



PERSONS
OF THE YEAR



The
Muslim 500

THE WORLD'S 500 MOST
INFLUENTIAL MUSLIMS

2022



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2022

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MABDA

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INTRODUCTION



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful ﴿﴾ Praise be to God; Lord of all Worlds. ﴿﴾ The Compassionate, the Merciful. ﴿﴾ Master of the Day of Judgement. ﴿﴾ You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help. ﴿﴾ Guide us to the straight path. ﴿﴾ the path of those whom You have favoured, nor the path of those against whom there is wrath, nor of those who are astray.

The Opening, 1—7

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Welcome to the thirteenth annual issue of *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims*. We are very pleased that we have made it this far and that the book has evolved as it has. We thank you for all your support and suggestions and look forward to continually receiving them.

There are 1.94 billion Muslims in the world today, making up approximately a quarter of the world's population. 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 or Muslims. 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. 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 followers, the number of books written, the amount of sales etc., but more often it is not something measurable in quantitative terms and is more related to the qualitative and lasting effect of that influence. A combination of social metrics, public opinion (we have a month-long open call for nominations every year, and all suggestions are considered) and expert opinion are the basis of this attempt to measure 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 as we give weight to people breaking barriers and to local influence as

well as global influence. This means that our list of names will change gradually, rather than dramatically, year-on-year.

The Top 50 individuals are ranked and listed first. The remaining 450 names are then listed (not ranked) in categories of influence, with a small number also chosen to be in our Honourable Mentions section to value the notable contributions made in their fields.

Our 13 categories are:

- 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

The individuals are ordered in each category according to geographical region (Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, North America, South America), then in alphabetical order by country and finally by surname.

This publication combines aspects of a review of the past year, including a timeline and statistics, but it also hopes to serve as a prospective guide to the new year, much like a *Who's Who*.

What's in this issue?

We have our Persons of the Year; these individuals achieved or represented something significant in the past year.

Our editor then offers his Selected Survey of the major events which have affected the Muslim world over the past twelve months.

Then we have our regular House of Islam essay which gives an overview of Islam and its branches. An updated Top 50 and 450 lists (including Honourable Mentions) then follows.

We have a list of Muslim medallists in both the Olympics and Paralympics games held in Tokyo. The final part of our lists is the Obituaries section which lists the people from last year's book who have since passed away.

Our Guest Contributions section has exclusive articles covering a wide range of issues. These are sure to stimulate thought and discussion around current pressing issues.

Our Book Reviews cover some books that have been published recently. The Major Events section provides a timeline of the major events that have taken place over the past year.

Appendices I and II 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 most popular Facebook, Twitter and Instagram Muslim users, as well as worldwide.

To give a richer visual experience we have also included several calligraphy pieces throughout the book, which we hope will serve as a beautiful re-

minder 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 the Amman Message on p. 53, A Common Word on p. 121, the Marrakesh Declaration on p. 128, The Muslim Council of Elders on p. 136, Free Islamic Calligraphy on p. 147, UN World Interfaith Harmony Week on p. 156, and Altafsir.com on p. 170).

Our website [www.TheMuslim500.com] is a popular destination. We welcome your feedback and will take nominations for the 2023 edition through it.



There is no compulsion in religion. Rectitude has become clear from error; so whoever disbelieves in the false deity, and believes in God, has laid hold of the most firm handle, unbreaking; God is Hearing, Knowing.

The Cow, 256

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Woman of the Year



PRESIDENT SAMIA SULUHU HASSAN

Samia Suluhu Hassan became president of Tanzania on 19 March 2021 following the death of President John Magufuli. As the first woman to become president of Tanzania, and only the second woman currently serving as president in Africa, President Suluhu intends to lead in a firm, but diplomatic way. In a speech she said, "I may look polite, and do not shout when speaking, but the most important thing is that everyone understands what I say and things get done as I say." This is in stark contrast to her predecessor, who was nicknamed "the bulldozer". More importantly, she has been taking steps to backtrack on some of the late President Magufuli's authoritarian policies; she is seen as restoring Tanzania's democracy.

Suluhu was born in 1960 in the small fishing village of Makunduchi, Zanzibar at a time when it was still an independent Muslim sultanate. Her father was a school teacher and her mother was a housewife. She finished her secondary education in 1977 and began working in the Ministry of Planning and Development as a clerk. After completing a degree

in public administration, she worked on a project funded by the World Food Programme. In 1994, she earned a postgraduate diploma in economics from the University of Manchester in the UK.

In 2000, Suluhu began her political career by winning a seat in the Zanzibar House of Representatives. She was appointed Minister of Labour, Gender Development and Children and later served as Minister of Tourism, Trade and Investment. She was the only high-ranking woman in the cabinet at the time. In 2010, she ran for a seat in Tanzania's National Assembly, winning by more than eighty per cent of the vote. She was appointed Minister of State for Union Affairs by then President Jakaya Kikwete. In 2014, Tanzania attempted to draft a new constitution, for which Suluhu was elected as the Vice Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly. During her time on the Constituent Assembly, many noted her calm demeanour and ability to manage outbreaks of pandemonium.

John Mugufuli chose Suluhu as his running mate in the 2015 election, and upon the subsequent win, Suluhu became Tanzania's first female vice-president.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan inspects a military parade following her swearing in the country's first female president.



During her term as vice-president, she earned the respect of many members of parliament who worked with her, noting her work ethic, temperament, and decision-making skills. In the 2020 election, Mugufuli and Suhulu won a second term in office.

Five months into their second term, President Mugufuli died, leaving Suluhu to inherit the presidential post according to the Tanzanian constitution. She has become the first female president of Tanzania, the second president from Zanzibar, and the third Muslim to hold the post.

While some may have initially expressed doubt regarding President Suhulu's abilities, they were soon silenced. The first policy was in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast to Mugufuli's policy of denial, President Suhulu began a vaccination campaign, stating that Tanzania could not isolate itself. And while Mugufuli was insular, President Suhulu is not. In her short time in office, she has made official visits to many of Tanzania's neighbouring states, Mozam-



bique, Uganda, and Kenya, in what some describe as a charm offensive in order to repair relations that suffered under her predecessor. Additionally, there are claims that Tanzania will ratify the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, demonstrating further intentions to integrate into the region.

During President Suhulu's first months in office in 2021, she has managed to attract 92 new investment projects, providing roughly \$3.5 billion. In contrast, 2020 only saw around \$300 million in investments during the same period. President Suhulu has restored investor confidence and attracted private sector investments. In April 2021, she finalised the agreement of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline with land-locked Uganda, which is expected to greatly improve both country's economies. President Suhulu's efforts are not limited to Africa though. She has been promoting Tanzanian tourism, appearing in the travel series, *The Royal Tour*, hosted by American journalist Peter Greenberg. Within her current tenure the East African Community will try to implement greater economic unity through issuing a common currency, and President Suhulu looks to be positioning Tanzania into a strong position.

Domestically, President Suhulu has restored some freedom of speech and has been more tolerant to her party's opposition. However, she has yet to push for any changes in the law. Commenting about social media, Suhulu said that "it helps us know what people are thinking, if we ban it, we won't have that platform". Her new appointees include former opposition members, broadcasters, and artists, but also staunch party members from Mugufuli's administration. The delicate balance between party loyalists and new faces may show Suhulu's desire to create a more inclusive government. Sceptics suggest that more needs to be done to right the past's wrongs. Despite criticism of her policies, President Suhulu has asked Tanzanians to "let me straighten up the country first" before addressing calls for constitutional reform. Until then, she has stated that she will side with her party concerning domestic policies. No doubt she will be looking to secure her party's support for the 2025 election.

Man of the Year



UĞUR ŞAHİN

Uğur Şahin is an immunologist and the CEO of BioNTech, the company which developed one of the major vaccines against COVID-19. By July 2021, Pfizer and BioNTech had distributed one billion doses globally and had orders to deliver several billion more doses, making it one of the most ambitious scale-ups in pharmaceutical history.

In 1969, when he was four years old, Şahin emigrated to Germany from İskenderun, Turkey, with his mother where they joined his father who was working at the Ford factory in Cologne. He studied medicine at the University of Cologne, graduating with his doctorate in 1992.

He met his wife, Dr Türeci, while studying medicine at Saarland University Hospital, and in 2001 the couple founded the company, Ganymed, which focused on developing therapeutic antibodies. It was during this time that they filed dozens of patents that later formed the company, BioNTech, which they founded in 2008 with their mentor, Christoph Huber. The breakthrough advances they made in mRNA research during this time would gain them the attention of both billionaire investors and the German government, who would put millions into BioNTech to push the research further.

Though the main focus of Dr Şahin's research work is the discovery of mRNA-based drugs for use as cancer immunotherapies, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, BioNTech pivoted to using mRNA-based drugs for fighting the new threat. By the end of 2020, BioNTech developed the BNT162b2 vaccine and reported a 95% efficacy against COVID-19. It became the first mRNA drug approved for human use. Subsequently, Dr Şahin entered a partnership with Pfizer pharmaceutical company to distribute it worldwide. Due to this partnership, BioNTech skyrocketed in value, making Dr Şahin and his wife among Germany's top 100 wealthiest people.

However, despite his success, Dr Şahin stays humble, preferring to ride a bike to BioNTech headquarters. He still lives with his wife and their daughter in their small apartment in the town of Mainz, Germany. "We do not have special needs," Dr Şahin says, "we don't even have a car. A yacht would be impractical." Still in touch with their poorer immigrant roots, (his family toasts all their accomplishments with Turkish

tea), Dr Şahin has often spoken of his wish that the vaccine be distributed widely and fairly. He often worries that rich countries will buy up the majority of doses, leaving the developing world in limbo. The wealthy should not be able to jump the line due to their wealth, he's often insisted. Despite this, the New York Times released a report in 2021 showing how wealthy areas are receiving vaccines meant for poorer communities in America. And the BBC released a report in 2020 stating that up to 70 lower-income countries will only be able to vaccinate one in 10 people, due to more wealthy countries snapping up the majority of vaccine supplies.

Additionally, because of their immigrant background, Dr Şahin and Dr Türeci have been used for political purposes despite their vocal objections; most recently by the Christian Democratic Union of Germany, who has used Dr Şahin and Dr Türeci's example as successful integration into the country. However, Dr Şahin prefers to concentrate on the advancement of science and medical research. "In science it does not matter where you are from, what counts is what you can do and what you are willing to do," he says.

Uğur Şahin and Özlem Türeci





In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
By Time! Verily man is in [a state of] loss, except those who
believe, and perform righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to
[follow] the truth, and enjoin one another to patience.

The Declining Day

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A SELECTED SURVEY OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

by Tarek Elgawhary

This past year has been strange, to say the least. It is easy to get lost in the ebbs and flows of the global pandemic since even though much of our day-to-day lives has changed or in some cases seized altogether, the fact remains that life goes on and that the Muslim world still must deal with so many issues that are yet to be resolved.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 has colored the entire Muslim world survey for this edition, and for this reason I decided to keep the same general outline and the same subheadings as last year. While there is some overlap with my assessment of 2021, there is also much new: new challenges, new opportunities, and always renewed hope for the future. To this end I am reminded of the saying of Imam Ali (may God be pleased with him) who said, “Morning surely shines for those who have vision.” Let this survey be a step towards the vision for a brighter future we are sure to have, *in sha Allah*.

PART I—MUSLIM WORLD SURVEY

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

As with all regions in our survey, this past year in the Middle East was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and the deep socio-economic toll it is taking on its people. In addition, the aftershocks from normalization of relations between Israel and several Arab states are still being felt and discussed.

The pandemic hit Iran and Turkey early, followed by Iraq and some of the Gulf states, but quickly spread throughout the region. Exact infection and mortality rates are hard to come by since there is no standard matrix for counting cases across the region, but the reality is that COVID-19 has had a devastating effect throughout the Middle East. Many nations were proactive in putting health and lockdown provisions in place, attempting to limit the damage. Like much of the world, however, the region is bracing for a difficult winter season, with states trying to line up acquisition and distribution of vaccines during the remainder of 2021.

COVID-19 also impacted the region’s economy, which contracted by an average of 5 percent, driving tens of millions into poverty, and millions into unemployment. The economic blow was the result of several factors: the slowdown of domestic economic activity because of lockdowns; the slowing of global demand; the exponential high negative impact on sensitive sectors such as the tourism and hospitality industry; and the collapse of oil prices. 2020 was the worst year economically in the past half-century, and the high levels of unemployment and poverty that prevailed before 2020 will most likely be worse throughout the rest of 2021. Most governments worked very hard to manage the crisis, but with limited resources, the pain has been widespread and unavoidable.

Troubled areas, such as Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Lebanon, many of which I discuss below, have been particularly hard hit. Economic contraction there is higher than the regional average estimated at around 13 percent, with no government or state institutions available to manage the crisis or ease the pain.

Geopolitically, the year will likely be remembered for the breakthrough agreements between Israel and several Arab states, which I discussed at some length in last year’s survey. With Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, the UAE, and Bahrain now having normalized relations with Israel, the old alignments and assumptions that defined the region for decades are deeply in flux, and of course the greatest question on everyone’s mind is what will become of the Palestinian people and the issue of Palestinian statehood.

LEBANON

For the past year and a half, Lebanon has been suffering from compounded crises: its dire economic and financial crises, the spread of COVID-19 amongst its population, the tragic explosion at the port of Beirut on 4 August, 2020, and most recently its energy deficit.

Of these, the economic crisis has had by far the largest (and most persistent) negative impact. Lebanon is enduring a severe, prolonged economic depression: real GDP growth contracted by 20.3% in 2020 and inflation reached triple digits, while the ex-



The aftermath of the Beirut port explosion, 4 August 2020

change rate keeps losing value. Poverty is rising sharply, and its currency is collapsing just as fast.

The resulting inflation is disproportionately affecting the poor and middle class. The social impact, already dire, could become catastrophic; more than half the country's population is likely below the poverty line; a higher share of households is facing challenges in accessing food, healthcare, and basic services; likewise poverty and unemployment are on the rise.

Meanwhile, like its regional neighbors, Lebanon is struggling to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic through intermittent lockdowns and other measures that mitigate the impact of the virus both on people and the already weak health system. Vaccination, launched on 14 February, 2021, with initial financing from the World Bank, is progressing according to the National COVID-19 Deployment and Vaccination Plan. This aims to vaccinate 70% of the total population, both citizens and non-citizens, in a multi-phase rollout by the end of the year. Efforts are underway to speed up the campaign through the procurement of vaccines via additional sources, including the private sector.

IRAN

Stemming from many of the issues discussed in last year's survey, the situation in Iran continues to be difficult. On the foreign policy front, the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign proved

relentless. Even as Tehran took steps to tough it out, the combined cost of the American-led sanctions and an unresponsive political posture to public demands for change kept Iran on the edge of popular unrest throughout the year. Meanwhile, as with the rest of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Iran hard, but the situation was exacerbated due to sanctions. Domestic production and consumption and an increase in barter-type trade with neighboring states were meant to help Tehran circumvent U.S. sanctions, but the pandemic put a big damper on such hopes. While Tehran at first judged the pandemic as an opportunity to foster international sympathy to undermine the U.S. sanctions regime, the continued adherence of countries and companies around the world to American demands not to deal with Iran was another wake-up call for Tehran about its isolated and precarious foreign policy position.

Politically, worries about the health of 81-year-old Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei were another source of anxiety in the ranks of the regime. The pandemic meant that Khamenei only had a few public events or meetings with officials. The supreme leader is, after all, the epicenter of the regime and a fraying command-and-control structure would not only have implications inside Iran but also in the wider region as the U.S. and Iran remain locked in a standoff.

In June of 2021 Iran held a presidential election in which Ebrahim Raisi won 17.9 million votes overall, nearly 62% of the total 28.9 million cast. Following

Raisi was former Revolutionary Guard commander Mohsen Rezaei with 3.4 million votes. Former Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati, largely viewed as a stand-in for outgoing President Hassan Rouhani in the election, came in third with 2.4 million votes. Amirhossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi was last with just under 1 million. Since the election there has been much discussion about what this means not only for Iran, but the West specifically since President Raisi was subjected to sanctions by the United States State Department in November of 2019 for alleged human rights violations.

TURKEY

This past year President Erdogan announced that Turkey would send troops to Libya to shore up the internationally recognized government in Tripoli. Erdogan threatened that Turkey would “teach a lesson” to Khalifa Haftar’s eastern Libyan forces if they did not stop their attacks against the Tripoli-based government. His announcement came after Turkey and Libya signed an agreement covering military cooperation and maritime boundaries in November 2019 as part of Ankara’s efforts to change the anti-Turkey status quo in the eastern Mediterranean led by Greece and Cyprus. Turkey’s move was condemned by several countries, including the U.S., Egypt, Israel, Greece, and Cyprus, and Turkey drew further criticism when it transferred thousands of Syrian mercenaries to fight in Libya.

In February of this year, Turkey-Russia tensions in Syria came to a head when 33 Turkish forces were killed in an apparent Russian airstrike on the last rebel-held Syrian enclave of Idlib. Russia, which has

been critical of Turkey’s failure to cleanse the enclave of jihadist forces, later said that Turkish troops were attacked while operating alongside jihadist fighters.

Energy exploration in the eastern Mediterranean, where Turkey and Greece have overlapping claims, has been a flashpoint as well. Ankara’s drilling for natural gas in waters where the ethnically split Cyprus has economic rights rekindled tensions over regional energy reserves, and Turkey was once again the target of widespread condemnation. In solidarity with Greece and Cyprus, French President Emmanuel Macron urged Turkey to halt oil and gas exploration in disputed waters and deployed the French navy to the area. Soon afterwards, an American warship arrived at the Greek island of Crete to observe the escalating tension.

LIBYA

During this past year, Turkish activities inside Libya led to Haftar’s withdrawal from Libya’s west. Then, instead of escalating further, the foreign interveners pulled back from the brink, lowered the risk of regional war, enabling U.N.-organized negotiations to finally take place. By late October, a Libyan Joint Military Commission agreed to withdraw all military units and armed groups from frontlines and to have all mercenaries and foreign fighters depart from Libyan territory by the end of January 2021.

A new U.N.-convened 75-member Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) agreed on 15 November, 2021 to presidential and parliamentary elections to be held on 24 December, 2021, the 70th anniversary of Libya’s independence. This roadmap also includes the creation of a final one-year transition

The Oruç Reis, Turkey’s seismic research vessel



government under a new three-person Presidency Council to lead the transitional period toward elections, re-unify state institutions, and provide security and basic services to the population until the elections are held.

PALESTINE

For Palestine and Palestinians, this past year made an already bad situation markedly worse. The outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic devastated the already battered Palestinian economy, which was further compounded by Israel's decision to withhold tax transfers collected on behalf of the PA that make up some two-thirds of its budget. Events came to a head when in response to the looming threat of Israeli annexation, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declared an end to all signed agreements with Israel, including the once sacred pillar of PA-Israel security cooperation.

The announcements by the UAE and Bahrain, respectively, that they had agreed to fully normalize relations with Israel as part of the Trump administration-brokered Abraham Accords came as a further shock to both Palestinian leaders and the public, who condemned the deals as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause and a fatal blow to the Arab Peace Initiative.

Viewing the growing tide of Arab normalization with Israel as an existential threat to Palestinian national aspirations, Palestinian rival parties, Fatah and Hamas, along with other factions agreed to close ranks. As part of a reconciliation deal, Palestinian factions agreed to hold new presidential and legislative elections as well as elections for the Palestine National Council, the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) long dormant parliament-in-exile. As with previous reconciliation efforts, however, the process soon stalled.

The death of longtime chief negotiator Saeb Erakat in November 2020 followed by the resignation of Hanan Ashrawi from the PLO Executive Committee a month later removed two of the PLO's most experienced negotiators and underscored Abbas' growing internal isolation. Meanwhile, as a goodwill gesture to the incoming Biden administration, and faced with the PA's imminent financial ruin, Abbas's leadership announced that the PA would resume all cooperation with Israel.

