaheem Ali**

Saeed is 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. Saeed is also collaborating with the Maldives National Broadcasting Corporation to introduce a new television channel which would focus on relating Islam to the broader issues of society. 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 (senior-most Hadith lecturer) at Jamia Farooqia in Pakistan. He is also the head of Wifaq al-Madaris al-Arabia Pakistan, the primary madrasa board of education in Pakistan. Wifaq al-Madaris administers the curriculum of more than 70,000 madrasas 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 Pakistani parliament being the Pakistani Senator from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### SRI LANKA

#### **Mufthi, MIM Rizvi**

MIM Rizvi Mufthi is the head of 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

#### **Abdulkorizada, HE Saidmukarram**

Saidmukarram Abdulkodirzoda is the state-selected Grand Mufti and thus head of Tajikistan's Muslims, most of whom are Sunni following the Hanafi school of law, and the Naqshbandi spiritual path. They belong 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

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## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

### **Kavazovic, Husein (new)**

Husein Kavazović has been the 14th Raisu-l-ulama - the Grand Mufti of Bosnia since 2012. Kavazović had pushed for cooperation with other religious communities and a wider "incorporation of women into the work of the Islamic religious community". His sphere of influence is mainly with Bosniak Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, around 2.5 million, as well as the Bosniak diaspora, approximately 1.5 million. He speaks Bosnian, Arabic and English.

## BULGARIA

### **Hadzhi, HE Mustafa Alish**

Hadzhi is Bulgaria's chief mufti. Bulgaria has recently been referred to as "Istanbulgaria" 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 recently 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 Ahamadiyyah 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 position of (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

Dr Muhammad Manazir Ahsan is the Chairman, Board of Trustees, The Islamic Foundation, and Rector, Markfield Institute of Higher Education, Leicester, UK. He has published and lectured extensively on Islam/Muslims in Britain. He is also the Editor of *The Muslim World Book Review*, a quarterly journal published since 1980, devoted to analysing the latest publications on Islam and the Muslim World. He has chaired several major Muslim and inter-faith organisations in the UK. He received an MBE in 2000 on the Queen's Birthday Honours List for his contribution to inter-faith and community activities

## Oceania

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### 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

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### 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 Life Time 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 was Director of the Center for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies in the Qatar Foundation for several years. He is currently the Chairman of the Holistic Education Center for Civilizational Renewal, Herndon, Virginia. He has more than a dozen books which he has authored or co-authored.

#### 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 *madrassa* integrated program for the Singapore *madrassa* system. IQRA's programs and educational materials are used in the United States, and worldwide.

#### Mohammed II, W. Deen (new)

Warithudeen Mohammed II is the eldest son of Imam W. Deen Mohammed. He is President of The Mosque Cares (Ministry of Imam W. Deen Mohammed), a charitable organization established by Imam W. Deen Mohammed. The organization sponsors Qur'anic Arabic class, financial literacy education, health & nutrition information sessions and business/entrepreneur initiatives.

## Caribbean

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### 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 that 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 organisation 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.



The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-A'raf* 7:56

*"Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good."*  
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 tariqah and has a wide following in his native Algeria, as well as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia and various countries in Europe. His students come from all walks of life, and he emphasises the recitation of the Qur'an, as well as abundant *Salawaat* (sending prayers upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)). He is a descendant of the famous Sayyid Sufi, Abdul Salam Mashish of Morocco.

#### **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, and the leader of the Hibriyya tariqah. 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 memorised 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.

### 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 *ijazas* 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.

### SAUDI ARABIA

#### **Al-Arifi, Muhammad**

Read bio on page 110 in Honourable Mentions

#### **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](http://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 14 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

Now in his mid-80s, Sheikh Tahir Usman Bauchi of the Tijaniyya Sufi order is celebrated for his Qur'anic schools which specialise in producing *Huffaz* (memorisers) 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 Izalati 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. He has for over 50 years 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 Arshad is also a noted scholar, and recently gave a speech in Arabic in the presence of 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 110 in Honourable Mentions'

### Qaudri, Professor Sayid Ameen Mian

Professor Sayid Ameen Mian Qaudri is leader of the

Indian Barelwis 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). Qaudri 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 UAE and the 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 Syaifi'iyah 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**

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 al Munawwarah, Sheikh Mahmoud MrGlani spends the majority of his time visiting his murids in different parts of the world, and especially in Malaysia, where he has established a number of places for people to gather for the purpose of holding gatherings of Khatm al Quran (recitation by attendees of the entire Quran in one sitting) and Majlis Salawaat (abundant recitation of blessings upon Sydna al Naby salla ALLAH 'alayhi wa sallam). One of these places is Bayt Sydna Abdul Nacer in Shah Alam, Malaysia (which is named in honour of Shaikh Mahmoud's beloved Shaikh, who currently resides in Setif, Algeria). He particularly stresses the need now for all human beings, regardless of whether or not they follow a particular religion, to rediscover



and implement human values and their humanity in all areas of life - Makarim al Akhlaq (the most excellent conduct). Shaikh Mahmoud encourages and promotes all genuine Shaikhs and Tariqahs. He has initiated a series of seminars in Malaysia entitled "Nafahat Jalan Robbi" ("Divine Gifts on the Path to ALLAH"), which have been held in various locations across Malaysia and is now in its 12 iteration, and regularly writes articles in Arabic on contemporary issues, translations of which are posted on "Tasawwuf Today".

#### 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-upper 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 4 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/Australia. Ms Bukhari is also the founder of the well known charitable organization, Bukhari Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization which aims at helping people all over Pakistan who have been displaced by major natural disasters.

##### **Jameel, Maulana Tariq**

Read bio on page 110 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 Dawate-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.

#### SINGAPORE

##### **Alattas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim (new)**

Syed Hassan, more affectionately known as Habib Hassan, has been a pillar of strength and unity towards the building of religious harmony in Singapore and beyond in Southeast Asia. He has condemned acts of terrorism and has been the force behind bringing Islam together with the other religions in Singapore. In 2015, during Singapore's 50th National Day, he was conferred one of the highest awards by the Singapore Government in recognition of his outstanding works and contributions towards building a harmonious nation.

## *Europe*

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#### 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 Idrissiyyah 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, Hassane**

Sheikh Hassan Moussa 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 Frbundet i Stockholm.

#### TURKEY

##### **Haqqani, Shaykh Mehmed Adil (new)**

Sheikh Mehmed Adil Haqqani is the Sheikh of the Naqshbandi Haqqani order established by his father, the celebrated Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani. He is the eldest son of Sheikh Nazim, and was born and raised in Damascus, Syria while his father was studying there under his Sheikh. With an uncanny resemblance to his

father, and a soft, humble approach Sheikh Mehmed has won over his father's thousands of students.

#### **Topbaş, Osman Nuri**

Osman Nuri Topbaş 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 as well as poetry, some of which have been translated into English as well as 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.

##### **Babikir, Shaykh Ahmed (new)**

Shaykh Babikir is a popular figure in the UK with his gentle and warm disposition. He studied Islamic Sciences in Sudan and is fully authorised in a host of Islamic disciplines, including Fiqh, Hadith, Aqeedah and Tasawwuf. He also has a degree in Mathematics and a Masters in Management at the University of London. He has contributed widely to UK society through social, charitable and educational initiatives. He was the headmaster of Islamic Primary School for many years, and is currently the Director and Founder of Rumi's Cave, a community hub in West London.

##### **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 1st 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.

## *North America*

#### **CANADA**

##### **Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal**

A notable convert and Salafi scholar, Philips is founder and chancellor of the virtual educational institution, Islamic Online University, which currently has over 270,000 registered students studying Sharia in English from 228 countries. 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..

##### **Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz**

Sheikh Rabbani is the founder, education director, and instructor at SeekersHub Global 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**

Dr. Hamid Slimi has been serving as an educator, imam, chaplain and consultant in Canada for 20 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 Sciences. He has been awarded for his Spiritual Leadership, Youth engagement, Community development, Interfaith and Bridge Building. He is the Imam and founder of Sayeda Khadija Centre and the chairman of the Canadian Centre for Deen Studies..

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### **Al-Ninowy, Shaykh Dr. Muhammad bin Yahya al-Husayni (new)**

Shaykh Al-Ninowy is the Founder and Director of Madina Institute, an Islamic seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, with campuses in South Africa, the United Kingdom, Norway, Sudan, and Malaysia. Dr. Al-Ninowy is considered to be a Muhaddith; a scholar of Hadith sciences. He has authored books in Usul, Creed, Hadith, and Sufi sciences. Al-Ninowy traces his lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad. He has been a pioneer working on grass root levels to bring back Unconditional compassion and love as the central themes of religion, and has been the forerunner promoting non-violence among all people and religions worldwide. Al-Ninowy also holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from the University of Illinois, and a doctor of medicine degree.

### **Kabbani, Shaykh Muhammad Hisham**

Sheikh Kabbani established the American branch of the Haqqani Educational Foundation, dedicated to the promotion of the fundamental Islamic teachings of tolerance, respect and peace. Since Sheikh Muhammad Nizam Adil's death in 2014, Kabbani has become the leader of the Naqshbandi Haqqani Sufi Order. 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.

### **Khan, Nouman Ali**

Read bio on page 110 in Honourable Mentions

### **Shakir, Imam Zaid**

Zaid is a senior faculty member and co-founder of Zaytuna College, in Berkeley, California, the first accredited Muslim liberal arts college in the USA. He converted to Islam in 1977 while serving in the United States Air Force and obtained a BA summa cum laude in International Relations, MA in Political Science, and then pursued studies in Arabic, Islamic law, Quranic studies, and spirituality in the Muslim world. 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.

### **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. Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz proclaimed this Aug. 15 "Siraj Wahhaj Day," in honor of his "lifetime of outstanding and meaningful achievement."

### **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 December 1, 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.

## *Carribbean*

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

### **Hosein, Sheikh Imran**

Sheikh Imran N Hosein is an Islamic Scholar specialising 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.

# 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 organisation, 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 was the first Saudi woman to become a regional TV personality. She is one of the founding co-hosts of the show "Kalam Nawam" 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 'Tikyot 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 \$103 million in aid to 41 countries around the world. The organization has also designed and developed the world's first and largest containerised 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 programs 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 had 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, which 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**

Syed Mokhtar al-Bukhary is the 8th richest Malaysian, according to Forbes. He owns a variety of companies including 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, Bilquis (new)

The wife of the late Abdul Sattar Edhi, Bilquis Edhi is a professional nurse, and a philanthropist in her own right. She runs several non profit organizations for orphans, widows, and elderly people. Serving the nation for more than 50 years, she is known by the honorific title "mother of the nation". In 2015, she received the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice.

### 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 recipient of many awards for his life's work.

## SINGAPORE

### Faizal, Mohamed (new)

Mr Mohamed Faizal is a passionate champion of education initiatives who has conceived of scholarship programs specifically targeted at lower-income students. He has received the President's Volunteerism & Philanthropy Award, being only the second-ever Muslim in its history to receive it. He also works on international social issues and international development and was awarded the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Association of Conflict Resolution.

## 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, giving him an OBE 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.



The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-Ra'd* 13:33

*"Is He then Who watches every soul as to what it earns?"*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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## *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 September 11, 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**

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.

### PALESTINE

#### **Abu Awwad, Khaled**

Khaled Abu Awwad is the General Manager of the Israeli-Palestinian Bereaved Families Forum and Chairman of Al-Tariq (The Palestinian Institution for Development and Democracy). 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 January 16th, 2009 and his subsequent transformation, has achieved critical acclaim. Published in 2010, (currently 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 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**

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*.

#### **Al-Hroub, Hanan (new)**

A school teacher from occupied Palestine who won "The Global Teacher Prize" in 2016. She started teaching traumatised children who had faced violence, or whose parents had been shot in front of them. Hanan Al Hroub instilled confidence, self-esteem and the ability to live a normal childhood. She published a book entitled "Play and Learn", enhanced with images that include educational games helping children overcome the challenges they face.

### **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 Abdullah, 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 a member of the Qatar Supreme Education Council, the highest educational authority in Qatar. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of Zaytuna College in the United States. 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 Mariam 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 Centers. 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 32-year-old 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 no. 2 in the 2013 list of the Most Powerful Arab Women by *Arabian Business*.

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

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### **BURKINA FASO**

#### **Aboubakary, Maïga**

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 near to 10 percent of the rural population.

#### COTE D'IVOIRE

##### **Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba**

Abdoulaziz is the leader of the Association Soulatine Pour Les Actions De Bienfaisance. He works in Cote 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 Mindaoudou 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 the city of 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 Sânnâgal (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.

## *Asia*

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### 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 Times most influential people of 2010 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, 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 Uygur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang.

### 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.

##### **Yousufzai, 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 that 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 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 (1991-95). 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 leads Unitas Communications, a British reputation management consultancy, where he leads on projects for the UN, US State Department, the IDB and OIC amongst others. He is also the founder of the Concordia Forum, an annual retreat for Western Muslim leaders. In addition, he is President of the John Adams Society, the UK's official US State Dept. IVLP Association. He is a Director of both the European Network of American Alumni, and the IDEA Fund & Faith's Forum for London. He is also a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts, a Member of the US Atlantic Council and a NATO YA Fellow. He recently completed a term as an Independent Advisor to the UK Government on UK Muslim communities.

#### **Ali, Shaykh Hasan (new)**

Shaykh Hasan Ali is a popular preacher and well-known and reputable figure in London, where he carries out voluntary work within the local community, such as local mosques and community centres, secondary schools, interfaith programmes and various community events. He is the founder of Safar Academy and has a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology in addition to his Islamic training.

#### **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 Huff Post UK and also presents 'Head To Head' on Al Jazeera English (AJE). He previously worked for the Guardian, BBC and Sky News.

#### **Mangera, Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf (new)**

Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera has been studying the traditional Islamic sciences for most of his life. He memorized the Qur'an by the age of fifteen and has studied with accomplished scholars in the UK, South Africa, India and Syria. He holds an MA degree from the UK and has translated and written numerous works, many of which are published through White Thread Press ([www.whitethreadpress.com](http://www.whitethreadpress.com)).

#### **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.

### **Patel, Mufti Hamid (new)**

Mufti Hamid Patel, CBE, is the driving force behind Tauheedul Education Trust (TET). TET runs a growing network of primary and secondary schools, with clusters in Lancashire, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and East London. The outstanding achievements and academic results of its schools has led to the government choosing it to take over some failing non-faith schools in an effort to transform them into successful schools.

## *Oceania*

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### AUSTRALIA

#### **Ali, Imam Afroz**

Imam Afroz studied with scholars in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Mauritania and Al-Azhar University before he established Al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences & Human Development. Previously he was an accomplished professional architect. Today he also offers ethical corporate training on Team Building, Personal Leadership, Spiritual Development, Motivation and Goal Setting. He leads various community developments for positive citizenship and sustainable environment projects in Australasia-Pacific region. He is the recipient of the International Ambassador for Peace award, as well as is an ambassador for the Charter for Compassion. He has worked extensively with SeekersHub Global where he served as the Managing Director. He is currently the Scholar in-Residence at Al-Ghazzali Centre.

#### **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 and has now reached India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Malaysia. Tawfique is a Medical Doctor by profession from Australia who has also been trained in Islamic Theology

specialising 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.

## *North America*

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### 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

#### **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 which 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 anyone around the world. It is a free website which has video tutorials stored on websites such as YouTube teaching subjects such as Mathematics, History, Healthcare, Medicine, Finance, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Astronomy, Economics, Cosmology, Organic Chem-



istry, American Civics, Art history, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics and Computer Science. They have over all delivered over 240 million lessons. He recently published the international best-seller, *The One World School House* 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 interfaith activities, Imam Magid is the executive director and imam at 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 interfaith bridge-building. He has served as an advisor to many in Washington, including President Obama.

#### **Mogahed, Dalia**

Dalia Mogahed is director of research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, where she moved to after being the executive director and a senior analyst at the Gallup Centre for Muslim Studies and director of the Muslim- West Facts Initiative. She was appointed by President Obama to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighbourhood 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*.

#### **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 in his role as Chair of the Parliament of the World's Religions (2010-2015), Mujahid has spoken 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**

Yasir Qadhi is one of very few professors of Islamic Studies who is also a classically trained scholar. 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. His condemnations of DA'ISH and other extremists have led DA'ISH to call for his assassination.

#### **Sarsour, Linda**

An American-Palestinian award winning Human rights and social justice activists and a fighter against the rapidly increasing islamophobia acts 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 crime include "Champion of Change" by the White House, the New York City Council's Shirley Chisholm Women of Distinction Award and received 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 focuses 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 accredited for 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 \$74bn. 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 specialising 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, some of which are: 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 \$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 "Official Qatar's" most inspirational Arab woman of the year in 2012, was named "Business Women of the Year 2011" by *Arabian Business Magazine* and rated 67 among the 100 most powerful women in the Middle East in 2011. She is manager of 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 2015, *Forbes* listed him 116 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 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 recently announced

that he would donate his entire fortune to charity. His net worth is estimated at \$18 billion, according to *Forbes*, making him the 41st richest person in the world on their list published in 2016.

### **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 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 was listed as the 67th most powerful woman in the world by *Forbes* in 2015.

## 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 organisations creating standards for the Islamic banking industry.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### Alabbar, Mohamed Ben Ali

Mohamed Ben Ali Alabbar 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

Raja al-Gurg is the managing director of Easa Saleh al-Gurg (ESAG), of Group LLC, and president of the Dubai Business Women's Council. Raja operates in a variety of philanthropic, economic 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*, 2014.

### Al-Qassimi, Sheikha Lubna

Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid bin Sultan al-Qassimi is the UAE's Minister of State for Tolerance. 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 43rd in 2016 by *Forbes*)

### 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 one 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

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## 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 50th richest people by *Forbes* in 2015.

## 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 honor, Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCN) by the President of Nigeria. As a philanthropist, he has donated to the National Mosque, the Presidential Library and a host of charities.

## *Asia*

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## BRUNEI

### **Waddahulah, HM Sultan Hajj Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Sultan of Brunai 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**

Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Bin Hashim served as President and CEO of Johor Corporation for more than 28 years as well as holding a Mayorial position for one of Malaysia's most successful industrial townships for a period of 26

years. He is currently the 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 the Maqasid Al Shari'ah.

## *Europe*

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## 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

### **Aziz, Asif (new)**

Asif Aziz is the founder and Chief Executive of Criterion Capital, which manages a £2bn property portfolio across London and the South East of England. He has made significant charitable contributions across a range of sectors in the UK, and is currently consolidating them under one foundation, the Aziz Foundation. He is also a key donor to various projects in Malawi, his country of birth.

### **Shafik, Nemat**

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 Worlds First Shariah 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 organisation with 35,000 staff) 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 CNN and *Foreign Policy*. In April 2013, *Foreign Policy* named him one of the 500 most powerful people on the planet.

## 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'anic 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](http://www.GreatTafsirs.com) with a special emphasis for mobile devices.

# 12.5 MILLION

The approximate number of visitors to [altafsir.com](http://altafsir.com) over the last 12 months.

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## *Middle East and North Africa*

### EGYPT

#### **Amer, Dr Ghada Mohammed**

Dr Ghada is the Vice-President of 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 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 issues in the fields of Science, Technology and entrepreneurship.

#### **El-Baz, Farouk**

Farouk El-Baz is a geologist who worked with NASA in the selection of landing sites on the Moon and the training of the Apollo astronauts in visual observations and photography. He is well known for applying satellite images to groundwater exploration in arid lands. In 1999, the Geological Society of America (GSA) established the Farouk El-Baz Award for Desert Research to annually reward excellence in arid land studies. Furthermore, the GSA established in 2007 the Farouk El-Baz Student Research Award to encourage desert research by students. He has received numerous honours and awards, including: Egypt's Order of Merit - First Class

#### **El-Naggar, Zaghoul**

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 award for Arab world social innovators in 2009. Other awards include: a membership to the Clinton Global Initiative 2010, a place in the book of 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.

#### 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 most Influential Muslim Scientists in Science and Technology.

## Europe

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### 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, which showcased the 1001 Inventions Global Touring Exhibition across the UK, the United States, and Turkey in 2010.

## North America

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### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### **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.

## 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* Magazine 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

#### Majid, Majid

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 (PBUH) 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, it was announced that Nazari will receive 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 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 which



provides underprivileged individuals with a forum for self-expression through drama.

#### MOROCCO

##### Lalami, Laila

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 platform. 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 that is 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 111 in Honourable Mentions

## Sub-Saharan Africa

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#### 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 Guianese President Sekou Toure. His music is very popular in the Francophone world, and more broadly in Europe. Keita's latest 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 Good-will 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 Wharnsby-Ali. Bhikha also writes and directs plays as well as creative expression workshops conducted specifically within schools.

## Asia

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#### AFGHANISTAN

##### Hosseini, Khaled

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 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 is 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 5 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 as 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 of *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 based who has written over 40 books ranging from short stories collections, novels, and nonfiction (self improvement, sakinah family, parenting, motivational books etc). 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

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

Dato Siti Nurhaliza binti Tarudin is a Malaysian singer

who has won numerous musical awards. She has also been honoured for her contributions in 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 for 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; specializing 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 (PBUH).

## Europe

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## 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 Cesar award for best actor, ahead of Jean Dujardin who won the academy award in the same year. Recently, he has begun to break into Hollywood, landing roles in *X-Men: Days of Future Past* and the upcoming *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 one spot on Amazon.com World Music charts and number 9 on the R&B charts. He has over 26 million fans on Facebook. In 2013, he took part in the Colours of Peace project constituting songs based on works by Fethullah Gilen. 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 Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

### Yalçın, Rabia

Rabia Yalçın 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 Yalçın Haute Couture, Yalçın has a strong presence in the European fashion scene.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Ahmed, Riz (new)

2016 is a breakout year for Riz Ahmed who finds himself in the lead role in acclaimed HBO drama 'The Night of' as well as supporting roles in the latest Jason Bourne film and Star Wars: Rogue One. A British-Pakistani, Riz graduated from Oxford before pursuing a career in the arts. He initially gained some recognition for his music work with his satirical song 'post 9/11 blues' before transitioning to acting. In his career he has demonstrated great versatility with films ranging from the dark comedy Four Lions, to the well received thriller Nightcrawler.

### 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 111 in Honourable Mentions

## North America

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### CANADA

#### 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, film maker 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.

#### Henry, Aisha Gray

Aisha Gray-Henry is the founder and director of the charitable foundation and publishing company Fons Vitae. Fons Vitae is currently engaged in the monumental task of bringing out Ghazali's Ihya in readable english for parents and teachers as well as adapting it for children with workbooks, school curricula and an instructional DVD. The Book of Knowledge and Book of Creed educational sets are available and in use internationally with Purity and Prayer nearing completion. Included is a children's interactive website [www.GhazaliChildren.org](http://www.GhazaliChildren.org), a pilot school project and prison program. Translations into Urdu, Arabic, and Malay are underway. The Fons Vitae Ghazali Project has been launched with great acclaim in Morocco, Canada, Indonesia, England and the USA so far.

#### 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 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.

## South America

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### 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.

# QUR'AN RECITERS

## Middle East and North Africa

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### 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](http://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. He has over a million fans on Facebook.

#### Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Saïd

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 Al-Haram Al-Madani in Madina, 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 111 in Honourable Mentions

## Asia

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### 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

#### Howeidy, Dr Fahmy

Howeidy is one of the leading columnists in the Arab World. He writes for the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, 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

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 *Shahed 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.

### 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 Iqra satellite channel; an Islamic TV channel presenting programs 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.

### PALESTINE

#### 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 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 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 Apr 09, 2014 the United Nations awarded Nashwa Al Ruwaini the title of Knight of women.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### Al-Ibrahim, Waleed bin Ibrahim (new)

Waleed Al-Ibrahim is the chairman of Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC). He founded MBC in London in 1991 as the first independent Arabic satellite TV station. In 2002, he moved his headquarters to Dubai. The following year, he launched Al Arabiya, a 24-hour news channel. MBC now includes 11 channels catering to all viewers in Arabic, English, and Persian. Waleed Al-Ibrahim has received several awards for his contributions and achievements in business and media.

## 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 Al-Awadhi is also the first Arab woman to hold a chief executive post in a state-run media organisation. With a particular focus on television, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of Television Channels at Dubai Media Incorporated.

## Asia

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## 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 News1 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, but released shortly afterwards.

### Iqbal, Salman

Mr. Salman Iqbal owns the largest media network in Pakistan called ARY Digital Network available in Pakistan, Middle-East, Europe, North America and many other regions of the world. He is recognised 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

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### 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

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 downloaded 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.

#### 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 organisations 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.

## North America

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### 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.

# CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

## *Middle East and North Africa*

### JORDAN

#### **HRH Prince Ali bin Al-Hussein**

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.

### PALESTINE

#### **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 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 9.1 million fans on his Facebook page

## *Sub-Saharan Africa*

### COTE 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, Tour joined a campaign against elephant poaching, becoming a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Environment Programme. Tour 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

#### **Pogba, Paul (new)**

Commanding a staggering £89 million, Pogba currently holds the title of most expensive footballer in the world. A talented midfielder for Manchester United and France he was also named as Best Young Player at the 2014 World Cup after some impressive performances for the French National Team. Pogba was born to Guinean parents and is one of a growing number of European Muslim football players who rank amongst the best in the world.

#### **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. He has enjoyed a successful

start to his managerial career with Real Madrid. His modest character has endeared him to the wider public.

#### GERMANY

##### Özil, Mesut

One of the German 2014 football World Cup winning team, the Arsenal playmaker is of Turkish descent was awarded the Bambi award in 2010 for being a prime example of successful integration into German 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

Read bio on page 111 in Honourable Mentions

##### Malik, Zayn

Malik, a British-Pakistani, is one of the most popular

pop singers in the world. Formerly a member of boy band One Direction, Malik left the group in 2015 deciding to focus on his own projects. He then released his first solo album 'Mind of Mine' in 2016. The album reached the top of the charts in numerous countries around the world. He is involved in a number of charitable causes 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. He memorably gave away his world cup winners' gold medal to a young supporter just after the 2015 final.