However, Trump's electoral defeat in November 2020 seemed only to accelerate the administration's scorched-earth policies. On 19 November, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo became the highest-ranking U.S. diplomat to make an official visit to Israeli set-

tlements in the occupied territories, using the opportunity to announce yet another radical shift in U.S. policy. Under new rules of origin guidelines, Israeli products originating in West Bank areas under sole Israeli control, known as "Area C," would henceforth be labelled as "made in Israel," effectively conferring U.S. recognition of Israeli sovereignty over some 60 percent of the West Bank. Closing out the Palestinians' year of setbacks, on 10 December, 2020, Morocco became the fourth Arab country to formally normalize relations with Israel in as many months in return for U.S. recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara.

An outbreak of violence broke out between Palestinians and Israelis on 10 May, 2021. It was marked by protests and police riot control, rocket attacks on Israel by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Israeli airstrikes targeting the Gaza Strip. The crisis was triggered on 6 May, when Palestinians began protests in East Jerusalem over an anticipated decision of the Supreme Court of Israel on the eviction of six Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah. Under international law, the area, effectively annexed by Israel, is a part of the occupied Palestinian territories. Israel applies its own laws there, however. On 7 May, Israelis stormed the compound of the al-Aqsa Mosque using tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades. The crisis prompted protests around the world and reactions from world leaders.

As a result of the violence, at least 256 Palestinians, including 66 children, were killed, 1, 900 Palestinians were injured and at least 72, 000 Palestinians displaced. In Israel, at least 13 people were killed, including two children and at least 200 Israelis were injured. A ceasefire between Israel and Hamas came into effect on 21 May 2021, ending 11 days of fighting with both sides claiming victory. Unfortunately, late in the summer of 2021, hostilities re-emerged with Israel pounding away at Gaza; however, international media remains largely silent.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

As sub-Saharan African economies look to rebound following the COVID-19 pandemic, some countries in the region may encounter fiscal troubles that could pose challenges to their economic recovery. South Africa and Angola, southern Africa's major economies, are particularly vulnerable to debt crises. Southern Africa has grown slower than the rest of the continent since the global financial crisis, as both Angola and South Africa have racked up commercial debt to



Youth protests in Nigeria

maintain extensive patronage networks linked to entrenched political elites. The lack of visionary political leadership will inhibit both countries from reaching the levels of economic growth required to rein in debt. Zambia, which defaulted on its Eurobond payments in November, must determine how to engineer an economic rebound while navigating election year politics and trying to engage positively with existing and prospective creditors that do not trust it.

Youth-led demonstrations against police brutality broke out in the year defining moment for the political consciousness of young Nigerians. The protests were the country's largest in a generation and drew out tens of thousands of people in Lagos, its largest city. The demonstrations ended abruptly after an outbreak of violence prompted a heavy-handed crackdown by security forces, but they will likely have a lasting impact on the political landscape, starting with the 2023 elections. The protests could drive greater political engagement among the youth (under-35s), who make up around 75% of the population and 51% of registered voters but have tended to not vote in large numbers in previous elections. Also, an increasingly urban population promises to bring into focus structural issues like police reform, which in the past has taken a backseat to issues important to rural voters like the provision of basic needs

Economic challenges in Ghana, particularly from mounting energy sector debt, also pose a challenge to President Nana Akufo-Addo, who won reelection earlier this year. Another engagement with the IMF will be a last resort; instead, the government will look to issue new debt and to receive grants and debt relief from global financial institutions to mitigate fiscal pressures next year.

For Ethiopia, the war in Tigray (in tandem with existing and emerging unrest) and continued tension

with Egypt over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), in addition to managing COVID-19 have been the biggest headlines. Ethiopia was able to hold elections on 21 June, 2021, which was originally delayed from August of the previous year due to the global pandemic. On 10 July, partial election results were released with the Prosperity Party winning at least 410 seats, enough to secure the majority and remain in power.

ASIA

PAKISTAN

When it comes to national security, terrorist attacks have considerably declined in the last few years. Yet, several bomb blasts in Baluchistan, an attack on an opposition party's rally in Karachi, and an attempted attack on the Karachi Stock Exchange this year have revived concerns over the continued presence of terrorist outfits in the country. Such terrorist activities could pose problems for Pakistan in the future as, despite taking some measures against money laundering and terrorism financing, there is still a lot left to be done to remove Pakistan's name from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list.

In contrast to its domestic policy, Pakistan's foreign policy this past year was more coherent, mainly due to its improved civil-military relationship under the Imran Khan-led government. Specifically, Pakistan was able to secure its foreign policy objectives in Afghanistan and obtain a prominent role in the region by using its influence over the Taliban to facilitate the U.S.-Taliban talks in Doha and to provide support for the intra-Afghan dialogue. Throughout the year, key representatives from the Afghan government, including Afghan Peace Envoy Abdullah Abdullah and Gulbadeen Hekmatyar, as well as

Zalmay Khalizad—the U.S. special representative for Afghanistan—made several important visits to Pakistan. The Taliban also had an official meeting in Islamabad just before the onset of the intra-Afghan dialogue in Doha. Having both political and economic stakes in fostering peace in Afghanistan, Pakistan's current strategy seems to be to establish a new coalition government in Kabul with the Taliban having a significant share in power. Hence, Pakistani policymakers are apprehensive about the current stalemate in the dialogue process reflected in Imran Khan's speech on his first official visit to Kabul—he explicitly supported a ceasefire between the two Afghan parties and urged to “do everything, whatever is possible” to establish peace in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN

Twenty years after being removed from power in a U.S.-led invasion, Taliban militiamen swept to into Afghanistan's capital, Kabul in mid-August 2021 facing little resistance from Afghan government forces. Within hours, Afghanistan's Washington-backed president had left the country amid a hasty evacuation of diplomatic personnel. Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan's president, said on Facebook that his was “a hard choice,” but that he decided to leave to prevent bloodshed. He signed off his post with “Long Live Afghanistan.” The Taliban released a statement saying they had entered the capital of 6 million people and were working to restore law and order.

Following the collapse of the government, the militia's fighters took the last remaining government

stronghold of Mazar-e-Sharif, followed quickly by the city of Jalalabad, which lies just east of Kabul on a major road artery.

At the time of this writing, it is still too early to tell what exactly will become of Afghanistan, but it will most likely be our biggest story of the coming year!

INDONESIA

The COVID-19 pandemic-ravaged Indonesia plunging the Muslim world's largest nation into an economic recession. Indonesia's caseload rose steadily during the first couple of months of the pandemic. By June 2020, Indonesia regularly recorded over 1,000 new cases daily. By September 2020, daily counts of over 3,000 and 4,000 cases were the norm. Unable to suppress the country's caseload, the government's focus turned to vaccine procurement. It most notably allowed Chinese pharmaceutical firm Sinovac to carry out advanced clinical trials of a promising vaccine candidate on 1,600 participants in Bandung, West Java starting in August 2020. Despite the absence of a regulatory approval, Indonesia received a shipment of 1.2 million doses of the Sinovac vaccine on 6 December, 2020, with 1.8 million more to follow in January 2021 along with the raw materials for Indonesia to independently produce 45 million doses. On 16 December, 2020 President Joko Widodo announced that Indonesians will not have to pay for the COVID-19 vaccine once it became available. Aside from Sinovac, the government has approved the future uses of five other vaccines, namely those produced by Bio Farma, Astra Zeneca, Sinopharm, Moderna, and Pfizer. Due

Afghan evacuees board a US Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Hamid Karzai International Airport.



to all these efforts, economists are predicting that Indonesia will pull out of the recession by the end of 2021 due to their vaccine rollout plan.

Despite public health concerns, nine provinces, 37 cities, and 224 regencies went to the polls on 9 December, 2020 for the annual simultaneous regional elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia. The elections were initially scheduled to take place in September of the same year.

President Joko Widodo's eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, beat his competitor in the race for mayor in Solo, Central Java, winning 86.5 percent of the votes. Jokowi notably led the city before making the step up as Jakarta governor and eventually to the presidency. Jokowi's son-in-law, Bobby Nasution, also won with 53.5 percent of the votes in the North Sumatra capital of Medan. Despite their insistence otherwise, Bobby and Gibran's victories have signaled the birth of a new political dynasty in Indonesia. Neither had any political experience prior to the elections.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia's Muhyiddin Yassin stepped down as prime minister in August 2021 after months of political turmoil culminated in the loss of his majority, but his resignation is likely to open another chapter of instability in the absence of any obvious successor. Muhyiddin's resignation ends a tumultuous 17 months in office, the shortest stint of a Malaysian leader, but hampers efforts to reboot a pandemic-stricken economy and curb a resurgence of COVID-19 infections.

Muhyiddin said he resigned along with his cabinet after losing majority support in parliament. As caretaker, he added, he will have no cabinet, but will perform executive functions and advise the king until a new prime minister is appointed. "I hope a new government can be formed immediately so that the administration of this country is not disrupted," he said in a televised speech.

Shortly after his resignation in fact, King al-Sultan Abdullah appointed Ismail Sabri Yaakob. The King ruled out elections because of the pandemic, saying he would invoke his constitutional power to appoint a prime minister he believes is likely to command a majority.

Muhyiddin said the recent crisis was brought on by his refusal of demands such as dropping graft charges against some individuals. UMNO politicians faced with corruption charges include former premier Najib Razak and party president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi. They have denied wrongdoing and were among those who withdrew support for Muhyiddin in August 2021. this month.

EUROPE / OCEANIA / AMERICAS

US ELECTIONS

In November 2020 Donald Trump was defeated by Joe Biden in the US presidential elections. With regards to his relationship with Muslims as president, Donald Trump implemented a travel ban that many

Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Taylor Crul via US DoD



saw as fulfilling his promise to bar Muslims. The ban targeted largely Muslim-majority countries. In his time in office, he frequently retweeted anti-Muslim videos from a far-right British group and told four progressive congresswomen of color, two Muslim, to go back to where they came from. It is no surprise, then, that more Muslim Americans voted for Biden than for Trump. An Associated Press exit poll showed 35% of Muslims voted for Trump and 64% for Joe Biden. While Muslims make up a small percentage of the population, their vote is key in states such as Michigan; Biden won Michigan by about 155,000 votes. Trump won Michigan in 2016 by under 11,000.

However, overall, there was a weakening of support of Muslims for the Democratic ticket. The biggest predictor of whether a Muslim supported Trump was not education or income, but race. One survey found 50% of Muslims who identified as white supported Trump, much like the general population. Among Arabs, Asians and Latinos identifying as Muslims that percentage dropped into the 20s and among Black Muslims the teens.

Much like the general population, Trump-supporting Muslims cited the economy as a top issue. They also were more likely to oppose building coalitions with Black Lives Matter, and instead they expressed support for building coalitions with religious conservatives working on religious liberty issues.

As I discussed in last year's survey, the BLM movement and other related social movements in the United States are growing fault lines within the Muslim community. It is definitely an issue we will want to observe closely over the next five years.

FRENCH HIJAB BAN ISSUE

The conflict over one woman's choice to cover her head comes in the wake of controversy surrounding an amendment passed by the French Senate that would ban girls under 18 from wearing the hijab in public. As part of a proposed "anti-separatism" bill, it was presented alongside amendments that would also prevent mothers from wearing hijabs on their children's school trips and would ban the "burkini," a full-body swimsuit.

While some French politicians defended the amendment as a reinforcement of the country's adherence to secularism, others have criticized it as yet another instance of part of an ugly strain of Islamophobia in the nation, which is home to the largest Muslim population in Western Europe, a population used to intense forms of discrimination, particular-

ly in recent years. A 2019 report conducted by the *Commission Nationale Consultative Des Droits De L'Homme* found that 44.6% of the country considered Muslims a threat to French national identity, while a government survey from the same year listed that 42% of Muslims reported experiencing discrimination due to their religion, a number that increased to 60% for women who wore a headscarf.

While the proposed legislation still needs to be approved by the lower house of French Parliament before it can become a law, it has already drawn significant backlash from many Muslim women around the world, who see the law as not only xenophobic and discriminatory, but an attack on their agency—a sentiment that has grown over the years as French politicians have argued that laws restricting religious symbolism are in service of women's empowerment and public safety. On social media, the hashtag #HandsOffMyHijab has become a rallying cry to protest the amendment, started by Somali-Norwegian model Rawdah Mohamed, who used the phrase in a now-viral Instagram post to call out the potential ban. It's since garnered support from the likes of U.S. congresswoman Ilhan Omar and Olympic fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad.

Women protest over French restrictions on hijab



PART II—MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE GLOBAL MUSLIM POPULATION

ROHINGYA

COVID-19 has brought vast changes and challenges to the Rohingya humanitarian response, particularly humanitarian operations in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District, which were already complex before the onset of the pandemic. Bangladesh confirmed the first cases of COVID-19 in early March 2020, and the virus reached the Rohingya camps two months later.

In early 2020, the UN and NGO partners, together with the Government of Bangladesh, mobilized to respond to the pandemic. The COVID-19 Response Plan covering the period April to December 2020 set out a strategy, plan and additional requirements totaling USD 181 million. It also expanded host community support to an additional half a million Bangladeshis in Cox's Bazar District with targeted interventions in the areas of health, wash coverage, food security and livelihoods during this unprecedented time.

Early in the COVID-19 response, the Government of Bangladesh took decisive action—with the full support of the humanitarian community—to reduce operations to critical activities only and limit the number of humanitarian staff going to the camps, mitigating the risks, slowing the spread, and providing a critical window of time to prepare for the onset of the virus.

The pandemic has brought a new threat to these overcrowded conditions. Many refugees live in flimsy bamboo and tarpaulin shelters where the dangers of everyday life remain all too real. On 22 March, 2021, a fire in Cox's Bazar caused widespread devastation when it quickly spread across four Rohingya refugee camps, displacing around 50,000 refugees—half of whom were children.

In Myanmar, most Rohingya still have no legal identity or citizenship and remain stateless, a significant concern. Rohingya children in the Rakhine State are hemmed in by violence, forced displacement, and restrictions on freedom of movement. Compounding the problem, insecurity and instability increased in 2020, with significant displacement and increased conflict in Rakhine and Chin States, continuing conflict in Shan State, and hardening of positions by ethnic armed organizations and the Myanmar Armed Forces. Until the conditions are in place in Myanmar that would allow Rohingya families to return home with basic rights—safety from

violence, citizenship, free movement, health and education—they are stuck as refugees or internally displaced persons living in overcrowded and sometimes dangerous conditions.

Older children and adolescents who are deprived of opportunities to learn or make a living are at real risk of becoming a “lost generation”, ready prey to traffickers and those who would exploit them for political or other ends. Girls and women are at particular risk of sexual and other gender-based violence in this situation, including being forced into early marriage and being left out of school as parents keep them at home.

One ray of hope is that approval to introduce the Myanmar Curriculum in the camps was granted by the Government of Bangladesh in January 2020. The aim is to transition children in the camps to the Myanmar Curriculum in the coming years.

UYGHUR

The Chinese government continues to detain more than a million Muslims in re-education camps. Most of the people who have been arbitrarily detained are Uyghur, a predominantly Turkic-speaking ethnic group primarily from China's northwestern region of Xinjiang.

Australian researchers have already mapped 380 suspected detention facilities scattered across Xinjiang, based on media reports, government documents, and their own review of satellite data. RAND's team started there and then focused in on how nighttime lighting in these locations have changed dramatically, an indication of massive activity. They saw the same pattern, again and again, starting in earnest in 2016: the glaring lights of construction work, followed by the steady glow of a new prison or detention center.

In fact, lighting kept increasing at nearly half of the facilities through at least mid-2020, an indication that they were not just active, but growing. At most other facilities, lighting levels stayed steady, or declined some, but never dimmed to where they had been before. That suggested to the researchers that those facilities were still operating, but possibly at reduced capacity.

The facilities that slowed down seemed to be mostly lower-security re-education sites. Those that grew looked more like prisons, with high walls spiked with barbed wire. That may indicate that China's approach shifted in 2019 and 2020, from the short-term detention and re-education of Uyghur people to long-term incarceration.

In June 2021, lawyers for the East Turkistan Government in Exile (ETGE) and the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement (ETNAM), submitted further evidence to the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) to the International Criminal Court (ICC), asking for an investigation to be opened against senior Chinese leaders for genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed against the Uyghur and other communities. This comes after the 14th of December 2020, when the OTP to the ICC confirmed that it could not take further the case of the Uyghurs. In its report, the OTP stated that there was no basis to proceed at this time.

As China is not a party to the Rome Statute, and hence, the ICC does not have the territorial jurisdiction over the crimes allegedly perpetrated there, the communication advances the argument, earlier used in the case of Myanmar/Bangladesh, that part of the criminal conduct occurred within the territory of a state party to the Rome Statute.

The new information submitted to the ICC includes evidence suggesting that “Uyghurs have been targeted, rounded up, deported and disappeared from Tajikistan back into Xinjiang by Chinese operatives.” As the lawyers argue, this evidence is to show that Chinese authorities “have directly intervened” in Tajikistan. Reportedly, the gathered evidence is further to show that the last 10-15 years have seen the number of Uyghurs in Tajikistan reducing from an estimated 3,000 to approximately 100. The largest decrease occurred between 2016 and 2018.

While the evidence submitted to the ICC concerns the situations in Tajikistan and Cambodia, news of similar treatment of the Uyghurs elsewhere continue to emerge. By the end of July 2021 media

outlets reported that Moroccan authorities arrested Idris Hasan, a Uyghur activist in exile, because of a Chinese terrorism warrant distributed by Interpol. Reportedly, he is to be forcibly returned to China where he will likely face arbitrary detention and torture. This risk of mistreatment is supported by in-depth research of several organizations warning about the dire treatment of the Uyghurs in China. According to them, Uyghurs are subjected to killings, mass incarceration in camps, torture and abuse, rape and sexual violence, separation of children from their parents, forced sterilizations, forced abortions, forced labor and much more. The Chinese government continues to deny these atrocities.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

In the aftermath of the massacre against Muslim worshippers in Christchurch city in New Zealand in March 2019 up until end of 2020, the major trend driving Islamophobia has kept on the rise, not only in Western countries, but also quite elsewhere around the world. Several factors have been identified as the main contributors to such a worrisome trend: mounting far-right ideologies, refugee crises, immigration, negative perceptions amid adherents of different faiths, and provocative rhetoric by some media. Nevertheless, it was quite relieving to note that following the New Zealand incident, significant measures and efforts have been deployed around the globe towards ensuring better protection of Muslims and other minorities.

The U.S. and Europe still stand as the major hot spots of Islamophobia, where the trend of Islamophobia is most disturbing as evidenced by the num-

French citizens rally on the International Day to Combat Islamophobia



ber of incidents such as mosque burning, provocative statements in social media, mail threats, Holy Qur'an burning and desecration, insults of Prophet Mohammed (God bless him and give him peace), physical assaults, and verbal abuses. Both in the U.S. and Europe, the Islamophobic trend has been mostly marked by the growing popularity of right-wing parties and movements, evolving into a global wave of anti-Establishment, ultra-nationalism, and the mushrooming of extreme right-wing parties. For instance, a growing number of European countries today see the dominant influence of far-right parties, i.e., Hungary (Fidesz), Poland (Law and Justice), the Netherlands (Freedom Party-PVV), the Czech Republic (Ano), France (National Rally), Italy (Five-Star Movement and Northern League), Germany (Alternative for Germany-AfD), Austria (Freedom Party-FPO), and so on. Beyond America and Europe, India and Sri Lanka are two notable cases to watch closely. In certain countries like China and Myanmar, the issue of Islamophobia is closely intertwined with other issues i.e., politics, human rights, minorities, culture, identity, humanitarian, separatism, terrorism, extremism, etc.

At the time of this writing the COVID-19 pandemic yields devastating repercussions worldwide. Anti-Muslim groups in some countries have tapped the crisis to fuel hatred towards Muslims. Social media is inundated with claims of Muslims breaching the lockdown by continuing to attend mosques to pray, due to which many Muslims have been attacked. Some Islamophobic leaders also used the Coronavirus crisis as a tool to further their agenda against Muslims. In India, for example, Islamophobic elements emerged starkly when cases of COVID-19 were

reported at a *Tablighi Jamaat* event due to which *Hashtags #CoronaJihad* and *#BioJihad* were trending on Twitter. Consequently, fake stories blaming Muslims for spreading the virus in the country started circulating on social media, casting Muslims as a threat to the nation. Elsewhere, since the outbreak of the pandemic, incidents of violent attacks against Muslims have reportedly redoubled in many countries.