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ  
وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-Rahman* 55:26-27

*"Everyone upon the earth will perish,  
And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor."*

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# Muslim Medals at the 2016 Olympics

## ALGERIA

- **Taoufik Makhloufi**, Athletics, Silver
- **Taoufik Makhloufi**, Athletics, Silver

## AZERBAIJAN

- **Radik Isayev**, Taekwondo, Gold
- **Rustam Orujov**, Judo, Silver
- **Elmar Gasimov**, Judo, Silver
- **Mariya Stadnik**, Wrestling, Silver
- **Valentin Demyanenko**, Canoeing, Silver
- **Toghrul Asgarov**, Wrestling, Silver
- **Lorenzo Sotomayor**, Boxing, Silver
- **Khetag Gazyumov**, Wrestling, Silver
- **Sabah Shariati**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Inna Osypenko-Radomska**, Canoeing, Bronze
- **Rasul Chunayev**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Patimat Abakarova**, Taekwondo, Bronze
- **Kamran Shakhsovarly**, Boxing, Bronze
- **Nataliya Synyshyn**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Haji Aliyev**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Jabrayil Hasanov**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Milad Beigi**, Taekwondo, Bronze
- **Sharif Sharifov**, Wrestling, Bronze

## BAHRAIN

- **Ruth Jebet**, Athletics, Gold
- **Eunice Kirwa**, Athletics, Silver

## BELARUS

- **Javid Hamzatau**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Ibrahim Saidau**, Wrestling, Bronze

## EGYPT

- **Mohamed Ihab Mahmoud**, Weightlifting, Bronze
- **Sara Samir Ahmed**, Weightlifting, Bronze
- **Hedaya Malak**, Taekwondo, Bronze

## FRANCE

- **Karim Laghouag**, Equestrian, Gold
- **Mehdy Metella**, Swimming, Silver
- **Sarah Ourahmoune**, Boxing, Silver

## GREAT BRITAIN / UNITED KINGDOM

- **Mohamed Sbihi**, Rowing, Gold
- **Mohamed Muktar Jama "Mo" Farah**, Athletics, Gold
- **Mohamed Muktar Jama "Mo" Farah**, Athletics, Gold
- **Lutalo Muhammad**, Taekwondo, Silver

## INDEPENDENT OLYMPIC ATHLETES

- **Fehaid Al-Deehani**, Shooting, Gold
- **Abdullah Al-Rashidi**, Shooting, Bronze

## INDONESIA

- **Tontowi Ahmad**, Lilyana Natsir, Badminton, Gold
- **Sri Wahyuni Agustiani**, Weightlifting, Silver
- **Eko Yuli Irawan**, Weightlifting, Silver

## IRAN

- **Kianoush Rostami**, Weightlifting, Gold
- **Sohrab Moradi**, Weightlifting, Gold
- **Hassan Yazdani**, Wrestling, Gold
- **Komeil Ghasemi**, Wrestling, Silver
- **Saeid Abdevali**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Ghasem Rezaei**, Wrestling, Bronze
- **Kimia Alizadeh**, Taekwondo, Bronze
- **Hassan Rahimi**, Wrestling, Bronze

## JORDAN

- **Ahmad Abu-Ghaush**, Taekwondo, Gold

## KAZAKHSTAN

- **Nijat Rahimov**, Weightlifting, Gold
- **Dmitriy Balandin**, Swimming, Gold
- **Daniyar Yeleussinov**, Boxing, Gold
- **Yeldos Smetov**, Judo, Silver
- **Zhazira Zhapparkul**, Weightlifting, Silver
- **Vasiliy Levit**, Boxing, Silver
- **Adilbek Niyazymbetov**, Boxing, Silver
- **Guzel Manyurova**, Wrestling, Silver
- **Galbadrakhyn Otgontsetseg**, Judo, Bronze
- **Farkhad Kharki**, Weightlifting, Bronze
- **Karina Goricheva**, Weightlifting, Bronze
- **Olga Rypakova**, Athletics, Bronze

- Alexandr Zaichikov, Weightlifting, Bronze
- Elmira Syzdykova, Wrestling, Bronze
- Yekaterina Larionova, Wrestling, Bronze
- Ivan Dychko, Boxing, Bronze
- Dariga Shakimova, Boxing, Bronze

#### KOSOVO

- Majlinda Kelmendi, Judo, Gold

#### MALAYSIA

- Cheong Jun Hoong, Pandeleda Rinong, Diving, Silver
- Chan Peng Soon, Goh Liu Ying, Badminton, Silver
- Goh V Shem, Tan Wee Kiong, Badminton, Silver
- Lee Chong Wei, Badminton, Silver
- Azizulhasni Awang, Cycling, Bronze

#### MOROCCO

- Mohammed Rabii, Boxing, Bronze

#### NIGER

- Abdoul Razak Issoufou, Taekwondo, Silver

#### NIGERIA

- Nigerian Olympic football team, Football, Bronze

#### QATAR

- Mutaz Essa Barshim, Athletics, Silver

#### RUSSIA

- Khasan Khalmurzaev, Judo, Gold
- Timur Safin, Fencing, Gold
- Timur Safin, Fencing, Bronze
- Aliya Mustafina, Gymnastics, Gold
- Aliya Mustafina, Gymnastics, Silver
- Aliya Mustafina, Gymnastics, Bronze
- Abdurashid Sadulaev, Wrestling, Gold

#### TAJKISTAN

- Dilshod Nazarov, Athletics, Gold

#### TUNISIA

- Inès Boubakri, Fencing, Bronze
- Marwa Amri, Wrestling, Bronze
- Oussama Oueslati, Taekwondo, Bronze

#### TURKEY

- Taha Akgül, Wrestling, Gold
- Daniyar Ismayilov, Weightlifting, Silver
- Rıza Kayaalp, Wrestling, Silver
- Selim Yaşar, Wrestling, Silver
- Cenk İldem, Wrestling, Bronze
- Yasmani Copello, Athletics, Bronze
- Soner Demirtaş, Wrestling, Bronze
- Nur Tatar, Taekwondo, Bronze

#### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- Sergiu Toma, Judo, Bronze

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Dalilah Muhammad, Athletics, Gold
- Nia Ali, Athletics, Silver
- Ibtihaj Muhammad, Fencing, Bronze

#### UZBEKISTAN

- Hasanboy Dusmatov, Boxing, Gold
- Ruslan Nurudinov, Weightlifting, Gold
- Shakhobidin Zoirov, Boxing, Gold
- Fazliddin Gaibnazarov, Boxing, Gold
- Shakhram Giyasov, Boxing, Silver
- Bektemir Melikuziev, Boxing, Silver
- Diyorbek Urozbekov, Judo, Bronze
- Rishod Sobirov, Judo, Bronze
- Rustam Tulaganov, Boxing, Bronze
- Elmurat Tasmuradov, Wrestling, Bronze
- Murodjon Akhmadaliev, Boxing, Bronze
- Ikhtiyor Navruzov, Wrestling, Bronze
- Magomed Ibragimov, Wrestling, Bronze

# TOP EXTREMISTS



## 1. Al-Baghdadi, Abu Bakr

Country: **Iraq**

Born: 1971 (age 45)

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. 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.



## 2. Al-Zawahiri, Ayman

Country: **Egypt**

Born: 19 June 1951 (age 65)

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. Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad

Country: **Jordan**

Born: 1959 (age 57)

Influence: Initial religious leader of Al-Qaeda.

Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (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-Maqdisi is a writer and uses the internet to spread his ideas. Al-Maqdisi was found guilty on terrorism charges and sentenced to five years in prison by a Jordanian court.



## 4. Al-Julani, Abu Muhammad (new)

Country: **Syria**

Born: 1981 (age 35)

Influence: Founder of the Syrian militant group Jabhet Fateh al-Sham

Al-Julani is the current Emir and founder of the Syrian militant group now known as Jabhet Fateh al-Sham. It is the main force fighting the Syrian regime and until recently was allied to Al-Qaeda. It formally renounced links with Al-Qaeda in July 2016 in an attempt to show that the group is focused on regime change in Syria alone, and does not have wider regional goals.



### 5. Shekau, Abubakar

Country: **Nigeria**

Born: 1974 (age 42)

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 training. 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. There are unconfirmed reports that he was killed by a military strike by the Nigerian army.



### 6. Umar, Ahmad (new)

Country: **Somalia**

Born: Unknown

Influence: Leader of al-Shabaab

Ahmad Umar, also known as Abu Ubaidah, has been the Emir of al-Shabaab since 2014, after US airstrikes killed the previous emir (Ahmed Abdi Godane). When Umar became advisor to Godane in 2013, he purged al-Shabaab of its foreign fighters, and oversaw all the domestic policies of the group. Umar adheres to takfiri ideology and strives to fulfill Godane's vision for al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab still carry out terrorist attacks in Mogadishu, Somalia, despite the presence of thousands of Somalia government as well as African Union troops. They have targeted hotels and resorts as well as Ugandan and Kenyan troops.



### 7. Bashir, Abu Bakar

Country: **Indonesia**

Born: 17 August 1938 (age 78)

Influence: Spiritual head of Jemaah Islamiya (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.



The Holy Qur'an  
*Al-An'am* 6:162-163

*"Say, Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims."*

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## Summary of 450 New Ins

### POLITICAL

- Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, Afghanistan
- Sadiq Khan, United Kingdom
- Naheed Nanshi, Canada
- Huma Abedin, USA

### ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

- Abdrahman Olanrewaju Ahmad, Nigeria
- Dr. KH. Haedar Nasir, Indonesia
- Dato Dr Haron Din, Malaysia
- Husein Kavazovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- W. Deen Mohammed II, USA

### PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

- Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim Alattas, Singapore
- Shaykh Muhammad Adil Haqqani, Turkey
- Shaykh Ahmed Babikir, United Kingdom
- Shaykh Dr. Muhammad bin Yahya al-Husayni al-Ninowy, USA

### PHILANTHROPY, CHARITY & DEVELOPMENT

- Bilquis Edhi, Pakistan
- Mohamed Faizal, Singapore

### SOCIAL

- Hanan Al-Hroub, Palestine
- Shaykh Hasan Ali, United Kingdom
- Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera, United Kingdom
- Mufti Hamid Patel, United Kingdom

### BUSINESS

- Asif Aziz, United Kingdom

### ARTS AND CULTURE

- Riz Ahmed, United Kingdom

### MEDIA

- Waleed al-Ibrahimi

### CELEBRITIES AND SPORTS

- Paul Pogba, France

### EXTREMISTS

- Abu Mohammad al-Julani, Syria
- Ahmad Umar, Somalia



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ

The Holy Qur'an  
Al-Baqarah 2:255

"Allah! There is no god but He,-the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)."

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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 The   
OBITUARIES



**Dr Taha Jaber Al-Alwani**  
**Scholarly**

Country: US  
Born: 1935  
Died: 4 March 2016 (age 81)

Al-Alwani was an active academic and organizer in the international community of Sunni Muslim scholars. He was 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. AlAlwani also authored 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. Al- Alwani passed away on the 4th of March 2016 at the age of 81.



**Nizami, Motiur Rahman**  
**Political**

Country: Bangladesh  
Born: 31 March 1943  
Died: 11 May 2016 (age 73)

Motiur Rahman Nizami was the leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, the third largest political party and the largest Islamic party in Bangladesh. He 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 and was hanged on May 11th in 2016 at the age of 73.



**Vaez-Tabasi, HE**  
**Ayatollah Abbas**  
**Administration of Religious Affairs**

Country: Iran  
Born: 25 June 1935  
Died: 4 March 2016 (age 81)

Vaez-Tabasi was 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. Vaez Tabasi died on the 4th of March 2016 at the age of 81.



**Al-Rifa'i, Sheikh**  
**Muhammad Said**  
**Al-Jamal**  
**Preachers & Spiritual Guides**

Country: Palestinian Territories  
Born: 1935  
Died November 2015 (age 80)

Sheikh Al-Rifa'i was a guide of the Shadhiliyyah Path, founded by Sheikh Ali Abu-l-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 was a teacher and central figure at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the three holiest sites in Islam. The sheikh had students and followers not only in the Holy Land but in America and Europe also. He passed away in November 2015 at the age of 80.



**Edhi, Abdul Sattar**  
Philanthropy, Charity  
& Development

Country: Pakistan  
Born: 1 January 1928  
Died: 8 July 2016 (age 88)

Abdul Sattar Edhi was the founder of the Edhi Foundation; the largest and most organized social welfare system in Pakistan. For over 50 years, Edhi had 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 funded free hospitals and dispensaries, rehabilitation for drug addicts, shelter for the destitute, orphans and handicapped persons, and national and international relief efforts. In November 2011, Edhi was recommended for a Nobel Peace Prize by the Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani. He passed away on the 8th of July 2016 at the age of 88.



**Ahmed Zewail**  
Science & Technology

Country: Egypt  
Born: 26 February 1946  
Died: 21 August 2016 (age 70)

Dr Zewail was a Linus Pauling Professor at the California Institute of Technology who won the 1999 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in femtochemistry. He served 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. Dr. Zewail passed away on the 2nd of August 2016 at the age of 70.



**Dame Zaha  
Muhammad Hadid**  
Arts & Culture

Country: UK  
Born: 31 October 1950  
Died: 31 March 2016 (age 66)

Dame Zaha Muhammad Hadid was one of the world's leading architects. She was born in Iraq, and moved to the UK at the age of 17. She won numerous prizes for her work and had become the first woman to be awarded the RIBA Gold Medal in recognition of her lifetime's work. She passed away in Miami, USA on 31 March, 2016 at the age of 66.



**Mohamed  
Hassanein Heikal**  
Media

Country: Egypt  
Born: 23 September 1923  
Died: 17 February 2016 (age 93)

A leading Egyptian journalist, he was 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-Ahram was considered to reflect Nasser's views. His lecture series on al-Jazeera had given him an even greater platform in the Arab World. He passed away in Cairo, Egypt on 17th of February 2016 at the age of 93.



## Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore

### Arts & Culture

Country: US

Born: 30 July 1940

Died: 18 April 2016 (age 76)

Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore was widely considered as the Poet Laureate of American Muslims, but travelled widely and frequently to parts of the Muslim world to give poetry readings and he had a wide following among English-speaking Muslims. The poet, essayist, artist and playwright, died April 18, 2016 at home in Philadelphia, PA after a long battle with cancer.

Born in Oakland, California on July 30, 1940 to Herbert and Inez (Jesse) Moore, he attended the University of California at Berkeley. A protégé of Beat poets Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsberg, Moore first came to prominence in San Francisco with his collection *Dawn Visions* (*City Lights*, 1964) and *Burnt Heart* (*City Lights* 1971). He was also founder and artistic director of the Berkeley, California-based *Floating Lotus Magic Opera Company* (1966-1969) that produced the radical Zen-inspired theatrical events, “The Walls are Running Blood” and “Bliss Apocalypse”, which were hugely popular and highly influential at the time. His later poetry reflected a deep and abiding faith in Islam and his dedication to the metaphysics of Sufism. His published work includes over 50 books of poetry.

After studying Zen Buddhism and other Eastern religions Moore embraced Islam in 1970, taking the name Abdal Hayy. At the same time he was initiated into the *Habibiyya-Darqawiyya Sufi Order*. In 1971 he visited Meknes, Morocco and sat in the presence of the founder of the order, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Al-Habib who is one of the towering figures in 20th century Sufism. After his Shaykh’s death the following year at age 100, Moore performed the Hajj, and over the next 45 years lived and traveled throughout England, Morocco, Spain, Algeria, Nigeria and the United States in pursuit of knowledge.

During the 1980s he resumed writing poetry and created a ground-breaking body of work that resonated with a search for theophanies and metaphysical flights into the commonplaces of existence. From this time until his death he composed nearly 60 volumes of poetry. Forty-three volumes were collected and released in *The Ecstatic Exchange* in 2005.

His poetry has been highly influential, inspiring younger generations of poets and seekers on the Sufi path. Poet Carolyn Forché wrote “Daniel Moore is a rarity among his contemporaries - a surrealist of the sacred.” The poet Michael McClure wrote: “The intelligence of Daniel Moore’s poems is like Frank O’Hara’s: there are no boundaries or limits to possible subject matter. Imagination runs rampant and it glides.” Coleman Barks wrote: “He’s like an old wisdom tradition come up off the streets.” Of Moore’s collection “The Blind Beekeeper” Ron Silliman wrote: “Daniel Moore was a legend among poets and the hip cognoscenti of California in the 1960s, so it’s a great pleasure to see how brightly this flame still burns.... Imagine Mayakovsky, McClure and Frank O’Hara all wrapped in the same soul. That still doesn’t capture just how much fun a book this intense can be.”

Author, photographer and filmmaker Shems Friedlander wrote: “Daniel Moore always travels to the essential question of who we are, why we are here, and, where we are going.” Shaykh Hamza Yusuf wrote: “Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore is really at the vanguard of a cultural movement within our ranks, of creating an indigenous Muslim art form that reflects the best of our culture.”

Apart from his poetry, Moore wrote and produced plays and puppet theatre and performed public readings around the world, accompanying himself on the zither. He released a series of children’s books with his wife, Malika, and created dozens of collages. In later life he advised and edited work of poets from around the world. He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Malika, his daughter Salihah Moore Kirby, his two stepsons, Mukhtar and Farid Sanders, his brother Herbert and six grandchildren, as well as friends and admirers from throughout the world. Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore was laid to rest at the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship cemetery in East Fallowfield, PA. Memorials may be directed to the Fellowship at [bmf.org](http://bmf.org).





## Muhammad Ali

### Sports

Country: US

Born: 17 January 1942

Died: 3 June 2016 (age 74)

Muhammad Ali was 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. Despite suffering from Parkinson's disease, he remained a figure of great influence, commenting on injustices where he saw 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. Muhammad Ali passed away on the 3rd of June, 2016 at the age of 74.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

The Holy Qur'an,  
*Al-Baqarah*, 2: 156

*"To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return"*

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*Shahadah*

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 Guest 

CONTRI-  
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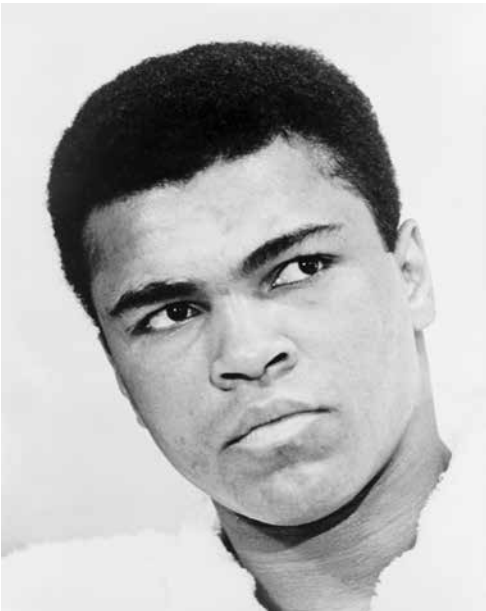
## MUHAMMAD ALI: A HUMBLE MOUNTAIN

*Imam Zaid Shakir*

(Many thanks to the author for his kind permission to reprint his article here)

I was honored to attend the waning hours of Muhammad Ali's life along with his immediate family. Taking a brief break from the stream of Qur'anic recitation, invocations, and devotional songs we were dedicating to Ali, one of the Champ's daughters asked how would I describe her father? After momentarily reflecting on her query, I responded, "This may sound oxymoronic, but I would describe him as a humble mountain." All present agreed that the description was apt.

Ali's humility was manifested in so many ways. It was seen during the countless hours he spent playing with or entertaining children. Whether performing one of his famous "magic" tricks or rolling around on the floor playfully wrestling with a toddler, Ali was never too big to take time to cheer up or amuse a child. During the latter stage of his life, that humility was nobly visible in the grace with which he embraced both his illness and the irreversible silencing of the voice once so poetic, prolific and provocative



that he was labeled the "Louisville Lip."

As for his mountainous stature, Ali towered over his times. What other figure was able to rally the entire world to his side? What other figure could unite black and white, rich and poor, "First, Second and Third Worlds?" Even in death, Ali was able to bring the world together in a display of brotherhood and goodwill unprecedented in our time and certainly unlikely to occur again any time soon.

The week between his passing and the globally televised memorial service honoring his life, witnessed a sorely needed break from the grinding attacks on Islam and Muslims. During that glorious week, where the life of arguably the greatest American Muslim was celebrated and honored, Muslims, and many others, saw a bright ray of hope. Perhaps, as a people, we could begin to move beyond the suspicion, fear and anger increasingly directed towards Muslims and start the daunting work of constructing a more enlightened society, one more consistent with the values we espouse as a nation.

For many Muslims, and countless others, that hope was shattered, smashed and left disfigured in the late night horror seizing an Orlando nightclub. The media, the haters, the opportunistic politicians, resumed business as usual. No more Ali, no more smiles for Muslims, no more normal conversations, no more relaxed days. The Ali-inspired euphoria is gone. At least that is how many see it. I see it differently.

The massacre in Orlando is surely an unacceptable, unspeakable, unjustifiable atrocity, rightly condemned by all. That night of darkness, however, cannot be allowed to dim the light of Ali's life. Ali's courage and sacrifice, power and grace, generosity and love, dwarf the despicable actions of the Orlando shooter like a mountain dwarfs a molehill. We cannot allow the molehill to come to be viewed as the mountain. Ali's example is still there for all to see if we keep it alive within ourselves.

Certainly, there is much to be done in terms of healing hearts and building bridges of understanding as a result of that maniacal act. One of the things we must do as Muslims in order to meaningfully participate in the process of repair is to continue to celebrate the life of Muhammad Ali. In celebrating

his life, we are inspired by his example. This has to be an ongoing process that defies the vagaries of the news cycle.

Among the greatest lessons we can learn from Ali's life is that the public will not always be on our side and the news media can be extremely malicious in pushing people away from us. When Ali stood up and refused to be inducted into the US Army, he became a huge public enemy. Already hated in many quarters because of his conversion to Islam and his subsequent name change, he was castigated in the media and became, to a certain extent, a dead man walking.

During the period preceding his refusal to enter the armed forces, Medger Evers and Malcolm X were assassinated and in the period immediately following it Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy were gunned down. In the face of the violence, death threats and growing economic hardship, Ali did not back down. He courageously maintained his principled, peaceful stand, travelling from venue to venue defending his position and educating people about his religion. Eventually,

the tide of popular opinion turned favorably in his direction and he was not only vindicated, he became the most popular man on earth. His path must be our path, his example our hope.

I am not attempting in any way to belittle the magnitude of the challenges we face as a community. Yet, compared to what Ali faced, our challenges are manageable. They do demand of us a level of courage, conviction and wisdom we have heretofore not displayed. This is why it is so important for us to keep Ali's life and example alive in our hearts and minds. As long as they live they can continue to inspire and guide us.

Muhammad Ali, a humble soul, elevated by God until he became a lofty mountain. If we can humble ourselves, perhaps we will also be uplifted by God and will tower over our times like mountains. This is exactly what God has promised us. Our Prophet (blessings and peace upon him) mentioned in this regard, "No one humbles himself for the sake of God, except that God elevates him." We have seen God's promised fulfilled in Muhammad Ali, may it find its fulfilment in each and every one of us.



## SETTING SCIENCE FREE FROM MATERIALISM

by *Rupert Sheldrake, PhD*

(Many thanks to the author for his kind permission to reprint his article here)

CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE IS BASED on the claim that all reality is material or physical. There is no reality but material reality. Consciousness is a by-product of the physical activity of the brain. Matter is unconscious. Evolution is purposeless. This view is now undergoing a credibility crunch. The biggest problem of all for materialism is the existence of consciousness. Panpsychism provides a way forward. So does the recognition that minds are not confined to brains.

The “scientific worldview” is immensely influential because the sciences have been so successful. No one can fail to be awed by their achievements, which touch all our lives through technologies and through modern medicine. Our intellectual world has been transformed through an immense expansion of our knowledge, down into the most microscopic particles of matter and out into the vastness of space, with hundreds of billions of galaxies in an ever-expanding universe.

Yet in the second decade of the 21st century, when science and technology seem to be at the peak of the power, when their influence has spread all over the world, and when their triumph seems indisputable, unexpected problems are disrupting the sciences from within. Most scientists take it for granted that these problems will eventually be solved by more research along established lines, but some, including myself, think that they are symptoms of a deeper malaise. Science is being held back by centuries-old assumptions that have hardened into dogmas. The sciences would be better off without them: freer, more interesting, and more fun.

The biggest scientific delusion of all is that science already knows the answers. The details still need working out, but the fundamental questions are settled, in principle.

Contemporary science is based on the claim that all reality is material or physical. There is no reality but material reality. Consciousness is a by-product of the physical activity of the brain. Matter is unconscious. Evolution is purposeless. God exists only as an idea in human minds, and hence in human heads.

These beliefs are powerful not because most scientists think about them critically, but because they do not. The facts of science are real enough, and so are the techniques that scientists use, and so are the technologies based on them. But the belief system that governs conventional scientific thinking is an act of faith, grounded in a 19th-century ideology.

### THE SCIENTIFIC CREED

Here are the 10 core beliefs that most scientists take for granted.

1. Everything is essentially mechanical. Dogs, for example, are complex mechanisms, rather than living organisms with goals of their own. Even people are machines, “lumbering robots,” in Richard Dawkins' vivid phrase, with brains that are like genetically programmed computers.
2. All matter is unconscious. It has no inner life or subjectivity or point of view. Even human consciousness is an illusion produced by the material activities of brains.
3. The total amount of matter and energy is always the same (with the exception of the Big Bang, when all the matter and energy of the universe suddenly appeared).
4. The laws of nature are fixed. They are the same today as they were at the beginning, and they will stay the same forever.
5. Nature is purposeless, and evolution has no goal or direction.
6. All biological inheritance is material, carried in the genetic material, DNA, and in other material structures.
7. Minds are inside heads and are nothing but the activities of brains. When you look at a tree, the image of the tree you are seeing is not “out there,” where it seems to be, but inside your brain.
8. Memories are stored as material traces in brains and are wiped out at death.

9. Unexplained phenomena like telepathy are illusory.

10. Mechanistic medicine is the only kind that really works.

Together, these beliefs make up the philosophy or ideology of materialism, whose central assumption is that everything is essentially material or physical, even minds. This belief system became dominant within science in the late 19th century, and is now taken for granted. Many scientists are unaware that materialism is an assumption; they simply think of it as science, or the scientific view of reality, or the scientific worldview. They are not actually taught about it, or given a chance to discuss it. They absorb it by a kind of intellectual osmosis.

In everyday usage, materialism refers to a way of life devoted entirely to material interests, a preoccupation with wealth, possessions, and luxury. These attitudes are no doubt encouraged by the materialist philosophy, which denies the existence of any spiritual realities or non-material goals, but in this article I am concerned with materialism's scientific claims, rather than its effects on lifestyles.

In the spirit of radical skepticism, each of these 10 doctrines can be turned into a question, as I show in my book *Science Set Free*<sup>1</sup> (called *The Science Delusion* in the UK). Entirely new vistas open up when a widely accepted assumption is taken as the beginning of an inquiry, rather than as an unquestionable truth. For example, the assumption that nature is machinelike or mechanical becomes a question: "Is nature mechanical?" The assumption that matter is unconscious becomes "Is matter unconscious?" and so on.



BANNED TED TALK

### THE CREDIBILITY CRUNCH FOR THE "SCIENTIFIC WORLDVIEW"

For more than 200 years, materialists have promised that science will eventually explain everything in terms of physics and chemistry. Science will prove that living organisms are complex machines, minds are nothing but brain activity, and nature is purposeless. Believers are sustained by the faith that scientific discoveries will justify their beliefs. The philosopher of science Karl Popper called this stance "promissory materialism" because it depends on issuing promissory notes for discoveries not yet made.<sup>2</sup> Despite all the achievements of science and technology, materialism is now facing a credibility crunch that was unimaginable in the 20th century.

In 1963, when I was studying biochemistry at Cambridge University, I was invited to a series of private meetings with Francis Crick and Sydney Brenner in Brenner's rooms in King's College, along with a few of my classmates. Crick and Brenner had recently helped to "crack" the genetic code. Both were ardent materialists and Crick was also a militant atheist. They explained there were two major unsolved problems in biology: development and consciousness. They had not been solved because the people who worked on them were not molecular biologists—nor very bright. Crick and Brenner were going to find the answers within 10 years, or maybe 20. Brenner would take developmental biology, and Crick consciousness. They invited us to join them.

Both tried their best. Brenner was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2002 for his work on the development of a tiny worm, *Caenorhabditis elegans*. Crick corrected the manuscript of his final paper on the brain the day before he died in 2004. At his funeral, his son Michael said that what made him tick was not the desire to be famous, wealthy, or popular, but "to knock the final nail into the coffin of vitalism." (Vitalism is the theory that living organisms are truly alive, and not explicable in terms of physics and chemistry alone.)

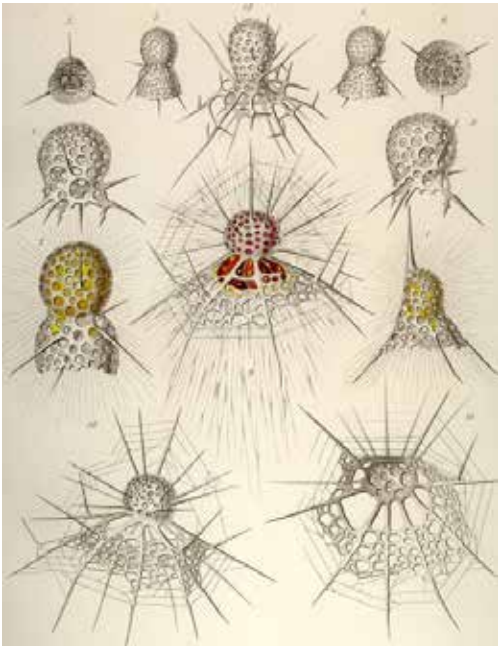
Crick and Brenner failed. The problems of development and consciousness remain unsolved. Many details have been discovered, dozens of genomes have been sequenced, and brain scans are ever more

precise. But there is still no proof that life and minds can be explained by physics and chemistry alone.

The fundamental proposition of materialism is that matter is the only reality. Therefore consciousness is nothing but brain activity. It is either like a shadow, an “epiphenomenon,” that does nothing, or it is just another way of talking about brain activity. However, among contemporary researchers in neuroscience and consciousness studies there is no consensus about the nature of minds. Leading journals such as *Behavioural and Brain Sciences* and the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* publish many articles that reveal deep problems with the materialist doctrine. The philosopher David Chalmers has called the very existence of subjective experience the “hard problem.” It is hard because it defies explanation in terms of mechanisms. Even if we understand how eyes and brains respond to red light, the *experience* of redness is not accounted for.

In biology and psychology the credibility rating of materialism is falling. Can physics ride to the rescue? Some materialists prefer to call themselves physicalists, to emphasize that their hopes depend on modern physics, not 19th-century theories of matter. But physicalism's own credibility rating has been reduced by physics itself, for four reasons:

First, some physicists insist that quantum mechan-



ics cannot be formulated without taking into account the minds of observers. They argue that minds cannot be reduced to physics because physics presupposes the minds of physicists.

Second, the most ambitious unified theories of physical reality, string and M-theories, with 10 and 11 dimensions, respectively, take science into completely new territory. Strangely, as Stephen Hawking tells us in his book *The Grand Design* (2010), “Noone seems to know what the ‘M’ stands for, but it may be ‘master’, ‘miracle’ or ‘mystery.’” According to what Hawking calls “model-dependent realism,” different theories may have to be applied in different situations. “Each theory may have its own version of reality, but according to model-dependent realism, that is acceptable so long as the theories agree in their predictions whenever they overlap, that is, whenever they can both be applied.”<sup>4</sup>

String theories and M-theories are currently untestable, so “model-dependent realism” can only be judged by reference to other models, rather than by experiment. It also applies to countless other universes, none of which has ever been observed.<sup>5</sup>

Some physicists are deeply skeptical about this entire approach, as the theoretical physicist Lee Smolin shows in his book *The Trouble With Physics: The Rise of String Theory, the Fall of a Science and What Comes Next* (2008).<sup>6</sup> String theories, M-theories, and “model-dependent realism” are a shaky foundation for materialism or physicalism or any other belief system.