Meanwhile, a changing pattern of Islamophobia was seen on a hijab-related issue. During the few months since February 2020, phobia against Hijab and Burqa declined very significantly, probably due to the world-wide campaign to wear face masks as part of the personal protective gear against Coronavirus. Despite the ban on women's headdress being still in force in at least 14 (fourteen) countries i.e., France, Belgium, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Bulgaria, Latvia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the policy's enforcement has softened, if not vanished completely. There are even indications that some might review the policy in the foreseeable future.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) organized a high-level meeting on 17 March, 2021, to highlight the efforts aimed at declaring March 15 of each year as an international day to combat Islamophobia, as part of the activities of the Islamic Group at the United Nations in New York.

OIC Secretary General, Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed al-Othaimeen, called on all Members of the United Nations and international and regional organizations to support the designation of 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. He stressed that this would be an opportunity for the international community to reiterate its commitment to



fight anti-Muslim hatred and religious discrimination and to promote the values of tolerance, understanding, inter-faith harmony and solidarity.

EXTREMISM

AFRICA

In West Africa and the Horn of Africa jihadist groups are gaining momentum, a trend that will likely continue well into next year. Many of the nations most at risk of suffering terrorist attacks are now located in Africa, a shift in the counterterrorism center of gravity from the Middle East. Even as the Islamic State's physical caliphate has been destroyed in Iraq and Syria, the group continues to expand through affiliates, especially throughout Africa where it now maintains provinces in West Africa (ISWAP), the Greater Sahara (ISGS), and Central Africa (ISCAP). Al-Qaeda and Islamic State-linked jihadists have destabilized countries that had previously escaped the scourge of terrorism, including Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Mozambique.

These groups will most likely intensify their operations through the end of 2021, reminding the West that counterterrorism operations will need to remain a priority. A Kenyan al-Shabaab operative was recently charged with planning a 9/11-style attack after taking flying lessons in the Philippines and researching potential targets in the United States. This case demonstrates that al-Qaeda and its affiliates remain committed to attacking Western nations on their home soil. These groups' efforts could look to accelerate in 2021, especially if resources from counterterrorism are diverted to other pressing needs, including public health.

Western policymakers have repeatedly declared both al-Qaeda and ISIS weak and defeated without factoring in that reducing their core territories in South Asia and the Middle East, respectively, does not necessarily have a decidedly negative impact on regional branches. While it is true that the core leadership of both organizations suffered a series of setbacks in 2020, their affiliate groups in sub-Saharan Africa have grown stronger. Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) in the Sahel and al-Shabaab in Somalia have accelerated their operational tempo, demonstrating an impressive range of operational and organizational capabilities. ISIS affiliates Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), and Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP) were progressively featured more frequently in core ISIS propaganda

last year according to a report by the United Nations published in mid-February 2021.

On 24 February, 2021, an attack killed Luca Attanasio, Italy's ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), when a UN convoy was ambushed by rebels. The attack was not attributed to ISCAP, which is active in the DRC, but it demonstrated the ability of non-state actors to operate in failed states with relative impunity. In Nigeria, on 23 February, 2021, ISWAP launched multiple operations against Nigerian security forces in Borno, including suicide attacks, claiming to kill and wound dozens. ISWAP also captured a Nigerian military base for the first time in several years just days earlier.

In fact, one of the curious aspects of ISWAP and ISCAP's recent successes, including the latter's October 2020 jailbreak in Congo freeing more than 1,000 inmates and capturing a key Mozambican port weeks earlier, is that ISWAP has not released photosets or videos of some of its major attacks, whereas previously it would be expected to do so. In Mozambique, ISCAP has significantly decreased its propaganda production in recent weeks. One explanation for this change is that these two groups are aware of U.S. and allies' destruction of ISIS's "caliphate" in Syria and Iraq and are being more cautious about revealing the extent of their territories in sub-Saharan Africa to avoid drawing back U.S. attention when it is focused elsewhere. ISIS propaganda was critical to leading the United States to intervene in Syria and Iraq, especially when Americans were killed. The recent decision by ISWAP and ISCAP to limit propaganda output could be a deliberate attempt to keep Western militaries at bay.

Al-Qaeda in Africa, like ISIS, seeks to eventually control territory, and, in significant parts of the Sahel and Somalia, al-Qaeda's affiliates have already achieved this goal. In contrast to ISIS, JNIM is attempting to call for negotiations that would involve foreign forces, primarily France, to withdraw from the Sahel. These demands appear to be based closely on the model for negotiations being pursued by the Taliban in Afghanistan. If JNIM achieves this, then it would not be unforeseeable for al-Shabaab to follow its—and therefore the Taliban's—lead. The result would be several regions where jihadists make significant gains in governance, although as noted above, jihadist groups are more cautious about openly holding territory and featuring it in propaganda for fear of increased counterterrorism pressure. Where they do seek to hold territory, they are doing so incrementally. Likewise, even when they have flirted with

negotiations, jihadists have been careful to avoid any actions that would make them appear to legitimize the international community.

The success enjoyed by jihadist groups in sub-Saharan Africa is juxtaposed with struggles encountered by al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates elsewhere. Overall, their core leaderships have been weakened. Because of that, both organizations have sought to rely more on the momentum of their respective affiliates. One thing is clear: Al-Qaeda and ISIS are ascendant in sub-Saharan Africa, and they both want the United States and its allies to remain focused elsewhere.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

In both North Africa and the Middle East, several developments could increase terrorism in certain parts. With the United States drawing down forces in the Middle East, South Asia, and throughout Africa, al-Qaeda, the Islamic State (ISIS), and their respective affiliates could make a renewed push to capture new territory and destabilize countries and regions. Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Nigeria are home to jihadist groups linked to al-Qaeda and ISIS. Even with the current state of its leadership in question with uncertainty surrounding the health of Ayman al-Zawahiri and the recent assassination of al-Qaeda veteran Muhammad al-Masri, 2021 could prove to be a critical year for al-Qaeda as it seeks to reassert itself through affiliates around the globe.

As Western nations continues to shift resources and redeploy troops in various theatres, there could be openings for terrorist and insurgent groups to take advantage of potential power vacuums. In Syria, while the Bashar al-Assad regime has consolidated control over critical territory, Idlib Province is dominated by terrorist groups, including Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and the al-Qaeda-linked Hurras al-Din. COVID-19 did little to slow the pace of operations of Islamic State attacks in Syria. In all of 2019, there were 144 total attacks, but through the first three quarters of 2020, ISIS managed to conduct 126 attacks, expanding significantly in southern Raqqa and eastern Hama. This year may present more, not fewer, opportunities for terrorist groups to recruit and launch strikes throughout the Levant.

In Iraq, Iran has already moved to increase its influence by supporting various Shia militias groups throughout the country. Encroaching Iranian influence could push Iraqi Sunnis, however begrudgingly, back into the arms of the Islamic State, in a replay of a phenomenon that has played out several times in recent years. As a state sponsor of terrorism, Iran may

also look to increase its support to various proxies, especially if the regime in Tehran feels threatened by a shifting geopolitical alignment in the Middle East defined by warming relations between Israel and Sunni Arab nations in the Gulf.

In late December 2020, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif caused a stir when he suggested that the Iranian-trained Liwa Fatemiyoun, currently fighting in Syria, could be deployed to Afghanistan to help a future Afghan government with counterterrorism operations. With the U.S. drawdown in Afghanistan, there are growing concerns that the Taliban will come to dominate the country once again, either resulting from a negotiated political settlement or by reverting to a full-blown insurgency and continuing to collaborate closely with transnational terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda.

AFGHANISTAN

The US withdrawal of all forces from Afghanistan discussed above will have dramatic effects on extremism in the country and the region. There already is an underlying ISIS-linked terrorist threat as the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) is already hostile to and in conflict with the Taliban. The airport bombing of late August 2021 already highlights this.

Meanwhile, Kabul's security has been placed in the hands of Haqqani Network commander Khalil Haqqani — one of America's most wanted terrorists, currently subject to a \$5 million bounty. While Khalil Haqqani may be operating under the Taliban's umbrella, his elevation in Kabul should be taken as a very concerning sign regarding prospects for an al-Qaeda recovery in the months and years to come.

PART III—COVID-19

ROHINGYA & COVID-19

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented short and long-term social and economic disruptions, while case numbers and deaths have soared around the world. As the acute, initial phase of the outbreak and the response to it around the world now moves into a protracted phase, there is an opportunity for reflection on and improvement of responses to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In early 2020, Cox's Bazar Rohingya refugee camps were identified to be at high risk to experience the negative impacts of the pandemic, given the highly congested areas and poor living conditions in addition to the high levels of vulnerability among the Ro-

hingya refugees and the Bangladeshi communities, and a national healthcare system that was already under severe strain before the COVID-19 pandemic. This prompted humanitarian partners in Cox's Bazar to initiate preparations for the COVID-19 pandemic months before the first confirmed case in the country.

The first COVID-19 cases in the district of Cox's Bazar were confirmed in March 2020, while the virus reached the refugee camps in May when the first Rohingya patient was admitted to one of the newly established Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation (SARI) and Treatment Centers (ITCs) in the camps. In the months prior, humanitarian actors and implementing partners, under the leadership of national and local government authorities and with support from WHO, have therefore outlined and implemented key public health interventions to try and limit the direct and indirect burdens of COVID-19, to guide the response and provide the best attainable care in Cox's Bazar complex setting for those at risk or infected. In close collaboration with all partners and key stakeholders, response activities were implemented across eleven identified thematic pillars of the national COVID-19 response both in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, where nearly 890,000 Rohingya live—most of them since 25 August 2017—as well as in the nearby host communities.

Thankfully in August 2021 over 4,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, received their first COVID-19 vaccine, as part of a national vaccination drive to curb the spread of the deadly virus. Rohingya refugees eligible for vaccination in the first cohort include some 48,000 individuals over 55 years of age. Equitable inclusion of Rohingya refugees in allocation of vaccines is critical to curbing the spread of the ongoing pandemic.

The vaccination drive for Rohingya refugees is being led by the Bangladesh authorities with technical support from the UN Refugee Agency, the World Health Organization and other humanitarian partners.

The fight against the pandemic has been led by thousands of refugee and host community volunteers who have worked since 2020 on informing refugees about health and hygiene, monitoring any signs of illness, and connecting the refugee community with critical health services. While the threat of COVID-19 remains critical, their efforts have helped to prevent and curb outbreaks and have saved lives.

The vaccinations follow the devastating monsoon rains that hit Cox's Bazar District throughout the summer of 2021, causing flash floods and landslides which killed eight Rohingya refugees and 15 Bang-

ladeshis in the host communities. Almost 25,000 refugees were displaced due to landslides, flooding, wind, and storms. Thousands of facilities have been damaged including primary health clinics, distribution points and latrines. Access was hindered due to damage to roads, pathways, and bridges.

UNHCR's Emergency Response Teams, and partners, refugee and host community volunteers were deployed to assess the damage, to provide support to families forced to relocate, to begin immediate repairs of shelters and other site improvements and to ensure access to essential services for all. While the weather has improved, the monsoon season will continue for another couple of months followed by the cyclone season.

SYRIAN REFUGEES & COVID-19

Like our brothers and sisters amongst the Rohingya, Syrian refugees have also found themselves in a double bind vis-à-vis COVID-19. Particularly, Syrian refugees in Lebanon have several vulnerability factors that directly or indirectly affect COVID-19 transmission dynamics and increase their risk of potentially large outbreaks. These factors related to crowding, inadequate water supply and sanitation, inadequate access to health care, low prioritization from the host nation, stigma, and fear of legal consequences, among others, are also common, to Syrian refugees in neighboring countries and to most refugee populations worldwide.

On the other hand, evidence is mounting regarding the protective effect of younger age on COVID-19 transmission dynamics. It is predicted that settings with predominantly younger age cohorts and a sizable children population may experience smaller and relatively slow epidemics, while settings with sizable adult and/or elderly populations are likely to experience large and rapid epidemics in the absence of interventions. With only 2% of the Syrian refugees worldwide being over 60 years of age (2.6% in Lebanon), and as much as 45% being less than 18 years (55% in Lebanon), the age structure of this population may be favorable for a smaller epidemic. The younger demographic profile is also a protective factor for the burden of severe disease and mortality among those infected. However, it is not yet clear whether the favorable age structure of refugees will outweigh the other risk factors that modulate high transmission dynamics within refugee populations. Mathematical modelling analyses taking into consideration these opposing factors would be able to predict the true scale and burden of COVID-19 epidemics in specific refugee populations.

However, even if the younger age of refugee populations may play a protective role, this should not lead to complacency. The infection burden in terms of morbidity and mortality has been shown to be not insignificant even among younger age groups. For example, in the US, there was a 19% increase in all-cause mortality among adults aged 25 to 44 years during the pandemic, and COVID-19 accounted for about 40% of this excess mortality. If a COVID-19 epidemic is established among refugees, it would still cause a heavy toll given all the vulnerability factors and the resource-poor healthcare infrastructure available to this population. Therefore, to prevent exacerbation of the current humanitarian crisis and catastrophic consequences, local and international actors and stakeholders should urgently mobilize and coordinate efforts to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and mitigate its impact amongst the vulnerable refugee populations globally. Special consideration also needs to be given to refugee populations when prioritizing vaccine deployment. In Lebanon, UNHCR has recently strengthened its preparedness to respond to COVID-19 by implementing a strategy integrated with in the national response. This includes setting up isolation facilities, expanding hospital capacity, covering all testing and treatment costs for refugee patients, as well as engaging communities and raising awareness. These efforts need to be sustained and expanded as the country is currently experiencing major epidemic expansion which may have devastating consequences if it affects the refugee population.

Out of the 47,000 refugees who are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine living in Jordan's refugee camps, 13,455 – representing 30 percent of the eligible population—have now received at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, UNHCR Jordan can confirm.

Although Za'atari, Azraq and the Emirati-Jordanian camp are home to about 120,000 refugees, the exclusion of children under 18 and pregnant women from taking the vaccine means that only 47,000 ref-

ugees are currently eligible to register for and receive the vaccine. The Jordanian Ministry of Health has been working tirelessly to roll out the vaccination campaign since the start of the year. The Emirati Red Crescent has led the vaccination campaign in the Emirati-Jordanian camp.

On 25 May 2021, a record 1,558 refugees were vaccinated in a single day in Za'atari camp. Two vaccination centers operate in the camp, as well as one in Azraq camp.

In addition, over 20,000 refugees are currently registered on the Jordanian Ministry of Health platform and are awaiting their vaccination appointments.

UYGHURS

China's largest coronavirus outbreak in months appears to have emerged in a factory in Xinjiang linked to forced labor and the government's controversial policies towards Uyghur residents. More than 180 cases of COVID-19 documented in late October 2020 in Shufu county, in southern Xinjiang, can be traced back to a factory that was built in 2018 as part of government "poverty alleviation" efforts, a campaign that researchers and rights advocates describe as coercive. Under the initiative, Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in the far-western region are tracked and given work placements that they have little choice but to take up.

Other than this basic sketch, it is nearly impossible to ascertain the precise impact of COVID-19 on the Uyghurs.

CONCLUSION

And there it is, a year clouded in pandemic, yet still moving and moving, but to where? In reflecting on our ancient history, the Muslim world has survived pandemics many times before and has thrived because of them. I have no doubt that the resilience Islam gives us will persevere and that tomorrow will be brighter than today, *in sha Allah!*

Dr Tarek Elgawhary is a scholar of Islam and comparative religions having studied at both Princeton University and al-Azhar Seminary. His writings and thoughts on life, Islam, and mindfulness can be found at www.makingsenseofislam.com.



QuranicThought.com

QuranicThought.com is a project dedicated to making all the important texts of the Islamic Sciences over the course of history up to the present day available free to everyone in the world, at one trusted address. This massive endeavour, consisting of millions of books and tens of thousands of hours of audio recordings, will be permanently ongoing *in sha Allah*. All texts will be available in Arabic, and English translations will be provided where these are available, God willing.

The site is committed to providing all the texts available in a non-political, non-partisan way, promoting all four established Sunni *madhabib* and respecting the other *madhabib* of Islam: Zeidi, Jafari, Tahiri and Ibadhi, as well as the thought of the early imams like Sufyan al-Thawri, Laith Ibn Sa'd and Al-Awza'i.

The materials have been categorized by Qur'an (for listening); *tafsir*; *hadith*, *usul*, *seerah*, *aqidah*, *fiqh*; *ihsan*, and *falsafa*. This is followed by a list of 25 books for the essential texts of all disciplines which all Muslims should know and a section on the 500 most influential books on Sunni Thought (according to the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institution's seminal survey).

Then, there are sections for three pivotal Shafi'i scholars (in association with the Professorial chairs on Razi and Ghazali linked to this website): Ghazali, Razi and Suyuti. Studying the entire thought of one major comprehensive thinker can be far more conducive to real comprehension and to absorbing an Islamic world-view than cherry-picking from many scholars, especially with polymaths like Ghazali, Razi and Suyuti.

Moreover, Ghazali represents a high point in Islamic *usul* (particularly in his *Mustasfa*), a high point in *ihsan* and *'aqida* (in his magnum opus, *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*) and a high point in both logic and philosophy in his books on those subjects. Razi represents the high point of Tafsir and Kalam in his *Mafatih al-Ghayb*. Suyuti represents a high point of Tafsir *ma'thur* (transmitted tafsir) in his *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, *Al-Durr al-Manthur* and his *Iqan fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*, a comprehensive survey of *hadith* in his collections of *hadith*, and authoritative exposition of Shafi'i *fiqh*.

This website and app are already the most extensive Islamic book and audio resource on the internet and continue to grow by the Grace of God.



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 thus created, however, was not a new message but simply a final restatement of God's messages to the Hebrew Prophets and to Jesus.

The Holy Qur'an says:

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

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

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

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

THE ESSENCE OF ISLAM

The essence and substance of Islam can be easily summed up by three major principles (which are also successive stages in the spiritual life): Islam (meaning 'submission to God's will'); Iman (meaning 'faith in God'), and Ihsan (meaning 'virtue through constant regard to, and awareness of, God'). The second Caliph, the great 'Umar ibn al Khattab, related that:

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

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

(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 re-

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

turn to one's true inner heart, the mysterious square, black-shrouded Ka'ba in Makkah being the outward symbol of this heart). Thus also Iman as such consists of belief in all the essential doctrines of religion (and the inner meaning of this is that one should not go through the motions of religion and of the five pillars of Islam blindly or robotically, but rather have real faith and certainty in one's heart). Thus, finally, *Ihsan* as such consists in believing that God always sees us, and therefore that one must be virtuous and sincere in all one's actions. In this connection the Prophet said: '*By Him in whose Hand is my Life, none of you believes till he loves for his neighbour what he loves for himself*'.² In summary, we could say that the essence of Islam is exactly the Two Commandments upon which Jesus said hangs all the Law and the Prophets:

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

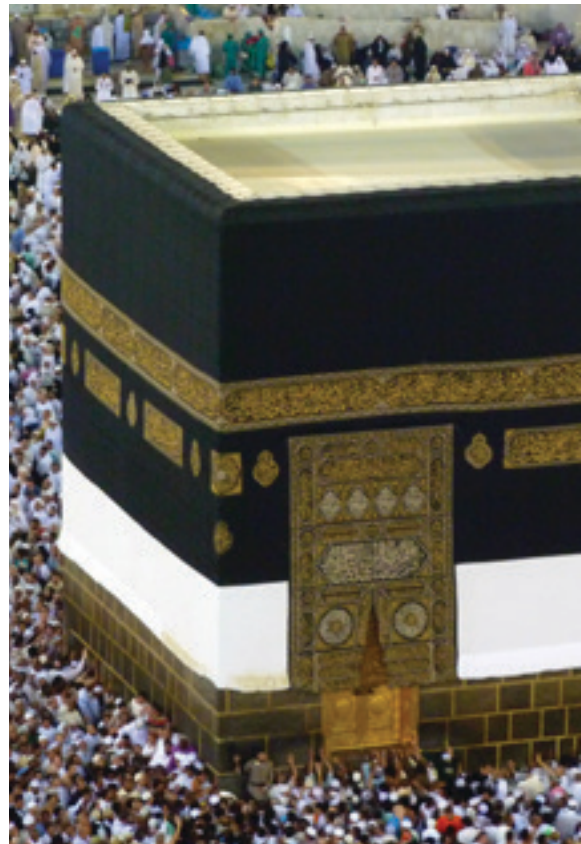
THE CANON OF ISLAM

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

The answer is that Islam has a traditional canon:⁴ a collection of sacred texts which everyone has agreed are authoritative and definitive, and which 'fix' the principles of belief, practice, law, theology and doctrine throughout the ages. All that Muslim scholars (called *ulema* and muftis or sheikhs and imams) have left to do is to interpret these texts and work out their practical applications and details (and the prin-

ciples 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 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.

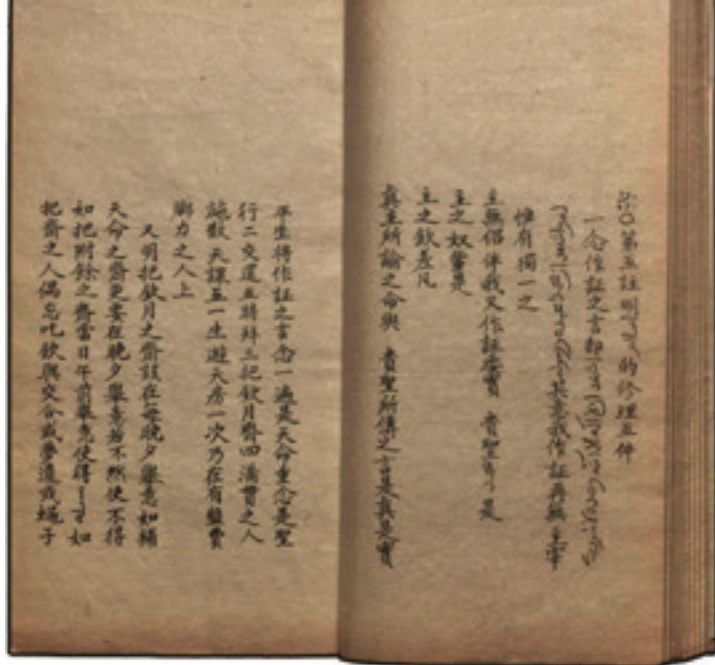
To be more specific, the traditional Sunni Islamic Canon starts with the Qur'an itself; then the great traditional Commentaries upon it (e. g. Tabari; Razi; Zamakhshari/Baydawi; Qurtubi; Jalalayn;



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 word *kanun* meaning 'law' or 'principle'.



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 minimise 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 learn-

ing 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.

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TOP LEFT: Manuscript pages of *A Sketch of the Islamic Law* by Ma Boliang (1640–1711 CE), an influential Islamic scholar from Jining, China. Islamic scholars who authenticated the work include Li Yongshou, Wen Yingshi, Yang Jiu'en, Ma Minggao, and Ma Zhilin.

TOP RIGHT: A manuscript page from *Sahih al-Bukhārī* from the National Library of Bulgaria dated 407 AH (1017 CE).

BELOW: Alhambra Palace in Spain



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.⁵

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

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

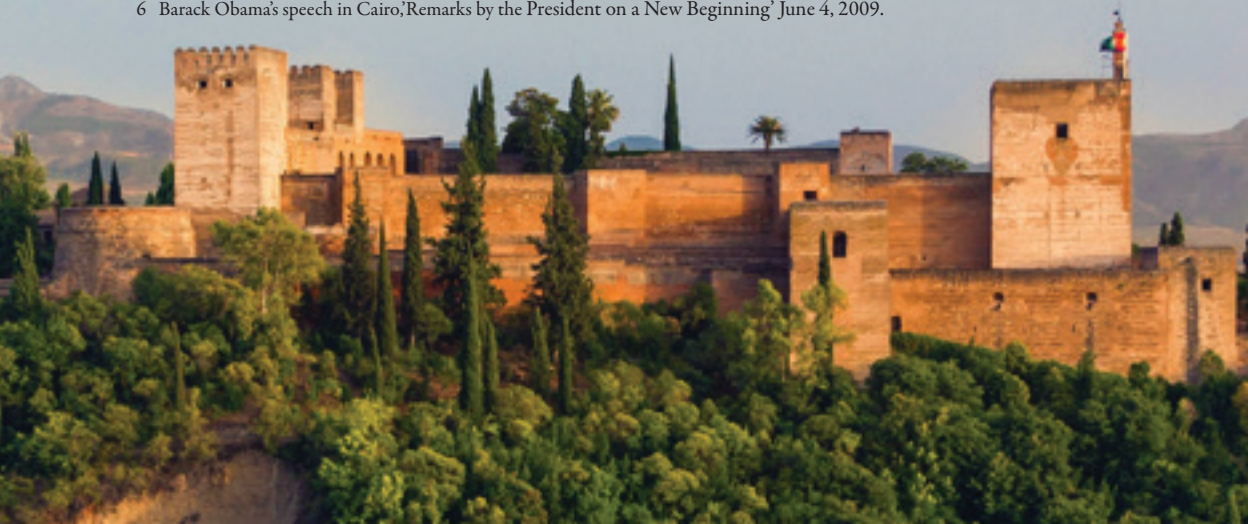
I also know that Islam has always been a part of America’s story. The first nation to recognise my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty



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

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

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



II. MAJOR DOCTRINAL DIVISIONS WITHIN ISLAM

Sunni Theology

1) ASH'ARI AND MATURIDI SCHOOLS: SUNNI ORTHODOXY¹

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

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

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

2) SALAFI SCHOOL

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

3) MU'TAZILI SCHOOL

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

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

Shia 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 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, Shia, and Ibadi branches of practice (and their subgroups) within the fold of Islam, but not groups such as the Druze or the Ahmadiyya, among others.

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

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

This is a highly politicized religious ideology popularised in the 20th century through movements within both the Shia 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'h* 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.

SHIA

(9.5% of the world's traditional Muslims)

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

BRANCHES OF SHIA ISLAM

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 (Seveners)

(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 SHIA

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 *akhbar* 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.

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.

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.

Shadhiliyyah

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

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.

Chishtiyya

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

Mawlawiyya

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

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.

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.

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.

SHIA ORDERS

Irfan

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

SHIA

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 Shia 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.



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:
Did We not expand your breast for you, and relieve you of your
burden, that which weighed down your back? Did We not exalt your
mention? For truly with hardship comes ease. Truly with hardship
comes ease. So when you are finished, toil and seek your Lord.

Solace

THE TOP 50

The Top 50

1. HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani
Emir of Qatar (11)
2. HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud
King of Saudi Arabia
Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (2)
3. HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran (3)
4. HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of the Republic of Turkey (1)
5. HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein, King of
the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Custodian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem (4)
6. HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani
Scholar and Deobandi Leader (5)
7. HM King Mohammed VI
King of Morocco (6)
8. HH General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed
Al-Nahyan
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme
Commander of the UAE Armed Forces (7)
9. HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-
Sistani, Marja of the Hawza
Najaf, Iraq (8)
10. HE Imran Khan
Prime Minister of Pakistan (15)
11. HE Sheikh Habib Umar bin Hafiz
Scholar and Director of Dar Al Mustafa, Tarim,
Yemen (9)
12. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda
Scholar and Preacher (10)
13. HE President Joko Widodo
President of Indonesia (12)
14. HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb
Grand Sheikh of the Al-Azhar University, Grand
Imam of Al-Azhar Mosque (13)
15. HRH Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman
bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud
Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia (23)
16. HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah
Scholar and President of the Forum for Promot-
ing Peace in Muslim Societies (14)
17. HE President Muhammadu Buhari
President of Nigeria (16)
18. HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan
Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III
Sultan of Sokoto (19)
19. Professor KH Said Aqil Siradj
Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama (18)
20. HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa
Former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of
Egypt (17)
21. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah
Secretary-General of Hezbollah (20)
22. Sheikh Habib 'Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri
Preacher and Director General of the Tabah (21)
23. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson
Teacher and Co-Founder of Zaytuna College (22)
24. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse
Leader of the Tijaniyya Sufi Order (24)
25. Sheikha Munira Qubeysi
Leader of the Qubeysi Movement (25)
26. HE Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal
Al-Sheikh
Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (26)

27. Maulana Mahmood Madani
Leader and President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind,
India (27)
28. Sheikh Mustafa Hosny
Preacher (28)
29. Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari
Scholar (29)
30. HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni
The Aga Khan IV, 49th Imam of Ismaili Muslims
(30)
31. Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi
Head of the International Union of Muslim
Scholars (31)
32. Habib Luthfi bin Yahya
Preacher (32)
33. Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi
Leader of the Houthi (33)
34. Sheikh Mahmud Effendi
Scholar and Preacher (34)
35. Maulana Tariq Jameel
Scholar and Preacher (35)
36. HE President Halimah Yacob
President of Singapore (37)
37. Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi
Scholar (39)
38. Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr
Philosopher and University Professor (40)
39. Sheikh Uthman Taha
Calligrapher (41)
40. Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi
Tunisian Politician (38)
41. Mohammed Salah
Footballer (42)
42. Sheikh Muqtada Sadr
Scholar and Political (43)
43. Maulana Nazur ur-Rahman
Amir of Tablighi Jamaat, Pakistan (44)
44. Moez Masoud
Preacher and Televangelist (36)
45. Dr Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal Hakim
Murad)
Islamic Scholar (47)
46. Dr Aref Ali Nayed
Scholar (46)
47. HE Sheikh Ibrahim Salih
Islamic Scholar, Nigeria (48)
48. Dr Mohamed Bechari
French activist (49)
49. Dr Amr Khalid
Preachers, Egypt (50)
50. HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada
Leader of the Taliban (450 listings)

* The number in brackets indicates last year's position.

THE TOP 50 AND HONOURABLE MENTIONS LISTED BY CATEGORY

Although the influence of the Top 50 straddles many categories and cannot be limited to just one or another category, it can be insightful to place them into more general categories. To the Top 50 we have added the Honourable Mentions and have chosen three general categories into which to place them: 1. Rulers and Politicians, 2. Scholars and Preachers and 3. Social Issues, Media, Science, Arts, Culture and Sports.

Rulers and Politicians

1. HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid Al-Thani
2. HM King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud
3. HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei
4. HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
5. HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein
6. HM King Mohammed VI
7. HH General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
8. HE Prime Minister Imran Khan
9. HE President Joko Widodo
10. HRH Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud
11. HE President Muhammadu Buhari
12. Seyyed Hasan Nasrallah
13. HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni
14. Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi
15. HE President Halimah Yacob
16. HE Rached Ghannouchi
17. HE Sheikh Muqtada Sadr
18. HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada
19. HE President Mahmoud Abbas
20. HE Ismail Haniyeh
21. HE Samia Suluhu Hassan
22. HE Anwar Ibrahim
23. HE Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad
24. HE Sadiq Khan

Scholars and Preachers

1. HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani
2. HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani
3. Sheikh Habib Umar bin Hafiz
4. Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda
5. HE Professor Dr Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb
6. HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah
7. HRE Amirul Mu'minin Sheikh As-Sultan Muhammadu Sa'adu Abubakar III
8. Professor Dr KH Said Aqil Siradj
9. HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa
10. Sheikh Habib 'Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri
11. Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson
12. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin Ali Cisse
13. HE Sheikha Munira Qubeysi
14. HE Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh
15. HE Maulana Mahmood Madani
16. Sheikh Mustafa Hosny
17. Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari
18. Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi
19. Habib Luthfi bin Yahya
20. Sheikh Mahmud Effendi
21. Maulana Tariq Jameel
22. Sheikh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi
23. Prof Seyyed Hossein Nasr
24. Maulana Nazur Rahman
25. Sheikh Moez Masoud
26. Prof Timothy Winter (Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad)
27. HE Dr Aref Ali Nayed
28. HE Sheikh Ibrahim Salih
29. Dr Amr Khalid
30. HE Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi Amoli
31. HE Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh
32. Prof M Din Syamsuddin

33. Prof Akbar Ahmed
34. Dr Ingrid Mattson
35. Aminu Ado Bayero
36. Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani
37. Sheikh Nuh Keller

38. Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi
39. Dr Zakir Abdul Karim Naik
40. Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri
41. Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais

Social Issues, Media, Science, Arts, Culture and Sports

1. HE Sheikh Uthman Taha
2. Mohammed Salah
3. Mohamed Bechari
4. Ahd Tamimi
5. Loujain al-Hathloul

6. Malala Yousufzai
7. Dr Uğur Şahin
8. Sami Yusuf
9. Saadio Mane
10. Khabib Nurmagomedov



Country: Qatar

Born: 3 June 1980 (age 41)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: Ruler of richest country per capita in the world

School of Thought: Sunni Hanbali

2021 (11)

2020 (12)

2019: (19)

"Development can achieve its objectives only through good governance, the rule of law, combating corruption and injustice."

12%

of the country are citizens

\$125 thousand

per capita



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His Highness

Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani

HH Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani

Emir of Qatar

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 \$63,505. It has under 400,000 citizens whilst the rest of its population of three million are expatriate workers. 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. 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. Packing a punch far above its weight has led to neighbouring countries questioning the purpose of so many initiatives. He has had to repair relations with other Gulf countries over supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and defend Qatar's world image over the treatment of labourers in Qatar.

Blockade: In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt, with the backing of the Trump administration, cut all relations with Qatar and imposed trade and travel bans. This drastic action resulted from various claims that Qatar was supporting terrorism and had violated a 2014

agreement with GCC countries. Its good relations with Iran and it hosting Al-Jazeera TV network were also factors in this tense situation which saw food-stuff imported from Iran and Turkish soldiers called in to help safeguard Qatar assets. A further complicating factor in this family feud was that Qatar hosts the largest American base in the Middle East and all the blockade partners are close allies of the US. The 43 month blockade was finally lifted in January 2021, having made little impact.

Peace Broker: With the Emir enjoying good international relations and continuing foreign investment, Qatar has positioned itself into the role of regional peace broker, playing a pivotal role in international talks with the Taliban government and hoping to broker a deal around Iran's nuclear programme. It has adopted a strong position of proactive engagement through dialogue with regional neighbours.

COVID-19: Strong and swift measures including lockdown, school closures and travel restrictions. Widespread disinfecting procedures were instigated and healthcare upgraded. Approximately 80% of the population has been vaccinated.

FIFA World Cup 2022: The 2022 FIFA World Cup is scheduled to take place in Qatar from 21 November to 18 December 2022. This will be the first World Cup held in the Arab world and it is estimated that Qatar is spending more than \$200 billion in construction projects to prepare itself; twelve stadiums, a new port, transportation systems and accommodation for an estimated 400,000 fans will face the scrutiny of the entire world. The Qatari government has already responded to global criticisms by adopting new labour reforms to improve working conditions. This has included a minimum wage and the removal of the *kafala* system.

Al Karaana Lagoon, Qatar



Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 31 December 1935 (age 86)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: King with authority over 35 million residents of Saudi Arabia and approximately 14 million pilgrims annually.

School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

2021 (2)

2020 (4)

2019: (2)

"We deeply believe that serving Hajj pilgrims, Umrah performers and visitors of the Two Holy Mosques is our duty and is a great honor of which we feel immensely proud of"

\$4 billion

donated to disaster and war-torn countries

25th

son of Ibn Saud, founder of Saudi Arabia



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His Majesty

King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

HM 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 Madinah, 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 propagation (*da'wa*) network, which makes its influence felt in all Muslim countries. On June 21st, 2017, King Salman appointed his son, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz as Crown Prince of the Kingdom.

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 Madinah. Makkah is the main pilgrimage site for 1.9 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 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. Its violent offshoots have meant that Saudi Arabia itself is a target

for them and in an effort to combat this extremist ideology, King Salman launched the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (GCCCEI) in an inauguration ceremony attended by former US President Donald Trump during his first trip to the Middle East.

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.

Military Action: In March 2015, King Salman launched a nine-state coalition bombing campaign against Houthi rebels in Yemen. The campaign is cited as curbing Iranian influence in the region, but it has also tarnished Saudi's international reputation as it continues to bomb the poorest nation on earth. The conflict has become even more complicated as cracks appear in the coalition, notably with the UAE, who are backing a new faction.

Key Appointments: The transfer of power from the sons of the founder of Saudi Arabia, King Abdul-Aziz, to the new generation, which some feared would be an issue that would split the country, has been remarkably smooth so far. HRH Prince Muhammad bin Salman is the second Crown Prince from the new generation appointed by King Salman. These appointees have brought changes in law which have had monumental social effects, changes such as allowing women in Saudi Arabia to move freely and drive, and the promotion of cinemas and music concerts.

COVID-19: The Hajj has been severely curtailed for the past two years with only 1,000 and then 60,000 residents allowed to perform the pilgrimage which usually draws 3-4 million pilgrims.

Asir National Park, Saudi Arabia

Country: Iran

Born: 16 July 1939 (age 82)

Source of Influence: Political, Administrative

Influence: Supreme Leader of 84.3 million Iranians

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

2021 (3)

2020 (2)

2019: (4)

"People who limit the Qur'an to worshiping and personal matters haven't understood it."

3%

of GDP spent on military funding

22

World Heritage sites



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His Eminence

Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei

HE Grand Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Ali Khamenei Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Grand Ayatollah Khamenei is the second 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.

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 in the early 16th century under the rule of the Safavids. It was conceived 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 Shia 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 mobilising 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 2 September 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, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb.

Sanctions: Since 1979, the United States has used sanctions to try to influence Iran's policies, including Iran's uranium enrichment program. The sanctions have had a detrimental effect on many aspects of life in the country. In 2015, Iran and the P5+1 (the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany) agreed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which limited Iran's nuclear activities and allowed international inspectors in return for the lifting of economic sanctions. This agreement worked for 4 years before President Trump unilaterally withdrew from it and subsequently imposed stricter sanctions on Iran and secondary sanctions for countries still buying Iranian oil. The Biden administration has signalled returning to the JCPOA, but this will require further negotiation with the new President Ibrahim Raisi.

Current Issues: Iran's role in the Syrian and Yemeni conflicts and how it maintains its relationships with the Arab world are key issues that require Khamenei's lead. The US assassinated Major General Qasem Soleimani in January 2020 and although Iran replied by firing missiles at a US base in Iraq, this issue seems far from resolved for many.

COVID-19: After initially suggesting the virus was part of a military attack, lockdowns and social distancing measures were introduced and pilgrimages, marches and large religious ceremonies were banned. These restrictions have now been loosened, and combined with low numbers of vaccination have meant a high covid toll.

Margoon Waterfall, Fars, Iran



Country: Turkey

Born: 26 Feb 1954 (age 67)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: President of 84.6 million Turkish citizens

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (1)

2020 (6)

2019: (1)

“The rich mosaic constructed by each and every individual of our nation sets a stunning example to the world in terms of coexisting freely in peace on the basis of mutual respect.”

49.7%

of the territory is dedicated to agriculture

Over

82 thousand mosques throughout the country



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His Excellency

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

President of the Republic of Turkey

HE Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the Prime Minister of Turkey for 11 years, winning three consecutive elections with a majority (2002, 2007 and 2011), before becoming Turkey's first popularly-elected president in August 2014 and then securing a second term in the 2018 election. During his terms, Turkey has seen unprecedented economic growth, constitutional reform, and a re-emergence as a major global power. All this, combined with his unapologetic voice on the world stage and support of Muslim issues, have won over Muslims world-wide.

President: Erdoğan secured 52.5% of the vote in the 2018 presidential election (electoral turnout was 86%), and thereby avoided a second-round runoff. This was a continuation of his remarkable popularity and success at the ballot box over the past two decades. During his time as president he has pushed 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 criticised for cracking down on the media.

Taste of Defeat: When President Erdoğan returned to the leadership of the AKP in 2017 he expected to continue his amazing streak of victories in the 2019 local elections. This time, the AKP lost not only Istanbul, for the first time in 25 years, but also five of Turkey's six largest cities. The Turkish government ordered a re-election in Istanbul, but the AKP fared even worse in the re-run elections in June. The state of the economy, mental fatigue with AKP rule as well as a well-organised and united opposition were all factors in this defeat. With stories of corruption within the AKP circulating widely on social media and poor Presidential appointments of key political and academic posts, there may be more defeats to come.

Failed Coup Ramifications: The failed coup of 15 July 2017, which led to about 200 deaths, has led to huge ramifications as Erdoğan looks to root out all those involved. He has squarely laid the blame of orchestrating the coup on Fethullah Gülen, and has led an all-out attack on Gülen's organisations and supporters. There has been a major crackdown on many sectors with about 160,000 civil servants being dismissed in various state institutions, with over half from the education sector. Also, 50,000 people remain in detention with this number continually rising as authorities press ahead with regular raids.