Third, since the beginning of the 21st century, it has become apparent that the known kinds of matter and energy make up only about 4% of the universe. The rest consists of “dark matter” and “dark energy.” The nature of 96% of physical reality is literally obscure.

Fourth, the Cosmological Anthropic Principle asserts that if the laws and constants of nature had been slightly different at the moment of the Big Bang, biological life could never have emerged, and hence we would not be here to think about it. So did a divine mind fine-tune the laws and constants in the beginning? To avoid a creator God emerging in a new guise, most leading cosmologists prefer to believe that our universe is one of a vast, and perhaps



infinite, number of parallel universes, all with different laws and constants, as M-theory also suggests. We just happen to exist in the one that has the right conditions for us.<sup>7</sup>

This multiverse theory is the ultimate violation of Ockham's Razor, the philosophical principle that "entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity," or in other words that we should make as few assumptions as possible. It also has the major disadvantage of being untestable.<sup>8</sup> And it does not even succeed in getting rid of God. An infinite God could be the God of an infinite number of universes.<sup>9</sup>

Materialism provided a seemingly simple, straightforward worldview in the late 19th century, but 21st century science has left it far behind. Its promises have not been fulfilled, and its promissory notes have been devalued by hyperinflation.

I am convinced that the sciences are being held back by assumptions that have hardened into dogmas, maintained by powerful taboos. These beliefs protect the citadel of established science, but act as barriers against open-minded thinking. Here, for example, I explore Dogma 2, the assumption that matter is unconscious

### *IS MATTER UNCONSCIOUS?*

The central doctrine of materialism is that matter is the only reality. Therefore, consciousness ought not to exist. Materialism's biggest problem is that consciousness does exist. You are conscious now. The main opposing theory, dualism, accepts the reality of consciousness, but has no convincing explanation for its interaction with the body and the brain. Dualist-materialist arguments have gone on for centuries. But if we question the dogma that matter is unconscious, we can move forward from this sterile opposition.

Scientific materialism arose historically as a rejection of mechanistic dualism, which defined matter as unconscious and souls as immaterial, as I discuss below. One important motive for this rejection was the elimination of souls and God, leaving unconscious matter as the only reality. In short, materialists treated subjective experience as irrelevant; dualists accepted the reality of experience but were unable to explain how minds affect brains.

The materialist philosopher Daniel Dennett wrote a book called *Consciousness Explained* (1991), in which he tried to explain away consciousness by arguing that subjective experience is illusory. He was forced to this conclusion because he rejected dualism as a matter of principle:

*Adopt the apparently dogmatic rule that dualism is to be avoided at all costs. It is not that I think I can give a knock-down proof that dualism, in all its forms, is false or incoherent, but that, given the way that dualism wallows in mystery, accepting dualism is giving up [his italics].<sup>10</sup>*

This dogmatism of Dennett's rule is not merely apparent: the rule is dogmatic. By "giving up" and "wallowing in mystery," I suppose he means giving up science and reason and relapsing into religion and superstition. Materialism "at all costs" demands the denial of the reality of our own minds and personal experiences—including those of Daniel Dennett himself, although by putting forward arguments he hopes will be persuasive, he seems to make an exception for himself and for those who read his book.

Francis Crick devoted decades of his life to trying to explain consciousness mechanistically. He frankly admitted that the materialist theory was an "astonishing hypothesis" that flew in the face of common sense: "You, your joys, and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, and your sense of personal identity and free will are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules."<sup>11</sup> Presumably Crick included himself in this description, although he must have felt that here was more to his argument than the automatic activity of nerve cells.

One of the motives of materialists is to support an anti-religious worldview. Francis Crick was a militant atheist, as is Daniel Dennett. On the other hand, one of the traditional motives of dualists is to support the possibility of the soul's survival. If the human soul is immaterial, it may exist after bodily death.

Scientific orthodoxy has not always been materialist. The founders of mechanistic science in the 17th century were dualistic Christians. They downgraded matter, making it totally inanimate and mechanical,

and at the same time upgraded human minds making them completely different from unconscious matter. By creating an unbridgeable gulf between the two, they thought they were strengthening the argument for the human soul and its immortality, as well as increasing the separation between humans and other animals.

This mechanistic dualism is often called Cartesian dualism after Descartes (Des Cartes). It saw the human mind as essentially immaterial and disembodied, and bodies as machines made of unconscious matter.<sup>12</sup> In practice, most people take a dualist view for granted, as long as they are not called upon to defend it. Almost everyone assumes that we have some degree of free will, and are responsible for our actions. Our educational and legal systems are based on this belief. And we experience ourselves as conscious beings, with some degree of free choice. Even to discuss consciousness presupposes that we are conscious ourselves. Nevertheless, since the 1920s, most leading scientists and philosophers in the English-speaking world have been materialists, in spite of all the problems this doctrine creates.

The strongest argument in favor of materialism is the failure of dualism to explain how immaterial minds work and how they interact with brains. The strongest argument in favor of dualism is the implausibility and self-contradictory nature of materialism.

The dualist–materialist dialectic has lasted for centuries. The soul–body or mind–brain problem has refused to go away. But before we can move forward, first we need to understand in more detail what materialists claim, since their belief system dominates institutional science and medicine, and everyone is influenced by it.

#### *MINDS THAT DENY THEIR OWN REALITY*

Most neuroscientists do not spend much time thinking about the logical problems that materialist beliefs entail. They just get on with the job of trying to understand how brains work, in the faith that more hard facts will eventually provide answers. They leave professional philosophers to defend the materialist or physicalist faith.

Physicalism means much the same as materialism,

but rather than asserting that all reality is material, it asserts that it is physical, explicable in terms of physics, and hence including energy and fields as well as matter. In practice, this is what materialists believe too. In the following discussion I use the more familiar word materialism to mean “materialism or physicalism.”

Among materialist philosophers there are several schools of thought. The most extreme position is called “eliminative materialism.” Consciousness is just an “aspect” of the activity of the brain. Thoughts or sensations are just another way of talking about activity in particular regions of the cerebral cortex; they are the same things talked about in different ways.

Other materialists are “epiphenomenalists”: they accept rather than deny the existence of consciousness, but see it as a functionless by-product of the activity of the brain, an “epiphenomenon,” like a shadow. People might just as well be zombies, with no subjective experience, because all their behavior is a result of brain activity alone. Conscious experience does nothing, and makes no difference to the physical world.

A recent form of materialism is “cognitive psychology,” which dominated academic psychology in the English-speaking world in the late twentieth century. It treats the brain as a computer and mental activity as information processing. Subjective experiences, like seeing green, or feeling pain, or enjoying music, are computational processes inside the brain, which are themselves unconscious.

Some philosophers, like John Searle, think that minds can emerge from matter by analogy with the way that physical properties can emerge at different levels of complexity, like the wetness of water emerging from the interactions of large numbers of water molecules. Many non-materialists would agree with Searle that consciousness is in some sense “emergent” but would argue that while mind and conscious agency originate in physical nature, they are qualitatively different from purely material or physical being.

Finally, some materialists hope that evolution can provide an answer. They propose that consciousness emerged as a result of natural selection through mindless processes from unconscious matter. Be-

cause minds evolved, they must have been favored by natural selection, and hence they must actually do something; they must make a difference. Many non-materialists would agree. But materialists want to have it both ways: emergent consciousness must do something if it has evolved as an evolutionary adaptation favored by natural selection; but it cannot do anything if it is just an epiphenomenon of the brain activity, or another way of talking about brain mechanisms. In 2011, the psychologist Nicholas Humphrey tried to overcome this problem by suggesting that consciousness evolved because it helps humans survive and reproduce by making us feel “special and transcendent.” But as a materialist, Humphrey does not agree that our minds have any agency, that is to say, they cannot affect our actions. Instead our consciousness is illusory: he describes it as “a magical mystery show that we stage for ourselves inside our own heads.”<sup>13</sup> But to say that consciousness is an illusion does not explain consciousness—it presupposes it. Illusion is a mode of consciousness.

If all these theories sound unconvincing, that is because they are. They do not even convince other materialists, which is why there are so many rival theories. Searle has described the debate over the last 50 years as follows:

*A philosopher advances a materialist theory of the mind... He then encounters difficulties... Criticisms of the materialist theory usually take a more or less technical form, but, in fact, underlying the technical objections is a much deeper objection: the theory in question has left out some essential feature of the mind... And this leads to ever more frenzied attempts to stick with the materialist thesis.<sup>14</sup>*

The philosopher Galen Strawson, himself a materialist, is amazed by the willingness of so many of his fellow philosophers to deny the reality of their own experience:

*I think we should feel very sober, and a little afraid, at the power of human credulity, the capacity of human minds to be gripped by theory, by faith. For this particular denial is the strangest thing that has ever happened in the whole history*

*of human thought, not just the whole history of philosophy.<sup>15</sup>*

*Francis Crick admitted that the “astonishing hypothesis” was not proved. He conceded that a dualist view might become more plausible. But, he added, “There is always a third possibility: that the facts support a new, alternative way of looking at the mind–brain problem that is significantly different from the rather crude materialistic view that many neuroscientists hold today and also from the religious point of view. Only time, and much further scientific work, will enable us to decide.”<sup>16</sup>*

There is indeed a third way.

#### PANPSYCHIST ALTERNATIVES

Galen Strawson shares the frustration of many contemporary philosophers with the seemingly intractable problems of materialism and of dualism. He has come to the conclusion that there is only one way out. He argues that a consistent materialism must imply panpsychism, namely the idea that even atoms and molecules have a primitive kind of mentality or experience. (The Greek word *pan* means everywhere, and *psyche* means soul or mind.) Panpsychism does not mean that atoms are conscious in the sense that we are, but only that some aspects of mentality or experience are present in the simplest physical systems. More complex forms of mind or experience emerge in more complex systems.<sup>15</sup>

In 2006, the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* published a special issue entitled “Does materialism entail panpsychism?” with a target article by Strawson, and responses by 17 other philosophers and scientists. Some of them rejected his suggestion in favor of more conventional kinds of materialism, but all admitted that their favored kind of materialism was problematic.

Strawson made only a generalized, abstract case for panpsychism, with disappointingly few details as to how an electron or an atom could be said to have experiences. But like many other panpsychists, he made an important distinction between aggregates

of matter, like tables and rocks, and self-organizing systems like atoms, cells, and animals. He did not suggest that tables and rocks have any unified experience, though the atoms within them may have.<sup>15</sup> The reason for this distinction is that man-made objects like chairs or cars do not organize themselves, and do not have their own goals or purposes. They are designed by people and put together in factories. Likewise rocks are made up of atoms and crystals that are self-organizing, but external forces shape the rock as a whole: for example it may have been split from a larger rock as a boulder rolled down a mountain.

By contrast, in self-organizing systems, complex forms of experience emerge spontaneously. These systems are at the same time physical (non-experiential) and experiential, in other words they have experiences. As Strawson put it, "Once upon a time there was relatively unorganized matter with both experiential and non-experiential fundamental features. It organized into increasingly complex forms, both experiential and non-experiential, by many processes including evolution by natural selection."<sup>15</sup> Unlike Searle's attempt to explain consciousness by saying that it emerges from totally unconscious, insentient matter, Strawson's proposal is that more complex form of experience emerge from less complex ones. There is a difference of degree, but not of kind.

The eminent American philosopher Thomas Nagel has put forward a powerful argument for panpsychism in his recent book *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False* (2012).<sup>17</sup> He too frames it in an evolutionary context: "Each of our lives is a part of the lengthy process of the universe gradually waking up and becoming aware of itself."<sup>18</sup>

Panpsychism is not a new idea. Most people used to believe in it, and many still do. All over the world, traditional people saw the world around them as alive and in some sense conscious or aware: the planets, the stars, the earth, the plants, and the animals all had spirits or souls. Ancient Greek philosophy grew up in this context, although some of the earliest philosophers were hylozoists and rather than pan-psychists, that is, they saw all things as in some degree alive, without necessarily supposing that they had sensations or experiences. In medieval Europe,

philosophers and theologians took for granted that the world was full of animate beings. The plants and animals had souls, and the stars and planets were governed by intelligences. Today this attitude is usually rejected as "naive," or "primitive," or "superstitious." Searle described it as "absurd."<sup>19</sup>

In the United States, the pioneering psychologist William James (1842–1910) advocated a form of panpsychism in which individual minds and a hierarchy of lower and higher-order minds constituted the reality of the cosmos.<sup>20</sup> The philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) saw the physical and mental as different aspects of underlying reality: "All mind more or less partakes of the nature of matter... Viewing a thing from the outside... it appears as matter. Viewing it from the inside... it appears as consciousness."<sup>21</sup>

In France, the philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941) took this tradition of thought to a new level by emphasizing the importance of memory. All physical events contain a memory of the past, which is what enables them to endure. The unconscious matter of mechanistic physics was assumed by Bergson's contemporaries to persist unchanged until acted on by external forces; matter lived in an eternal instant, and had no time within it. Bergson argued that mechanistic physics treated changes cinematographically, as if there were a series of static, frozen moments. But for Bergson, this kind of physics was an abstraction that left out the essential feature of living nature. "Duration is essentially a continuation of what no longer exists into what does exist. This is real time, perceived and lived... Duration therefore implies consciousness; and we place consciousness at the heart of things for the very reason that we credit them with a time that endures."<sup>22</sup>

The leading panpsychist philosopher in the English-speaking world was Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947), who started his career as a mathematician at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he taught Bertrand Russell. Together they co-authored *Principia Mathematica* (1910–1913), one of the most important works in twentieth-century mathematical philosophy. Whitehead then developed a theory of relativity that made almost identical predictions to Einstein's, and both theories were confirmed by the

same experiments.

Whitehead was probably the first philosopher to recognize the radical implications of quantum physics. He realized that the wave theory of matter destroyed the old idea of material bodies as essentially spatial, existing at points in time, but without any time within them. According to quantum physics, every primordial element of matter is “an organized system of vibratory streaming of energy.”<sup>23</sup> A wave does not exist in an instant, it takes time; its waves connect the past and the future. He thought of the physical world as made up not of material objects but actual entities or events. An event is a happening or a becoming. It has time within it. It is a process, not a thing. As Whitehead put it, “An event in realizing itself displays a pattern.” The pattern “requires a duration involving a definite lapse of time, and not merely an instantaneous moment.”<sup>23</sup>

As Whitehead made clear, physics itself was pointing to the conclusion that Bergson had already reached. There is no such thing as timeless matter. All physical objects are processes that have time within them, an inner duration. Quantum physics shows that there is a minimum time period for events, because everything is vibratory, and no vibration can be instantaneous. The fundamental units of nature, including photons and electrons, are temporal as well as spatial. There is no “nature at an instant.”<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps the most astonishing and original feature of Whitehead's theory was his new perspective on the relationship between mind and body as a relationship in time. The usual way of conceiving this relationship is spatial: your mind is inside your body, while the physical world is outside. Your mind sees things from within; it has an inner life. Even from the materialist point of view, the mind is literally “inside” — inside the brain, insulated within the darkness of the skull. The rest of the body and the entire external world are “outside.”

By contrast, for Whitehead mind and matter are related as phases in a process. Time, not space, is the key to their relationship. Reality consists of moments in process, and one moment informs the next. The distinction between moments requires the experimenter to feel the difference between the moment of now and past or future moments. Every actuality is

a moment of experience. As it expires and becomes a past moment, it is succeeded by a new moment of “now,” a new subject of experience. Meanwhile the moment that has just expired becomes a past object for the new subject—and an object for other subjects too. Whitehead summed this up in the phrase, “Now subject, then object.”<sup>25</sup> Experience is always “now,” and matter is always “ago.” The link from the past to the present is physical causality, as in ordinary physics, and from the present to the past is feeling, or, to use Whitehead's technical term, “prehension,” meaning, literally, seizing, or grasping.

According to Whitehead, every actual occasion is, therefore, both determined by physical causes from the past, and by the self-creative, self-renewing subject that both chooses its own past and chooses among its potential futures. Through its prehensions it selects what aspects of the past it brings into its own physical being in the present, and also chooses among the possibilities that determine its future. It is connected to its past by selective memories, and connected to its potential future through its choices. Even the smallest possible processes, like quantum events, are both physical and mental; they are oriented in time. The direction of physical causation is from the past to the present, but the direction of mental activity runs the other way, from the present into the past through prehensions, and from potential and futures into to the present. There is thus a time-polarity between the mental and physical poles of an event: physical causation from past to present, and mental causation from present to past.

Whitehead was not proposing that atoms are conscious in the same way that we are, but that they have experiences and feelings. Feelings, emotions, and experiences are more fundamental than human consciousness, and every mental event is informed and causally conditioned by material events, which are themselves composed of expired experiences. Knowing can happen only because the past streams into the present, forming it and shaping it, and at the same time the subject chooses among the possibilities that help determine its future.<sup>25</sup>

Whitehead's philosophy is notoriously difficult to follow, especially in his key book *Process and Reality* (1929), but his insights about the temporal relation-



ship of mind and matter point to a way forward, and are well worth trying to understand, even if they are very abstract. One of his modern exponents, Christian de Quincey, has described his idea as follows:

*Think of reality as made up of countless gazillions of 'bubble moments,' where each bubble is both physical and mental—a bubble or quantum of sentient energy.... Each bubble exists for a moment and then pops! and the resulting 'spray' is the objective 'stuff' that composes the physical pole of the next momentary bubble... Time is our experience of the ongoing succession of these momentary bubbles of being (or bubbles of becoming) popping in and out of the present moment of now. We feel this succession of moments as the flow of the present slipping into the past, always replenished by new moments of 'now' from an apparently inexhaustible source we objectify as the future... The future does not exist except as potentials or possibilities in the present moment—in experience—which is always conditioned by the objective pressure of the past (the physical world). Subjectivity (consciousness, awareness) is what-it-feels-like to experience these possibilities, and choosing from them to create the next new moment of experience.<sup>26</sup>*

#### CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MINDS

There are at least two senses of the word unconscious. One means totally devoid of mind, experience, and feeling, and this is what materialists mean when they say matter is unconscious. Physicists and chemists treat the systems they study as unconscious in this absolute sense. But a very different meaning of “unconscious” is implied by the phrase “unconscious mind.” Most of our own mental processes are unconscious, including most of our habits. When driving a car we can carry on a conversation while our perceptions of the road and other vehicles affect our responses, without our being consciously aware of all our movements and choices. When I come to a familiar road junction, I may turn right automatically, because this is my habitual route. I am choosing among possibilities, but choosing on

the basis of habit. By contrast, if I am driving in an unfamiliar town and trying to find my way with the help of a map, my choice when I come to a junction depends on conscious deliberation. But only a small minority of our choices are conscious. Most of our behavior is habitual, and habits by their very nature work unconsciously.

Like humans, animals are largely creatures of habit. Yet the fact that they are not conscious of most of their actions—as we are not conscious of most of our own—does not mean they are mindless machines. They have a mental aspect as well as a physical aspect, and their mental aspect is shaped by their habits, feelings, and potentialities, among which they choose, unconsciously or consciously.

It may not make much sense to suggest that electrons, atoms, and molecules make conscious choices, but they may make unconscious choices on the basis of habits, just as we do and animals do. According to quantum theory, even elementary particles like electrons have many alternative future possibilities. The calculation of their behavior by physicists involves taking all their possible futures into account.<sup>27</sup> Electrons are physical in that they re-enact elements of their past; but they also have a mental pole in that they relate this re-enactment of the past to their future potentialities, which in some sense work backwards in time.

But can we meaningfully say that electrons have experiences, feelings and motivations? Can they be attracted towards one possible future, or repelled by another? The answer is “yes.” For a start, they are electrically charged; they “feel” the electric field around them; they are attracted towards positively charged bodies, and repelled by those with negative charges. Physicists model their behavior mathematically without supposing that their feelings, attractions, and repulsions are anything other than physical forces, or that their individually unpredictable behavior is governed by anything other than chance and probability. Materialists would say that only by fanciful metaphors can they be seen to have feelings or experience. But some physicists think differently, like David Bohm and Freeman Dyson. Bohm observed, “The question is whether matter is rather crude and mechanical or whether it gets more and more subtle

and becomes indistinguishable from what people have called mind.”<sup>28</sup> Freeman Dyson wrote,

*I think our consciousness is not just a passive epiphenomenon carried along by the chemical events in our brains, but is an active agent forcing the molecular complexes to make choices between one quantum state and another. In other words, mind is already inherent in every electron, and the processes of human consciousness differ only in degree but not in kind from the processes of choice between quantum states which we call ‘chance’ when they are made by an electron.*<sup>29</sup>

These are difficult questions, and raise all sorts of questions about the meaning of words like “feeling,” “experience,” and “attraction.” Are they metaphorical when applied to quantum systems? Perhaps. But we do not have a choice between metaphorical and non-metaphorical thinking. There are no metaphor-free zones in science. The whole of science is suffused with legal metaphors, as in “laws of nature,” materialist theories of mind-in-computer metaphors, and soon. But the issues are not merely literary or rhetorical, but scientific. As Bergson and Whitehead made clear, the mental and physical aspects of material bodies have different relationships to time and to causation.

### MINDS BEYOND BRAINS

If our minds are not just the activity of our brains, there is no need for them to be confined to the insides of our heads. As I argue in my book *Science Set Free*, our minds are extended in every act of perception, reaching even as far as the stars. Vision involves a two-way process: the inward movement of light into the eyes and the outward projection of images. What we see around us is in our minds but not in our brains. When we look at something, in a sense, our mind touches it. This may help to explain the sense of being stared at. Most people say they have felt when someone was looking at them from behind, and most people also claim to have made people turn round by looking at them. This ability to detect stares seems to be real, as shown in many scientific tests, and even seems to work through closed circuit television.

Minds are extended beyond brains not only in

space but also in time, and connect us to our own pasts through memory and to virtual futures, among which we choose. As discussed in *Science Set Free*, repeated failures to find memory traces fit well with the idea of memory as a resonant phenomenon, where similar past patterns of activity in the past affect present activities in minds and brains. Individual and collective memory both depend on resonance, but self-resonance from an individual's own past is more specific and hence more effective. Animal and human learning may be transmitted by morphic resonance across space and time. The resonance theory helps account for the ability of memories to survive serious damage to brains, and is consistent with all-known kinds of remembering. This theory predicts that if animals, say rats, learn a new trick in one place, say Harvard, rats all over the world should be able to learn it faster thereafter. There is already evidence that this actually happens. Similar principles apply to human learning. For example, if millions of people do standard tests, like IQ tests, they should become progressively easier, on average,



for other people to do. Again, this seems to be what happens. Individual memory and collective memory are different aspects of the same phenomenon and differ in degree, not in kind.

And if minds are not confined to brains in space or in time, it becomes much easier to understand how psychic phenomena like telepathy might fit into an expanded, post-materialist science. Here I have space only to summarize my conclusions from an extended discussion in *Science Set Free*.

Most people claim to have had telepathic experiences. Numerous statistical experiments have shown that information can be transmitted from person to person in a way that cannot be explained in terms of the normal senses. Telepathy typically happens between people who are closely bonded, like mothers and children, spouses and close friends. Many nursing mothers seem to be able to detect when their babies are in distress when they are miles away. The commonest kind of telepathy in the modern world occurs in connection with telephone calls when people think of someone who then rings, or who just know who is calling. Numerous experimental tests have shown that this is a real phenomenon. It does not fall off with distance. Social animals seem to be able to keep in touch with members of their group at a distance telepathically, and domesticated animals like dogs, cats, horses, and parrots often pick up their owners' emotions and intentions at a distance as shown in experiments with dogs and parrots.

Other psychic abilities include premonitions and precognitions, as shown by their anticipation of earthquakes, tsunamis, and other disasters by many species of animals. Human premonitions usually occur in dreams or through intuitions. In experimental research on human presentiments, future emotional events seem able to work "backwards" in time to produce detectable physiological effects.

#### SCIENTIFIC FUTURES

The sciences are entering a new phase. The materialist ideology that has ruled them since the 19th century is out of date. All 10 of its essential doctrines have been superseded.

The sciences will have to change for another reason

too: they are now global. Mechanistic science and the materialist ideology grew up in Europe, and were strongly influenced by the religious disputes that obsessed Europeans from the 17th century onwards. But these preoccupations are alien to cultures and traditions in many other parts of the world.

In 2011, the worldwide expenditure on scientific and technological research and development was more than \$1000 billion, of which China spent \$100 billion.<sup>30</sup> Asian

countries, especially China and India, now produce enormous numbers of science and engineering graduates. In 2007, at the B.Sc. level there were 2,500,000 science and engineering graduates in India and 1,500,000 in China<sup>31</sup> compared with 515,000 in the US.<sup>32</sup> In addition, many of those studying in the US and Europe are from other countries: in 2007, nearly a third of the graduate students in science and engineering in the US were foreign, with the majority from India, China, and Korea.<sup>33</sup>

Yet the sciences as taught in Asia, Africa, the Islamic countries, and elsewhere are still packaged in an ideology shaped by their European past. Materialism gains its persuasive power from the technological applications of science. But the successes of these applications do not prove that this ideology is true. Penicillin will go on killing bacteria, jet planes will keep on flying, and mobile telephones will still work if scientists move on to wider views of nature.

No one can foresee how the sciences will evolve, but I believe recognizing that "science" is not one thing will facilitate their development. "Science" has given way to the sciences. By moving beyond physicalism, the status of physics has changed. By freeing the sciences from the ideology of materialism, new opportunities for debate and dialog open up, and so do new possibilities for research.

#### by Rupert Sheldrake, PhD

Rupert Sheldrake, a biologist and author, is best known for his hypothesis of morphic fields and morphic resonance, which leads to a vision of a living, developing universe with its own inherent memory. He worked in developmental biology at Cambridge University, where he was a Fellow of Clare College. He was then Principal Plant Physiologist at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), in Hyderabad, India. From 2005 to 2010 he was Director of the Perrott-Warrick project, funded from Trinity College, Cambridge.

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## CRESCENT-VISIBILITY AND HIJRI-CALENDAR: THE LIMITATIONS OF MEDIocre ERUDITION

*by K. Meziane and A. M. Hamza*

**T**HE QUESTION OF TIME reckoning has always played a central role in human history in general, and has ever since the advent of Islam preoccupied the best minds among Muslim astronomers for its relevance to religious practice. While the timings of the five daily canonical prayers are determined by the relative position of the Sun with respect to a local horizon, the determination

of the new Lunar Hijri month relies on the visibility of the first thin lunar crescent following a Luni-Solar conjunction. To date, the scientific prediction of the visibility of the first crescent remains difficult and challenging for various technical reasons. To be able to predict its visibility, scientists have to first resolve the celestial mechanics problems: a daunting task that can be performed using high performance computing. The next challenge is not as trivial as the first one for it involves the reflection of light off the Moon and its transmission through the Earth's atmosphere, a highly variable and turbulent medium that affects the propagation and absorption of light. The final limitation is directly connected to human physiology

since one requires naked-eye observation. If the dynamics of the Moon-Earth system is now known and understood with a remarkable precision, predicting the physical state of the atmospheric medium over any given time of interest is obviously a complex and difficult task for anyone familiar with the field of fluid dynamics and atmospheric physics. This in turn leads to the logical conclusion that a crescent visibility-based calendar is unfeasible since it requires real time observations. By combining celestial mechanics computations with atmospheric radiative transfer conditions and naked-eye observations, one can clearly get a feel for the amount of uncertainty involved in predicting first crescent visibility.

Our purpose in the present article is not to develop a critical scientific assessment of the way the crescent visibility question has been addressed in the academic literature over the past decades; this is neither the place nor the proper format for a technical report. We, however, examine how the scientific results are employed and manipulated by individuals, basically amateur astronomers, who have little or no science practice that would enable the grasp of subtleties embedded in the academic research on the various relevant topic. With the virtual world of the Internet, irreducible complex and sophisticated topics have been reduced to fit the “popular” demand, and pre-

sented with fundamental loopholes that we would precisely like to address here. Moreover, this very critique raises some fundamental points scattered in the literature that in no way contribute towards elucidating the crescent-visibility problem and its solution while at the same time add confusion where none is needed. What follows is in no way a comprehensive review of the field or for that matter a full critique, and we do not pretend to hold the master key to all the problems raised below. However, we are fully aware that some of these problems need to be addressed thoroughly and scholarly. Moreover, we believe in full academic transparency, and our short critique is meant to bring the whole field related to crescent visibility to an academic level.

Our critique is focused solely on the scientific component of the crescent visibility challenge; we are in no way qualified to comment on the legal aspect. The various schools of jurisprudence have over the past centuries clearly identified their respective positions. However, we should point out that for this problem to be resolved, modern jurisconsults have to familiarize themselves with the tools of modern science: the theoretical and the experimental ones.