Between the US and Russia: Ties with the US have strained considerably since Turkey decided to purchase the Russian S-400 defence system instead of the Patriot surface-to-air missile system. The US responded by suspending Turkey from the F-35 jet programme and holding up other arms deals.

Hagia Sophia: Hagia Sophia, built in 537 as the patriarchal cathedral of Constantinople, was converted into the Fatih Mosque after Sultan Mehmed II conquered the city in 1453. In 1935 and in line with his effort to erase Turkey's Islamic identity, Atatürk converted Hagia Sophia into a museum. In July 2020, Erdoğan reversed Atatürk's decision and reclassified Hagia Sophia as a mosque, a decision celebrated by most Muslims.

Soft Power: The soft power of the Turkish film industry has played a large part in growing Turkey's influence throughout the Muslim world. Historical dramas about Sulayman the Magnificent and Sultan Abdul-Hamid II were hugely popular in the Arab world, but the drama about Ertuğrul, (*'Diriliş: Ertuğrul'*) the legendary father of the founder of the Ottoman Empire has intensified and broadened this influence. Leaders of other Muslim countries have not only urged their citizens to watch it, but have also taken it as a model with which to develop their own indigenous dramas.

Challenges: Turkey's response to COVID-19 was swift and decisive. Travel restrictions, curfews and mandatory mask wearing were supported by economic stimulus packages and now a strong vaccination roll-out. Climate challenges in the form of devastating fires and floods were also dealt with efficiently. But political, social and economic challenges loom large.

Uzungöl, Turkey



Country: Jordan

Born: 30 January 1962 (age 59)

Source of Influence: Custodian of the Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Influence: King with authority over 10.5 million Jordanians; outreach to Traditional Islam

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (4)

2020 (5)

2019: (3)

“Instead of looking at problems to solve, I urge you to look at opportunities to seize, and ways to collaborate, to rebuild a truly global, inclusive system that leaves no one behind.”

41st generation

direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Over **100** thousand archeological and tourist sites throughout the country



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His Majesty

King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein

HM King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein

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

HM King Abdullah II is the constitutional monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Supreme Commander of the Jordan Arab Army. He is also the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

Location: King Abdullah is not the leader of a rich or populous country, nor is he a religious scholar, but what makes his role vital is being the linchpin to the central cause of the Islamic world: the issue of Palestine and Jerusalem, and his being the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites there. There are over 12 million Palestinians in the world, 3 million in Jordan itself, around another 5 million in the occupied territories and Israel, and 2 million in Gaza. As Palestine is not recognised as a state by the whole international community, the responsibility for an equitable peace falls largely on its next-door neighbour Jordan, and on King Abdullah II in particular, especially as his family have been the hereditary Custodians of the holy sites from before the creation of the state of Jordan itself. Moreover, in the face of increased pressure to dissolve the very notion of Palestinian identity; dissolve UNRWA and illegally and unilaterally grant Jerusalem to Israel, King Abdullah has been the only voice of influence actively—but responsibly—resisting this catastrophe for the Islamic world. Moreover, Jerusalem is as holy to Muslims as it is to Jews and Christians, and its loss would represent a grievance based not only on justice but on faith to all the world's 1.9 billion Muslims, a situation with explosive potential consequences, to say the least.

Lineage: King Abdullah II is a 41st generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through the line of the Prophet's grandson Al-Hasan. The Hashemite Dynasty is the second-oldest ruling dynasty in the world, after that of Japan. As the current bearer of the Hashemite legacy, HM King Abdullah II has a unique prestige in the Islamic world, in addition to his being the Custodian of the Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem (and of course Jordan itself).

Longevity: King Abdullah II is now the longest-serving Arab ruler (and still in his 50s). His father King Hussein himself ruled for 47 years and was the longest-serving Arab leader when he died in 1999.

Support for Jerusalem (Al-Quds): HM King Abdullah II is the custodian of Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem, the sacred compound which contains Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. HM is also the custodian of Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. He has strongly supported the upkeep and renovation of these sites.

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 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.

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 "www. ammanmessage.com" on page 53), which was unanimously adopted by the Islamic World's political and temporal leaderships. 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 (see "Altafsir.com" on page 170). He also founded the World Islamic Sciences and Education University in Jordan (www. wise. edu. jo) in 2008. In 2012, King Abdullah II set up integral 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.

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. 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.

Interfaith Outreach: HM King Abdullah II is also lauded as an interfaith leader for his support of the

2007 A Common Word initiative (see “A Common Word” on page 121). He was also the initiator and driving force behind the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution in 2010 (see “UN World Interfaith Harmony Week” on page 156). 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.

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. 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. It has the highest percentage of refugees of any country in the world.

Templeton Prize Winner 2018: HM King Abdullah was awarded the 2018 Templeton Prize, the most prestigious prize in the world in religious affairs. He is the second Muslim, and the first statesman, ever to be granted this honour. The prize recognises those who have “made an exceptional contribution to affirming life’s spiritual dimension”. The judges mentioned in particular the King’s work in promoting intra-Islamic religious harmony, reclaiming the narrative from extremists, as well as between Islam and other faiths.

COVID-19: Jordan imposed swift and strict lockdowns and has managed to vaccinate approximately a third of the country so far.

Dana Biosphere Reserve, Jordan



THE AMMAN MESSAGE



www.AmmanMessage.com

[T]he best resource for those who wish to travel along the straight path in their words and their actions, and in their spiritual and religious life.

— The Grand Sheikh of the Azhar, Sheikh Mohammed Sayyid Tantawi رحمته الله, 2006.

The Amman Message started as a detailed statement released the eve of the 27th of Ramadan 1425 AH / 9th November 2004 CE by H. M. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein in Amman, Jordan. It sought to declare what Islam is and what it is not, and what actions represent it and what actions do not. Its goal was to clarify to the modern world the true nature of Islam and the nature of true Islam.

In order to give this statement more religious authority, H. M. King Abdullah II then sent the following three questions to 24 of the most senior religious scholars from all around the world representing all the branches and schools of Islam: (1) Who is a Muslim? (2) Is it permissible to declare someone an apostate (*takfir*)? (3) Who has the right to undertake issuing *fatwas* (legal rulings)?

Based on the fatwas provided by these great scholars (who included the Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Ayatollah Sistani, and Sheikh Qaradawi), in July 2005 CE, H. M. King Abdullah II convened an international Islamic conference of 200 of the world's leading Islamic scholars (*ulema*) from 50 countries. In Amman, the scholars unanimously issued a ruling on three fundamental issues (which became known as the 'Three Points of the Amman Message'):

- They specifically recognised the validity of all 8 *mathhabs* (legal schools) of Sunni, Shia, and Ibadhi Islam; of traditional Islamic Theology (Ash'arism); of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism), and of true Salafi thought, and came to a precise definition of who is a Muslim.
- Based upon this definition they forbade *takfir* (declarations of apostasy) between Muslims.
- Based upon the Mathahib they set forth the subjective and objective preconditions for the issuing of *fatwas*, thereby exposing ignorant and illegitimate edicts in the name of Islam.

These Three Points were then unanimously adopted by the Islamic World's political and temporal leaderships at the Organization of the Islamic Conference summit at Makkah in December 2005. And over a period of one year from July 2005 to July 2006, the Three Points were also unanimously adopted by six other international Islamic scholarly assemblies, culminating with the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of Jeddah, in July 2006. In total, over 500 leading Muslim scholars worldwide—as can be seen on this website—unanimously endorsed the Amman Message and its Three Points.

This amounts to a historical, universal and unanimous religious and political consensus (*ijma'*) of the Ummah (nation) of Islam in our day, and a consolidation of traditional, orthodox Islam. The significance of this is: (1) that it is the first time in over a thousand years that the Ummah has formally and specifically come to such a pluralistic mutual inter-recognition; and (2) that such a recognition is religiously legally binding on Muslims since the Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) said: My Ummah will not agree upon an error (Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Kitab al-Fitan, Hadith no. 4085).

This is good news not only for Muslims, for whom it provides a basis for unity and a solution to infighting, but also for non-Muslims. For the safeguarding of the legal methodologies of Islam (the *mathahib*) necessarily means inherently preserving traditional Islam's internal 'checks and balances'. It thus assures balanced Islamic solutions for essential issues like human rights; women's rights; freedom of religion; legitimate jihad; good citizenship of Muslims in non-Muslim countries, and just and democratic government. It also exposes the illegitimate opinions of radical fundamentalists and terrorists from the point of view of true Islam. As George Yeo, the Foreign Minister of Singapore, declared in the 60th Session of the U. N. General Assembly (about the Amman Message): "Without this clarification, the war against terrorism would be much harder to fight."

Country: Pakistan

Born: 5 October 1943 (age 78)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Lineage

Influence: Leading scholar for the Deobandis and in Islamic finance

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Hanafi, Deobandi)

2020 (1)

2019: (6)

2018: (7)

"Nothing destroys one's respect in the hearts of others more than greed."

143 books

authored in Arabic, English, and Urdu

3 thousand

schools affiliated with Darul 'Uloom



۞ 6 ۞

His Eminence

Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani

HE Justice Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani Leading Scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence and Finance

Justice Sheikh Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani is a leading scholar of Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic finance. He is considered to be the intellectual head of the Deobandi School of Islamic learning, as well as an authority outside of the Deobandi School. He served as Judge of the Shari'at Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan from 1982 to May 2002.

Deobandi De facto Leader: 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. His views and fatwas are taken as the final word by Deobandi scholars globally including those at the Deoband seminary in India. Usmani was born in Deoband, India, the son of 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 Sheikh al-Hadith Mawlana 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 great revivalist scholar of India, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi. His students in the thousands are spread across the globe as leaders and Imams, especially in the Indian subcontinent, central Asia and many Western countries. Deobandis consider themselves orthodox Hanafi Sunnis rooted in a foundation of sufi teaching, but allowing for a broad spectrum of interpretation which accommodates politically passive members to the Taliban.

Leading Islamic Finance Scholar: Usmani's other influence comes from his position as a global authority on 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 Sharia Council for the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) in Bahrain. He is also a permanent member of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of the

Organization of the Islamic Conference, one of the highest legal bodies in the Muslim world.

Writer: He has translated the Qur'an both into English and Urdu. He is the author of a six-volume Arabic Hadith commentary on Sahih Muslim. 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. His legal edicts (fatwas), written over the period of 45 years, are published in 4 large volumes. He has authored more than 143 books in Arabic, English, and Urdu.

New Works: He is directly supervising *The Hadith Encyclopaedia*, a masterful, pioneering 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 a verse of the Qur'an. The Encyclopaedia will be over 300 volumes. A second major work recently published 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, which serves as a powerful call to action for regulators and standard setting organisations alike.

Assassination Attempt: On 22 March 2019 as Mufti Taqi was on his way to deliver a Friday sermon, gunmen riding three motorbikes opened fire on his and an accompanying car. The Mufti, his wife and two grandchildren (a girl aged seven and boy aged five), miraculously survived the shower of bullets untouched, but two people lost their lives and a further two were severely injured. The Prime Minister of Pakistan condemned the attack as did scholars and politicians across the board. As of yet, no one has claimed responsibility for carrying out the attack. He was once again a target for assassination in July 2021.

COVID-19: The Mufti has argued for keeping the mosques open—this situation demands prayers—but has asked the vulnerable to stay at home and has stressed the need for extra measures to be in place at mosques to minimise transmission of the virus.

Ghizer, Pakistan



Country: Morocco

Born: 21 August 1963 (age 58)

Source of Influence: Political, Administrative, Development

Influence: King with authority over 37 million Moroccans

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni, Maliki

2021 (6)

2020 (7)

2019: (5)

"But what is freedom? For me, it is the respect of the other and the respect of the law. Freedom is not anarchy."

1631_{CE}

the year the Alaouite dynasty was founded

30

foreign honors and decorations received



۷

His Majesty

King Mohammed VI

HM King Mohammed VI

King of Morocco

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

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

Influence on Maliki Network: Morocco is home to the oldest university in the world, Al-Karouine. 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 recognised as a source for the spread of Islam 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 ﷺ himself, they issued calls for majority-Muslim communities to respect minorities' "freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defence". 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 <?>)

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.

COVID-19: Morocco imposed strict lockdowns, including curfews, and travel restrictions with air and sea borders closed for months. Approximately half the population has been vaccinated.

Ouzoud Falls, Morocco



Country: UAE

Born: 11 March 1961 (age 60)

Source of Influence: Administrative, Development, Philanthropy

Influence: Military and political leadership

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (7)

2020 (3)

2019: (15)

"The duty of loyalty and gratitude to a homeland that provides decent and happy life for all of its citizens and residents requires that we all deeply engrave it in our hearts at all times."

\$15 billion

pledged towards the development of solar, wind, and hydrogen power technologies in the UAE

\$20 million

spent to conserve and protect UAE's wild bird species



His Highness

**General Sheikh Mohammed
bin Zayed Al-Nahyan**

HH 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. He is the third son of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the widely respected first President of the UAE who ruled from independence in 1971 until his death in 2004.

Military Leadership: Sheikh Mohammed has transformed the military capabilities of the UAE not only through buying military hardware (over 80 F-16 jets), but also by developing the UAE's own industry, both hardware and special forces. All of these have also been deployed in various conflicts including Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen. The UAE is an important centre for global weapons trading hosting the world's largest defence expos.

Global Player: Sheikh Mohammed has enjoyed excellent personal relationships with the previous two US Presidents managing to have his views heard on Iran, the Muslim brotherhood, Palestine and the support of a young Saudi prince. Further, Sheikh Mohammed has shown that he is his own man by following policies that the US does not support publicly: the support of Libyan general Khalifa Haftar and the blockade on Qatar. Involvement in other key issues shows that the UAE is punching above its weight in international affairs. Its involvement in Yemen has become increasingly complex with a recent split with Saudi policy meaning their respective proxies on the ground are fighting each other as well as local forces and proxies of Iran. The humanitarian disaster in Yemen is of an immense magnitude with many voices squarely laying the brunt of the blame on the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Abraham Accords: The UAE (along with Bahrain) formalised relations with Israel by signing the Abraham Accords Peace Treaty at the White House in September 2020 with the Israeli Prime Minister and President Trump in attendance. An Israeli embassy was opened in July 2021 with the president of Israel in attendance as the UAE pushes ahead with a full normalisation strategy which has outraged Palestinians and their supporters.

Economic Development: With Abu Dhabi sitting on 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. He also controls one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds (700 billion dollars). He has overseen a construction boom which includes man-made islands, entertainment parks and museum franchises of the Louvre and Guggenheim.

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.

Philanthropy and Tolerance: Sheikh Mohammed has donated billions of dollars to various causes, including AED 55 million to the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, and purchasing vaccines in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development celebrated its 50 year anniversary in 2021; it has given over AED 150 billion in development funding and investments in 97 countries. The UAE is home to a diverse workforce and has been keen to show respect to other religions and cultures. It has allowed various houses of worship to be built. The first synagogue will be complete by 2022. The country hosted Pope Francis on a recent trip. It has also created a "Ministry of Tolerance" and declared 2019 the official "Year of Tolerance."

COVID-19: Strong and swift measures included lockdown, school closures and travel restrictions. Widespread disinfecting procedures were instigated. Approximately 80% of the population has been vaccinated.

Country: Iraq

Born: 4 August 1930 (age 91)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Lineage

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

School of Thought: Traditional Twelver Shia, Usuli

2021 (8)

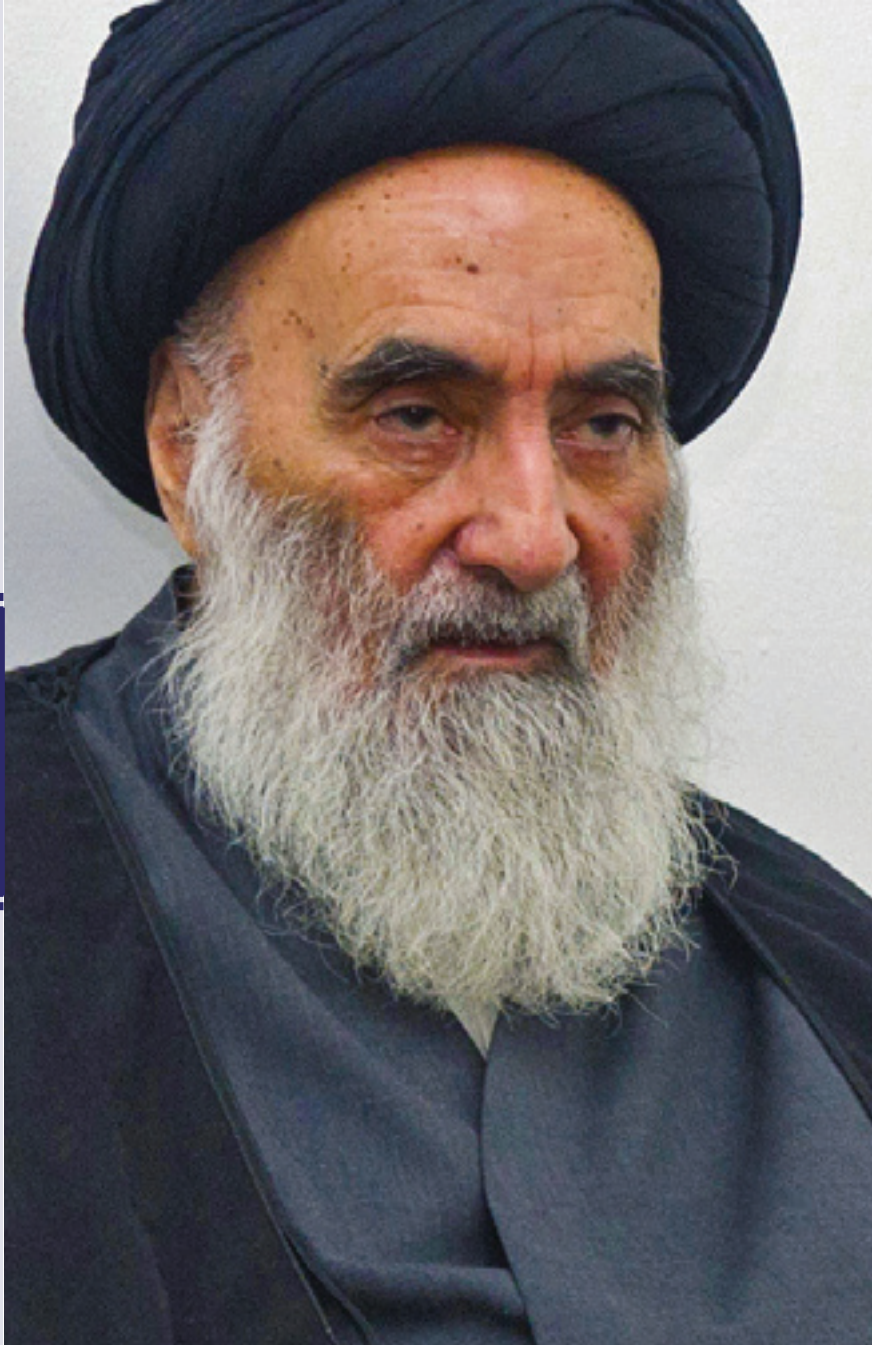
2020 (8)

2019: (7)

“Have good morals, such as wisdom, consideration, kindness, modesty, frugality, prudence, patience, etc. They are the main causes of happiness in this world and the Hereafter.”

49 thousand
students supported annually

31 years old
when he became a *mujtahid*



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His Eminence

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Sistani

HE Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani

Marja of the Hawza

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussein Al-Sistani is the prime *marja*, or spiritual reference for *Ithna Ashari'a* (Twelver) Shia Muslims. He is the leading sheikh of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq and the preeminent Shia cleric globally.

Preeminent Shia Cleric and *Marja* Taqlid: Sistani's influence in the Twelver Shia 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 Shia Islam. *Marja taqlid* means literally one who is worthy of being imitated—placing Sistani in a position of great authority over Twelver Shia Muslims. 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.

Financial Influence: Sistani also has very significant financial clout. 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 Shia development organisation in the world that maintains a network of educational and humanitarian establishments for both Shia and non-Shia Muslims.

Quietist Influence: Significantly, Sistani is against the idea of *Velayat-e Faqih*, suggesting Shia clerics should not get involved in politics. Paradoxically this approach has afforded him very strong influence as a religious leader unsullied by politics. Sistani has used his position of quietist authority to wield influence also as a peacemaker in turbulent, post-invasion Iraq. His comments about the political scene have been credited with bringing about stability in key moments. He has identified eliminating political corruption and improvement of public services as the main issues of the day. He has also issued strong statements against DA'ISH, calling on Iraqis to unite against the militants.

Meetings: Sistani rarely meets officials but made an exception for Iran's President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif in March 2019. Pope Francis also visited Sistani's home in Najaf in March 2021 during the Pope's visit to Iraq.

Waterfall near Halabja, Iraq



Country: Pakistan

Born: 5 October 1952 (age 69)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: Leader of 222 million Muslims in Pakistan and major influence on the Pakistani diaspora

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (15)

2020 (16)

2019: (29)

"It is not defeat that destroys you, it is being demoralized by defeat that destroys you."

6

UNESCO World Heritage sites

60

million
footballs produced a year



10

His Excellency

Prime Minister Imran Khan

HE Imran Khan

Prime Minister of Pakistan

Imran Khan became the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 2018 amid huge expectations that he could bring the country forward on issues of governance, accountability and reduction of corruption. He has endured a tough start; the economy is fragile, reforms to financial systems are slow and there are questions asked about the influence of the army on his government.

A Long Journey: When the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party won the 2018 General Elections, it was the culmination of a 22 year journey for Imran Khan. He had founded the PTI in 1996 hoping to oust the 'political mafias' ruling Pakistan. He garnered national support over the next two decades and in 2013 had become the second largest party in the country by popular vote, before eventually winning in 2018.

Corruption: A major crackdown on corruption has seen a former prime minister and a former president both imprisoned on charges of corruption. Having the money returned to the nation is proving to be more difficult although some progress has been made with local businessmen who benefitted enormously through contacts within previous administrations. He has also pursued cutbacks in any extravagant government expenditure, himself setting a personal example.

Economy: He managed to avert a default on the balance of payments by securing loans from allies and then reluctantly from the IMF (he had pledged not to go to the latter). This was the country's 13th IMF bailout since the 1980s. With economic growth slower than expected, the currency dropping by 15% and inflation rising to 10%, the economy is in crisis. One of his major challenges is to increase the tax base in a country where tax evasion is the norm.

International Relations: Early on, he stated his intentions to develop much better relations with India. But with military incidents never far away and with

India virtually annexing Kashmir, it is difficult to see how peaceful relations will develop. He was accredited internationally for returning a captured Indian air force pilot who had been shot down during an incursion into Pakistan. He has pushed the development of the Kartarpur Corridor, which will allow Indian Sikh pilgrims the opportunity to make a pilgrimage, visa-free, to their holiest site. The site is 5km from the Indian border and represents a major opportunity for cooperation. He has managed to re-establish good relations with the US and Gulf states, but has been criticised for not speaking out against the treatment of the Uyghurs by the Chinese government, one of Pakistan's closest allies.

Past Projects: Imran Khan started fund raising for a cancer hospital soon after his mother died from cancer in 1985. His appeal within Pakistan and to the diaspora Pakistani community raised enough funds to open the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in 1994, in Lahore. It is a hugely successful project with 75% of patients receiving free treatment. He also spearheaded a successful project to build Namal University, which provides scholarship assistance to over 90% of its students.

A Sporting Legend: Prior to entering politics, Imran Khan played professional cricket for 22 years and is recognised as one of the game's finest all-rounders. His ability to lead and unite an often disparate team culminated in Pakistan winning the 1992 World Cup. It is this ability and success that many hope can be replicated in the political field.

COVID-19: Pakistan has received international accolade for its policy response of smart lockdowns, demonstrating the intelligent use of accurate data. Its covid infection and death rate is considerably more-favourable compared to its neighbours. Approximately 10% of the population has been fully vaccinated.

K2, Pakistan



Country: Yemen

Born: 27 May 1963 (age 58)

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

Influence: Millions of traditional Muslim followers globally

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

2021 (9)

2020 (9)

2019: (8)

"If Allah created you for this world, He would have created you without death."

15

is the age at which he started teaching and doing da'wah.

14

books written



❧ 11 ❧

His Eminence

Sheikh Habib Umar bin Hafiz

HE Sheikh Habib Umar bin Hafiz

Director of Dar Al-Mustafa

Habib Umar bin Hafiz is well-known for his Prophetic lineage and status as one of the most influential religious 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 Sufi movement. He has been touring South East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Europe and the US regularly in the past few years in response to his growing following there.

Study: Habib Umar received all his early education in the city of his birth, Tarim, at the hands of his father, the Mufti of Tarim and other revered scholars. In 1981, the situation became untenable for him to stay in South Yemen due to the communist regime and so Habib Umar migrated to the city of Al-Bayda in North Yemen where he continued his studies.

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 Muslims and Christians. He has also spoken at Cambridge University on the need for such a dialogue. He has authored several books, such as *Al-Dhakirah Al-Musharrafah*,

which is a summary of obligatory knowledge for every Muslim, three short hadith compilations and a summary of the third quarter of Imam Al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'Ulum Al-Din*. His mawlid compositions, *Al-Diya' Al-Lami'* and *Al-Sharab Al-Tabware*, are recited in gatherings throughout the world.

Da'wah 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, hunger and lack of sufficient health care that affect areas of Tarim. His students, most notably Habib 'Ali Al-Jifri (see page <OV>), who established the Tabah Foundation, and Habib Kadhim Al-Saqqaf, are luminaries in their own right. He has a substantial following on social media, via Muwasala, an organisation founded by his students to "promote the scholarly teachings of the blessed tradition of Hadramawt."

Ba Alawi Tariqa: 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 Tariqa has now spread to all parts of the world and is famous for using the *Ihya* of Imam Ghazali as a basis of their teachings.

Soqatra, Yemen



Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 14 December 1956 (age 66)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Media

Influence: 53 published books, supervised IslamToday.net, and reached millions through TV

School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

2021 (10)

2020 (11)

2019: (10)

"I am grateful to some pens that are as sharp as a sword edge; they taught me how to go on calmly and smiling."

2017_{CE}
the year he was arrested

13 million
followers on Twitter



❧ 12 ❧

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 became hugely 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. In September 2017, Al-Ouda was arrested by Saudi authorities along with twenty other Saudi clerics for tweets that were seen as offensive to the State. He is still imprisoned (including months of solitary confinement) and awaiting trial.

Key Scholar of Salafi Network: Sheikh Salman Al-Ouda is a leading scholar of the Salafi movement having 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. He was imprisoned between 1994-1999 for calling for reforms within the country but softened his stance upon release. He is identified with the Sahwa movement, calling for peaceful political reform, more role for the clergy in politics and an opposition to western troops based in the peninsula. His hugely influential website, IslamToday.net—a Saudi-funded website dedicated to providing Islamic educational resources in English, Arabic, French and Chinese, seems to have been shut down. He was active on social media until his arrest and still has 22 million followers.

Ambassador of Non-violence: In an effort to distance himself from alleged connections to perpetra-

tors of terrorism, Al-Ouda is outspoken about the importance of inculcating love and mercy as opposed to violence (except in valid cases of self-defence) 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. He also called for peace and unity between members of the GCC and Qatar.

Arrested on Charges Against the State: Al-Ouda was arrested in September 2017 and charged for what ostensibly seems to be nothing more than tweets urging Saudi and Qatar to end a diplomatic rift. He had earlier voiced concerns about Saudi's human rights record, but perhaps his true crime has been not to publicly endorse and support the recent changes happening in Saudi Arabia. Al-Ouda has been held in punishing conditions, often in solitary confinement and detained incommunicado.

Unjust Arrest: With the public prosecutor calling for the maximum penalty to be implemented, there have been serious fears that Al-Ouda could be executed at any time. There has been outcry from a whole range of organisations about what is seen as a grossly unjust imprisonment, trial and possible sentence. The International Union of Muslim Scholars, the European Muslim Forum and Amnesty International have all called on the Saudi government to hold a fair trial or release Al-Ouda and his two compatriots; Sheikh Ali al-Omari and Sheikh Awad al-Qarni.

Al Wahbah Crater, Saudi Arabia



Country: Indonesia

Born: 21 June 1961 (age 60)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: Leader of 274 million citizens and residents of Indonesia

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (12)

2020 (13)

2019: (16)

“Indonesia is the world’s third-largest democracy. And we also have the world’s largest Muslim population. This demonstrates that democracy and Islam are not incompatible. Terrorism is not associated with any religion.”

Over
18 thousand
islands in Indonesia

8
World Heritage sites



13

His Excellency

President Joko Widodo

HE President Joko Widodo

President of Indonesia

Joko Widodo, or Jokowi as he is popularly known, was re-elected President of Indonesia in the April 2019 elections, winning 55.5% of the vote and will serve his second and final term until 2024. Running against an opponent who questioned his Islamic credentials, President Widodo selected Ma'ruf Amin as running mate. Ma'ruf Amin is the leader of the Indonesian Ulema Council, the country's top Muslim clerical body.

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

Governor of Jakarta: His political success continued with his election as governor of Jakarta. He was

equally successful as governor, making meaningful reforms in education, public transportation, revamping street vendors and traditional markets, and implementing flood control.

Presidential candidacy: Various awards (3rd place in the 2012 World Mayor Prize, one of the 'Top 10 Indonesian Mayors of 2008') testify 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 in 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.

Future Prospects: Although economic growth has not been as expected, strong investment in infrastructure and social services ensure that Widodo still enjoys strong support amongst the populace. He is also still seen as an honest leader and oversaw a successful 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.

COVID-19: Slow response and initial concern about the effects on the economy meant social distancing and other measures came in late and were difficult to implement given the size of the country. Approximately 15% of the population has been vaccinated.

Sekonyer River, Tanjung Puting National Park, Indonesia



Country: Egypt

Born: 6 January 1946 (age 75)

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

2021 (13)

2020 (14)

2019: (9)

“Europe owes our Prophet Mohammed ﷺ and our religion for the light that they have brought to all humanity.”

50th

Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar

970^{CE}

the year Al-Azhar University was founded.



14

His Eminence

Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

HE Sheikh Dr Ahmad Muhammad Al-Tayyeb

Grand Sheikh of 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. Al-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, Al-Tayyeb has attempted to hold the middle way. He has been outspoken against the Muslim Brotherhood for their exploitation of Islam as a political ideology whilst also resisting calls by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi for a “religious revolution” and efforts to “renew Islamic discourse”. Such efforts included the suggestion to revoke the verbal divorce law in Egypt. Al-Azhar wholly rejected the President’s plan, calling the law an “undisputed practice since the days of the Prophet Muhammad.” Al-Tayyeb has been active in trying to diffuse the influence of DA’ISH, organising many initiatives and conferences. He has also tried to improve foreign relations and met with many foreign religious leaders and heads of states (including the Pope and Queen Elizabeth).

Advocate of Traditional Islam: Sheikh Al-Tayyeb has emphasised 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 Al-Tayyeb has both the institute and the personal skills to authentically claim to be a representative of traditional Islam, Islam as practiced by the majority of Muslims throughout the ages, Sheikh Al-Tayyeb has defined the Sunni community (*Abi 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 the way of Imam Al-Junayd.

Leader of Al-Azhar University: Sheikh Al-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, with 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 two 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.

COVID-19: In April 2020, the Council of Senior Religious Scholars of Al-Azhar issued a fatwa declaring that any public gathering during the pandemic, even for the purpose of worship, constitutes a contravention of the Sharia law, which aims to safeguard the public good. Mosques remained closed for 5 months.

Interfaith Initiative: The International Day of Human Fraternity, is an annual UN-designated celebration of interfaith and multicultural understanding which was established by Pope Francis and Sheikh Al-Tayyeb.

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 31 August 1985 (age 36)

Source of Influence: Political

Influence: De facto ruler of Saudi Arabia

School of Thought: Moderate Salafi

2021 (23)

2020 (24)

2019: (13)

"We commit ourselves to providing world class government services which effectively and efficiently meet the needs of our citizens."

6th

son of HM King Salman

1st

member of the Saudi royal family to oversee the state oil company, Saudi Aramco



15

His Royal Highness

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

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

Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia

HRH Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman Al-Saud is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, all at the tender age of 36.

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 appointed Minister of Defence, and also named Secretary General of the Royal Court. Then Prince Muhammad was named the chair of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs, and was given control over Saudi Aramco by royal decree. In June 2017, he was appointed as Crown Prince of the Kingdom following his father's decision to remove Prince Muhammad bin Nayef from all positions.

Military Challenges: As Minister of Defence the young prince has had 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 supporting the monarchy in Bahrain, and arming the anti-Assad forces in Syria. His ascension to the role of Crown Prince coincided with geopolitical tensions among members of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the cutting of diplomatic ties with Qatar, which subsequently turned into a full blockade before being resolved in January 2021.

Catalyst of Change: The Crown Prince has been

linked to major changes taking place in the Kingdom: allowing women to drive, holding their own passports and moving independently, the (re)opening of cinemas and holding of pop concerts, a crack-down on corruption (including the arrest of princes and prominent businessmen), and the proposal to float Saudi Aramco to mention a few.

Vision 2030: As Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman launched "Vision 2030", a comprehensive, multi-year plan for the future of Saudi Arabia. The ambitious plan seeks to revitalise the Saudi economy by bolstering the Kingdom as a global investments powerhouse, and moving away from oil-dependency as the largest source of national income. It also seeks to strengthen government efficiency and the promotion of a "tolerant, thriving, and stable Saudi Arabia that provides opportunity for all."

The Khashoggi Assassination: Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi was a prominent journalist and Saudi Arabian dissident who was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018. Forced into exile from Saudi Arabia in 2017 because of his criticisms of authoritarian rule and foreign policy, Khashoggi had many enemies in high places. Although the Saudi government denied any knowledge of the murder, they were later forced to admit that their officials had been involved, but didn't go as far as the CIA who concluded that Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman had ordered Khashoggi's assassination.

al-Ula, Saudi Arabia



Country: Mauritania

Born: 1935 (age 86)

Source of Influence: Scholarly

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

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Maliki)

2021 (14)

2020 (15)

2019: (11)

"It was reflection and contemplation which were the means to understanding the reality of the wisdom of creation and the benefit which is contained in the provisions and judgments of truth and the right (al-haqq)."

11

books published

700

Muslim scholars who attended the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies



﴿ 16 ﴾

His Eminence

Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah

HE 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 Sharia Affairs at the Ministry of Justice. He was appointed chair of the recently formed UAE Fatwa Council.

Education: Sheikh bin Bayyah was raised in a household famous for its scholars, and his father, 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 *Mahadbir*, 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 organisation with a permanent delegation to the United Nations.

Author: Having written numerous texts, Sheikh bin Bayyah's scholarly explorations have gone global through speaking engagements that draw crowds of tens of thousands. He has spoken at length about the endurance of the Islamic legal tradition and also

written extensively on rulings for Muslims living as minorities in foreign lands, or *fiqh al aqaliyaat*.

Activist: In June 2013, Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah visited the White House where he met with senior advisers and aides to President Obama. He called for the protection of the Syrian people and the Muslim minority in Myanmar. Also, he met with Bill Gates during the Global Vaccine Summit in Abu Dhabi in April 2013. He recently initiated the 'Muslim Council of Elders' which embraces leading scholars (including the Sheikh of Al-Azhar), and presided over a large gathering of religious scholars at a forum entitled 'Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies', which has now been established as an organisation (based in the UAE). He has been criticised for accepting support from the UAE, which is currently involved in several regional conflicts.

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 ﷺ 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 <?>).

Terjit Oasis, Mauritania



Country: Nigeria
Born: 17 December 1942 (age 79)
Source of Influence: Political
Influence: President of Nigeria
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni
2021 (16)
2020 (17)
2019: (17)

"Economies that grow fastest and at more sustainable rates are those that actively promote trade and attract investment."

520

spoken languages

70%

of the population works in the agriculture sector



17

His Excellency

President Muhammadu Buhari

HE President Muhammadu Buhari

President of Nigeria

President Muhammadu Buhari won his second term as President of Nigeria in February 2019, beating his rival by more than three million votes.

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 has publicly committed to stopping the terror attacks. In July 2014, he escaped a suicide bombing attack that killed over 50 peo-

ple. On 6 May 2017, Buhari's government secured a release of 82 out of 276 girls kidnapped in 2014, in exchange for five Boko Haram leaders. President Buhari met with the released Chibok girls before departing to London, UK, for a follow up treatment for an undisclosed illness; health concerns continue.

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 by ensuring 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.

COVID-19: A combination of extremely low average age, very low obesity, and low urbanisation have all helped to stave off a disaster, with the country reporting very low death rates. Approximately 1% of the population has been fully vaccinated.

Okwangwo Biosphere Reserve, Nigeria



Country: Nigeria

Born: 24 August 1956 (age 65)

Source of Influence: Lineage, Development, Administrative

Influence: Central figure for 99 million Nigerian Muslims

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

2021 (19)

2020 (20)

2019: (21)

“Every Nigerian ought to promote unity in their communities regardless of their religious differences.”

70 million

Muslims look to His Royal Eminence as their spiritual leader

20th

Sultan of Sokoto



❧ 18 ❧

His Royal Eminence

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

HRE 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 98.7 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.

Military Man: Sa'adu Abubakar succeeded his brother, Muhammadu Maccido, who died in a plane crash in 2006. Prior to this he had served in the military, including commanding African peacekeepers in Chad. He retired as Brigadier General and was serving as Defense Attache to Pakistan when he became Sultan.

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.

Current Issues: The Sultan has started many initiatives to counter and reduce the influence of Boko Haram. He has also worked to strengthen Muslim-Christian ties by inviting an international joint Muslim-Christian Delegation to visit Nigeria.

Sokoto State, Nigeria



Country: Indonesia

Born: 3 July 1953 (age 68)

Source of Influence: Administrative, Political, Education

Influence: Leader of approximately 40 million members of the Nahdlatul Ulama

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (18)

2020 (19)

2019: (20)

"You know who you are, so don't try to pretend otherwise in front of others."

Over
40 million
members in Nahdlatul Ulama

1926^{CE}
is the year Nahdlatul Ulama
was founded.



❧ 19 ❧

Professor

KH Said Aqil Siradj

Professor KH Said Aqil Siradj

Chairman of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama

Dr KH Said Aqil Siradj is the leader of Indonesia's largest independent Muslim organisation and one of the world's most influential Islamic organisations, 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 *Ahl as-Sunnah 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 organisation'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 influential Sunni movement.

Model of Traditionalism: With a mainly rural membership base, the Nahdlatul Ulama distinguishes itself from other Islamic organisations in Indonesia by positioning itself as a premier organisation of tra-

ditional 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 organisation 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.

Lore Lindu National Park, Indonesia



Country: Egypt

Born: 3 March 1953 (age 68)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Political

Influence: Legal authority for 90.7 million Egyptian Muslims

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (17)

2020 (18)

2019: (18)

"My advice is to protect unity, which is one of the most important duties at this time, until Egypt is able to move past this difficult period. The principle of agreement and reconciliation must serve as our barometer to measure what is happening in our country. We must also pay attention to development and confront our major problems."

50

books written

18th

Grand Mufti of Egypt



20

His Eminence

Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa

HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa

Former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Sheikh Ali Gomaa 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 in 2013, Gomaa has remained active on many fronts and his counsel is more in demand than ever before.

Egypt's Weight in Islamic Scholarship: Gomaa'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, Gomaa was a professor of jurisprudence at Al-Azhar University—the second oldest university in the world, founded in 975 CE—Gomaa 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 organisation for Muslim-majority countries. Gomaa has authored over 50 books, as well as hundreds of articles. However, in July 2021 the secretariat of the International Union of Muslim Scholars dismissed him, along with Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah and Farouk Hamadeh, from the organisation, ostensibly for controversial *fiqh* (jurisprudence) opinions.

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

Jerusalem. The visit was viewed as controversial in Egypt, but set off a change of public opinion in the Islamic World that continues to this day. The Grand Mufti also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was much appreciated by the Christian community of Jerusalem.