#### *PROBLEMATIC*

The determination and observation of the first lunar crescent is of primordial importance in Islam. Ever since the birth of Islam, Muslims of all walks of life, on the eve of religious events, would carefully





scan the western horizon at sunset hoping to catch a glimpse of the thin crescent that would signal the end of a lunar month and the beginning of a new one. In the absence of observation, the beginning of the next lunar month is postponed by a full day. It is absolutely clear that the setup of a lunar calendar cannot be based on visibility reports of the first thin crescent; this would mean waiting for the 29th day of each lunar month before deciding about the start of the next one. This approach is obviously problematic since it does not have any predictive potential: a necessary condition for the setup of any calendar. This state of affairs did not prevent scholars from attempting to tackle the problem and propose solutions with very limited predictive potential for reasons to be elucidated. The proposed solutions available to the general public have not been able to resolve the unfortunate controversy that arises year after year on the eve of each and every Muslim holiday. This in turn has put government officials under a great deal of pressure given the fact that in our modern times we are lost in the zoo of information looking for the Phoenix of knowledge. This “état de fait” is due to a number of factors that we barely detail below. But before embarking on the scientific study of the problem at hand, which we have to address eventually in a longer publication, we would like to bring forth one important source of confusion, namely the ‘reproductive flourishing’ of the number of individual contributors to the question related to crescent visibility. These contributors have in general very few scientific credentials if none, and seem to have become internet stars. However, we have no doubt that in most cases the intention is noble, but we ought to remind those contributors that this matter necessitates scholarship for it is of utmost importance: it deals with the religious affairs of Muslims all around the world. The use of the available technical literature requires some mastering of various fields of research; indeed, we have observed that the web is littered with information that is clearly misleading since it does not reflect the scientific consistency and expectancy of most of the refereed literature, and in most cases fails to convey the consequences and the validity limits of the studies reported. Another source of confusion,

which will not be addressed in this short paper, is related to reports by trustworthy witnesses of observation of the lunar crescent under unfavourable atmospheric physical conditions. The polemic raised by such reports, when diffused by mass media and when reaching the general public, can only take the level of confusion to yet another height.

The apparent enthusiasm sparked by the question of the crescent visibility during the last few decades is not synonymous of significant progress. Visibility criteria were developed and put forward in order to bring some beneficial solutions. These criteria, as they can be used in practice, are all geometric in nature except the one introduced by Schaefer, i.e. based on the relative position of the Moon with respect to the Sun. One has to determine a critical angular separation between the two luminaries that allows a sufficient contrast therefore enabling the observation of the new-born crescent in the western sky. For example, the Danjon<sup>1,2</sup> limit poses that the lunar crescent cannot be seen with a naked-eye if the angular distance between the Moon and the Sun (ARCL, Arc of Light) is less than  $\sim 7$  degrees. Although Danjon’s limit remains a solid empirical threshold (violations of Danjon’s limit are rare, and in general should be taken with caution), yet it does constitute a sufficient condition for visibility. In general, the geometry-based criteria can be illustrated in what we call the DAZ-ARCVvisibility curve discussed below. Other criteria that appear to be not directly related to angular distance, such as the time lag (moonset and sunset time difference) or the Moon age, are of the same nature nevertheless. The present report is by no means a comprehensive assessment of the scientific progress on the question. However, we focus our critique on the popularized geometrical argument and criterion, which carries potential impacts on insitutions throughout the Islamic world. Through our analysis, we raise at the same time the main limitation of the criterion that is occulted by the amateur astronomers.

#### THE DAZ-ARCL VISIBILITY CURVES

<sup>1</sup> Danjon, A., *l’Astronomie*, 46, 57, 932.

<sup>2</sup> Danjon, A., *Bull. Soc. Astron. France*, 50, 57, 1936

The crescent visibility curve is designed to help separate between regions characterized by a set of variables (altitude, azimuth, ...) where the crescent is potentially visible, and regions where it cannot be seen. This approach was used by Muslim astronomers during the classical era to make visibility predictions. The most simple of these visibility curves is that proposed by Al-Khwarizmi<sup>3</sup>, and which relies on a single variable. Ever since Fotheringham<sup>4</sup> published his pioneering study in 1910 on lunar crescent visibility, the standard was set for the generation and production of visibility curves. Indeed, all visibility curves that appear in the modern literature use the relative altitude of the Moon with respect to the Sun (ARCV) and the relative azimuth (DAZ). In practice, both DAZ and ARCV are calculated for a given time at sunset, and at a given location. A different marker is then assigned to each (DAZ-ARCV) vector based on whether the crescent is visible or not. To be visible, a small (large) DAZ requires a high (low) altitude ARCV. After collecting a large and significant number of observations, a scatter plot is produced in the DAZ-ARCV plane. A visual inspection of the scatter plot is then relied upon to draw/insert a line, a hypothetical line  $ARCV=f(DAZ)$ , separating the data into a set of points reflecting crescent visibility and a second set reflecting the non-visibility. The line is monotonically regular, and one should expect that from this subjective insertion one is bound to end up with some discordant observations. Moreover, this hypothetical line has no physical justification, and the points that lie on it do not necessarily satisfy the geometrical constraints of the problem. The important point to take home is the fact that the visibility on the scatter plot is based solely on a visual inspection and therefore becomes highly subjective. Nowhere in the literature has this point been addressed.

In order to increase the visibility potential, the DAZ-ARCV curves are extended to include aided-observations using binoculars and telescopes. The resulting visibility curve is nothing but the naked-eye visibility curve shifted in the y-direction (ordinate

direction). Again, this artifice is nowhere justified. It implicitly assumes that the used instruments operate like a naked-eyed with an enhanced optical power only. The actual effects, which are inherent to the instrument characteristics, are rarely questioned or addressed properly. Worse, the data collection used to make the visibility curves is built from observations made with various instruments a priori having different optical characteristics. In the case of binocular equipment, issues related to calibration are completely ignored or not documented properly. It is clear, from the few arguments mentioned above, that a solid scientific experimental procedure need to be followed in order to justify the use of the "aided visibility curve".

For a marginal Earth-Moon-Sun configuration, where uncertainties are the highest, the DAZ-ARCV curves are of a minor interest and sometimes even useless. For this critical configuration, the criteria of geometrical nature reach their own limit. For this reason, in particular, there exist in the literature several visibility criteria with various degrees of reliability, which basically constitute a source of disagreement in the prediction, although often minor. In reality, and at this level of magnitude (relative), weather and atmospheric conditions predominate; the Celestial Mechanics problem becomes secondary and the atmospheric radiative transfer problem becomes dominant. The refraction, absorption and diffraction of light reflected by the Moon and propagating through the Earth's atmosphere becomes the main problem to resolve. This kind of treatment was begun by B. Schaefer whose work is not available in the literature for an assessment. We have here identified the heart of the problem, which constitutes the main scientific obstacle to the elaboration of the Hijri calendar. The problem is accentuated because that the marginal configuration described above occurs on a regular basis.

#### *THE LUNAR DATE LINE: A GROSS APPROXIMATION*

The Malaysian astronomer Mohamed Ilyas<sup>5</sup> is one

<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, E. S., and M. Janjanian, The crescent visibility table in Al-Khwarizmi's *Zij. Centaurus* 11, 73-78, 1965.

<sup>4</sup> Fotheringham, J. K., On the smallest visible phase of the Moon, *Mon. Not. Roy. Ast. Soc.*, 70, 527, 1910.

<sup>5</sup> Mohamed Ilyas, *Islamic Calendar. Times & Qibla, Berita*, Kuala Lumpur, 1984.

of few Muslims, in the modern era, who has made a genuine technical effort to address the crescent visibility problem. In his seminal book, “*Islamic Calendar, Times & Qibla*,” he developed a modern formulation in terms of mathematics of reckonings related to Islamic rituals. Among Muslim scholars, Ilyas is considered as one of the pioneers in the field of crescent visibility. Ilyas<sup>6,7</sup> introduced in 1982 the Lunar Date Line (*LDL*), a line that separates regions on the Earth’s surface where the lunar crescent could be seen from those regions where it remains invisible. Similar to the change date line (*CDL*), the Lunar Date Line (*LDL*) concept could be used as a reference for the determination of the monthly sequence in the *Hijri* calendar: In regions located West of the *LDL* a new Lunar month starts while in those located East of the *LDL* one more day has to pass before a new Hijri month starts. However, a visibility criterion has to be selected first for this *LDL* insertion to become feasible, and as a consequence, there are as many *LDLs* as criteria. The *LDL* is rather a didactic visual tool which is not meant to address the fundamental question of the crescent visibility. In fact, under critical conditions the *LDL* is useless and even misleading. The Doggett-Schaefer Moonwatch campaign<sup>8</sup> showed that the uncertainty of the *LDL* could reach 1050 in longitude, almost 1/3 of the planet! Still, this has not prevented the wide use of the *LDL* by neophytes who are quick to the release button for the instant display on the net. Globally, the *LDL* reflects the eastward motion of the Moon with respect to the horizon, which renders western regions more favorable than the eastern parts for crescent observation.

#### ERUDITION EXPOSED

The establishment of an Islamic Lunar calendar has always been a focal point of interest for Muslims, and this has in turn led many Muslim scientists and

respected scholars to address this need and propose practical and reliable solutions. In this section, we present what we believe is a fair and critical assessment of a sample of papers and works published by Muslims on various platforms related to the net. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate that the treatments and the solutions proposed and found in the literature often reflect the lack of erudition and depth with which the question of the crescent visibility has been presented. We believe that this very shallow handling of this important question constitutes part of the problem. In no way do we intend to alter the integrity of the people named below, our concern is strictly academic, and our criticism is aimed at elevating the standard to a true academic one. We have approached this exercise as a refereeing task for a professional academic journal.

#### 1. Khalid Shaukat

For years, Khalid Shaukat has been running the widely popular moonsighting.com website, which provides very useful information on prayer times, moon visibility and other matters related to Astronomy and Islam. Data on crescent visibility are based on Shaukat’s own criterion. What makes the case of Shaukat astonishing is that his criterion has not been published in the peer review literature, and is nowhere to be found, not even on his own website, and we are not the first ones to report this (see for example Leong Wen Xing). We find ourselves in a situation where no scientific assessment of Shaukat’s work can be carried out, and we have no way to find out how Khalid Shaukat derived his criterion. We have no doubt about the sincerity of Khalid Shaukat. However, we find this situation completely incongruous since this information should be available to the public, and a full assessment of the criterion has to be carried before adopting it in one form or

6 Mohamed Ilyas, Earliest global visibility of the new Moon 1981-85, *J. R. Ast. Soc. Canada*, 76, 371, 1982a.

7 Mohamed Ilyas, New Moon’s first visibility: review of Astronomy and current Islamic calendrical practices, *Islamic Culture*, 56, 43, 1982b.

8 Doggett and Schaefer, Lunar visibility, *Icarus*, 107, p 388-403, 1994

9 Leong Wen Xin, Lunar Visibility and the Islamic Calendar, 2001. On page 23 of his document, L. W. Xin writes: “We do not know the exact criteria that led to the figures used above. Nevertheless, Khalid Shaukat is a research scientist since 1967 and has been a consultant on moon sighting for the Islamic Society of North America and had developed a website on moon sighting (<http://www.moonsighting.com>). His criterion has been one of those more reliable one”.

another or rejecting it.

## 2. Mohamed Odeh

Odeh is the vice-president of the International Crescent Observatory Project (ICOP), an active group whose main objective is the collection of lunar data. Odeh is quite active on the web, and many public institutions from around the Muslim and Arab countries frequently solicit his expertise on the crescent visibility, and other astronomy related matters. He even set up a criterion for crescent visibility labeled with his name (Odeh's criterion). The criterion was derived from work published by Odeh in 2004<sup>10</sup>. Odeh's criterion lies within the DAZ-ARCV family of curves, and is based on a collection of 737 observations of which about half were undertaken by ICOP. In his study, Odeh used topocentric values for the Moon Age (Age), the arc of vision (ARCV), the arc of Light (ARCL) as well as the width of the crescent moon (W). Odeh never explains in his 2004 publication<sup>10</sup> why he used topocentric variables rather than the universal geocentric ones. The choice of a topocentric framework results in a meridian-dependent Age of the Moon (for example), which renders the context completely confusing, and one wonders about the underlying physical interest for this unnecessary transformation. Moreover, the positions of the Moon (such as ARCV) used to fit the data are calculated (Celestial Mechanics) NOT observed. So, Odeh for some obscure reasons replaced the calculated geocentric variables with the topocentric ones, which are also calculated. Nowhere in his 2004 paper does Odeh discuss how topocentric variables provide a better fit to the observations. The use of topocentric variables ought to be justified considering that no similar previous studies since Fotheringham (1910) have utilized them. Moreover, there is another striking ingredient in Odeh's paper. To carry his study, the author followed the footsteps of Yallop's note published in 1998<sup>11</sup>. To determine the critical visibility curve, a conventional procedure

is used since Fotheringham (1910) in which a table (ARCV, W) or equivalently (ARCV, DAZ) is introduced to separate positive from negative observations. The numerical values given on the table are afterwards fitted using a third degree polynomial in lunar width W (or DAZ). Yallop's fit provides the following model:

$$q = (\text{ARCV} - (-0.1018W_3 + 0.7319W_2 - 6.3226W + 11.8371))/10$$

while Odeh's model is given by:

$$V = \text{ARCV} - (-0.1018W_3 + 0.7319W_2 - 6.3226W + 7.1651)$$

Except for the y-intercept, it appears that the numerical values of the coefficients in Odeh's model are quite striking: Odeh's findings are, to the fifth digit, EXACTLY 10 times higher than Yallop's (we should point out that Yallop's division by 10 was introduced for convenience to confine the values of q between -1 and 1). Assuming that there is no error of any kind, Odeh's critical visibility curve is just a translation (along ARCV-axis) of Yallop's one. This situation is quite suspicious since both Yallop and Odeh used different sets of observations and therefore one would expect the fits not to be quasi identical, not to the fifth digit. Worse, Odeh used topocentric ARCV while Yallop did not, i.e. the y-variable is not exactly the same. It appears to us that Odeh's fit is bogus or at least needs a very serious clarification. Finally, the third degree polynomial fit in W is not consistent with Table V of the paper and on which Odeh constructed his new criterion. Odeh also claims that his criterion is precise, meaning that there is an improvement when compared to previous similar studies. However, Odeh does not provide any quantitative argument to support his claim.

## 3. Nidhal Guessoum's bi-zonal calendar

To remedy the question of the crescent visibility, Guessoum<sup>12</sup> went further by calling for a bi-zonal calendar, which separates the ancient world (Asia-

<sup>10</sup> M. Odeh, New Criterion for Lunar Crescent Visibility, *Experimental Astronomy*, 18, p39-64, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Yallop, A Method for Predicting the First Sighting of the New Crescent Moon, *NAO Technical note*, No69, 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Guessoum, Two-Zone solution

Europe+Africa) from the American continent. Guessoum criterion can be formulated as follows:

*“The new month begins in both areas if the conjunction occurs before dawn at Mecca. If the conjunction occurs between the dawn of Mecca and noon GM, the new month begins in the American zone to be postponed for the day after in the ancient world”.*

Guessoum labels his solution “Kepler solution” echoing the Copernican revolution, which dismissed the complicated epicycles used in the middle age to model the planetary motion around Earth to replace it by a heliocentric system. In reality, Guessoum’s criterion remains solely based on a geometric argument with no relevance to the problem he set himself to dismiss. Guessoum does not elaborate on his rule and we are consequently left unable to make any technical assessment of his work. What follows is a critique mainly based on what Guessoum published on the net and made available on various websites. We have combed the professional academic literature to no avail.

First, switching from Mecca to Greenwich meridian seems a bit injudicious or even heteroclitic. In addition, using *Fajr* as a reference instant is ambiguous. Moreover, Guessoum claims that 73% of the observations comply with the criterion. Is it assumed that a visibility criterion was adopted? Also, what about the 27% of cases left (basically 1 out of 4), a score that dismisses any claim for an authentic calendar. As presented, Guessoum’s solution appears completely inconsistent since it relates his bi-zonal criterion with the observations without any physical base. For example, he does not explain why using the Mecca meridian, although symbolically understandable though not legally justified, leads to a better result. This inconsistency could be the source of serious problems. For example, the length of the same month could be different whether you are in Zone 1 or Zone 2. A reliable calendar cannot be built only on observations whose validity is questionable, and it is far more preferable to rely on sound and understood physics.

Guessoum’s criterion is just an artifice to predict

the beginning of a month and by no means forms a basis for a calendar. In fact, any other meridian reference will provide similar outcomes. An authentic calendar possesses resources to include deviant or eccentric situations. Testing the reliability of a calendar in terms of statistics is not pertinent for as far as academic standard requirements are concerned.

#### *A SHORT STORY TO MEDITATE ON*

In 1572, following a recommendation of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the newly elected Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585) had the task to reform the Julian calendar, which was enforced back then. The first steps taken by the Pope were to designate Aloysius Lilius, an astronomer from Naples, and later the German Jesuit multidisciplinary scholar Christopher Clavius, to lead a scientific group (committee of experts) to address the question of the Julian calendar and its shortcomings. For pedagogical and instructive reasons, we briefly remind the reader what the reform was all about. Although the Julian calendar accounts for the leap year, which was applied every 4 years, a gap (due to a forward drift with respect to the tropical year) of 0,0078 day still occurs after every year. Ignoring this “error” would lead after 1000 years (for example) to an accumulation of a drift of 7.8 days or 3.12 days after 400 years. To overcome this problem, Gregorian reform suggested skipping the leap year for secular years that are not divisible by 400 (such 1700, 1800). This is not the end of the story. After this judicious adjustment, the Gregorian calendar still leaves a (forward) gap of 0.0004 day after each year, which gives an accumulation of one full day after 3333 years at which time the current calendar will end up with one more extra day. Since the current calendar began in 1582, the month of February of year 4915 (1582+3333) has been set to include 27 days only. This story illustrates how handling a calendar is a very serious issue and cannot be left to “apprentice sorcerers”. Moreover, although Pop Gregory XIII was an expert in canon law, it did not prevent him to carry one the most important reform in human history, one that is widely used today. The Pope was certain that the issue of the calendar raised then by the council could be resolved by science only.



Although astronomers such as Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler and the Catholic princes of Europe hailed the reform, many Protestants see in it the work of the Antichrist and refuse to accept it. More than a historical event, the council of Trent is considered as a bifurcation point from the medieval to the classical Church, and one of the most important ecumenical council in Catholic history. Something to meditate at some point !

In conclusion, we have stressed above some science-related elements that prevent the elaboration of a Hijri calendar based solely on geometric arguments. We did not evoke the current attitude of religious scholars including the jurists, vis-a-vis this very question. This obviously cannot be ignored given their influence on Islamic institutions throughout the Muslim world. We do not consider ourselves experts in the field of jurisprudence, but we, however, believe that any current legal opinion should not ignore the scientific progress realized on the question

of crescent visibility. One cannot use sophisticated communication devices on real time, on a global scale, and deny at the same time that science has its claim when it comes time reckoning. If vehicle-size spacecrafts can be monitored while located several Astronomical Units from Earth, it means that an underlying reality exists and it cannot simply be refuted using legal arguments. However, we have noticed that over the past few years, Islamic institutions from around the world have started to reject reports of crescent observation “occurring” before the luni-solar conjunction; a sign of a significant progress in the attitude of many religious scholars.

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## HOW CLOSE ARE THE ROHINGYA IN MYANMAR TO MASS GENOCIDE?

*by Dr Azeem Ibrahim*

**G**ENOCIDE AND MASS MURDER stem from a complex set of circumstances that collectively legitimizes violence against a specific group. But these circumstances still need to be quite extraordinary. Despite the claims of ethnic or religious ideologues, intergroup harmony has in fact been the norm for most of human history. Yes, group differences on the grounds of ethnicity or religious belief can, and often do, lead to tensions between communities. If sufficiently serious and if no external authority intervenes, these tensions can spill over into localized acts of violence. But even when such local acts of violence flare up, they rarely produce something that could be defined as genocide.

The role of local and national political leaders

in Myanmar in stoking anti-Rohingya sentiment is equally important to the situation there. Historically, the Rohingya - who account for an estimated 1 million to 1.3 million people of the total population of 53 million or more - became a target group as a convenient “enemy within” for a succession of leaders of the military junta, which governed the country for most of its history. In World War II, Japan invaded the area. The Rohingya remained loyal to their British colonial overlords, while many Burmese nationalists — many of whom would go on to form the Burmese military after the country gained independence — sided with the Japanese in their struggle for national emancipation. After the war in 1947, but before Burma gained independence in 1948, many of the Rohingya who had fought for the British in the war formed a separate army and sought to incorporate the state of Arakan into the newly independent East Pakistan to the north. This painted them as traitors to the Burmese state in the eyes of the military for many decades afterward.

But this was also very convenient for the military establishment. The perceived constant threat from enemies within, such as the Rohingya but also many

other more belligerent border tribes, as well as from enemies without, where every powerful country in the world is actively feared, has sustained the oppressive and otherwise not very popular military administration in power since 1948 for most of Burma's history.

Of all the “enemies” of the Burmese state, the Rohingya are perhaps the most unlucky because they are the most visible minority: They are the largest Muslim community in a country that is overwhelmingly Buddhist, but they also have darker skins than any other ethnic group in the country. These factors contributed a lot toward the way in which the paranoid narrative that the military pushed caught on with the rest of the population. Slowly, the fear of existential threats crystalized around the Rohingya as the ultimate enemies in the minds of significant portions of Burmese society. Today, many consider the Rohingya to be some kind of vanguard of an international Islamist conspiracy to convert everyone to Islam and destroy Myanmar's Buddhist heritage. The Rohingya have attracted all this fear and loathing even though they have been one of the least violent and troublesome of the country's minority ethnic groups since 1948. Many other border tribes, such as the Shan, have been in almost constant rebellion since 1948 and would certainly constitute more plausible threats. Yet because of their faith and race, the Rohingya elicit much more fear and distrust in the popular imagination.

The word “Rohingya” wields power because it carries the torch of historical truth that dissolves the impossibly contrived case for ethnic cleansing, linking the Rohingya with the British Raj. This is why those who would carry out ethnic cleansing in Myanmar fear it.

But the most important reason for giving no ground to the extremists' revisionist history is that the word “Rohingya” is historically documented in the region prior to the British Raj. Muslims have lived in the region from the 7th century, alongside Hindus and Buddhists, according to an assessment by U.K. Min. Before 1824, the British referred to the region as Rohang and those who lived there as Rohingyas. Later reports from the 19th century, including the 1852 *Account of the Burman Empire*,

*Compiled from the Works of Colonel Symes, Major Canning, Captain Cox, Dr. Leyden, Dr. Buchanan, Calcutta, D'Rozario and Co*, refer to how the local Muslims called themselves “Rovingaw” or “Roonga.” Likewise, a 1799 study of languages spoken in the Burmese area divides the natives of Arakan state between Yakain and Roonga.

The *Classical Journal of 1811* has a comparative list of numbers in many East and Central Asian languages, identifying three spoken in the “Burmah Empire,” and distinguishes between the Rohingya and the Rakhine as the main ethnic groups in the region. Likewise, Roonga is structurally different to Bengali. A German compendium of languages of the wider region once again mentions the existence of the Rohingya as an ethnic group and separate language in 1815.

This is the history that the ethnic cleansers and their apologists are trying to obscure. They claim that the “Bengalis” invented the term “Rohingya” to hide an illegitimate Bengali background. And this is why the term “Rohingya” posits a threat for them. The word is in the history books – the same books showing that the area has been multi-ethnic and multi-confessional for well over a millennium.

But today politicians and military leaders from the central government no longer drive the narrative of fear and hatred toward the Rohingya. Rather, it is driven primarily by local politicians in Rakhine state (previously known as Arakan) from the Rakhine ethnic group, as well as by a strong contingent of local Buddhist monks, especially those associated with the 969 Movement, who seem intent on removing the Rohingya from the land of their birth both on ethnic and religious grounds. Yet the political leaders of the central government continue to be at least



passively complicit with these efforts, largely on the assumption that attacks on the Rohingya are by now quite popular with the people of Myanmar.

Producing the conditions for genocide requires a cultural shift to slowly legitimize and normalize the framework used to justify systematic discrimination, and eventually systematic murder, on the basis of identity, while the perpetrators test the limits of what the wider population deems acceptable at regular intervals. Thus genocide never emerges from an individual outburst of rage and violence. It requires long-term development of cultural and institutional conditions to organize and sustain violence on a large scale. Furthermore, it takes very special conditions for the wider population to stomach that level of violence and not rise up against the perpetrators. This is why genocide is rare, because in most situations, these necessary conditions cannot be met. People may have periodic tensions and conflicts with their neighbors, but almost always simply revert back to living with them with the usual degree of give and take. These interactions inevitably deconstruct the ideological myths about the “other,” as normal human empathy takes its course and builds bridges across chasms of mistrust.

Unfortunately in Myanmar, all these cultural conditions are already in place. The chasms of hatred and mistrust between communities are wider than ever, with local politicians and extremist monks pushing them even wider. United to End Genocide observed in a 2014 report, *Marching to Genocide in Burma*, that Myanmar fits almost all the preconditions for genocide, more than any other place on earth. The situation has since gotten worse, as 2015’s migration crisis amply demonstrated.



There is very little in the internal political dynamics of Myanmar to give us hope that the situation could get better any time soon. In fact, if there is a direction of travel, it is farther down the road toward genocide. But international opinion does not acknowledge this. Partly, this stems from a basic ignorance of the situation of the Rohingya, and also of its underlying historical causes. And partly, this stems from the recent parliamentary election success of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the party of Nobel Peace Prize laureate and democracy campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi. In 2008, after the devastation of Cyclone Nargis and an internal political crisis, the military establishment was forced to change the constitution and start moving toward a democratic system. Although progress has been painfully slow, the main opposition to the military establishment for almost three decades has finally managed to win a quasi-democratic election for parliament in 2015 and form a majority government.

This may prompt us to assume that things will get better, that a democratic government in Myanmar must be like Western governments, and thus could not possibly allow the dire oppression of the Rohingya to continue unabated, and that Suu Kyi would certainly stand up and protect these people as the effective leader of the new civilian government. This is what Western political leaders seem intent on believing. Unfortunately, this is just wishful thinking.

First, there is the issue of Suu Kyi herself. She is keenly aware that much of her political capital comes from the very good international press she has received over the years. But on the issue of the Rohingya, she has long been evasive. Whenever international journalists have pressed her on the issue, she has given boilerplate responses and platitudes about the need to look after the rights and interests of all minorities in Myanmar. For example, in an interview with *The Washington Post* in June, she said: “The protection of rights of minorities is an issue which should be addressed very, very carefully and as quickly and effectively as possible, and I’m not sure the government is doing enough about it.” But elsewhere, and especially when talking to a home audience, she conforms with the narrative imposed by extremists: She would not even speak the word

“Rohingya,” and instead refers to them as “Bengalis,” thus acquiescing to Buddhist nationalist propaganda that the Rohingya are not an indigenous people, but rather illegitimate immigrants who should be deported to Bangladesh, or any Muslim country that would have them.

Secondly, there is the issue that Rakhine state politics are different from national politics. In part there is a greater degree of direct military rule. But also, the effective political opposition to the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) is not the NLD but an extremist regional party, which changed its name multiple times, from the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party (RNDP) to the Rakhine National Party (RNP), and finally now to the Arakan National Party (ANP). This regional party, in all its incarnations, was heavily implicated in the 2012 and 2013 massacres of the Rohingya and has regularly called for their expulsion. According to its political platform, it aims to “represent the interests of Rakhine people in Rakhine (Arakan) state and the Yangon region.” In other words, it is a self-declared ethnocentric, xenophobic and racist party. And it hates the Rohingya with a burning passion — for having a different skin color, and most of all, for having a different religion (Islam). Throughout 2012, party leader Dr. U Aye Maung prominently called for the segregation and then expulsion of the Rohingya, just as the first waves of mass violence enveloped Rakhine state. His party demanded that “Bengalis must be segregated and settled in separate, temporary places so that the Rakhines and Bengalis are not able to mix together in villages and towns in Rakhine state.” He subsequently argued for the arming of the Rakhine community so they can protect themselves from the supposed threat posed by the Rohingya. The ANP now controls 22 of 47 seats in the local legislative chamber of Rakhine state, and it is by far the largest party. There are 12 military appointees, and the third-largest party is the NLD with nine seats.

Lastly, Suu Kyi is politically allied with many leaders of the ANP and the 969 Movement who instigate and lead the attacks on the Rohingya. The democratic opposition movement in the late 1980s that gave birth to the NLD started out as an alliance of monks and students opposed to the excesses of

the military regime. Many of those monks are the same Buddhist nationalist hardliners who are driving the animosity toward the Rohingya today. As long as the military considers the Rohingya a convenient “enemy within” and uses them as scapegoats for many of the country’s problems to shore up its own power base, it won’t have an interest in permanently removing the Rohingya from Myanmar. The Rohingya can only serve the enemy image purpose while they are still around and a plausible threat. But this restraint does not apply to the extremist elements of the pro-democracy movement. They are not using the Rohingya as a convenient enemy to rally support. They simply hate the Rohingya with a burning passion and want to see them completely removed from Myanmar. In this, the monks coordinate well with the extremist Rakhine ethnic elements, who, as nominally opposed to the military regime, also come under Suu Kyi’s wider political alliance.

When all these factors are taken into account, we see that the recent election success of the NLD does not in fact bode well at all for the Rohingya. In light of the internal political dynamics, the power shifts in the wake of the recent elections may in fact have removed the last few constraints on those who would seek to get rid of the Rohingya for good.

In situations such as this, international intervention is crucial. There are important lessons that need to be learned from history. The most important is that when the internal political constraints to mass killing have all but gone, the opinion of the international community may be the only thing that can keep the situation in check. But when the international community chooses to ignore the warning signs, genocide becomes almost inevitable.

The situation in Myanmar at the moment is showing some depressing parallels to Rwanda. No international power looks like it would be willing to intervene militarily in the country. The U.S. and other Western nations are already worn out by wars and have repeatedly looked for any excuse to avoid intervention, even in situations they had previously committed to (such as U.S. President Barack Obama’s 2014 “red line” on the use of chemical weapons by Bashar Assad’s regime in the Syrian conflict). China has a history of keeping its relations with other



countries confined to economic cooperation. India is taking a similarly hands-off approach, especially since the Hindu nationalist government of Narendra Modi has a similarly xenophobic attitude toward Muslims. And no neighboring Muslim country has the capacity or the will to intervene in Myanmar.

Obama and former British Prime Minister David Cameron raised the issue of the Rohingya, with Obama even mentioning it in a speech during his visit to Myanmar in 2014. Once, we have instead chosen to be very warm and congratulatory toward the political classes of Myanmar, to encourage their slow transition toward democracy, and especially their reintegration into the world economy. The country's move to open itself economically will be worth billions to Western investors. But this deliberately unbalanced feedback may well turn out to have very grave consequences. Just as the Hutus kept escalating their level of violence against the Tutsis and found that they would meet with very little international censure, Rakhine and Buddhist extremists are finding that their own aggression toward the Rohingya has virtually no adverse consequences for Myanmar, and that even their celebrated Nobel laureate leader is studiously refusing to get dragged into the issue.

But the point stands. The wider international community is often the only obstacle to genocide in situations where a group of people is as feared and hated as the Rohingya are in Myanmar. Even authoritarian and insular states need to maintain at least some good relations with their neighbors and international powers. The freshly "democratic" and more economically open Myanmar needs these good relations perhaps more than at any time in its independent history if it is to emerge from the economic malaise that has plagued it for the past two decades and that has undermined the military elite's grasp on power. The current transition may well be necessary for the continued existence of Myanmar as it is today. Even the military leadership seems to be sensing this. This potentially gives the international community considerable leverage to intervene on behalf of the Rohingya and prevent Myanmar from becoming another Rwanda. But we absolutely must be prepared to use that leverage. And the time is now — while there are still people left to save.

### *Dr Azeem Ibrahim*

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## POLITICAL ISLAM: CAN IT BE REFORMED

*by Dr. Robert D. Crane*

### **Part One:** Defining the Essence of Islam

**T**HE ROMAN PHILOSOPHER CICERO wisely taught that before one can discuss anything intelligently one must define one's terms, including what today would be one's basic premises or paradigms of thought.

Political Islam is usually equated with the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab World, though there are other similar forces in the rest of the world. In this case, one must first agree or at least discuss what Islam is before one discusses so-called political Islam as a means to practice it.

The Islamicity of "political Islam" may be the key question in the world today, other than reforming the entire system of money, credit, and banking, including so-called "Islamic banking", in order to reverse the otherwise inevitably increasing wealth gap within and among countries, which either is or may become the principal cause of global terrorism.

The Year 2016 (1437 Hegira) witnessed perhaps the most significant turning point in the global history of the century-old Muslim Brotherhood or *Ikhwan*. In May, 2016, Tunisia's Ennahda (Renaissance) Party, at the 10th Congress in its 35-year history, held as a special constitutional assembly, announced that Islam has no essence and exists only contextually in response to changing conditions from one century and one geographic region to another.

This definition or non-definition of a global religion was developed during the 1990s in great detail as his life's work by the renegade Jesuit priest, Hanns



Kueng, in three massive tomes to prove that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam do not exist ontologically (what is reality), epistemologically (how does one know it), or even axiologically (how does one derive justice from it), but are, in effect, the result of political conflict and compromise.

This de-constructive approach, premise, or paradigm of thought was also the naïve theme or contention of my honors dissertation at Northwestern University in 1955-56, entitled *The Political Origins of Heresy in the First Six Centuries of Christianity*.

Developing the opposite conclusion was my pre-occupation during the following twenty years and has been my full-time occupation, mostly in my own think-tanks, during the past almost four decades in my study of comparative jurisprudence in the world religions.

This includes the indigenous religions and among them my own Cherokee heritage, which dates back to the two great expeditions of Emir Abu Bakr's Mali Empire in 1310 and 1312 to the Caribbean islands of America and then a century later on to the Yucatan, the Carolinas, and Virginia (then known as the Tuscarora, a new addition to the Iroquois Confederation).

The definition of Islam that I use encompasses three modes or levels of reality all integrated holistically through the unique Islamic concept of *tawhid* and the derivative concept of *'adl* (*'adala*) or transcendent and compassionate justice.

The first mode of Islam's essence, which may be called "Classical Islam", is based on the scientific method in the heuristic search for knowledge of immanent reality (the physical world), known as *'ain al yaqin*. This mode exists in all the world's religions, but is uniquely prominent in Islam as part of its essence.

This scientific method was borrowed by Western Europe largely from Andalusian Spain in a very successful search for physical power as an ultimate purpose.

Unfortunately, in the Muslim world the threat mentality, especially after the Crusades and the holocaust of the invading Mongol hordes, raised mere physical survival in the Muslim world to the level of an ultimate aim and surpassed the search for truth. It is an iron law of history and of civilizational rise and

fall, as well as of human psychology, that whoever seeks only to survive will surely die. The opposite occurred in Europe, where an opportunity mentality gave rise to a new civilization, where truth was not sought but created by man.

The second mode of Islam is the search for knowledge of ultimate reality, which may be defined as Traditionalist Islam, known as *haqq al yaqin*. This aspect of Islam's essence is based on the unique Qur'anic concept of *haqq*, which means simultaneously God (Allah), truth, wisdom, and justice in the sense of respect for human responsibilities and their corresponding human rights.

Western Christianity borrowed this primordial and perennial wisdom from Saint John of the Cross in Andalusia, who, in turn, borrowed his entire substance, methodology, and even terminology of what became known as Christian mysticism from Shaykh Abu al Hassan Ali al Shadhili of North Africa, who founded the only major tariqa or spiritual order to originate outside of Asia.

This second mode of Islam is also known in English as Sufism in the search for an individual, closer relationship with God, sometimes to the exclusion of one's social responsibilities.

The third paradigmatic concept and mode of Islam may be referred to as Critical Islam, not in the sense of negatively criticizing what exists, but in the more positive sense of spelling out the meaning of the Qur'anic concept of *furqan*, which means



TUNISIA, Tunis : Tunisian former prime minister Hamadi Jebali (2nd R) attends a meeting of the consultative council of Ennahda with the leader of the Ennahda Party Rached Ghannouchi (R) to appoint a new prime minister on February 21, 2013 in Tunis. Tunisia was scrambling to find a replacement prime minister and pull itself out of a major political crisis two days after Jebali quit after failing to form a cabinet of technocrats. AFP PHOTO / FETHI BELAID

distinguishing right from wrong and virtue from its absence.

These three modes of Islam as its essence are legitimate only to the extent that they reflect and reinforce the nature of Holistic Islam, which combines all three modes as the essence of every world religion.

Together they provide a holistic pattern for their development in the governing paradigm of civilizational rise and fall, as suggested in my book written in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at my Center for Civilizational Renewal in the mid-1990's and published in 1997 under the title *Shaping the Future: Challenge and Response*.

This tripartite pattern is the precursor of physical science and human intellection in recognizing the coherence in the dialectical diversity of observable reality that points to the Oneness of its Creator, and is also the derivative expression of *tauhid* in the hierarchy of higher jurisprudential purposes known as the *maqasid al shari'ah*,

These two bases of Islam's essence are summarized in Surah An'am 6:115, *tamaat kalimatu rabika sidqan wa 'adlan*, "The Word of your Lord is fulfilled and perfected in truth and in compassionate justice".

This reference compares with the revelation from Jesus Christ, who himself, like every prophet, was a manifestation and a revelation from God: John 14:6, I am the way, the truth, and the life", and John 8:32, "The truth will set you free".

## Part Two: The Challenge of Muslim Practice

The essence of Islam challenges the individual Muslim to become the person one was created to be and therefore already is. This requires the lifelong



PAKISTAN, Karachi : PAKISTAN, Karachi: Supporters of Islamic political party Jamat-e-Islami protested in Karachi the decision of an Egyptian court to seek the death sentence for deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi on May 22, 2015. - CITIZEN-SIDE/SYED RIZWAN ALI

search for ultimate being, ultimate truth, and ultimate meaning as the ultimate source of compassionate justice.

The challenge for humankind at every level of community is to develop a system of governance most conducive in the given circumstances to this end.

The almost universal system of government in modern polities or countries today is the secular state, which originated at the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 as a means to end the Thirty Years War in Germany between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism,

The concept of a sovereign state, hitherto unknown in human history, denied the existence of any transcendent authority and placed the absolute power of sovereignty, by definition, in the hands of whoever could impose one's physical power over more than 50% of a given territory. This also is the definition of imperialism.

This modern phenomenon first reached its height during the French Revolution, when the Jacobins publicly beheaded about 17,000 men, women, and children. During the 20th century the most successful states were the Soviet Union, which killed 20,000,000 people, and Communist China, which killed 50,000,000, in the process of imposing their sovereign power. The most famous state in the world today is the so-called Islamic State or *daesh*, which claims legitimacy under the cover of religion and thereby demonstrates the essence of evil.

Another system of governance, common in practice in much of human history, is confederalism, as described in my "state of the world" essay in last year's edition of the *Muslim 500*, entitled "Kurdistan: Pivot of Southwest Asia," based on the organic nation defined as a large group of people with a common sense of their past, common values in the present, and common hopes for the future.

A good example of an ancient nation today is Pushtunistan, which was split by the British in 1947 to give the eastern half to form the western third of Pakistan and to give the western half to form the majority of Afghanistan. Such nations never die, nor does their national liberation movement.

Still another system of government is a republic, which is a product of nation building, designed not

to destroy existing nations as in Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Mali, but to create a new nation, as best exemplified in the United States of America and possibly in Tunisia, each following the guidance inherent in the essence of a world religion.

In a principled republic, as distinct from a polity based on raw democratic power, the legislature is charged with deriving guidance from a higher source than human fiat, namely, from natural law (Sunnat Allah), consisting of revelation, scientific study of the world, and human reason. The executive branch of government is charged with doing what it is told by the legislature, and the judicial branch has the responsibility to assure that the first two branches are doing their job.

Although this form of government is distinct from a democracy in which legitimacy is based by definition on the power of a majority vote, a republic can include such a system of voting either or both by indirect representation and direct universal voting on individual issues in order to derive consensus (*ijma*) as a technique of consultation (*shura*).

Both of these are essential to the four pillars of governance in the sixth of the eight *maqasid al shari'ah* that I use, namely, *haqq al hurriyah* or respect for both personal and community self-determination.

These eight consist of two sets of respect for human responsibilities and rights. Human rights come in practice from respect for human responsibilities. The first set, which are guiding purposes, consist of respect for freedom of religion (*haqq al din*), the sacredness of the person (*haqq al nafs*), the sacredness of the community (*haqq al nasl*), and the physical environment (*haqq al mahid*). The second set, which are purposes of action and implementation, consist of respect for economic justice (*haqq al mal*), individual and community self-determination (*haqq al hurriya*), dignity, including gender equity (*haqq al karama*), and freedom of speech, writing, and assembly (*haqq al ilm*).

In the hierarchy of purpose known as Islamic jurisprudence the highest level is known variously as the *maqasid* (ultimate purposes), *kulliyat* (universals), and *dururiyat* (essentials). The internal architectonics of each *maqasid* has four levels of specificity, of which the second is known as the *hajjiyat* (goals),

followed by the subordinate level of objectives and then courses of action, as spelled out in eight model charts in Chapter Five of the four-volume textbook, *Islam and Muslims: Essence and Practice*.

The four goals in *haqq al hurriyah* are *khilafa*, which is the responsibility of both the governors and the governed equally to God as trustees and stewards of creation, followed by *shurah* (consultation) by the governors with the governed or electorate, *ijma* (consensus among the governed), and an independent judiciary to supervise the constitutional and holistic legitimacy of the entire operating system.

The two nations, America and Tunisia, are designed to be models for the rest of the world, but will always be works in progress with occasional lapses. As Benjamin Franklin said at America's Constitutional Convention when asked what kind of a polity or political community had just been created, he answered "A republic, if we can keep it".

### **Part Three:** The Historical Role of Personal Leadership

The Nahda branch of the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan), spelled Ennahda in English, originated in response to the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Historical trends and forces for change, however, often depend on individual "out of the box" leadership in developing and introducing new paradigms of thought.

The founder of Ennahda, Rachid al Ghannouchi, a former philosophy professor, followed the enlightened wing of the Egyptian Ikhwan's founder, Hassan al Banna, and from his leadership introduced in Tunisia the profoundly traditionalist paradigm of thought that change in support of human dignity can come only from "bottom-up", not from "top-down", that is, from individuals whose personal sovereignty comes from God.

Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi, a walking one-man think-tank, dared to challenge the "deep state" under Bourguiba despite the Ikhwan's history epitomized by the violent deaths of its two greatest martyrs, Hassan al Banna, who was gunned down in 1949, and Sayyid Qutb, who was publically hanged in 1966.

In 1987, the worst of the secular autocrats in the

Arab world, Habib Bourguiba, ordered the top twenty of the Ikhwan in Tunisia to be executed. His more rational policy advisors persuaded him to try them publically first and then execute them.

At the behest of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), then considered to be the “brain center” of the world-wide Muslim Brotherhood, as well as of the new American ambassador to Tunisia, my friend Robert H. Pelletreau, two former ambassadors were invited to the trial as international observers. These two were myself as former U.S. Ambassador in 1981-1982 to the United Arab Emirates, responsible also personally to President Ronald Reagan for two-track diplomacy with the Muslim Brotherhood throughout the MENA region, and the former French ambassador to Kuwait, Francis Lamand, head of the Association Francaise “Islam et Occident” (AFIO).

Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi was famous at the time for stating that, if the Ikhwan would ever gain power in a free election in Tunisia, its leaders would immediately surrender after losing the next election.

During the trial, the Tunisian exiles in Paris sent me a message, which I was able to give to the court, that Imam Ruhollah Khomeini in Iran had just denounced Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi as an apostate (*kafir*) for rejecting the use of force to either gain or keep power.

This may have been the critical piece of evidence to save his life, so that someday he could prove that he was serious and that the Islamophobic charge against the Ikhwan, “One election, one time”, is misleading propaganda, at least in Tunisia.

#### **Part Four:** Five Questions

The failure of the Arab Spring, as discussed in my essay in the 2013-14 edition of the *Muslim 500* under the title, “Flameout-Out of the Muslim Brotherhood: Options for the Future”, raises the question whether political Islam as a paradigmatic concept is necessarily a dead-end failure in constructively shaping the global future.

The answer depends on five further questions:

1. Does the answer depend on context, rather than on principle, as illustrated by the experiment led by

Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi?

2. Is he right that politically active Muslims should and can keep political advocacy separate from Islam as a world religion?

3. Can and should the Muslim Brotherhood be reformed by returning to its roots in the teachings and practice of its founder, Hassan al Banna?

4. Can the writings of Sayyid Qutb, who can be called the originator of the paradigm known as the “clash of civilizations” (rather than Samuel Huntington) be legitimately re-interpreted to conform with those of Hassan al Banna? In the past, extremists in the Muslim Brotherhood have tried to prove that Hassan al Banna, properly interpreted, agreed with Sayyid Qutb and that there is little or no difference between the two. The reverse argument that Sayyid Qutb’s writings, in fact, can be interpreted to agree with Hassan al Banna’s enlightened vision and mission has been undertaken in her thirty-volume “critical thinking” series by Sayyida Lalah Bakhtiar, who in 2012 published her translation of the Qur’an, one of the best among the new translations from the 21st century. “Each lesson-section (*ruku*)”, she writes, “has a modern commentary from the work of Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur’an*, designed to arm young people with a new approach to understanding the Qur’an so that they are less likely to radicalize”.

5. And finally, can Muslims in America and elsewhere follow the similarly enlightened insights of America’s founding fathers and mothers? This challenge is a major purpose of my new Holistic Education Center for Civilizational Renewal.

#### **Part Five:** Contextualizing the Muslim Brotherhood

The key to the failure of the Arab Spring in Egypt was the Ikhwan’s refusal to compromise or cooperate with the secular liberals, who were the leaders of the Arab Spring at last in the beginning. These “liberals” were seeking to introduce a third option other than the simple tyranny of the entrenched “Deep State”, based on the military and security establishment, and the feared totalitarian system of so-called “political Islam” based on controlling the very thought of every individual person.



The top-down mentality of the Egyptian Ikhwan during the Arab Spring resulted from an internal coup by extremists a year before the Arab Spring started. The front man, President Morsi, was primarily interested in imposing the designation “Islamic” on the constitution. The new Ikhwan leadership ignored the need to address the economic problems in any meaningful way, especially the highly concentrated ownership of productive wealth, which, as in every country, leads to concentrated political power.

Not coincidentally, unlike in Tunisia, the Egyptian economy was owned by the military.

The key to success in transforming the government in Tunisia, on the other hand, was the Ikhwan’s delay of a new constitution for two years in order pragmatically to address the everyday concerns of the Tunisian people.

The extent of Annahda’s compromise with the secular liberals in a country where the “left/right” conflict was the most extreme in the entire Arab world was illustrated by Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi’s daughter, Sumaya Ghannouchi, who is an expert on Middle East affairs and on June 24, 2016, one month after Annahda’s 10th Congress, published an article in the Huffington Post entitled “Should Islam Have a Role in Politics?”

In this article she wrote: “There is no Islam in itself outside of historical practice”; “Two models have failed in the Muslim world. One is based on top-down secularization, the other on top-down Islamization”; and “Tunisia’s new constitution exemplifies the state model, which protects freedoms and rights, while also recognizing Islam as the state religion”.

The U.S. State Department hesitates to give foreign aid on any other basis, and does not even mention the word “justice”, even though President Obama did so in Cairo in his first major foreign policy address, where he used the paradigmatic word “justice” for the first and last time during his first four years in office.

### **Part Six: Separating “Church and State”**

The immediate issue after what might be called the Constitutional Congress of the Tunisian Muslim

Brotherhood in May, 2016, is not merely whether but how Muslims can keep political advocacy separate from Islam as a world religion.

At the Congress, while engaging in definitions, Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi explained, “One of the reasons that I do not need to belong to political Islam is that Daesh is part of this political Islam. Daesh is one of the elements within political Islam, so I would like to distinguish myself from Daesh. I am a Muslim democrat and they are against democracy. ... Daesh is another face of dictatorship. Our revolution is a democratic revolution, and Islamic values are compatible with democracy”.

While keeping enlightened Islam as its reference point, just as the parties in America do with Christianity and its expression in natural law, Shaykh Rachid announced, “We would like to promote a new Ennahda, to renew our movement and to put it into the political sphere, outside any involvement with religion. Before the revolution, we were hiding in mosques, trade unions, charities, because real activity was forbidden, but now we can be political actors openly”.

He explained in reference to what one might call the transcendent essence of Islam as the source for transcendent justice, “We adopted the idea of a civil party so that we can distinguish between what is sacred in Islam and what can be freely interpreted. The political field is not sacred nor immutable. It’s civic, human. It’s free for *ijtihad* or independent reasoning. ... The Islamic text concerning politics is open to interpretation, and this is the field in which Ennahda now acts”.

From a sociological perspective, the function of religion for its adherents in a secular, totalitarian society is to confirm one’s own existential identity. This perspective is well presented in Dr. Emin Poljarevic’s 190-page book, *Islamist Grassroots and Youth Activism: A Sociology of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi Movement in Egypt*, Mobilization Series on Social Movements, Protest, and Culture, Routledge Publishers, to be released on April 4, 2017.

This book by Emin Poljarevic, now a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh, explains that political oppression produces a resistance culture focused



on authority and elemental justice. In 2012, I was honored to evaluate the first draft of this book at the dissertation stage when I was Director of the Qatar Foundation's Center for the Study of Islamic Thought and Muslim Societies and Emin was studying at the NATO-allied European University Institute in Florence, Italy.

He focused on the teachings and practice of Hassan al Banna. His core chapter introduced the paradigmatic concept of the "Islamist search for the authentic self", whereby "the grass-root activists' understandings of an ideal-type human extend this notion to an ideal-type social-political system".

Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi is adapting to the freedoms in Tunisia by abandoning the politics of identity in favor of the bread and butter issues that concern both the entire Tunisian political electorate and all the parties competing with Ennahda. Ennahda is no longer a revolutionary liberation theology, a language of opposition, but a participant in governance and reform.

This reinvention of Annahda is Shaykh Rachid's strategy to protect Tunisia from the surrounding chaos that results from the cycle of extremism and extremist counter-measures.

At Annahda's Constitutional Congress in May, 2016, Shaykh Rachid warned, "We advise all Islamists in the region to be more open and to work with others and to look for a consensus, because without national unity, without national resistance against dictatorship, genuine freedom cannot be achieved. There needs to be genuine reconciliation (*tawafuq*) between Islamists and secularists, between Muslim and non-Muslim. Dictatorship feeds off confrontation among all parties".

In the May 25, 2016, issue of the Washington Post, Monica Marks, a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, contributed an article entitled "How big were the changes Tunisia's Ennahda party just made at its national congress?": She writes, "The most important thing to emerge from the congress is a new push for reconciliation (*tawafuq*). The congress delivered a referendum upholding the politics of reconciliation spearheaded by Ghannouchi and Beji Caid Essebsi [of the Nidaa Tounes party, whose career was based on opposi-

tion to Ennahda and since January, 2015, has been Tunisia's President]. In vote after vote, congress delegates – including prominent national leaders and low-ranking representatives from Tunisia's countryside – overwhelmingly endorsed, with margins of two-thirds or greater, the political direction of consensus and reconciliation favored by Ghannouchi in recent years".

It was primarily in recognition of its leadership in reconciliation that the Tunisian Dialogue Quartet, a team of four civil society activists, was awarded the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

The challenge then was to put into practice not the separation of religion from public life, but the "separation of Church and State", that is, of organized religion from organized politics as competitors for power, because "politics", based on a platform of conflict and power, is not the proper function of any religion.

The operational strategy adopted at the Congress was not "separation (*fasl*) but specialization (*takhasus*), whereby anyone who functions primarily as a cleric or religious guide is barred from participation in politics, and vice-versa. The aim presumably is to prevent also a reverse trend toward the revolutionary system in Iran, known as *wilayat al faqih* or government by clerics, which is just as much condemned in classical Shi'i thought as in orthodox Sunni Islam.

The strategy of *takhasus* in Tunisia may remain a permanent work in progress, as it has been in America for two and a half centuries.

## Part Seven: Modeling Reform

Revolutionary ideas for reform based on reason and justice can eventually prevail only by choosing the best paradigmatic model for the given context in order to bring out the best of the past in the present to build a better future.

America's Founders chose to reject one-man-one vote democracy as the ultimate source of legitimacy, because it already had been tried with disastrous results in France as a high-risk road to mobocracy. The American revolutionary war of reform was against the mercantilist English parliament dominated by

what today we might call the “one percent”. They chose a republic. Not until the so-called Revolutionary War was well underway did they oppose the English monarchy and the king.

Modeling reform in Tunisia may still be open to multiple options and scenarios. Applied to the Arab Spring of the 21st century’s second decade one might well follow the wisdom of Gustav Mahler’s definition of “tradition”. He said it is “the handing on of the flame, not the worship of ashes”.

As Norman Kurland, the de facto founder in 2014 of the Unite America Party, says, quoting R. Buckminster Fuller, “You never change things by fighting existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the old model obsolete”.

One of the most powerful models may be found in the Platform of the Unite America Party, produced by the Center for Economic and Social Justice. This was founded in 1984 to advise President Ronald Reagan, who was its principal supporter, on broadening capital ownership under the slogan “own or be owned”. Unfortunately, he never overcame the barriers posed by the Republican establishment in New York and Washington.

The second most powerful model was created in 1997 by Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi, together, among other “traditionalists, with Louis Cantori, who was a professor at the University of Maryland and a stalwart advisor to the International Institute of Islamic Thought, and Anthony Sullivan, who was the Program Director of both the Relm and Earhart Foundations and funded my own think-tank through Professor John Esposito’s Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University.

This model was produced by the Halaqa Asala wa Taqadun (Circle for Tradition and Progress) as an interfaith coalition of scholars for reconciliation in order to provide spiritual and moral direction to revolutionary movements that may oppose modernism as an ideology but are products of Western secular education without any real foundation in the essential wisdom of any world religion.

The founding vision and mission of the *halaqa al asala wa taqadun* is described on pages 13-15 and 78-81 of my book, *The Grand Strategy of Justice*, which

was published by the Islamic Institute for Strategic Studies in April 2000. The specific orientation of this movement within the broad scope of both chaos and cosmos sweeping the Muslim world is indicated in the founding statement’s emphasis that:

We believe in the transcendence of God, the need of man for divine guidance, and the continuing relevance of the prophetic faiths of Muslims, Jews, and Christians. ... Just as there has always been a Muslim imperative to reform, there has also been a Western search for God and for the modalities of cultural conservation. Belief in a religiously rooted natural law and an acknowledgement of the importance of the claims of the past have been a hallmark of Western thought at least since Thomas Aquinas. In more recent times, this Western religious imperative and traditionalism has manifested itself in the work of such thinkers as Edmund Burke, Eric Vogelin, Russell Kirk, and Gerhart Niemayer. Together, we believe that the Islamic impulse to reform and the Western quest for religious understanding provide a solid foundation for our joint endeavors.

The three principles governing this movement were provided by Shaykh Rachid al Ghannouchi. The first principle of this movement is *tahqiq*, the ascertainment of reality. The second principle is *masawad*, equality in dignity and opportunity. And the third principle is *khadam*, or servant, which is the designation that he gives to governmental power.

The following founding statement of this movement was designed succinctly to summarize the key to global leadership in the Twenty-First Century:

The modern project, derived from the European Enlightenment, can rightly claim great achievement in the technical and socio-political realms. Many people throughout the world, however, have come to realize the destructive consequences occasioned by modernity: the triumph of materialism, the decline of morality, unequal global economic development, the collapse of family and community, and the erosion of religious belief.

Implicit in the modernist project is an arrogant and naïve insistence that human fulfillment can be achieved solely on materialistic bases, and a belief in the absolute autonomy of human reason and in man’s presumed ability to create his moral and cultural

systems in isolation from any belief in transcendence. The modernist project issuing from a shallow, utilitarian claim of value-free rationality has come to pose a threat to life itself.

The Circle of Tradition and Progress has been established to promote and enhance dialogue, discussion, and scholarly research among academics and public figures committed to the preservation of religious and traditional values and the achievement of progress in the Muslim world, the West, and elsewhere. Special emphasis will be placed on counteracting the excesses of modernity, with particular attention to a critique of the contemporary materialistic, behaviorist, and radically secular experiment. All the activities of the Circle will be scholarly and intellectual in nature. The Circle will not engage in the advocacy of any specific public policies.

Among much else, this effort will include an encouragement of holism in both the individual and society. The societal holism we seek will incorporate accountable and democratic government, individual liberty and human rights, and an economic system that is both free and humane. What we propose is to reestablish an equilibrium between the spiritual and the material, and reclaim for our time what have been called the “permanent things”. Most broadly, the intention of the Circle is to foster intellectual activities designed to rectify the modern rupture between economics and ethics, reason and religion, and man and God. Above all, we hope to encourage greater understanding among religions and to contribute to reconciliation of peoples and to international cooperation.

We believe in values that are not alterable and have been manifested in the teaching of all the prophets (peace be upon them) and great civilizations throughout the ages. We believe further in the transcendence of God, the need of man for divine guidance, and the continuing relevance of the prophetic faiths of Muslims, Jews, and Christians.

A commitment to reform has always been at the heart of the Islamic project as articulated in the work of such *ulama* and scholars as al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyya, al-Afghani, Abduh, Rida, Iqbal, Baqr al Sadr, and Malik ben Nabi. Each of these great reformers attempted to address the problems occasioned by the

recurring imbalance caused by man’s quest for earthly fulfillment and material prosperity on the one hand, and the reality of God and the ultimate primacy of matters spiritual on the other. We regard the Circle of Tradition and Progress as a new initiative in this long and unending enterprise of reform.