Personal Popularity: Gomaa was exceedingly popular as a mufti and remains ever popular since his retirement, although some of his political statements and pro-military government stance after the Egyptian Revolution have tempered this support somewhat. Apart from appearing on popular broadcasts and satellite television programmes, he also revived the practice of informal 'knowledge circles' at the Al-Azhar Mosque. At his very well-attended Q&A sessions after his Friday sermons, Gomaa 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 vehemently oppose political Islam as well as also making him a target for some extremist Islamists. He recently escaped an assassination attempt outside a mosque in Cairo.

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

Elphinstone Reef, Egypt



Country: Lebanon

Born: 31 August 1960 (age 61)

Source of Influence: Political, Development

Influence: Political leader of 1–2 million Lebanese Shia and supporters of his resistance to Israel

School of Thought: Revolutionary Shi'ism

2021 (20)

2020 (21)

2019: (23)

"So long as there is imperialism in the world, a permanent peace is impossible."

1992^{CE}

the year he assumed office of Secretary General of Hezbollah

Over

45^{thousand}

active duty troops and reservists in Hezbollah



21

Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah

Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah

Secretary-General of Hezbollah

Seyyed Hassan 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, social and paramilitary organization based in Lebanon which seeks 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. 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. Hezbollah fighters have been key in strengthening the Syrian regime during the Syrian civil war, and their presence there has pushed out DA'ISH but draws reactions from Israel. Hezbollah has continued to develop its arsenal, as well as developing accuracy. The latest estimates include at least 100,000 rockets and missiles.

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, the majority of whom are Sunnis. His claim that the Syrian conflict is not sectarian in essence is not one that many Sunni Muslims agree with. He is widely seen as one of the main victors of the Syrian conflict. Nasrallah recently declared "victory" in the Syrian war, adding that what remained was "scattered battles."

Current Issues: Nasrallah has been very critical of recent peace initiatives with Israel and recently met with Hamas leader, Ismail Haniyeh, during the latter's first visit to Lebanon in 30 years. Also, the aftermath of the huge blast in Beirut in August 2020 has led to a crippling political and economic situation.

Horsh Ebdan, Lebanon



Country: Yemen

Born: 16 April 1971 (age 50)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Lineage, Philanthropy

Influence: Preacher, Social Issues

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (21)

2020 (22)

2019: (24)

“People who have lived amongst others generally find that there is nothing as effective as kind words, a soft disposition and good character in affecting them.”

2005^{CE}

the year the Tabah Foundation was founded

11 years

study under Habib Abdul-Qadir Bin Ahmad al-Saqqaf



22

Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri

Sheikh Habib Ali Zain Al Abideen Al-Jifri

Director General of the Tabah Foundation, UAE

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

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 late scholars and spiritual masters Habib Abdul-Qadir bin Ahmad Al-Saqqaf 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 and giving lectures. Al-Jifri's counselling is also in demand, and his spiritual insights have left a huge impression on many. His guidance is based on incorporating as

much of the sunnah into one's daily life as one can.

Think Tank: Al-Jifri founded the privately-funded philanthropic Tabah Foundation for Islamic Studies and Research in Abu Dhabi, a young non-profit institution that is a source of reputable work in Islamic research and thought. It applies traditional religious principles to analyse contemporary issues. Some of these have inevitably become controversial such as when he made some statements against popular revolutions during the Arab Spring for his belief that the preservation of peace and reducing bloodshed is paramount.

World-Wide Following: Habib Ali's popularity has grown enormously over the past few years with almost 15 million followers on different social media platforms, plus half a million subscribers on his YouTube channel. 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.

Hazm al-'Udayn, Yemen



Country: United States

Born: 1 January 1960 (age 61)

Source of Influence: Preacher, Social Issues

Influence: Scholarly, leading Islamic voice for English-speaking Muslims

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2021 (22)

2020 (23)

2019: (23)

"Everyone's a believer when things are going fine. The real faith is when one becomes patient with tribulations."

9

books published

2008_{CE}

is the year he co-founded Zaytuna College



23

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf Hanson

Teacher and Co-Founder of Zaytuna College

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 and current President of the Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, the first and only 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. He spent most of his time in the UAE and then Mauritania, where he met and lived with one of his closest teachers, Sheikh Murabit Al-Hajji. He returned to the USA in 1987 and studied nursing before transitioning to a full-time Imam at the Santa Clara Mosque.

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 has spread 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. He has been the inspiration for a whole generation of English-speaking Muslims to study Arabic and Islamic sciences. He has

taught and inspired many of them to become teachers in their own right, and more importantly help forge a confident and faithful Islamic identity in the troubling times of the 21st century.

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. He works closely with Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah and serves as vice-president for two organisations the Sheikh is president of: the Global Center for Guidance and Renewal, and the UAE-based Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies. He has also been called on to give advice by the US government and this has opened him up to attacks from certain quarters of the Muslim community.

Controversies: Despite being in the public eye for over three decades, Sheikh Hamza has managed to stay clear of most controversies and continues to reach a large, diverse audience. Some personal attacks have questioned his advice to a US President or his ties to the UAE government, yet he remains one of the most beloved scholars in the world, and arguably the most intellectually widely-read and formidable Western Muslim scholar in the world.

Yosemite National Park, California, United States



Country: Senegal

Born: 1955 (age 66)

Source of Influence: Lineage, Scholarly

Influence: Spiritual leader of around 100 million Tijani Muslims

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni (Maliki, Tijani)

2021 (24)

2020 (24)

2019: (22)

"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."

Over

1 million

Sufi adherents under his guidance

1781 CE

is the year the Tijani Tariqa was founded



24

Sheikh Ahmad Tijani bin 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 Tijaniyya 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 Niassé. 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 travelled extensively throughout Africa, the Middle East and America attending numerous conferences and participating 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 recognised 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* ('flood' or 'overflow of spiritual grace'), 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. The Tijanis are characterised by strict following of the sunnah, recitation of spiritual litanies (*awrad*) individually and in gatherings and an emphasis on developing the inward relationship with God.

Fathala Wildlife Reserve, Senegal



Country: Syria

Born: 1933 (age 87)

Source of Influence: Scholarly, Educator

Influence: Spiritual leader of more than 75,000 students in Damascus alone

School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

2020 (27)

2019: (27)

2018: (29)

Over

50 years

teaching Islamic studies to women

37 thousand

female students in Syria study in Qubeysiat circles



25

Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

Sheikha Munira Qubeysi

Leader of the Qubeysi Movement

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

Background and Growth: Munira Qubeysi is the daughter of a merchant from the Hauran region in Syria. She was born in 1933 and grew up in al-Muhajirin district in Damascus. She attended government schools as a child, eventually entering the Faculty of Science at the University of Damascus. After graduation, she worked as a teacher. At that time, she attended lessons of Sheikh Ahmed Kufaro, who later became the Grand Mufti of Syria. However, after some differences, she continued her studies under Sheikh Abdul Karim al-Rifai. She entered the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at the University of Damascus, studying under Sheikh Mustafa al-Siba'i, who was leader of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, and Professor Issam al-Attar, who succeeded al-Siba'i. Although she studied under several teachers, she carved her own path while maintaining good relations with the various Muslim intellectual communities in Damascus. After the Ba'athist coup in Syria, Sheikha Qubeysi focused all her efforts on women's religious education—even to the point of refusing to marry—establishing what is now generally known as the “Qubeysiat”.

Female Muslim Order: At a time when meetings of Islamic organisations 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 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, providing a forum to address religious questions and discuss religious issues. Due to some of her followers coming from wealthy and influential families, Qubeysi's movement has been able to spread globally as well as affect changes in Syria. Under Bashar Al-Assad, restrictions around wearing hijab were relaxed. During the Syrian Civil War the Qubeysiat have grown extensively and enjoy good relations with the regime. Among their new responsibilities conferred by President Assad is near exclusive control over the country's youth Qur'anic memorisation program conducted in every mosque.

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 memorised nine canonical books of Hadith with extensive chains of narration.

Jabal al-Shaykh, Syria





HE Sheikh Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Aal Al-Sheikh
 Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 30 November 1943 (age 78)
Influence: Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and of Salafis worldwide
School of Thought: Salafi



Maulana Mahmood Madani
 President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind
Country: India
Born: 3 March 1964 (age 57)
Influence: Scholarly, Political, Administrative. 12 million members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind
School of Thought: Traditional Sunni

26

Rank (2021): 26
 Rank (2020): 26
 Rank (2019): 26

27

Rank (2021): 27
 Rank (2020): 28
 Rank (2019): 32

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 is recognised for his influence in enforcing a distinct view of Islamic tradition. He has publicly criticised Muslim televangelists who encourage Muslims to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. He has also been robust in his condemnation of Turkish soap operas sweeping the Arab World, calling them distracting practices.

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 emphasise the need to strip away past interpretations that have become a part of Muslims' lives. The movement he leads is characterised by an authoritative stance on Islamic religious practice. He has described DA'ISH as 'evil' and called them 'the number one enemy of Islam'. In 2017, he received praise from an Israeli minister for labelling Hamas a terrorist organisation.

Maulana Mahmood Madani is the President of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH), having been secretary-general for 13 years, and has gained influence for his forthright condemnations of terrorism and unfaltering support of the Indian Muslim community.

Lineage: Maulana Mahmood's grandfather Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani was a great scholar of Islamic theology, teaching Hadith in Medina, and Deoband. He was the President of the JUH until his death in 1957 and was then succeeded by his son Asad Madani (the father of Maulana Mahmood), who was President until his death in 2006.

Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (JUH): JUH was established in 1919 by leading Deoband scholars who argued for the concept of composite nationalism, believing that a nation should not be formed on the basis of one factor only (e. g. religion, ethnicity etc), but rather be based on many factors. Maulana Mahmood has striven to keep this concept alive amid all the turmoil of nationalistic politics in India. After graduating from Deoband in 1992, he became actively involved in the JUH, organising conferences and meetings across the country which saw a rapid rise in membership. He became the General Secretary of JUH in 2001, and continued to invigorate the organisation. When his father passed away in 2006, a dispute arose between him and his uncle around the leadership of the organisation leading to a bifurcation.

Activism: He has striven for Muslim rights in India and 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 mobilised Darul Uloom Deoband institutions to host events condemning terrorism as inherently un-Islamic. This had a major impact in the community. He has been at the forefront of relief work (earthquakes in Gujrat and Kashmir), health and social development (Kashmir).

Sheikh Mustafa Hosny

Televangelist

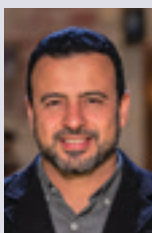
Country: Egypt

Born: 28 August 1978 (age 43)

Influence: Preacher

School of Thought: Traditional

Sunni



Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid

Al-Azhari

Scholar

Country: Egypt

Born: 16 July 1976 (age 45)

Influence: Scholarly

School of Thought: Traditional

Sunni



Rank (2021): 28

Rank (2020): 29

Rank (2019): 34

28



Rank (2021): 29

Rank (2020): 30

Rank (2019): 35

29



Mustafa Hosny is a televangelist and Islamic preacher who presented his first show in 2004 and has gone on to become a household name.

Changing careers: Mustafa Hosny started his career in sales after obtaining a BA degree in Business from the Ain Shams University in Egypt. He changed careers to become a full-time preacher after he received a Certification from the Institute of training preachers, an affiliate of the Ministry of Awqaf (Egypt).

Preacher: Mustafa Hosny 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 60 million followers on different social media platforms in addition to 4.5 million subscribers on YouTube. His YouTube videos have over 484 million views. His daily advice and softly spoken words endear him to the public and account for his continued influence.

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

Scholar: Sheikh Usama was chosen by the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Gomaa, to deliver the Friday sermons on his behalf in the Sultan Hassan Mosque. He has 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 Sharia 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, and the Qur'anic accommodation of different civilizations, amongst others.



HH Shah Karim Al-Hussayni
The Aga Khan IV
Country: France
Born: 13 December 1936 (age 85)
Influence: Leader of Nizari Ismailis
School of Thought: Modernist Shia, Ismaili, Nizari



HE Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi
Senior Muslim Scholar
Country: Egypt
Born: 9 September 1926 (age 95)
Influence: Leading scholar
School of Thought: Sunni, Muslim Brotherhood/Salafi

30

Rank (2021): 30
Rank (2020): 31
Rank (2019): 36

31

Rank (2021): 31
Rank (2020): 32
Rank (2019): 30

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 10–15 million Nizari Ismaili Muslims the Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam, with lineage descending back to Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Hereditary Leader of Ismailis: The Aga Khan, a hereditary title bestowed upon the Imam by the Shah of Persia in the mid-nineteenth century, derives his position of authority from his lineage. At the age of 21 the Aga Khan bypassed his father and uncle to become the fourth Aga Khan and 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 Development Network (AKDN) 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 revitalise historic cities. Some projects include 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 organisations. The period from July 2017 to July 2018 was designated the Diamond Jubilee Year of the Aga Khan’s 60th year of reign.

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi is a preeminent Egyptian scholar. Articulate and widely read, he is one of the most famous Islamic scholars of our time. He recently stepped down as president of the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS).

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. Qaradawi has been sentenced to death in absentia by an Egyptian court along with over 100 other Egyptians affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, an organisation banned in Egypt. Meanwhile, Interpol removed Qaradawi from its “Wanted” list in 2017.

Fatwas: Qaradawi vocally supported the ‘Arab Spring’ movements issuing fatwas for the killing of Colonel Gaddafi, and fatwas against the Assad regime in Syria. He also issued a fatwa condemning the overthrow of Morsi, saying that it was an obligation to continue to support Morsi. He advised El-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.

Habib Luthfi bin Yahya

Preacher

Country: Indonesia

Born: 10 November 1947 (age 74)

Influence: Scholarly, Spiritual
Guide

School of Thought: Traditional
Sunni



Sheikh Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi

Leader of the Houthi

Country: Yemen

Born: 22 May 1979 (age 42)

Influence: Political

School of Thought: Traditional
Shia



Rank (2021): 32

Rank (2020): 33

Rank (2019): 37

32



Habib bin Luthfi is currently: *Ra'is 'Amm of the Jam'iyyah Abli Thariqah Al-Mu'tabarah Al-Nab-dliyyah* (Head of the Association of Recognised Sufi Orders), Head of MUI Middle Java, and the spiritual leader of the Ba Alawi tariqa in Indonesia.

Ba Alawi: The Ba Alawi are descendants of the Prophet ﷺ who migrated to Hadramaut in Yemen early on in Islamic history. They played a major role in bringing Islam to the Far East, including Indonesia and Malaysia, and they hold high prominence to this day. They emphasise the importance of inward sincerity coupled with the study of religious sciences, especially as espoused by Imam Ghazali.

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 Madinahh 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 tariqa (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*).

Rank (2021): 33

Rank (2020): 34

Rank (2019): 38

33



Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi is the current leader of the Houthi political, religious and militant movement in the Sa'dah governorate in Yemen.

Houthi: The Houthi movement was established in 1992 by Hussein Badr Al-Din Al-Houthi, a Zaydi Shia'a scholar and anti-Wahhabism who had written a number of books criticising Wahhabism and the leading authorities of Yemen. The Zaidis ruled most of Yemen for over 1,000 years until 1962. They believe that Muslims should be ruled only by a descendant of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, whom they call an Imam.

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 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. This bombing of one of the world's poorest countries has led to over 130,000 fatalities and a humanitarian crisis which has left around 70 per cent of the population (27 million) reliant on humanitarian aid and over a million people infected by cholera. The UK in particular has come under international criticism for its supply of weapons which are being used in the bombardment.



Sheikh Mahmud Effendi
Scholar and Preacher
Country: Turkey
Born: 1929 (age 92)
Influence: Scholarly, Preacher
School of Thought: Sunni



Maulana Tariq Jameel
Scholar and Preacher
Country: Pakistan
Born: 1953 (age 68)
Influence: Scholarly, Preacher
School of Thought: Sunni, Tablighi Jamaat

34

Rank (2021): 34
Rank (2020): 35
Rank (2019): 39

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

Life: Sheikh Effendi became a *hafiz* (one who has memorised 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.

Preaching: He began delivering spiritual and ethical guidance from 1960 following the death of his Shaikh Ali Haydar Effendi. He devoted three weeks per-year to teach people across Turkey and made several missionary and educational tours in several countries, including Uzbekistan, India, Germany and the United States. He has a Qur'an tafsir (commentary) named *Ruhu'l Furkan* in Turkish.

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. Despite being confined to a wheelchair and unable to give talks, he is still sought out for his blessings by people ranging from the layman to the highest powers in the land.

35

Rank (2021): 35
Rank (2020): 36
Rank (2019): 40

Maulana Tariq Jameel is a prominent Deobandi 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 pursuing the way of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Background: After completing pre-medical studies, Maulana Tariq was admitted to the King Edward Medical College in Lahore. It was there—under the influence of members of the Tablighi Jamaat—that his focus changed to Islamic Education. His Islamic training is from Jamia Arabia, where he studied Qur'an, Hadith, Sufism, logic, and Islamic jurisprudence. Maulana Tariq's background in the sciences allows him to explain Islamic matters in a way that appeals to modern urban Muslims. Additionally, his simple lifestyle and eloquence in Urdu, as well as his fluency in Arabic, catapulted his fame across the Muslim world.

Tablighi Jamaat: Tablighi Jamaat is a political missionary movement founded by Muhammad Ilyas Al-Kandhlawi in India in 1927. It focuses on encouraging Muslims not to neglect the basic practices of their faith. It has informal affiliations with the Deobandi movement but targets a more general audience. The sub-continent diaspora have carried its message to nearly every country in the world and its adherents number in the millions. It has annual gatherings in Pakistan and Bangladesh which number in the millions.

Influence: In addition to running a madrasa in Faisalabad, Pakistan, Maulana Tariq has delivered thousands of lectures around the world. He has been very effective in influencing all types of the community ranging from businessmen and landlords to ministers, actors, and sports celebrities.

HE President Halimah
Yacob

President of Singapore

Country: Singapore

Born: 23 August 1954 (age 67)

Influence: Political

School of Thought: Sunni



Sheikh Muhammad Al-
Yaqoubi

Scholar and Spiritual Guide

Country: Syria

Born: 7 May 1963 (age 57)

Influence: Scholarly

School of Thought: Sunni



Rank (2021): 37

Rank (2020): 38

Rank (2019): 41

36



Halimah Yacob became Singapore's eighth, and first female, President in September 2017 when she was elected unopposed.

Election: A former speaker of Parliament she gave up her parliamentary seat and position with the ruling People's Action Party to run for President. The government's criteria for the current President, including that the President must be an ethnic Malay, meant that Yacob was unopposed and became President unelected, a process which has drawn some criticism. She is the first ethnic Malay President.

Background: Halimah Yacob comes from humble beginnings, being raised by her Malay mother after her Indian father passed away when she was eight years old. Her mother struggled to raise her five children and Halimah almost neglected her school studies because of the need to help out at home. She was successful at school and continued to obtain her law degree and master's in law from the National University of Singapore. She then went on to work at the National Trades Union Congress before becoming Director of the Singapore Institute of Labour Studies.

Political career: She entered politics in 2001 and a decade later was appointed Minister of Community Development, Youth and Sports and later on Minister of Social and Family Development. She was elected Speaker of Parliament in 2013, becoming the first woman to hold the post. As President she has promoted initiatives for supporting a cohesive society, strengthening interfaith and recognising all workers who contribute to Singapore's growth. She has a strong international profile, regularly meeting world leaders.

Rank (2021): 39

Rank (2020): 40

Rank (2019): 42

37



Sheikh Al-Yaqoubi is a widely respected religious scholar who also has a significant spiritual following worldwide. He was appointed as member of the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute of Islamic Thought in 2016.

Background: 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.

Against Extremism: He was one of the first scholars to speak against DA'ISH, denouncing its atrocities and showing that its actions are un-Islamic. His book *Refuting ISIS* (now in eight languages), has become an essential reading, providing theological arguments against the extremists and calling on the mainstream, traditional followers to combat them. His criticism of the Syrian government's response to protests made his stay in Syria untenable, and so he had to flee the country, eventually seeking refuge in Morocco where he is still based.

Educator: 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 Europe and the USA. He is a charismatic public speaker in both Arabic and English (he also speaks Swedish) and one of the most powerful voices of Islam making a huge positive impact via his public talks, writings and numerous media appearances worldwide. His public teaching includes readings of the entire collection of hadith in Sahih Bukhari.