Just as there has always been a Muslim imperative to reform, there has also always been a Western search for God and for the modalities of cultural conservation. Belief in a religiously rooted natural law and an acknowledgement of the importance of the claims of the past have been a hallmark of Western thought at least since Thomas Aquinas. In more recent times, this Western religious imperative and traditionalism has manifested itself in the work of such thinkers as Edmund Burke, Eric Vogelin, Russell Kirk, and Gerhart Niemayer. Together, we believe that the Islamic impulse to reform and the Western quest for religious understanding provide a solid foundation for our joint endeavors.

We favor the conduct of international relations on a basis of respect for all the world’s civilizations. We oppose all attempts to export or impose cultural systems, to support dictatorial regimes, or to obstruct democratic transformation. It is our conviction that attempts to re-invent the Cold War with Muslims as enemies of the West, or the West designated as an incorrigible enemy of Islam, are deplorable and should be avoided. We are united in our belief that all such Manichaeian formulations will impede cooperation between Muslims and the West and are likely over time to have a dramatically negative impact on both international stability and world peace.

This mission statement puts the Haraqa Asala wa Taqadun among the founders of traditionalism in the ranks of what today amount to 7,000 think-tanks worldwide, as evaluated in my forthcoming book for the IIT, entitled *Think-Tanks in the Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the Culture Wars*.

The four criteria used for defining traditionalist think-tanks are the following four concepts or sub-paradigms, which might best be identified today as the common wisdom of Islamic and American genius and as the most powerful model for reform of the Muslim Brotherhood:

1. The degree to which the think-tank is responsive

to the Qur’anic concept of law found in all religions, but especially in the Qur’an 20:11, which refers to multiple levels of jurisprudence. These are 1) the *shar’* or normative jurisprudential principle common all sentient beings everywhere in the universe, which may be termed “natural law” or “meta-law”; 2) the more restrictive term, *minhaj*, referring to a way of life based on one’s own conscience and on the wisdom of one’s community; and 3) the *shari’ah*, which is the most restrictive term, reserved for the normative principles (*maqasid*) and the derivative rules or regulations (*fiqh*).

The specific regulations or *fiqh*, some of them depending on changing context, are binding only on those who profess to be Muslims and accept one of the major *madhab* or “schools of law” in Islam, such as the Maliki in North Africa and the Ithna’ashari in Iran. These schools of law were developed a thousand years ago to maintain the independence of law from political power, which is the opposite of the state sovereignty model borrowed by Muslims from European imperialism.

The greatest of all Islamic jurists, who lived seven centuries ago at the end of the classical Islamic civilization, Al Shatibi, taught, “Anyone who seeks to obtain from the rules (*ahkam*) of the shari’ah something that is contrary to its purpose has violated the shari’ah and his actions are null and void”.

2. The second concept basic to a think-tank’s traditionalist orientation and emphasized by Edmund Burke and Russell Kirk is expressed in the coherent balance (*mizan*) of order, justice, and freedom:

“When freedom is construed to be independent of justice, there can be no justice, and the result will be anarchy. When order is thought to be possible without justice, there can be no order, because injustice is the principal cause of disorder. When justice is thought to be possible without order and freedom, then the pursuit of order, justice, and freedom are snares of the ignorant”.

3. The third criterion or concept basic to a republic and to a traditionalist think-tank was best expressed by the author of America’s constitution, Thomas Jefferson, who wrote, “A people can remain free only if they are properly educated. Proper education consists above all in knowledge of virtue. No people can remain virtuous unless both the personal and public lives of the individual person are infused with awareness and love of Divine Providence”, by which he meant not deism, which is mere recognition of God’s existence, but theism, meaning thankful acceptance of God’s love and guidance.

4. The most profound criterion and model needed for reform in the world today was experienced and described by the publisher, Gray Henry, one of the world’s most influential Muslims, at the Martin Luther King anniversary celebration in June, 2016, “Our souls overflowed as we witnessed the presence of God in our minds as truth, in form as Beauty, and in the will as virtue”.

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## THE ROLE OF ZAKAT IN BUILDING FAITH COMMUNITIES

*by Sohail Hanif*

**M**USLIMS IN MINORITY SETTINGS must wake up to the importance of zakat. The payment of zakat is one of the most repeated injunctions of the Holy Qur’an. It is conjoined in importance with the ritual

prayer (*salat*) almost thirty times. God has promised many things in the Qur’an to those who give zakat: His special mercy (Qur’an, 7:156, 9:71), an increase in blessings (Qur’an, 30:39), a tremendous reward (Qur’an, 4:162), success (Qur’an, 23:1-4) and even worldly power (Qur’an, 22:41, 24:56). Given the centrality of zakat, it is surprising to see it so neglected. While mosques are found almost everywhere there is a Muslim community, there are very few attempts to organise the collection and distribution of zakat within

these communities. It is the community itself that suffers by holding back from this institution. This is because zakat has a very clear purpose. But how many of us are aware of what it is?

The detailed rules of the payment and distribution of zakat, as laid out in classical law texts, speak clearly of a higher purpose for this institution. This purpose is to create, strengthen, nourish and nurture communities of believers, wherever they are found, to enable them to uphold the cause of God and His remembrance. This is part of the larger social vision of the Islamic faith, whose many rules and injunctions are designed to bring hearts together in healthy communal ties. The institution of zakat lies at the centre of this vision. This is why the revival of this institution is of particular importance in settings where Muslims form vulnerable minorities and are in need of unity and confidence.

Classical texts of Islamic law tell us it is disliked for a person to pay their zakat away from the locality in which they live, except in particular circumstances. This shows that zakat is meant to form a bond of concern, care and responsibility between the members of this locality. Furthermore, this creates within zakat payers themselves a sense of identity and belonging to where they are. In our age of globalisation and communal identity crises, especially amongst Muslim minorities in the west, the message of zakat could not be clearer: your home is where you live, so devote your wealth and energy to serving it.

Classical law texts also tell us that the recipient of zakat should be a Muslim. This is equally significant. It shows that zakat is not simply charity, which is clearly deserved by all who are in need, but rather,



it serves a cause beyond that. It serves to build a connection between the people of the faith wherever they are. This is of particular importance in minority settings where Muslims often form communities of solidarity based on ethnicities and professional networks. This leaves those newly converted to the faith with nowhere to belong. The underprivileged and small ethnic groups are also left out. Zakat was legislated to tackle this problem. In the earliest days of Islam, zakat was at the heart of defining the new community. Instead of a tribal basis for solidarity and care, zakat made Islam the basis. The Muslim poor could claim a financial right over the wealth of the Muslim rich regardless of tribe and status.

This is not to say that zakat preaches insularity, or that believers should not care for unbelievers. The injunctions of the religion are clear that all living beings have a right to care and charity. The Prophet of Islam (God bless him and give him peace) said, “There is a reward in every moist liver,” meaning that a person is rewarded for acts of care to all living creatures. But how can a community of believers fulfil its duties to its non-Muslim neighbours if the community itself is weak, divided, and has no care for its own members? Charity, to be effective and long lasting, must always begin at home. Zakat builds that home. It is not a cold and insular home. How can it be insular, when one of the eight categories of zakat recipient named in the Qur’anic text are those whose hearts are to be brought close?

This category of zakat recipient, mentioned in the Qur’an as the *mu'allafat qulubuhum*, or those whose hearts are to be reconciled, illustrates the community and bridge building role of zakat. The exact application of this category has been subject to scholarly debate. Some Muslim jurists held that this category refers to new Muslims, that the community sets aside zakat funds to encourage them as they start their journey in the faith with their new faith community. Some jurists held that this refers to non-Muslims, that the community sets aside funds to spend charitably and show goodwill to members of other faith communities, building bridges that might enable them to experience the serenity and beauty of God’s remembrance that lies at the heart of Islamic faith and practice. Some jurists held that it



refers to those actively opposed to the faith, that the community sets aside funds to show them displays of goodwill in the hope that the walls they have erected may be removed, and that a new world and a new form of community can be built. The rules of zakat, therefore, are clearly directing us to invest in our communities. We are not fulfilling the divine injunction if we are not building, creating, sustaining and nourishing the faith-community where we live.

But many questions arise as we seek to actually bring life to this much needed pillar of the faith. Which of the aforementioned positions, if any, should be adopted regarding the topic of reconciling hearts? Does the answer depend on the social context of a Muslim community? These questions are perhaps best answered by bringing together both Islamic legal experts and social scientists. Another category of zakat recipient mentioned in the Qur'anic text that requires scholarly deliberation is that of slaves working to free themselves from slavery. Now, we might be quick to say that slavery has been abolished, but are we really so sure? There are many forms of modern slavery found all over the world. There are people threatened, often under the burden of debt, to, quite literally, be enslaved in the sex industry, or poorly-paid intensive labour arrangements, even in developed countries such as the United Kingdom. Can zakat be used to liberate such individuals to allow them a chance to live free? Again, for an answer that is faithful to the Islamic tradition, and grounded in knowledge of the reality of the case, experts of many backgrounds will need to be brought together. But there is a stark difference between experts discussing these issues as mere hypothetical scenarios and between their discussing them in a context where the Muslim community actually sets aside, say, £2 million a year to free the enslaved. When a community holds the key to literally transform society, then experts will be fully engaged and present the best that they have to offer.

One might wonder if such large zakat funds are possible. They certainly are, even in the Muslim minority settings of which we speak. In the United Kingdom, there were 2.7 million Muslims in 2011, as per the national census. Pew estimates 5.5 million by 2020. One can only imagine what this number

might be by 2050. It could be 20 or 30 million. Of these, perhaps 20 percent would be zakat payers. The average zakat payment, based on current values, might be £500. If you do the calculations, you will realise that we are talking about very large sums of money, sums that could change society and connect hearts. So why are we holding back?

It is clear from the preceding discussion that zakat is an institution, not just a personal obligation. For this institution to fully function, funds must be pooled together, divided carefully and distributed fairly. A central institution would be needed to manage this, explain to people what zakat is for and provide services to help people in their zakat calculations. This institution would facilitate for scholars of all backgrounds to come together and provide their best solutions to the very real questions the institution will raise because it will hold the keys to real change. We are fortunate that there are some noteworthy efforts across the world to build central zakat institutions in Muslim minority settings.

In the United Kingdom, the National Zakat Foundation, or NZF ([www.nzf.org.uk](http://www.nzf.org.uk)), was founded in 2011, spurred into existence by heart-wrenching stories of the struggles of homeless Muslim women in Birmingham. It is the first nationwide project collecting and distributing zakat in the UK. NZF's services include supported housing projects – three homes dedicated to homeless Muslim women and one home for ex-offenders – where residents have access to spiritual and emotional counselling, are trained in life-skills and helped in accessing employment opportunities. NZF's other forms of support include scholarships for students of undergraduate degrees, funding to support business start-ups and funding for training programmes to help those fit-



nancially struggling increase in earning capacity. NZF has distributed over four million pounds of zakat to date. Branches of NZF have opened in Australia and Canada.

In Singapore, there is Muis, a state sanctioned central zakat authority ([www.zakat.sg](http://www.zakat.sg)) with many years of experience in collecting and distributing zakat in Singapore with the aim of nurturing the Muslim community, equipping Muslim youth “with resilience and faith” and building bridges with wider Singaporean society. They distributed more than 36 million Singaporean dollars of zakat in 2015.

In South Africa, there is the South African National Zakah Fund ([www.sanzaf.org.za](http://www.sanzaf.org.za)), established in 1974. It has a wide portfolio of projects funded by zakat and other forms of charitable donation. These projects include distributing winter supplies to the vulnerable and underprivileged, programmes to provide focused support for the elderly and a number of educational drives and student bursaries as part of an education empowerment and development programme. They distributed over 115 million rands of zakat in 2015.

The Canada-based SeekersHub presents another interesting model in their SeekersHub Global Zakat Fund ([projects.seekershub.org/zakat/](http://projects.seekershub.org/zakat/)). This is not a centralised zakat institution as in the examples above, but its experience is nonetheless noteworthy. SeekersHub collects zakat funds from across the globe to provide stipends for outstanding Muslim scholars around the world to free them up for schol-

arship and teaching in their communities. This is an example of focusing on a single stream of zakat recipient, singled out for their transformative effect on the wider Muslim community in which they live.

Muslims often spend time and energy discussing the weak state of Muslims and various governmental attempts to undermine Muslim communities. Not enough time and energy is spent providing solutions for the current state of affairs. A correctly managed collection and distribution of zakat in localised communities across the world can be a major step towards improving the economic, political and spiritual situation of Muslim communities. Although the focus of this essay has been the importance of the institution of zakat for Muslim minorities, who are perhaps in most need of zakat’s ability to unify and nurture communities, it is no doubt of relevance to Muslim majority settings as well. Like many potential solutions to complex problems, the revival of the institution of zakat is a project that takes time, effort, struggle and people coming together to see this vision fulfilled. As we do this, we will realise that the true beneficiary of the injunctions of the sacred law of Islam is not God, but it is us, us and all those hearts we are able to touch and grant a chance for a better and more wholesome life.

### *Sohail Hanif*

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## DO ALL LIVES REALLY MATTER?

*by Faisal Kutty,*

“WE ALMOST TURNED IT ON when terrorists attacked Ankara since Turks are technically Caucasian,” wrote IslamicaNews referring to the popular Facebook feature that allows members to activate a flag overlay to show solidarity with and honor certain victims, not others. The satirical website, putting words in the mouth of a fake Face-

book spokesperson, added: “But then we thought, come on ... They’re not like regular white people. Disqualified.”

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This was in the wake of the terror attack in Turkey on March 13, 2016.

IslamicaNews is not alone in noticing Western media (and social media) bias in the coverage of terror attacks. The victims are given extensive, sympathetic and prolonged attention when they are primarily white non-Muslims, while the plight of similar victims in Muslim or developing countries are underplayed or even ignored.

In fact, even prominent world landmarks (including the CN Tower) changed colors for Paris and Belgium, but have never done so for Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Pakistan, Nigeria or Somalia. Moreover, even major Western leaders, including Prime Minister Trudeau, made public statements of solidarity with Brussels (34 deaths), of the March 22, 2016 attacks, though the silence was deafening from many quarters for the terror unleashed the week before in Ivory Coast (22 deaths), Turkey (38 deaths), Pakistan (15 deaths), Nigeria (22 deaths), Syria (11 deaths) and Egypt (18 deaths). It was not any different for the two attacks on the 25th in Iraq (31 deaths) and Yemen (26 deaths).

So far this year (as of August 30th) globally there have been approximately 1,170 recorded terrorist attacks, of which less than 50 took place in the Western world (Europe and North America). Not to minimize any deaths, but the vast majority of the attacks in the Western world took less than 2 lives, if any. The picture is starkly different in the Muslim world and the East, where dozens of attacks claimed more than 15 lives and a significant number took the lives of more than 50.

In case you thought the unbalanced media coverage was because the difference in numbers is not stark enough, consider that in January 2015, the coverage of the 17 left dead after the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris dwarfed and obscured the roughly 2,000 killed by Boko Haram in the Nigerian town of Baga the same week.

DA'ISH, Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab and Taliban all have different goals and targets, but they have one thing in common: They have all killed more Muslims than non-Muslims. Though exact figures are hard to muster, based on available data from a number of sources including a 2011 report of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center and the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) at the University of Maryland, we can safely conclude that between 80% to 90% of the victims of terror are Muslims.

One of the reasons for the selective mourning may be due to the fact that some of these countries outside Europe may be perceived as one undifferentiated mass where violence is the norm. This may be a partial explanation but one that should not carry much weight. Indeed, are the dead any less dead or

their pain any less because they see more violence? The implication here is that some lives matter more than others. We certainly can't claim the moral high ground if notions of human dignity are attached to identity and how similar they are to us whether in reality or perception.

Another more plausible explanation is the ingrained and subconscious racism that exists in too many of our institutions and our unwillingness to confront the conditioning which has allowed us to only view certain people as victims. In the words of Edward Said, it is due to the systemic "otherization" of non-western people which has its roots in the Orientalist discourse that evolved from the Crusades and Colonization.

The reality is that even many Muslims have fallen prey to this Eurocentric worldview sometimes to avert suspicion about allegiances, other times due to the subconscious adoption of orientalist tropes.

The compassion gap is made possible when we can portray ourselves at the centre of focus and "The Other" as outside our group. When they are different from us it is easier to see the outsiders as less human or in need of being civilized by us.

Western victims are martyrs while other victims are not given this honor and are met with silence or even blame for nurturing terror. It places a hierarchy on who is to be grieved and is contradictory to any assertions that all lives matter. The most blatant expression of this view was offered by US Secretary of State at the time Madeline Albright in 1996, who told *60 Minutes* that American policy objectives were worth the sacrifice of half a million Arab children.

Such views make it easy for a prominent Canadian columnist to write that Arab society is one "where wickedness is bred in the bone," and have to be taken to the Ontario Press Council to be admonished. Indeed, as psychiatrist Marc Sageman argues, most of us are guilty of "fundamental attribution error" (excessive emphasis on perceived internal motivation when it comes to judging the actions of others). He says: "You attribute other people's behaviour to internal motivations but your own to circumstances."

The division of the world plays into the terrorist narrative. Indeed, what is the difference between "us" versus "them" and the *dar-ul-harb* (abode of war)

and *dar-ul-Islam* (abode of Islam) world peddled by DA'ISH and those of its ilk?

True humanity necessitates that we stand not only with France, America and Belgium, but with all terrorized people.

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## EUROPEAN MUSLIMS, THE MIGRANT CRISIS AND REFLEXIVE PREJUDICE

by *Shenaz Bunglawala*

IN HIS SEMINAL WORK, *Orientalism*, Edward Said differentiated between knowledge of other peoples for the purpose of expanding horizons and deepening understanding and knowledge gathered, filtered and regurgitated for the purpose of 'self-affirmation'.

'There is,' he wrote, 'a profound difference between the will to understand for the purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control and external domination.'

Words that have for decades deconstructed the representation of Islam and Muslims in European discourses, literary, artistic, political and media, resonate still and are read with renewed purpose in reflections about the UK's political campaigns supporting Brexit and the EU's refugee crisis.

The shift in the idea of Fortress Europe, once constructed as strict border control, an ineffective option when the tens of thousands arriving here do so to seek asylum or are displaced by conflicts raging in violent zones abroad, has mirrored the shift in media portrayals of Islam and Muslims away from 'hard' frames (violence, the 'war on terror') to 'soft' frames (a focus on lifestyle and cultural issues).

If the early noughties were defined by a dominant propensity to link Islam and Muslims to violence, war and conflict, the late noughties were characterised by the tendency to construct 'conflict' as cultural, social and lifestyle-based.

The shift, which is documented in the Cardiff University study on Images of Islam in the UK, is instructive of two important facets of Said's observations on knowledge as serving the purpose of 'self-affirmation' and reinforcing power relations between dominant and subaltern groups.

Firstly, the conflict is value-based, treating Islamic lifestyle choices – wearing the veil, eating halal meat, circumcision and so forth – as inferior to enlightened western or European values which eschew obscurantism, gender 'apartheid' and violation of the rights of a child, to name some of the claims levelled at Muslim religious practice.

Difference is not seen as a mutually enriching dialogue where majority and minority are transformed by the encounters but as an impediment to be overcome and obliterated so that 'our' values triumph. So media output and politicians' rhetoric on the rights of religious minorities is presented as 'their' assault on 'our' way of life and 'their' demands for 'separatism' over 'our' legitimate aim of assimilation.

Whether European citizens or new arrivals to these shores, the collectivisation of 'us' and 'them' renders no distinction between the exacting of rights by European Muslims *qua* Europeans and a new opportunity for the exercise of the 'will to understand for the purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons' that mass migration presents.

Secondly, the spatial differences which at one time may have offered coherence to the notion of 'us' and 'them,' separated by physical space, no longer holds when the 'them' are, for the most part legally, part of 'us' or aspiring, legally, to be part of 'us'. Not that this registers in the incoherent utterances of those racists who, post-Brexit, have demanded ethnic minority Britons 'go home'. They are home.

The presence of European Muslim communities and the arrival of Muslim refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants from Muslim majority



countries in north and sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, permeates the imagined physical separation between ‘them’ and ‘us’ even if the separation persists in the value-laden discourses that reinforce ‘self-affirmation’.

It is an interesting development to observe as a British Muslim, though I expect my fellow European Muslim citizens probably share similar sentiments.

It is a sentiment I would capture as the title of Bruce Clark’s book, *Twice a Stranger*, about the forced deportations of Greeks and Turks from those respective territories after the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the forging of the nations of Turkey and Greece.

Twice a stranger.

We are born Europeans but are othered by virtue of our religious identity and treated a lesser part of the whole. We are othered again as new arrivals reinforce the tendency for ‘self-affirmation’ and our identities are interwoven in discourses through which the complexities arising from the displacement of peoples fleeing war or economic hardship are replaced with narratives about sex pests, tax burdens and apocalyptic fears of a demographic threat heralding the demise of ‘European’ culture. Worse still, the othering is reflexive, where European-born Muslims are affected by anti-migrant hostility at the same time as being the source of it.

Consider a billboard campaign in Hungary, branded with the apparent imprimatur of the government and declaring an anti-migrant hostility that is interlaced with the sort of Islamophobic tropes that are commonly visited upon European Muslim populations.

“Did you know that since the beginning of the immigration crisis more than 300 people died as a result of terror attacks in Europe?”

“Did you know that since the beginning of the immigration crisis the harassment of women has risen sharply in Europe?”

It is difficult not to read in the billboard slogans existing tropes which popularise the notion of ‘Muslim terrorists’ and ‘Muslim sex gangs.’

A study by the Pew Research Center published in July 2016, *Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs*, revealed a correlation

between negative attitudes towards Muslims presently living in the ten EU countries and negative attitudes towards refugees. The report observed: ‘In every country polled, the dominant view is that Muslims want to be distinct from the rest of society rather than adopt the nation’s customs and way of life.’

From burkini bans and fines for the wearing of burqas in public spaces to legal interventions restricting religious slaughter and the scaremongering about ‘Turks entering the EU,’ ‘self-affirmation’ has become the rallying cry of racists and xenophobes aided and abetted by those right wing politicians who lend credence to the mainstreaming of anti-Muslim hostility.

Self-affirmation is inflected on the rights sought by European Muslims to live as Europeans, governed and protected by rights conventions that are our European norms, as it is on those seeking the right to asylum or refugee status or economic migration, all of them protections and opportunities afforded in liberal democracies.

If the past year has fed an alienating discourse that has the effect of making European Muslims feel twice a stranger, it also presents European Muslims with a dual opportunity.

The first opportunity is to reclaim the notion of migration as a liability. European Muslims, the well-educated and patriotic and the sporting heroes and Olympic winning champions, are examples of the benefits of migration and of ‘co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons’ that close encounters can bring. We should celebrate their stories and re-



FRANCE, Paris : TOPSHOT - Migrants are evicted from a makeshift camp by French gendarmes, on July 22, 2016 in Paris. Between 1,200 and 1,400 people, mostly men, from Eritrea, Somalia and Afghanistan, were in this camp near the metro stations Jaures and Colonel Fabien. / AFP PHOTO / JACQUES DEMARTHON



weave our narrative to embrace the contributions of those who come to our countries and enrich them.

The second opportunity, and an important intervention given the normative dimension of 'self-affirmation', is the reclamation of 'our' values from the hierarchies of power that render Muslims passive recipients of 'our' values on 'our' terms instead of active agents in the exercise and upholding of our values as one of 'us'.

The transformation experienced by European Muslims as a result of migration is so often lost in the collectivising narratives that can only regard them as a homogenous 'other', despite the passage of time and evidence of their integration but their personal history and their narrative of belonging to Europe and being European deserves greater attention than it has been afforded in present times. Unable to appreciate the journey European Muslims have made and are making, as Europeans and as Muslims, the tendency for 'self-affirmation' seeks to stifle the prospects of new journeys being undertaken by those who are newly arrived. Resisting the misrepresentation of

our story as European Muslims is a challenge we should embrace not for ourselves, but also for those Muslims who may one day embark on a journey of their own to Europe.

### *Shenaz Bunglawala*

Shenaz Bunglawala is Head of Research at MEND - Muslim Engagement & Development; a non-governmental organisation tackling Islamophobia and enhancing British Muslim participation in politics, media and public life.



FRANCE, Paris : During those last few days, because of the heat and the overcrowding, the situation was very tense in the new makeshift camp in the north of Paris where nearly 800 migrants and refugees live. / AFP PHOTO / MATTHIEU ALEXANDRE

## THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN SOFT POWER RESOURCES

*by Muddassar Ahmed*

THE 21ST CENTURY HAS witnessed unprecedented instability over the past few years; the rise of DA'ISH in Iraq and Syria has captured the anxieties of the entire world; the increasing popularity of Donald Trump in the United States continues to grip the world's attention, and the success of the Brexit movement in the UK has shaken the very core of British society.

These are all very different developments, and come with different challenges, but at the heart of these seismic events lies a deterioration of healthy public discourse and an erosion of trust and communication globally. Challenges and threats which can only be addressed with soft power approaches are being dealt with recklessly, and often even with coercion.

The Muslim world has also been suffering from

these challenges, which is starkly apparent for all to see because of its significant shortcomings in soft power and effective communication.

Whilst national self-interest and foreign policy goals remain the key drivers of how countries act in the global stage - there has been a steady decline in bilateral diplomatic engagement and a rise in networks of non-state actors, such as NGOs, unions, or civil society. In such a varied environment, clinging to old notions of hard power, whether it is economic or military, is increasingly futile and potentially damaging.

A recent study of the top 30 soft powers in the world did not feature a single Muslim country. And yet, it is the Muslim world that stands in the most dire need of public engagement and communication with broad audiences.

The void has been filled by the worst actors; ISIS, hate preachers, and fundamentalists - all have used public engagement and communications tools to facilitate their alarming rise. In fact, it is no overstatement at all to say that challenges such as DA'ISH and hate preachers are essentially soft power challenges which cannot be fully defeated with hard power.

This Muslim world must respond to these challenges appropriately because the consequences couldn't be more severe. The rise of DA'ISH alone highlights the importance of engaging with global audiences outside of state apparatuses - as power becomes less centralised in the hands of few actors, and social and civic organisation becomes more diffuse through digital media - it is strongly within the national interest of Muslim countries to build the capacity of healthy communications and global civic engagement.

This does not simply mean investing money in a public media campaign, or going on a public relations drive against radicalisation, it is much broader than that. Yes, capacity building in those areas is important, but significant investment must also be made in education, in raising and disseminating cultural capital, embracing innovation, enhancing digital capabilities, and investing in social and human development.

Having dedicated much of my professional career to building the repertoire of a healthy public (and global) Muslim discourse - whether it was cultural, social, economic or religious - I have seen at first hand the advantages that this can bring, and the extraordi-

nary ability it has in building trust and relationships, and just how much the Muslim world is losing out for not placing strategic priority in this area.

It is the sum of these things that forms the basis of soft power, and acts as a vital defence mechanism in the face of religious extremism or any other social threat. It is on such diverse soft resources that the reputation, perception and global public opinion of a country is underpinned, and through which a country can exert considerable international influence. The world's biggest superpowers are also the world's leading soft powers, and that is no coincidence.

It is unfortunate that today, it is the Muslim world which is perceived with the highest levels of mistrust and suspicion - both from outside and from within. When this becomes the case, it is very difficult to reverse, but we must start somewhere, or the void will continue to be filled by the worst ambassadors.

### *Muddassar Ahmed*

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## INTIMATE ENMITY: SECTARIANISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

*Ali Khan Mahmudabad*

ONE OF THE MOST pressing problems in the Muslim world is that of *takfeer* or the act of declaring someone a *kafir*. Some years ago in Cambridge (UK), I walked by a military hardware store located in an alley next to a Korean Church. It had a display of its best-selling products in the window. Surrounded by large Union Jacks, Swiss knives, army issue shirts with the American flag, and old style parade uniforms with gleaming brass buttons was a black t-shirt. Emblazoned on it was the word *kafir* in the Arabic script and beneath it the English translation:

infidel. In the popular imagination the word *kafir* has come to mean infidel or unbeliever but as with most other Arabic words, both these translations do injustice not only to the word but also to those who are deemed to be *kafir*.

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Amongst the multiple meanings of the root word is one that translates to that which is concealed. A *kafir* is not merely someone who disbelieves but someone who deliberately rejects truth, despite knowing its reality. In other words, *kufr* is a state of ingratitude borne out of conscious disbelief. Thus, the Quran says of the heart of the believer - importantly in Arabic the word used is *mo'min* not *muslim* - that it is calm and at peace (Q 13:28) whereas the heart of the *kafir* is as hard as a rock (Q 69:74) because they broke their covenant with God.

Although that T-Shirt in Cambridge, perhaps meant for the modern day crusader, spoke of a Mus-

lim-Non-Muslim divide with its use of the word *kafir*, the fact is that the issue of *takfeer* is as much, if not more of a problem within Muslim communities across the world. Of course, it constantly crops up in the guise of the so-called Shia-Sunni divide but within both these communities there are also deep divisions with one sect labeling the other as *kuffar* (pl. of *kafir*). Indeed, the 1959 fatwa by the Sunni scholar Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut of Al-Azhar in Cairo deeming the Shia to be correct in their worship and therefore constituting a fifth legal school of thought seems to be a distant and faded memory.

Another such stark divide exists amongst certain Sunni groups in India that identify themselves as Barelvi and Deobandi. Both these appellations refer to 19th century religious reform movements that took root in colonial India. Their *takfeer* of each other is not just a theological device meant to draw up impermeable ideological boundaries but indeed it inevitably manifests itself in everyday practice. So mosques have signs forbidding members of other sects from entering, cemeteries are designated according to sect and indeed certain religious leaders have made people re-take their wedding vows if they have prayed behind an imam of the other sect. A brief search on the Deoband *Darul Ifta* website highlights how *fatawa* or religious edicts are routinely issued to queries from around the world about matters as simple as whether food can be eaten on the same table as people from other sects. Barelvi websites routinely publish articles and books highlighting which Muslim sects are considered deviant or indeed whether certain Muslims are *kafirs*. Similarly amongst Shias, there are certain scholars who denigrate and do *takfeer* of each other and inevitably this also involves personally maligning the other group. Thus, the mere mention of the name of a scholar from the pulpit, who is ideologically contentious, has often resulted in members of the audience booing and in some cases even attacking the offending speaker. Prominent Iranian scholars had deemed the late Ayatollah Mohammad Hussain Fadhlallah of Lebanon as someone who had strayed and was causing others to stray.

Within and beyond the sub-continent, *takfeer* manifests itself most often in the form of sectarian

killings. From Pakistan to Iraq and from the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant, the murder of innocent Muslims is ideologically justified by their *takfeer*. Sadly news of Shia-Sunni strife has become an almost routine matter in the news cycle, particularly around certain important months of the year. The bombing of a Shia congregation in Khanpur in Pakistan on Eid al-Adha in 2016 was just one example of the bloody sectarianism that is infecting Muslim societies across the world. Despite the fact that the Islamic New Year ends with the symbolic sacrifice of Ismail, Abraham's son, and begins with the sacrifice of Hussain ibn Ali, these sacred days have become marked by poisonous and vicious sectarianism. Incidentally, it is important to note that the martyrs of Karbala have also been mourned by Sunnis from across the world for centuries and the perception that it is only significant for the Shia is completely unfounded.

Until recently, in a place like Iraq, there were families and tribes that were half Shia and half Sunni but with the burgeoning conflict between the nation-states of Saudi Arabia and Iran, their enmity is increasingly seen as only sectarian and not also as fundamentally geo-political. In August 2016, Ayatollah Khamenei lambasted the Saudi government for its mismanagement of the annual Haj pilgrimage during the previous year. In reply, one of the most important clerics of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Aal al-Sheikh, a direct descendent of Mohammad ibn Abdul Wahhab- the ideological progenitor of Wahabism, deemed the Iranians, and by implication Shias, to be non-Muslim.



INDIA, Bangalore : Indian Muslims belonging to the Shia community hold posters of Saudi Arabian Shia Cleric Ayatullah Baqir al Nimr, who was executed in Saudi Arabia, during a candle light protest against The Saudi Rulers, in Bangalore on January 8, 2016. The Cleric was executed for denouncing the Saudi kingdom's rulers and had called for religious freedom. AFP PHOTO/ Manjunath KIRAN

For many years now, a number of videos have been circulating on the Internet showing various cleric's condemnation of Shia Muslims and indeed other Sunni Muslims. One such video shows a Sheikh who, while leading the prayers in Mecca, prayed for victory over the Godless rejecters (*rawafidh*) as well as the Jews and Christians. The pejorative term 'rejecters' goes back to the very essence of the intimate enmity between the Shia and Sunni as their differences are about the idea of authority in Islam and therefore in a sense contesting the very nature of Islam. The Shia believe that Ali, son-in-law and cousin of the Prophet, should have been his true inheritor after him and they 'reject' the rule of three Caliphs revered by the Sunnis, Abu Bakr, Omar and Uthman, as invalid. Here it is important to state that the categories of Shia and Sunni should not be seen as homogenous as this completely overlooks internal diversity. Indeed, intra-Sunni polemics, as mentioned earlier, can be as sharp and divisive as those between Shias and Sunnis.

Of course, these theological differences are used to exacerbate political, economic and even social relationships and therefore it has become politically expedient for certain clerics, both Sunnis and Shia, to use the fear of difference to create social cleavages. Some Sunni clerics pronounce that Shias, and indeed some other Sunnis, are not to be trusted because they lie and dissimulate in order to appease. The theological concept of *taqiyya*, or dissimulation in order to protect one's life, is misused to propagate the stereotype that Shias deploy *taqiyya* all the time and therefore can never be trusted. One popular offshoot of this is that in the sub-continent some Sunnis will not even drink water in a Shia's house, as they believe that it might have been spat in.

On the other hand, some Shia leaders openly curse and denigrate the first three Caliphs and certain wives of the Prophet, with little care that their abuse of those venerated by the Sunnis causes hurt and anguish. This practice is popularly and indeed wrongly known as *tabarra* and while it is certainly not the equivalent of cursing, this is how lay Muslims understand it. What unites certain religious leaders on both sides is their cynical manipulation of people's fear of difference in order to consolidate

their own power and position. It is of note that in the popular imagination the meanings of both *taqiyya* and *tabarra* are completely misunderstood and these misunderstandings are perpetuated by those who wish to exacerbate sectarian divides. Of course, the easiest way to make people afraid of difference is to make them doubt the very intentions of the other group. This kind of propaganda is doubly dangerous because even if someone is speaking with sincerity about fraternity and unity, their intentions are forever in question.

Given the fractious nature of these differences, a small initiative started in India has provided a reprieve from the usual sectarianism and factionalism. The aptly named, Shoulder-to-Shoulder (S2S) organisation was created by a group of young people in order to bring people together people from all walks of life, including Shias and Sunnis. To this end, they organised a joint Eid congregational prayer where Shias and Sunnis come together in order to offer thanks for the symbolic sacrifice of Abraham. S2S state as their objective that they are "a volunteer-driven organisation set up to bring people of different



INDIA, NEW DELHI : An Indian Muslim holds a placard during a demonstration in New Delhi on June 27, 2014. Shia and Sunni Muslim devotees took part in a demonstration calling for unity among Muslims following recent violence in Iraq. AFP PHOTO/RAVEENDRAN



faiths together and promote universal brotherhood” because “peace, unity and tolerance are essential for human existence.”

It was no small feat then, for this mixed group of people to bring together Shias and Sunnis and help them stand as one congregation. Previously under the aegis of S2S, a Sikh *Gurudwara* had organised an *iftar* for Muslims during Ramadan and some Muslims had got together to do *seva* or serve food to worshipers on the occasion of *Gurpurab*, the birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru. , During Christmas in the first year of its inception, people from different faiths came together to provide food to the poor and homeless.

While all this is symbolically very important, the fact remains that matters do come to a head when discussing certain details. One such instance was when decisions are made as to who would lead the prayers. Last year and this year a Sunni imam led the congregation in Lucknow and it remains to be seen whether a Shia will lead the prayers in the future. The root of the problem lies in the fact that if you doubt the very intentions of the ‘other’ then there is absolutely no way that there can be dialogue beyond mere superficialities. In Delhi, a Shia imam led a joint Sunni-Shia congregation, so it seems that there is potential, albeit limited, for equitable reconciliation. However, distrust and the fear of difference is often instilled so deeply and at such a young age that it, in itself, becomes a formidable hurdle to overcome. The theological debates that inform these discussions about who is a *kafir* and what constitutes *kufir* have occurred for centuries. However, today the biggest danger to most young Muslims is posed by Sheikh Google who issues baseless edicts and unfounded and generalised opinions that not only entrench prejudices but also provoke hatred. One of the biggest challenges for religious scholars in the coming years will be about how to engage with and undo the more pernicious effects of the internet on the acquisition of religious knowledge.

The kind of socialisation that engenders hate, even at an unconscious level, is of course not restricted to the Shias and Sunnis. Indeed, wherever belief and faith are used to sow discontent and division, an atmosphere is created wherein the very intention of

the ‘other’ is brought into question. After all, during Nazi rule, Jews were an inextricable part of the German cultural milieu but the propaganda against them was based on calling their intentions into question and therefore treating their ‘Germaness’ as merely eyewash. A similar dynamic existed in Ireland between the Catholics and the Protestants and today sections of the Hindu right-wing are perpetuating the stereotype that Indian Muslims are fundamentally disloyal, even anti-national, because their holy places lie beyond India.

To doubt someone’s intentions is to fundamentally question their ethical orientation. Indeed in the Quran, it is emphasised that actions will be judged according to intentions (Quran 2:225) and not just the action itself. There is also the famous hadith of the Prophet that states that intentions inform and therefore form the base of actions. Doubting the intentions of an individual or indeed a group of people is akin to a form of bigotry. S2S’ efforts are truly commendable in this regard as they seek to create bridges and generate dialogue. Theological differences, like political distinctions, will inevitably remain but it is not necessary for people to isolate themselves from one another. The real challenge therefore remains about how religious leaders from across the spectrum can inculcate trust and respect without fearing for their own loss of power. After all laying the seeds of hate is easy but uprooting it completely is extraordinarily difficult. Ultimately, intra-faith dialogue is much harder than inter-faith dialogue.

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# Issues of the Day

## 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 Ibrahim 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.

### 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 Judaise 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:

19. 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:

20. Palestinians wherever they may be, in or out of Palestine and regardless of their nationalities.

21. Muslims with passports from countries outside the Muslim world.

22. Second: In all cases, the following conditions must be observed:

23. That it does not lead to normalisation with the occupation which may cause harm to the Palestinian cause.

24. 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 Jerusalemites and none other than them.

25. That visitors enter with Palestinian or Jordanian tourist groups and stay clear of programmes run by the occupier.

26. 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

## 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 worshiping, 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

- May 2016: the historical Hamo Mosque in Mosul is blown up
  - April 2016: Further parts of the Nineveh wall are destroyed including the Mashka and Adad Gate.
  - March 2016: Al-Rahmah Mosque in Mosul blown up
  - August 2015: Abu Baker Al Sadiq's mosque in Mosul is blown up
  - June 2015: The Tomb of the Girl, in Mosul, bulldozed.
  - April 2015: The remnants of the 12th-century Bash Tapia Castle in Mosul is destroyed
  - March 2015: The Hamou al-Qadu Mosque in Mosul, which dated back to 1880, is bulldozed to the ground.
  - 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.
  - February 2015: Al-Farouq Mosque, one of the oldest mosques in the city of Al-Anbar built at the times of Omar Bin al-Khatib, is blown up
  - February 2015: Mosul library is ransacked, and over a hundred thousand rare manuscripts and documents are burnt
  - January 2015: Nineveh Wall in al-Tahrir neighbourhood is bombed
  - September 2014: Al-Arba'een Mosque in Tikrit, containing forty tombs from the Umar era, was blown up.
  - 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.
  - June 2014: The shrine of Fathi al-Ka'en is bulldozed.
  - 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.
- DA'ISH has also destroyed many Christian sites including:
- April 2016: The Sa'a Qadima Church, which was built in 1872, was blown up
  - January 2016: The Monastery of St. Elijah or Dair Mar Elia, which was 1400 years old, and was the oldest Christian historic site in Iraq. The Monastery was demolished in late August or September 2014 and went unreported until January 2016.
  - March 2015: St Markourkas Church, a 10th-century Chaldean Catholic church
  - March 2015: the historic tomb of Saint Behnam, a monastery built in the 4th century

## Syria

- March 2016: Parts of the 13th-century Palmyra Castle are blown up
- September 2015: 2nd-century AD Tower of Elahbel in Palmyra is blown up.
- 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.
- 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.
- May 2015: the Lion of al-Lat and other statues at the historical site of Palmyra (Tadmur) were destroyed.
- 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.
- Al-Omari mosque destruction started in 2012, but later in 2014, shell crater damage caused a hole in the roof and the upper level of the mosque was also destroyed.
- 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.



A destroyed mosque in the town of Al-Shaykh Maskin, liberated by the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) from ISIS militants in Syria's Daraa province. Michael Alaeddin/Sputnik

- October 2013: Mosque of Sheikh Ajjan Al-Hadid shelled.
- April 2013: The minaret of the great Umayyad Mosque of Aleppo was destroyed and looted.
- March 2013: Ammar ibn Yasir's shrine in al-Raqqah was destroyed.
- 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.
- 2011: The tomb of Sheikh Rih, a prominent Sufi sheikh, was demolished in Azaz, northern Syria.

*Reports by the Directorate of Antiquities in Aleppo indicate that 90 percent of Sufi shrines have been destroyed. At least five major archeological 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

- 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.
- May 2011: The shrine of Sheikh Zuweid was bombed by an unknown group.
- April 2011: The tomb of Sidi Abdel Rahman in Qalyoub, as well as five other tombs, were destroyed. DA'ISH's leader, al-Baghdadi, referred to the destruction of the pyramids and Sphinx as a religious duty upon Muslims.

## Libya

- March 2015: Sufi shrines near Tripoli destroyed by sledgehammers and bulldozers.
- May 2013: The Hamid Hudairi tomb in Sebha was extensively damaged.



- March 2013: The al-Andalusi Mausoleum in Tadjoura, a national monument that dates back more than 500 years, was destroyed.
- 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
- January 2012: The cemetery of Sidi Ubaid in Benghazi was wrecked and 31 corpses were stolen
- October 2011: The Sidi al-Masri Mosque in Tripoli was vandalized and damaged extensively.
- 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:

- February 2013: Sidi Bin Abd al-Jabbar's tomb in Jammal, was damaged by arson
- 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.

## 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.

- September 2012: The mausoleum of Cheik El-Kebir was destroyed.
- 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.

- 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.
- Other sites destroyed include the tomb of Almirou Mahamane Assidiki in Goundam in 2012.

## Somalia

- March 2010: The tombs of 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.
- Early 2010: The tomb of Sheikh Ali Mumin was destroyed and exhumed.
- the tomb of Sheikh Ali Tairi

## 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

- August 2016: The bombing of Prophet Shu'ayb's tomb, one of the Prophet's mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.
- 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.

## YEMEN DECIMATED

Since March 2015, a Saudi-led coalition that includes US, UK and Sunni Arab allies have carried out regular airstrikes in support of the ousted president, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, against the local Houthis. The Houthis are Zaydi Shi'a (who ruled Yemen for more than a thousand years until 1962) and have been accused of receiving weapons from Iran. As well as conflict between these two sides, both sides are fighting Al-Qaeda, who regularly carry out suicide attacks. And then there are the US drone strikes targeting Al-Qaeda.

Yemen is being decimated.

The current conflicts as well as the restrictions and sanctions imposed by the Saudi-led coalition have left 21 million people, out of a population of 26.7 million, in need of humanitarian aid. The airstrikes alone have caused three million people to flee their homes, and caused thousands of civilian deaths, as well as devastating the infrastructure. International organisations like Medecins Sans Frontieres have been forced to withdraw because not even their hospitals have been safe from attacks.

Yemen is the poorest country in the Arab world



YEMEN, SANAA : Yemeni female fighters supporting the Shiite Huthi rebels sit holding weapons in the back of a vehicle during an anti-Saudi rally in the capital Sanaa on September 6, 2016. The Saudi-led Arab coalition launched a military campaign against the Huthis and their allies in March 2015, after the rebels closed in on Gulf-backed President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi in his southern refuge of Aden, forcing him into exile. / AFP PHOTO / MOHAMMED HUWAI

importing 90% of its food. The UN estimates that 19 out of Yemen's 22 governorates are currently facing severe food insecurity leaving 7.6 million people in Yemen suffering from malnutrition, including 1.3 million children under the age of five.

Unfortunately, this crisis has received very little attention in the media. With the international focus on Syria and where its refugees will end up, Yemen is largely forgotten. And this is a conflict that shows no signs of ending: the Houthis are not only resisting the attacks, but also gaining ground; Al-Qaeda is as active as ever, as are the drone strikes; and Saudi arms purchases jumped around 50% to \$9.3bn.

HRH Prince Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein, the current United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has recently commented on the number of strikes on Yemen's infrastructure: "These terrible mistakes occur with unacceptable regularity", and also "Perhaps the members of the coalition have been guilty of international crimes".

## FRANCE'S "BURKINI BAN"

France's so-called "burkini ban" reached its peak after global news outlets disseminated images of four police officers towering over an unassuming Muslim woman while she lay on a beach in the Promenade des Anglais. Cameras caught the sight of the Muslim woman publically disrobing her long-sleeve shirt upon their demand, which in turn sparked outrage by co-religionists and women's rights activists across the world.

Later that summer in Cannes, a Muslim mother wearing leggings, a tunic and a headscarf was also fined and ordered to disrobe by local police. Her violation read that she was not wearing "an outfit respecting good morals and secularism".

The town of Cannes was the first to pass the ban, which was confirmed by the local administrative court on the 13th of August, 2016. Cannes mayor David Lisnard explained the decision by stating: "the burkini is like a uniform, a symbol of Islamist extremism."

It is perhaps no surprise that the ban on full-body swimsuits arose in the French Riviera, where the

nearby city of Nice was the site of the horrific deadly lorry attack that claimed 85 people on Bastille Day by a lone DA'ISH supporter. The fact that a third of the attack's victims were Muslim typifies the doubly destructive effect of DA'ISH's violent extremist ideology: not only does it ruthlessly reap innocent lives of all faiths, it also incites the promotion of secular extremism and xenophobic tensions against Muslims living in the West.

The dress of Muslim women has borne the brunt of laïque scrutiny since 2004, when a law was instated to forbid the wearing of religious symbols in schools and colleges, including headscarves. In 2010, France became the first European country to ban the full-face veil in public. Though France's unique stringent brand of national secularism claims to uphold equality among its citizens, the regulation of what Muslim women can or cannot wear is justifiably seen as a contradiction of liberal values and the freedom of religion. The unilaterally directed scrutiny towards Muslim citizens of the republic, and specifically Muslim women, reveals France's shortcomings in the progressive and "moral values" it seeks to uphold.

While the French High Court deemed the ban illegal in August 2016, many local municipal courts continue to be adamant about banning modest swimwear in their towns. The recent controversy is therefore symbolic not just of a seeming "clash" of values, but also of a deep-seated racial and political divide between a predominantly white, European nation with Christian roots, and its largely Muslim immigrant community. The issue of modest dress is therefore often scapegoat for underlying tensions towards Islam and Muslims in France, which ultimately exacerbates the xenophobic casting of Muslims as an

inferior "otherized" group that is incompatible with French society. The irony of the present day so-called "burkini ban" cannot escape seasoned purveyors of modern Middle Eastern history. In French-occupied Algeria in 1960 – only a little over half a century ago – French colonial officers would distribute flyers among native Algerian women that read: "are you not pretty? Unveil yourselves!" The so-called "burkini ban" is therefore not only revealing of France's contradictory notions of liberty and equality, but also points to the deeper complex political history between Europe and its Muslim-majority colonies in the early 20th century.



Major  
EVENTS

# EVENTS TIMELINE

Date	Country	Individual	Description
10 October 2015	Turkey		Turkish officials blame DA'ISH and its affiliated Dokumacılar group for two bombings outside Ankara Central railway station during a rally in Ankara, killing 103 people and injuring 500 people.
14 October 2015	Pakistan	Sardar Amjad Farooq Khan Khosa	The Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a Taliban splinter group, killed seven people and injured thirteen in a bomb attack in Taunsa Sharif a city in Punjab province inside the political office of Pakistan Muslim League MNA Sardar Amjad Farooq Khan Khosa. Khosa was not present at the time.
14 October 2015	Kazakhstan	Nurlan Utebovich Balgimbayev 20 November 1947 - 14 October 2015	Prime Minister of Kazakhstan from 10 October 1997 to 1 October 1999.
26 October 2015	Afghanistan, Pakistan, other		A 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck near `Alaqahdari-ye Kiran wa Munjan, Afghanistan, killing 399 people. Damage was reported in Kabul while tremors were felt in Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.
30 October 2015	Turkey	Sinan Şamil Sam 23 June 1974 - 30 October 2015	A Turkish heavyweight professional boxer. As a professional boxer, Sam won the EBU, World Boxing Council and WBC Mediterranean titles in the heavyweight division.
31 October 2015	Egypt, Russia		Russian Metrojet Flight 9268 disintegrated over Sinai following its departure from Sharm el-Sheikh International Airport, Egypt. All 217 passengers and seven crew were killed. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi acknowledged that terrorism was to blame.
03 November 2015	Iraq	Ahmed Abdel Hadi Chalabi 30 October 1944 - 03 November 2015	An Iraqi politician, a founder of the Iraqi National Congress (INC). He was interim Minister of Oil in Iraq in April-May 2005 and December 2005 to January 2006 and Deputy Prime Minister from May 2005 to May 2006.
09 November 2015	Jordan		A Jordanian police officer opened fire on staff in a police training centre, killing four people and injuring six people. The Minister of Interior Affairs Salameh Hammad said the shooter was motivated by personal problems and was not affiliated with any terrorist organization.
12 November 2015	Lebanon		DA'ISH detonated two suicide bombs in a Beirut suburb Bourj el-Barajneh, killing forty-three people.
13 November 2015	France		DA'ISH carried out multiple attacks in Paris and its northern suburb, Saint-Denis. The initial attack included three suicide bombers outside Stade de France in Saint-Denis, during a football match, followed by shootings and suicide bombings at cafés and restaurants. A hostage situation occurred at Bataclan theatre where 130 people died and 368 people were injured in explosions and shootings after the police raided the premises. DA'ISH claimed the attacks were in retaliation for the French airstrikes on them in Syria and Iraq.



Date	Country	Individual	Description
20 November 2015	Mali		Al-Mourabitoun and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attacked the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, taking over 170 hostages. Malian commandos raided the hotel, freeing the hostages. Twenty hostages were killed in the incident.
21 November 2015	Belgium		The Belgium government imposed a security lockdown on Brussels due to information about possible attacks in the wake of the DA'ISH attacks in Paris earlier that month. Reports that Belgian-born French national Salah Abdeslam was hiding in the city also sparked a manhunt. Shops, schools, and public transport were all shut down and people were told to stay at home.
24 November 2015	Turkey, Syria, Russia		The Turkish Air Force shot down a Russian bomber aircraft near the Syria–Turkey border for violating Turkish airspace after giving several warnings. Russian and Turkish officials disagree over the flight path of the aircraft. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan iterated that Turkey had the right to defend its airspace.
24 November 2015	Egypt		Wilayat Sinai, a DA'ISH offshoot, attacked a hotel in the coastal city of Al-Arish, Egypt. The militants attempted to blow up the hotel with a car bomb, but Egyptian security forces stopped it before reaching the building. Still, two militants gained access to the hotel, killing seven people with gunfire and a suicide bomb. Two judges supervising Egypt's parliamentary elections were among the dead.
24 November 2015	Tunis		A DA'ISH suicide bomber attacked a bus carrying Tunisian presidential guards in Tunis, killing twelve people.
30 November 2015	Morocco	Fatema Mernissi 1940 - 30 November 2015	A Moroccan feminist writer and sociologist.
02 December 2015	United States of America		Fourteen people were killed and twenty-two people injured in a terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California. The perpetrators, Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik, targeted a San Bernardino County Department of Public Health training event and Christmas party. The couple were later killed by police. US President Barack Obama defined the shooting as an act of terrorism.
15 December 2015	Saudi Arabia, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation member states	Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud	Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Defense, announced the creation of The Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFIT), or The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition. It is an intergovernmental military alliance of countries in the Muslim world united around military intervention against DA'ISH and other counter-terrorist activities. The organization is based at a joint command center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and has thirty-nine member states.
31 December 2015	United Arab Emirates		A fire broke out at the Downtown Address Hotel in Dubai, injuring sixteen. The fire started in residential suites due to an electrical short circuit and spread quickly due to strong winds. It took four teams of the Dubai Civil Defence to fight the blaze.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
02 January 2016	Saudi Arabia		Shaykh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, a prominent Shia cleric in Saudi Arabia, was among forty-seven people executed after being convicted of terrorism offences. His execution led to demonstrations in many countries and an attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran, Iran.
02 January 2016	Saudi Arabia	Nimr Baqir al-Nimr 21 June 1959 - 02 January 2016	A Shia Sheikh in al-Awamiyah in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province whose arrest and execution created diplomatic tension between Shia and Sunni governments.
07 January 2016	Iran, Monaco	Princess Ashraf ol-Molouk Pahlavi 26 October 1919 - 07 January 2016	The twin sister of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran, and a member of the Pahlavi Dynasty.
12 January 2016	Turkey		A DA'ISH suicide bomber attacked Istanbul's historic Sultanahmet district, killing thirteen people, all foreigners, and injuring fourteen people. The attack occurred near the Blue Mosque, an area popular among tourists.
14 January 2016	Indonesia		DA'ISH extremists targeted UN offices in central Jakarta. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) confirmed that a Dutch UN official was seriously injured. After an armed stand-off, eight people were dead and twenty-three were injured.
16 January 2016	Burkina Faso		Al-Mourabitoun and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attacked the Cappuccino restaurant and the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou. The extremists took 176 hostages. After a government led counter-attack, thirty people died, including former Swiss MPs Jean-Noël Rey and Georgie Lamon, and fifty-six were injured. Three attackers were killed in the gunfight. A fourth attacker was killed after fleeing to the nearby YIBI Hotel.
16 January 2016	Iran		International nuclear sanctions were lifted from Iran after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Iran had complied with a deal designed to prevent it developing nuclear weapons. The IAEA said it had installed a device at the Natanz plant to monitor Iran's uranium enrichment activities in real time, as agreed in the deal with world powers. Iran had to drastically reduce its number of centrifuges and dismantle a heavy-water reactor near the town of Arak, both of which could be used in creating nuclear weapons.
20 January 2016	Pakistan		The Tariq Geedar Afridi faction of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan fired upon Bacha Khan University near Charsadda, killing twenty-two and injuring over twenty more. Over 200 students fled the campus. The two extremists were killed by security forces.
17 February 2016	Turkey		The Kurdistan Freedom Falcons bombed a convoy of shuttles carrying both civilian and military personnel working at the military headquarters, killing thirty and injuring sixty. The attack took place during rush hour in a neighbourhood containing several ministries, the headquarters of the army and the Turkish Parliament.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
17 February 2016	Egypt	Mohamed Hassanain Heikal 23 September 1923 - 17 February 2016	An Egyptian journalist who was a commentator on Arab affairs for more than 50 years.
05 March 2016	Sudan	Hassan 'Abd Allah al-Turabi 01 February 1932 - 05 March 2016	A religious and Islamist political leader in Sudan. He has been called one of the most influential figures in modern Sudanese politics. He was instrumental in institutionalizing sharia (Islamic law) in the northern part of the country.
13 March 2016	Ivory Coast		Al-Mourabitoun and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb attacked the Étoile du Sud beach resort in Grand-Bassam, killing eighteen and injuring thirty-three. The extremists were killed by police forces after reaching La Paillote Hotel.
16 March 2016	Nigeria		Two Boko Haram female suicide bombers killed twenty-two people praying in the Molai-Umarari mosque on the outskirts of Maiduguri. One of the women disguised herself as a man to gain access, detonating her bomb during prayers. The second detonated her bomb outside as people fled the mosque.
16 March 2016	Pakistan		Pakistani Taliban are suspected of bombing a bus of government employees in Peshawar, killing fifteen people and injuring twenty-five people.
19 March 2016	Turkey		A DA'ISH suicide bomber killed four people and injured thirty-six people in an attack in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district in front of the district governor's office.
19 March 2016	United Arab Emirates, Russia		Passenger flight Flydubai 981 crashed during an aborted landing at Rostov-on-Don Airport in Rostov-on-Don, Russia. The crash occurred at night during inclement weather and resulted in the death of all fifty-five passengers and seven crew.
22 March 2016	Belgium		DA'ISH detonated three coordinated suicide bombings in Brussels, killing thirty-two people and injuring more than 300 people. Two explosions occurred at the Brussels Airport in Zaventem, and another explosion at Maalbeek metro station. The extremists belonged to a terrorist cell which had been involved in the November 2015 Paris attacks.
24 March 2016	The Hague, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia	Radovan Karadžić	Radovan Karadžić was found guilty of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and sentenced to forty years imprisonment. He was found guilty of genocide for the Srebrenica massacre, which aimed to exterminate the Bosnian Muslim community. He was also convicted of persecution, extermination, deportation, ethnic cleansing, and murder in connection with his campaign to drive Bosnian Muslims and Croats out of villages claimed by Serb forces.
27 March 2016	Pakistan		Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a affiliate of the Pakistani Taliban, killed seventy-five people and injured over 340 people in a suicide bombing at the main entrance of Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park in Lahore. The attack targeted Christians who were celebrating Easter. However, the majority of the victims were Muslim women and children.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
01 April 2016	Azerbaijan, Armenia		A war broke out between Armenia and Azerbaijan, now known as the Four-Day War, killing over 350 people, both military and civilian. The war started in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.
10 April 2016	Afghanistan, Pakistan, other		A magnitude 6.6 earthquake struck west-southwest of Ashkasham, Afghanistan, killing four people in Pakistan. The tremors shook up Peshawar, Chitral, Swat, Gilgit, Faisalabad, and Lahore.
19 May 2016	Egypt		Passenger flight EgyptAir 804 crashed into the Mediterranean Sea, killing fifty-six passengers and ten crew. The flight data recorder indicated a fire was the cause of the crash.
30 May 2016	Chad, Senegal, Extraordinary African Chambers	Hissène Habré	The Extraordinary African Chambers found Hissène Habré guilty of rape, sexual slavery, and ordering the killing of 40,000 people during his tenure as Chadian president and sentenced him to life in prison. The verdict marked the first time an African Union-backed court convicted a former ruler for human-rights abuses and the first time that the courts of one country have prosecuted the former ruler of another country for crimes against humanity.
31 May 2016	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	Mohamed Abdelaziz 17 August 1947 - 31 May 2016	The first President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic from 1982 until his death.
03 June 2016	United States of America	Muhammad Ali 17 January 1942 - 03 June 2016	Widely regarded as one of the most significant and celebrated sports figures of the 20th century.
12 June 2016	United States of America		Omar Mateen killed forty-nine people and injured fifty-three people in an attack on a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida. He was killed by Orlando police. Although Mateen allegedly swore allegiance to DA'ISH, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) said they found no links between him and DA'ISH.
28 June 2016	Turkey		Turkish officials claimed DA'ISH attacked Atatürk Airport in Istanbul, killing forty-five people and injuring more than 230 people. Shootings and suicide bombings targeted the international terminal. Officials said the extremists were from Russia and Central Asia.

Date	Country	Individual	Description
06 July 2016	United Kingdom, Iraq	Sir John Chilcot	Seven years after UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced the inquiry, The Iraq Inquiry was published. Sir John Chilcot published a public statement in which he stated that Saddam Hussein did not pose an urgent threat to British interests, that intelligence regarding weapons of mass destruction was presented with unwarranted certainty, that peaceful alternatives to war had not been exhausted, that the United Kingdom and United States had undermined the authority of the United Nations Security Council, that the process of identifying the legal basis was "far from satisfactory," and that a war in 2003 was unnecessary. The report is available under an Open Government Licence.
08 July 2016	Pakistan	Abdul Sattar Edhi 01 January 1928 - 08 July 2016	A prominent Pakistani philanthropist, ascetic and humanitarian who founded the Edhi Foundation which runs hospitals, homeless shelters, rehab centres and orphanages across Pakistan.
14 July 2016	France		Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel drove a truck through crowds celebrating Bastille Day on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, killing eighty-six people and injuring 307 people. Lahouaiej-Bouhlel was killed by police. DA'ISH claimed the attack was executed in response to its calls to attack citizens of nations fighting them. The French government announced it would intensify military attacks on DA'ISH in Syria and Iraq.
15 July 2016	Turkey	Recep Tayyip Erdogan	A faction of the Turkish Armed Forces attempted a coup d'état against state institutions. During the failed coup attempt, over 300 people were killed and more than 2,100 people were injured. Mass arrests followed, with at least 6,000 people detained, including at least 2,839 soldiers and 2,745 judges. Additionally, 15,000 education staff were suspended and the licenses of 21,000 teachers working at private institutions were revoked. Government buildings, including the Turkish Parliament and the Presidential Palace, were damaged. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused Fethullah Gülen of being behind the coup.
23 July 2016	Afghanistan		DA'ISH bombed minority Hazara Afghan protesters near Deh Mazang square in Kabul, killing eighty people and injuring 260 people. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani renamed the square as the Martyrs' Square in tribute to the victims.
25 July 2016	Turkey	Halil İnalçık 26 May 1916 - 25 July 2016	A Turkish historian of the Ottoman Empire. His highly influential research centred on social and economic approaches to the empire.
02 August 2016	Egypt, United States of America	Ahmed Hassan Zewail 26 February 1946 - 02 August 2016	An Egyptian-American scientist, known as the "father of femtochemistry". He was awarded the 1999 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his work on femtochemistry and became the first Egyptian and the first Arab to win a Nobel Prize in a scientific field.



Date	Country	Individual	Description
22 August 2016	Mali	Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi	Ansar Dine leader Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi stood trial in the International Criminal Court for the destruction of a UNESCO World Heritage site in Timbuktu. The trial marks the first time that the destruction of a world heritage site is classified as a war crime. Al-Mahdi pled guilty.
24 August 2016	Afghanistan		Militants attacked the American University in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing ten and injuring thirty-seven. The Afghan government blamed the Taliban.
29 August 2016	Chechen Republic		An Islamic conference was held in Grozny to discuss the definition of Ahla Sunnah wa Jama'a, or Sunni Islam. Over 100 participants from over 30 countries participated, including the Grand Mufti of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb.
29 August 2016	Syria	Abu Mohamed al-Adnani 1977 - 29 August 2016	Abu Mohamed al-Adnani was killed by western military assault in Aleppo. Al-Adnani was the chief propaganda officer and head of external operations for DA'ISH. He was linked with recruiting and inspiring foreign fighters to make attacks outside of DA'ISH held territory, including those that took place in France.
31 August 2016	Myanmar		State Councilor and Foreign Minister Aung Sang Suu Kyi signed an agreement with the Kofi Annan Foundation to set up a commission to investigate abuses to the minority Rohingya Muslim community. More than 125,000 Rohingyas have been forced into refugee camps while hundreds have died due to continuing violence with Myanmar's majority Buddhist citizens.
2 September 2016	Pakistan		Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a breakaway Taliban faction, attacked a Christian colony near the town of Peshawar, killing one, and detonating a suicide bomb in a district court in the town of Mardan, killing eleven and injuring forty-one. A total of four suicide bombers entered the colony, but local civilian guards and security forces responded quickly, preventing further loss of life.
2 September 2016	Uzbekistan	Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov January 30, 1938 - September 2, 2016	President of Uzbekistan from 1 September 1991 to 2 September 2016
3 September 2016	Bangladesh	Mir Quasem Ali 31 December 1952 - 3 September 2016	An important leader of Bangladesh's Jamaat-e-Islami party, he was executed for offenses committed during the country's 1971 war of independence against Pakistan.
10 September 2016	Iraq		Iraqi officials claimed that DA'ISH was responsible for a double suicide car bombing at a popular shopping mall in downtown Baghdad, killing forty and injuring sixty.
14 September 2016	Indonesia		The Indonesian Council of Ulema issued a fatwa against the intentional lighting of fires in forests or on plantation land. This is the second fatwa in Indonesia aimed at protecting the environment. This first fatwa forbade trafficking in Indonesia's wildlife. Indonesia is home to a population of orangutan, which are listed as an endangered species.

Population Statistics

# APPENDIX I

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Afghanistan	27,657,145	99.8	27,601,831
Albania	2,886,026	58.79	1,696,695
Algeria	40,400,000	98.2	39,672,800
American Samoa	57,100	< 0.1	< 57
Andorra	78,014	< 0.1	< 78
Angola	24,383,301	1	243,833
Anguilla	13,452	0.3	40
Antigua and Barbuda	86,295	0.6	518
Argentina	43,590,400	2.5	1,089,760
Armenia	2,995,100	< 0.1	< 2995
Aruba	110,108	0.4	440
Australia	24,186,900	2.2	532,112
Austria	8,741,753	6.8	594,439
Azerbaijan	9,755,500	98.4	9,599,412
Bahamas	378,040	0.1	378
Bahrain	1,404,900	70.2	986,240
Bangladesh	161,075,000	86.3	139,007,725
Barbados	285,000	0.9	2,565
Belarus	9,500,000	0.2	19,000
Belgium	11,323,925	5.9	668,112
Belize	375,909	0.1	376
Benin	10,653,654	24.5	2,610,145
Bermuda	61,954	0.8	496
Bhutan	778,000	0.2	1,556
Bolivia	10,985,059	< 0.1	< 10985
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3,531,159	50.7	1,790,298
Botswana	2,230,905	0.4	8,924
Brazil	206,649,000	< 0.1	< 206649
British Virgin Islands	28,514	1.2	342
Brunei	411,900	67	275,973
Bulgaria	7,153,784	13.7	980,068
Burkina Faso	19,034,397	60.5	11,515,810
Burundi	10,114,505	2.2	222,519
Cambodia	15,626,444	1.6	250,023
Cameroon	22,709,892	20.9	4,746,367
Canada	36,525,800	3.2	1,168,826

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Cape Verde	531,239	2	10,625
Cayman Islands	60,413	0.2	121
Central African Republic	4,998,000	15	749,700
Chad	14,497,000	58	8,408,260
Chile	18,191,900	0.03	5,458
China	1,378,730,000	1.8	24,817,140
Colombia	48,834,600	< 0.1	< 48835
Comoros	806,153	98.3	792,448
Congo	82,310,000	5	4,115,500
Cook Islands	18,100	< 0.1	< 18
Costa Rica	4,890,379	< 0.1	< 4890
Côte d'Ivoire	22,671,331	40	9,068,532
Croatia	4,190,669	1.4	58,669
Cuba	11,239,004	0.1	11,239
Cyprus	847,000	22.7	192,269
Czech Republic	10,558,524	< 0.1	< 10559
Denmark	5,724,456	4.1	234,703
Djibouti	900,000	97	873,000
Dominica	71,293	0.2	143
Dominican Republic	10,075,045	< 0.1	< 10075
Ecuador	16,612,195	< 0.1	< 16612
Egypt	91,575,200	94.7	86,721,714
El Salvador	6,520,675	<0.1	< 6520
Equatorial Guinea	1,222,442	4.1	50,120
Eritrea	5,352,000	36.6	1,958,832
Estonia	1,315,944	0.2	2,632
Ethiopia	92,206,005	34	31,350,042
Falkland Islands	2,563	< 0.1	< 3
Federated States of Micronesia	102,800	< 0.1	< 103
Fiji	867,000	6.3	54,621
Finland	5,495,830	0.8	43,967
France	66,736,000	7.5	5,005,200
French Guiana	254,541	0.9	2,291
French Polynesia	271,800	< 0.1	< 271
Gabon	1,802,278	9.7	174,821
Gambia	1,882,450	95.3	1,793,975

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Georgia	3,720,400	10.5	390,642
Germany	82,175,700	5.8	4,766,191
Ghana	27,670,174	18	4,980,631
Gibraltar	33,140	4	1,326
Greece	10,858,018	5.3	575,475
Greenland	56,186	< 1.8	< 1000
Grenada	103,328	0.3	310
Guadeloupe	400,132	0.4	1,601
Guam	184,200	< 0.5	< 1000
Guatemala	16,176,133	< 0.01	< 1000
Guinea	12,947,000	84.2	10,901,374
Guinea Bissau	1,547,777	50	773,889
Guyana	746,900	7.2	53,777
Haiti	11,078,033	< 0.1	< 11078
Honduras	8,721,014	0.1	8,721
Hong Kong	7,346,700	3.1	227,748
Hungary	9,823,000	0.3	29,469
Iceland	336,060	0.24	807
India	1,330,940,000	14.2	188,993,480
Indonesia	260,581,000	87.2	227,226,632
Iran	79,531,800	99.7	79,293,205
Iraq	37,883,543	98.9	37,466,824
Ireland	4,757,976	1.1	52,338
Isle of Man	84,497	0.2	169
Israel	8,581,620	17.7	1,518,947
Italy	60,665,551	3.7	2,244,625
Jamaica	2,723,246	< 0.04	< 1000
Japan	127,000,000	0.1	127,000
Jordan	9,660,860	93.8	9,061,887
Kazakhstan	17,753,200	70.2	12,462,746
Kenya	47,251,000	10	4,725,100
Kiribati	113,400	< 0.9	< 1000
Kuwait	4,183,658	86.4	3,614,681
Kyrgyzstan	6,047,800	88.8	5,370,446
Laos	6,492,400	< 0.02	< 1000
Latvia	1,958,800	0.1	1,959



Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Lebanon	5,988,000	59.7	3,574,836
Lesotho	1,916,000	< 0.05	< 1000
Liberia	4,076,530	12.8	521,796
Libya	6,385,000	96.6	6,167,910
Liechtenstein	37,623	4.8	1,806
Lithuania	2,866,935	0.1	2,867
Luxembourg	576,200	2.3	13,253
Macedonia	2,071,278	33.3	689,736
Madagascar	22,434,363	7	1,570,405
Malawi	16,832,910	12.8	2,154,612
Malaysia	31,755,700	61.4	19,498,000
Maldives	344,023	100	344,023
Mali	18,341,000	95	17,423,950
Malta	429,344	0.2	859
Marshall Islands	54,880	< 1.8	< 1000
Martinique	378,243	0.2	756
Mauritania	3,718,678	100	3,718,678
Mauritius	1,262,879	17.3	218,478
Mayotte	226,915	98.8	224,192
Mexico	128,632,000	0.1	128,632
Moldova	3,553,100	0.4	14,212
Monaco	38,400	0.5	192
Mongolia	3,104,650	6	186,279
Montenegro	621,810	19.11	118,828
Montserrat	4,922	0.1	5
Morocco	34,080,300	99	33,739,497
Mozambique	26,423,700	22.8	6,024,604
Myanmar( Burma)	54,363,426	4.3	2,337,627
Namibia	2,324,388	0.4	9,298
Nauru	10,084	< 0.1	< 10
Nepal	28,431,500	4.2	1,194,123
Netherlands	17,048,500	5	852,425
New Caledonia	268,767	2.8	7,525
New Zealand	4,714,460	0.9	42,430
Nicaragua	6,262,703	<0.1	6,263
Niger	20,715,000	98.3	20,362,845

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Nigeria	186,988,000	41	76,665,080
Niue	1,470	0.1	1
North Korea	24,213,510	0.1	24,214
Northern Mariana Islands	56,940	0.7	399
Norway	5,236,826	3	157,105
Oman	4,496,760	87.7	3,943,659
Pakistan	194,242,000	96.4	187,249,288
Palau	17,950	< 0.1	< 18
Palestinian territories	4,816,503	97.5	4,696,090
Panama	3,814,672	0.7	26,703
Papua New Guinea	8,083,700	< 0.1	< 8084
Paraguay	6,854,536	< 0.1	< 6855
Peru	31,488,700	< 0.1	< 31489
Philippines	103,006,000	5	5,150,300
Poland	38,437,239	0.1	38,437
Portugal	10,341,330	0.6	62,048
Puerto Rico	3,474,182	< 0.1	< 3474
Qatar	2,401,598	77.5	1,861,238
Republic of Congo	4,741,000	1.6	75,856
Reunion	843,529	4.2	35,428
Romania	19,760,000	0.3	59,280
Russia	146,654,366	10	14,665,437
Rwanda	11,553,188	4.8	554,553
Samoa	194,899	< 0.1	< 195
San Marino	33,005	< 0.1	< 33
Sao Tome and Principe	187,356	< 0.1	187
Saudi Arabia	31,015,999	97.1	30,116,535
Senegal	14,799,859	95.9	14,193,065
Serbia	7,076,372	2.8	198,138
Seychelles	93,144	1.1	1,025
Sierra Leone	7,075,641	71.5	5,059,083
Singapore	5,535,000	14.7	813,645
Slovakia	5,426,252	0.2	10,853
Slovenia	2,063,371	3.6	74,281
Solomon Islands	642,000	< 0.1	< 642
Somalia	11,079,000	98.9	10,957,131

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
South Africa	55,653,654	1.5	834,805
South Korea	50,617,045	0.1	50,617
Spain	46,438,422	4.1	1,903,975
Sri Lanka	20,966,000	9.71	2,035,799
Sudan	41,176,000	97	39,940,720
Suriname	541,638	19.6	106,161
Swaziland	1,132,657	10	113,266
Sweden	9,920,881	5	496,044
Switzerland	8,341,600	5	417,080
Syria	18,564,000	90	16,707,600
Taiwan	23,514,750	0.3	70,544
Tajikistan	8,551,000	99	8,465,490
Tanzania	55,155,000	35	19,304,250
Thailand	65,729,098	5.8	3,812,288
Timor-Leste	1,167,242	0.1	1,167
Togo	7,143,000	20	1,428,600
Tokelau	1,411	< 0.1	< 1
Tonga	103,252	< 0.1	< 103
Trinidad and Tobago	1,349,667	5.8	78,281
Tunisia	11,154,400	99.8	11,132,091
Turkey	78,742,000	98.6	77,639,612
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	36,861,000	12	4,423,320
Ukraine	42,658,149	0.8	341,265
United Arab Emirates	9,856,000	76	7,490,560
United Kingdom	65,110,000	4.8	3,125,280
United States	324,468,000	0.8	2,595,744
United States Virgin Islands	106,000	0.1	106
Uruguay	3,480,222	< 0.1	< 3480
Uzbekistan	31,575,300	96.5	30,470,165
Vanuatu	277,500	< 0.1	< 278
Vatican City	842	0	0
Venezuela	31,028,700	0.3	93,086
Vietnam	92,700,000	0.2	185,400

Country	Population	% Muslim	Muslim Population
Wallis and Futuna	11,750	< 0.1	< 12
Western Sahara	584,000	99.6	581,664
Yemen	27,478,000	99	27,203,220
Zambia	15,933,883	1	159,339
Zimbabwe	14,240,168	3	427,205
Total	7,382,443,467	23.85%	1,760,563,196

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  
*"I entrust my affair to Allah"*  
 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.  
(Rounded values in millions.)

Rank	Name	Age	Country	Occupation	FB	TW	IG	Total
1	Salman Khan	51	India	Actor	32.30	19.20	5.80	57.30
2	Zayn Malik	23	UK	Musician	19.69	19.90	14.40	53.99
3	Mesut Özil	27	Germany	Footballer	31.16	12.50	8.60	52.26
4	Shahrukh Khan	51	India	Actor	20.29	21.00	3.30	44.59
5	Muhammad Al-Arifi	46	KSA	Scholar	22.36	15.70	n/a	38.06
6	Ahmad Al-Shugairi	43	KSA	Preacher	14.06	15.30	7.00	36.36
7	A.R. Rahman	49	India	Musician	22.40	11.70	0.13	34.23
8	Mustafa Hosny	38	Egypt	Preacher	26.11	3.41	4.70	34.22
9	Aamir Khan	51	India	Actor	15.43	18.40	0.03	33.85
10	Amr Khaled	49	Egypt	Preacher	23.09	7.29	2.00	32.38
11	Maher Zain	35	Sweden	Musician	26.27	1.50	3.00	30.77
12	Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid Alafasy	40	Kuwait	Qur'an Reciter	16.55	11.20	1.90	29.65
13	Aidh Al-Qarni	56	KSA	Scholar	14.28	13.90	n/a	28.18
14	Amr Diab	54	Egypt	Musician	16.08	6.11	3.90	26.09
15	Tamer Hosny	39	Egypt	Musician	18.38	2.01	5.00	25.39
16	Atif Aslam	34	Pakistan	Musician	19.47	0.69	1.60	21.76
17	Haifa Wehbe	40	Lebanon	Musician	11.39	5.17	3.70	20.26
18	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	62	Turkey	Politician	8.85	9.11	1.40	19.36
19	Ahlam Alshamsi	47	UAE	Musician	6.01	6.71	5.10	17.82
20	HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah	46	Jordan	Royalty	9.67	5.34	2.20	17.21
21	Kadim Al Sahir	58	Iraq	Musician	12.53	3.50	0.96	16.98
22	Paul Pogba	23	France	Footballer	5.39	2.50	8.70	16.59
23	Bassem Youssef	42	Egypt	Show Host	8.35	8.03	0.00	16.38
24	Tareq Al-Suwaidan	62	Kuwait	Show Host	8.38	7.68	n/a	16.06
25	Salman Al Ouda	59	KSA	Scholar	6.21	9.77	n/a	15.98
26	Ahmed Helmy	45	Egypt	Actor	11.44	2.09	0.31	13.85
27	Muhammad Assaf	27	Palestine	Musician	9.15	1.76	2.50	13.41
28	Prabowo Subianto	64	Indonesia	Public Speaker	9.32	2.65	0.36	12.33
29	HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum	67	UAE	Royalty	3.47	6.70	1.80	11.97
30	Ragheb Alama	54	Lebanon	Musician	4.63	5.05	1.90	11.58
31	Moez Masoud	40	Egypt	Preacher	8.17	3.23	n/a	11.40

Rank	Name	Age	Country	Occupation	FB	TW	IG	Total
32	Ahlam Mustaghanami	63	Algeria	Novelist	10.38	0.82	0.17	11.37
33	Imran Khan	63	Pakistan	Politician	6.88	4.21	n/a	11.09
34	Dr Mehmet Oz	56	USA	Show Host	6.01	3.85	0.38	10.24
35	Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri	45	UAE	Preacher	6.16	3.60	0.15	9.91
36	Nabil Al Awadhy	46	Kuwait	Preacher	0.88	8.26	n/a	9.14
37	Sami Yusuf	36	UK	Musician	7.82	0.67	0.57	9.06
38	Khadija Ben Guenna	51	Algeria	Media	8.46	0.09	0.17	8.71
39	Fayez Maliki	47	KSA	Actor	0.02	4.91	2.80	7.73
40	Tariq Al Habeeb	49	KSA	Self-Help	0.52	6.37	0.54	7.43
41	Abdullah Gymnastiar	54	Indonesia	Preacher	4.55	1.86	0.53	6.94
42	Mohammad Al Wakeel		Jordan	Media	6.80	0.00	n/a	6.80
43	Samira Said	53	Morocco	Musician	5.68	0.44	0.58	6.69
44	Awal Ashaari	35	Malaysia	Actor	1.81	1.84	2.60	6.25
45	Najib Razak	63	Malaysia	Politician	3.05	2.89	0.24	6.18
46	Bilal Phillips	69	Qatar	Scholar	5.38	0.31	0.25	5.94
47	Mohamed ElBaradei	74	Egypt	Politician	1.21	4.58	n/a	5.79
48	Mustafa Agha	57	Syria	Sports Journalist	0.02	4.25	1.00	5.27
49	Diana Karazon	33	Jordan	Musician	3.24	0.49	0.64	4.37
50	Shaykh-ul-Islam Prof Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri	65	Pakistan	Scholar	3.32	0.58	n/a	3.90
51	Yahya Hawwa	40	Syria	Qur'an Reciter	2.80	0.15	0.17	3.12
52	Mohammed 'Mo' Farah	33	UK	Athlete	0.97	1.30	0.42	2.69
53	Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad	91	Malaysia	Politician	2.47	0.13	n/a	2.60
54	Dr. Yusuf Al Qardawi	90	Qatar	Scholar	1.18	1.23	n/a	2.41
55	Ali Gomaa	64	Egypt	Scholar	1.17	1.15	0.02	2.34
56	Mos Def	43	USA	Actor	2.12	0.15	n/a	2.27
57	Nouman Ali Khan	38	USA	Preacher	1.95	0.23	n/a	2.17
58	Habib Lutfi Yahya	68	Indonesia	Scholar	1.89	0.05	n/a	1.94
59	Muna Abu Sulayman	43	KSA	Show Host	1.27	0.36	n/a	1.63
60	Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein	40	Jordan	Sports - Admin	1.19	0.39	n/a	1.58
61	Yusuf Islam	68	UK	Musician	1.43	0.05	0.03	1.50

# SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)  
(Rounded values in millions.)

Rank	Name	Age	Country	Category	FB	TW	IG	Total
1	Taylor Swift	26	USA	Musician	75.0	80.8	90.5	246.30
2	Cristiano Ronaldo	31	Portugal	Footballer	116.8	46.1	75.7	238.55
3	Katy Perry	31	USA	Musician	71.3	92.4	55.3	218.99
4	Selena Gomez	24	USA	Musician	61.5	45.6	97.0	204.05
5	Rihanna	28	Barbados	Musician	82.0	65.1	43.6	190.70
6	Shakira	39	Colombia	Musician	104.6	39.7	24.0	168.31
7	Justin Bieber	22	Canada	Musician	77.5	87.3	n/a	164.85
8	Beyonce	35	USA	Musician	64.7	14.6	83.7	162.98
9	Kim Kardashian	35	USA	Reality Star	29.2	47.7	81.6	158.52
10	Lady Gaga	30	USA	Musician	61.3	63.0	18.6	142.97
11	Neymar	24	Brazil	Footballer	58.8	24.6	58.6	142.01
12	Lionel Messi (Leo Messi)	29	Argentina	Footballer	86.8	1.8	53.2	141.74
13	Barack Obama	56	USA	Politician	49.8	77.1	8.7	135.63
14	Jennifer Lopez	47	USA	Musician	45.6	36.9	51.0	133.57
15	Justin Timberlake	36	USA	Musician	39.5	56.5	34.7	130.69
16	Nicki Minaj	33	USA	Musician	42.5	20.6	65.4	128.54
17	Miley Cyrus	23	USA	Musician	46.5	30.6	51.2	128.27
18	Vin Diesel	49	USA	Actor	100.2	n/a	26.2	126.37
19	Demi Lovato	24	USA	Actress - Musician	38.2	38.1	45.6	121.83
20	Eminem	43	USA	Musician	91.6	20.8	9.4	121.78
21	Adele	28	UK	Musician	65.8	27.1	17.2	110.15
22	Britney Spears	35	USA	Musician	40.1	47.4	12.7	100.20
23	Drake	29	Canada	Musician	35.4	33.8	27.8	97.00
24	Kevin Hart	37	USA	Comedian	23.5	30.7	41.4	95.52
25	Bruno Mars	30	USA	Musician	58.2	26.0	6.9	91.17
26	Chris Brown	30	USA	Musician	42.9	17.0	30.6	90.47
27	Dwayne Johnson (The Rock)	44	USA	Wrestler	51.3	9.3	28.4	89.06
28	Pitbull	35	USA	Musician	59.2	22.5	4.6	86.31
29	Lil Wayne	33	USA	Musician	50.6	27.7	4.2	82.54
30	David Guetta	48	France	Musician	55.2	20.4	5.9	81.51
31	Wiz Khalifa	29	USA	Musician	41.1	27.3	12.1	80.53

Rank	Name	Age	Country	Category	FB	TW	IG	Total
32	David Beckham	41	UK	Footballer	54.9	0.6	24.4	79.92
33	Bob Marley	deceased	Jamaica	Musician	74.8	1.4	2.9	79.12
34	Michael Jackson	deceased	USA	Musician	75.9	2.0	1.0	78.94
35	Will Smith	47	USA	Actor	75.1	0.4	0.8	76.37
36	Avril Lavigne	31	Canada	Musician	52.3	20.1	3.7	76.06
37	LeBron James	31	USA	Athlete - NBA	22.9	23.8	24.7	71.39
38	Emma Watson	26	UK	Actress	33.5	22.7	13.8	69.92
39	Enrique Iglesias	41	Spain	Musician	51.5	10.6	7.7	69.85
40	Jackie Chan	62	Hong Kong	Actor	64.4	0.9	1.7	66.98
41	Ricardo Kakà	34	Brazil	Footballer	32.2	25.7	9.0	66.92
42	Ronaldinho Gaucho	35	Brazil	Footballer	34.5	13.5	16.8	64.84
43	Alicia Keys	35	USA	Musician	33.9	23.8	6.8	64.43
44	Usher	37	USA	Musician	46.9	11.3	4.9	63.15
45	Snoop Dogg	44	USA	Musician	36.5	14.5	12.0	63.03
46	Jason Statham	49	USA	Actor	54.7	0.0	8.0	62.71
47	Pink	37	USA	Musician	32.7	28.2	0.8	61.70
48	AKON	43	USA	Musician	52.3	5.9	2.9	61.05
49	50cent	41	USA	Musician	38.0	8.6	11.6	58.26
50	Adam Sandler	50	USA	Actor	51.9	2.0	2.0	55.96
51	John Cena	39	USA	Athlete	42.4	8.6	4.7	55.71
52	Megan Fox	30	USA	Actress	50.6	1.3	3.3	55.27
53	Andres Iniesta	32	Spain	Footballer	26.4	13.3	13.6	53.35
54	Daddy Yankee	39	Puerto Rico	Musician	29.7	9.1	10.6	49.36
55	Amitabh Bachchan	73	India	Actor	24.2	22.2	2.1	48.45
56	Christina Aguilera	35	USA	Musician	25.5	16.1	3.0	44.54
57	Sachin Tendulkar	43	India	Cricket Player	27.4	12.2	3.7	43.29
58	Paulo Coelho	69	Brazil	Author	28.5	11.2	1.4	41.13
59	Kesha	29	USA	Musician	30.8	3.8	1.8	36.37
60	Taylor Lautner	24	USA	Actor	31.1	0.1	1.2	32.34
61	Michael Jordan	53	USA	Athlete - NBA	26.6	0.1	4.2	30.86
62	Celine Dion	48	Canada	Musician	23.5	0.5	1.0	24.99

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ  
وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا  
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ  
إِلَّا تَبَارًا

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ  
وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا  
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ  
إِلَّا تَبَارًا

The Holy Qur'an  
Nuh 71:28

*"My Lord! Forgive me and my parents and him who entereth my house believing, and believing men and believing women, and increase not the wrong-doers in aught save ruin."*

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an

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 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.

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## 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 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.



*Shahadah*

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