Prof Seyyed Hossein Nasr
 Philosopher and University
 Professor
Country: United States of America
Born: 7 April 1933 (age 88)
Influence: Scholarly
School of Thought: Traditional
 Shia
 Rank (2021): 40



HE Sheikh Uthman Taha
 Calligrapher
Country: Syria
Born: 1934 (age 87)
Influence: Calligrapher
School of Thought: Sunni

38

Rank (2020): 41
 Rank (2019): 43

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is University

Professor of Islamic Studies 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.

Background and Career: Nasr was born in Iran and raised in a house of scholars and physicians. He was sent to school in the USA, won a scholarship to MIT for undergraduate studies in physics and obtained a doctorate in the history of science and philosophy from Harvard. He returned to Iran in 1958 where he swiftly rose through academic ranks to become Vice-Chancellor of Tehran University and then President of Aryamehr University. The 1979 Iranian revolution forced Nasr to leave Iran and so he settled in the USA.

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 inter-faith 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*. 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* (1968) critique the rise of a secular, modern conception of nature as inert matter to be conquered by modern technology, and attempt to revive a sacred notion of nature.

Legacy: For Nasr, the quest for knowledge, specifically knowledge which “liberates and delivers him from the fetters and limitations of earthly existence,” has been and continues to be the central concern and determinant of his intellectual life.

39

Rank (2021): 41
 Rank (2020): 43
 Rank (2019): 45

Uthman Taha is an internationally acclaimed Arabic calligrapher who has hand-written the Mushaf Al-Madinah, which is the copy of the Qur'an issued by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.

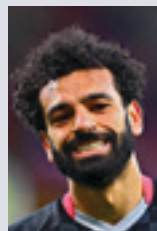
Background: Sheikh Taha was born in 1934 near Aleppo, Syria. He developed a passion for calligraphy when very young, but had to wait until he moved to Damascus (where he studied a BA in Sharia at Damascus University) before he met the chief calligrapher in Syria, Muhammad Badawi Al-Diyarani, and the Iraqi calligrapher, Hashim Al-Baghdadi. He then travelled to Istanbul, where he met the most celebrated calligrapher of the time, Hamid Al-Amidi, from whom he received certification.

Copying the Qur'an: The written copy of the Qur'an is known as a Mushaf, and it took Taha approximately three years to copy one out. He wrote his first copy in 1970 and in total has written out over 10 copies. The most significant one was the one assigned to him in 1988 by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an in Madinah. This copy is the one printed by the King Fahd Complex and distributed to millions of pilgrims every year. It is the most common copy of the Qur'an available worldwide. Taha has copied out six different textual variants including *Warsh* (used in Morocco and Algeria), *Hafs* (worldwide), *Duri* (Africa and Sudan), and *Qalun* (Libya).

Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi
President of Ennahda Party
Country: Tunisia
Born: 1941 (age 80)
Influence: Political, Scholarly
School of Thought: Sunni



Mohamed Salah
Footballer
Country: Egypt
Born: 15 June 1992 (age 29)
Influence: Celebrities and Sports
School of Thought: Sunni



Rank (2021): 38
Rank (2020): 39
Rank (2019): 28

40



Ghannouchi is one of the world's leading Islamic thinkers and one of the most influential Tunisian politicians in the post-revolution transition period. He was elected speaker of the parliament in November 2019.

Politics: Ghannouchi co-founded The Ennahda Movement ('Renaissance') in the 1970s and was imprisoned several times before being forced into exile. The Ennahda is a political party based on Islamic values resembling the Christian Democratic political parties in Europe. It supports the concept of a multi-party democracy. In 2012 he received the Chatham House Prize for "the successful compromises each achieved during Tunisia's democratic transition" and in 2016 he received the Jannalal Bajaj Award for "promoting Gandhian values outside India".

Post Arab Spring: With the fall of President Ben Ali, Ghannouchi returned to Tunisia in January 2011 having spent 20-years in exile. He led the Ennahda (Renaissance) party to victory in the October 2011 national elections. In 2014, Ghannouchi quit government and handed power over to a technocratic government. When elections were held later that year, Ennahda, without Ghannouchi leading them, came second to the Nidaa Tounes party. The 2019 elections produced a deeply fragmented parliament with the government collapsing just 5 months into its term. Ghannouchi, who was elected speaker of parliament, narrowly won a vote of confidence in July 2020.

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 is acutely aware of the bloodshed in neighbouring Algeria and is keen to avoid having only binary options of identity available. He also believes that whoever wants to fight extremism must do so in moderation by following the Tunisian model.

Rank (2021): 42
Rank (2020): 44
Rank (2019): 46

41



Mohamed Salah is an Egyptian football player of global fame.

International Player: Salah started his career in the Egyptian Premier League in 2010 before moving to Switzerland, UK, Italy and then UK again. Salah enjoyed the most successful season of his career with Liverpool FC in 2017/18. He broke many records and won many accolades. He also helped Egypt qualify for the World Cup. The 2018/19 season saw more success with Liverpool FC being runners-up in the English Premier League, and crowned 2019 European Champions and World Club Champions. The 2019/20 season saw the end of a 30 year wait for Liverpool to become champions of the English league again.

Popularity: His affable nature and polite manners have won him many fans across the globe, and none more so than in his native country of Egypt where he has donated to various charitable causes. In the March 2018 Egyptian Presidential elections, over a million people struck out the two names vying for the presidency and inserted Mohamed Salah's name, making him an unofficial runner up in the election. His down to earth nature has shown itself in chance meetings with fans and acts of kindness towards those in need. He has over 72 million followers on social media and now has a wax model in Madame Tussauds.

Singing in the Terraces: His footballing exploits during his time at Liverpool FC have had the unprecedented effect of football fans singing positive songs about Muslims. "If he's good enough for you, he's good enough for me. If he scores another few, then I'll be Muslim too. Sitting in the mosque, that's where I wanna be! Mo Salah-la-la-la, la-la-la-la-la-la-la."



Sheikh Muqtada Sadr
Scholar and Politician
Country: Iraq
Born: 4 August 1974 (age 47)
Influence: Political, Social Issues
School of Thought: Shia



Maulana Nazur Rahman
Amir of Tablighi Jamaat
Country: Pakistan
Born: 1929 (age 92)
Influence: Preacher,
Administration of Religious Affairs
School of Thought: Sunni

42

Rank (2021): 43
Rank (2020): 45
Rank (2019): 47

The son of the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadiq Al-Sadr, and son-in-law of Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr, Muqtada is a highly influential leader who inherited control over large social institutions that served millions in the slums of Baghdad.

Serving the Poor: He has concentrated on serving Iraq's poor Shia Muslims and has had complete freedom to work in many parts of Iraq, especially Sadr City, a district in Baghdad named after his father. He provides healthcare and access to food and clean water. He has raised issues of corruption, high unemployment and poor government services.

Politics: 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. This is now known as Saraya Al-Salam. Through it he has concentrated on campaigning against corruption in Iraq, criticising the government openly about this. He has worked for Shia-Sunni unity, and in 2017 called for Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad to step down and met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

King-Maker: In the May 2018 elections, Al-Sadr allied with the communist party, and their Sairoon coalition won the most seats, making him the king-maker in Iraq's new government. The campaign rhetoric focused on corruption and tried to cut across sectarian platforms. Rejecting influence from both USA and Iran, he has focused on bringing disparate Iraqi parties together. He has continued his criticism of corruption within the Iraqi government. He has threatened to boycott the upcoming elections.

43

Rank (2021) 45
Rank (2020) 50

Maulana Nazur Rahman is the fourth Amir of the Pakistani Tablighi Jamaat. He succeeded Hajji Abdul-Wahhab who passed away in November 2018, aged 96.

New Leader: A change of leadership changes nothing for the Pakistan chapter of the Tablighi Jamaat—a transnational Islamic organisation dedicated to reminding Muslims of their duty to fulfill their religious obligations. Maulana Nazur was the Deputy Amir and one of three people named by the previous Amir as contenders for the position of Amir upon his demise.

Missionaries: As Amir, or leader of Pakistan's Tablighi Jamaat, Maulana Nazur Rahman's influence spans globally due to the organisation's emphasis on missionary work. It is active in over 150 countries and famously involves people in small groups travelling to Muslim communities reminding individuals about their religious duties. This act of da'wa or exhortation towards fulfilling religious duties is seen as a cornerstone of the faith and has enabled it to acquire a massive membership base. The Tablighi Jamaat has close ties with the prominent Islamic institution Darul Uloom Deoband, in India. It is where the founder, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelvi, 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, prominent politicians, actors, and sports stars all publicly show allegiance to the group. This is done easily because the TJ is wholly apolitical. It is identified as a spiritual revivalist movement. It condemns violence and distances itself from any militant groups. Annual gatherings in Raiwind, Pakistan draw close to 2 million people, and those in Biswa, Bangladesh attract over 3 million.

Moez Masoud
Televangelist
Country: Egypt
Born: 27 February 1978 (age 43)
Influence: Preacher
School of Thought: Sunni



Dr Timothy Winter (Sheikh
Abdal-Hakim Winter)
Scholar
Country: UK
Born: 1960 (age 61)
Influence: Scholarly, Preacher,
Administration of Religious Affairs
School of Thought: Sunni



Rank (2021): 36
Rank (2020): 37
Rank (2019): 31

44



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.

Religious and academic work: Founder of *Al-Tareeq Al-Sabbh* (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 Ramadan broadcast, "*Khutuwat Al-Shaytan*," was widely viewed across the Arab world. In 2017, Masoud produced the Egyptian film "Clash" which has been hailed as "one of the most telling depictions of modern Egypt yet filmed" and the film was selected to represent Egypt in the Oscars' 2017 Best Foreign Language Film category. Masoud has a following of over 25 million on various social media sites, including YouTube videos, Facebook and Twitter. 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. In 2019 he announced production of a film about the Christchurch mosque shootings, in which 51 people died. It will be entitled *Hello, Brother*, the words spoken by one of the victims.

Rank (2021): 47
Rank (2020): 48
Rank (2019): HM

45



Prof Timothy Winter, also known as Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, is an academic who has been actively involved in numerous initiatives in the UK over the past four decades.

Academic: He is currently the Sheikh Zayed Lecturer of Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge University and Director of Studies in Theology at Wolfson College. He has published and contributed to numerous academic works on Islam and among his best known works are translations from Imam Ghazali's *Ihya*, a series of aphorisms (*Commentary on the Eleventh Contentions*) and his most recent book, *Travelling Home: Essays on Islam in Europe*.

Educator: He is the founder of the Cambridge Muslim College, which has offered Diploma courses for British Darul Uloom graduates and now has an accredited BA programme which promises to graduate religious leaders who are confident, competent and conversant with the issues of the age. He is a much sought after speaker and contributes regularly to the media (fluent in several languages). Hundreds of YouTube videos of his lectures and talks form an important source of knowledge for English-speaking Muslims.

Cambridge Mosque: Prof Winter has been the main force behind the decade long project to build the Cambridge Central Mosque. The mosque represents an authentic Islamic design contextualised to its location and times. It is Europe's first eco-mosque, having been designed with a high degree of environment sustainability. It also incorporates a café, and meeting rooms for use by the whole community. The mosque opened in April 2019 and has taken its place as an iconic standard for all places of worship in the country.



Dr Aref Ali Nayed
 Scholar
Country: Libya
Born: 1962 (age 59)
Influence: Scholarly, Political.
 Influential figure in Libyan government.
School of Thought: Sunni



HE Sheikh Ibrahim Salih
 Scholar
Country: Nigeria
Born: 12 May 1938 (age 83)
Influence: Scholarly,
 Administration of Religious Affairs
School of Thought: Sunni

46

Rank (2021) 46
 Rank (2020) 47
 Rank (2019) 48

47

Rank (2021): 48
 Rank (2020): HM
 Rank (2019): HM

Dr Aref Ali Nayed is a Libyan public figure, a renowned scholar in the field of Islamic theology (*kalam*) and philosophy, and a leading pioneer of inter-faith relations. He was former Ambassador of Libya to the United Arab Emirates, former Special Envoy of the President of the Libya House of Representatives to USA, UK, European and African Unions, and led the Libya Stabilisation Team in 2011. He has played a vital role in the revitalization of the Libyan political track.

Scholar: Nayed is the Founder and Chairman of two leading think tanks, Kalam Research and Media (KRM) and the Libya Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS). He is also currently a Visiting Senior Research Affiliate of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia. He was former professor at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome), and a former professor at the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC, Malaysia). 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.

Political Leader: Nayed is viewed in many circles as a man of integrity, wisdom, strength and diplomatic foresight—virtues needed at the highest level to put Libya back on track. In 2017, Nayed launched a new movement for change in Libya named Ihya Libya (Reviving Libya) which centred around a comprehensive vision for Libya, and managed to galvanise various social fabric and civil society groups into a political consortium. Ihya Libya aims to create a stable, prosperous and democratic country. Dr Nayed is one of the leading figures in the Libyan diplomatic, civic and political landscapes and is a leading Presidential candidate in the coming elections in Libya.

Sheikh Dr Ibrahim Salih 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.

Early Studies: 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, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Salih bin Yunus Al-Nawwy. He lost his father at the age of seven, and so 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: He recently opened the Sheikh Sharif Ibrahim Saleh Islamic Centre, which will focus on teaching and research. Its aim is to “promote a better understanding of contemporary challenges and how to face and handle such challenges in today’s world.”

Mohamed Bechari

Political Leader

Country: France

Born: 16 April 1967 (age 54)

Influence: Political,
Administration of Religious Affairs

School of Thought: Sunni



Rank (2021): 49

Rank (2020): 49

Rank (2019): 50

48



Dr Mohammed Bechari, born in Morocco, is a leading prolific and dynamic public figure in the landscape of European Islam. He heads a variety of organisations that seek to better represent French and European Muslims to wider society as well as working to empower their own communities.

Head of Organisations: He is the Secretary General of the UAE-based World Muslim Communities Council, president of the French National Federation of Muslims, one of the leading entities organising 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 entity representing European Muslims at the European level. Bechari is the founder of the Avicenna Institute in Lille and member of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in Vienna.

Scholar and Awards: Bechari has written many books and taken up visiting professor posts at several international universities. He was awarded the King Abdullah II Award for Excellence of the First Class as well as The Medal of Sciences and Arts of the First Class from the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Outspoken: Bechari has been outspoken against those who would incite hatred and violence. He has included not only DA'ISH in this category but also any Imams who preach hatred in French mosques. He has been keen to win Islam back from the distorted image portrayed by terrorists. He has voiced his beliefs against DA'ISH and Al-Qaeda who promote terrorism and have distorted the image of Islam worldwide. During an interview on Dubai TV in 2016, he went as far as saying that Imams who incite and “preach hatred in the mosques” should be deported.

Dr Amr Khalid

Preacher and Social Activist

Country: Egypt

Born: 5 Sept 1967 (age 54)

Influence: Media, popular
multimedia preacher with highly
visited website and social network
following

School of Thought: Traditional
Sunni



Rank (2021): 50

Rank (2020): HM

Rank (2019): 33

49



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. Khaled is credited with the launch of the first Muslim reality TV show *Mujaddidun* on Dubai Television. His website is translated from Arabic into nearly twenty languages and his videos have racked up over 196 million views on YouTube. He has over 46 million subscribers on his various social media.

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 launched to realise this objective of community development was *Life Makers*, which had the stated goal to encourage youth to work in charity. The show was a great hit and expanded into one of the most famous charity organisations in Egypt.



HE Mullah Haibatullah
Akhundzada

Leader of the Taliban

Country: Afghanistan

Born: 1 January 1966 (age 55)

Influence: Leader of Taliban which governs 38 million

School of Thought: Deobandi / Taliban

50

Rank (2021) 450 Lists

Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada was named as Taliban leader in 2016 after a US drone strike killed the previous leader Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour. Akhundzada is known primarily as a religious leader who ran schools from which many of the Taliban have graduated.

Mujahideen and Taliban 1.0: Akhundzada is a former member of the Mujahideen, who fought against the Soviet Union invasion during the 1980s. However, during that time, he was known more for his religious guidance, rather than military leadership. He continued in the position as a religious counselor during the formation of the Taliban in the 1990s and after the Taliban captured the western Farah province, he was put in charge of reducing crime in the area. Later on, he took on the position as head of the military court, arbitrating disputes among Taliban members. After the US invasion in 2001, he became both head of the Taliban's council of religious scholars, and as teacher in a village near the Pakistani border for 15 years until his sudden disappearance in 2016.

Taliban 2.0: After the United State's withdrawal in 2021 and the Taliban's subsequent takeover, Akhundzada has become the head of the newly announced Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Akhundzada shuns public speeches and even dislikes taking photos—he has yet to be seen in public—but has issued various statements outlining how the Taliban will rule in a more inclusive way and be different than when they previously ruled. The main promises have been around the role of women, allowing them education and work, but these promises have not been enough to allay women's fears of a return to a restrictive way of life.

THE TOP 50 INS & OUTS

THE INS

- HE Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada (from 450 lists)
see left

THE OUTS

- HE President Mahmoud Abbas (to Honourable Mentions)
page 109



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HONOURABLE
MENTIONS

**HE Grand Ayatollah
Abdullah Jawadi Amoli**
Scholarly
Country: Iran
Born: 1933 (age 88)



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.

**HE Grand Ayatollah
Mohammad Ishaq Fayadh**
Scholarly
Country: Iraq
Born: 1930 (age 91)



Grand Ayatollah Fayadh, originally from Afghanistan, is one of the four maraji' 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.

Prof Dr M Din Syamsuddin
Scholarly
Country: Indonesia
Born: 31 December 1958 (age 63)



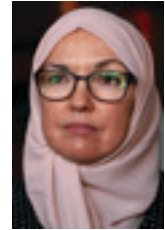
Prof Din Syamsuddin served as chairman (2005-2015) of the largest modernist Islamic organisation in Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah. He also served as chairman of the Indonesian Council of Ulema and is currently acting as chairman of its Advisory Council. He is a member of Group of Strategic Vision Russia – Islamic World, Chairman of the World Peace Forum and President of the Inter Religious Council – Indonesia. He was recently re-elected for another five-year term as President of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP). Syamsuddin is still very active in interfaith and intercultural dialogue and was appointed the Special Envoy for Religious Harmony by President Widodo.

Prof Dr Akbar Ahmed
Scholarly
Country: Pakistan
Born: 15 January 1943 (age 78)



Prof Dr Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University in Washington, DC and the former Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK and Ireland. In addition to his academic and public sector careers, Ahmed has produced a number of noteworthy films and authored more than a dozen award-winning books. He produced the Jinnah Quartet and feature film, Jinnah (1998). He was awarded the 2017 Sir Syed Day Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in Poetry, Literature, Arts and the Sciences and declared the 2017 Scholar/Teacher of the Year of the American University School of International Service. Ahmed was awarded the Diplomatic Leadership Award in 2019 from PakPac USA for outstanding academic endeavor. He has produced two films: 'Journey into America' and 'Journey into Europe', which are both accompanied with books with the same titles.

Dr Ingrid Mattson
Scholarly
Country: Canada
Born: 24 August 1963 (age 58)



Dr Ingrid Mattson is the London and Windsor Community Chair in Islamic Studies at Huron University College at Western University in Canada. Previously she had worked for 14 years as Prof at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, and served as Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. In 2001 she was elected Vice President of ISNA and in 2006 she was elected president. She is the author of the highly acclaimed 'The Story of the Qur'an.' In late 2018, Dr Mattson founded a major project to uphold the sacred inviolability (hurma) of those who enter Muslim spaces from exploitation and abuse by those holding religious power and authority. The Hurma Project is conducting research, education, training and protocols for professional oversight for imams, chaplains, mosque boards and others.

HE President Mahmoud Abbas

Political

Country: Palestine

Born: 15 November 1935 (age 85)

Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, is the President of the Palestinian National Authority, and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization. He is one of the few surviving founder members of Fatah - the main political grouping within the PLO 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. He was elected President of the PNA in 2005 in what was due to be a four-year term. No elections have been held since then, and so he remains President. President Abbas opposed the 'Deal of the Century', refusing promises of billions worth of investment, but suffered the consequences with aid cuts of hundreds of millions of dollars by the US leaving the economy in ruins. The financial crisis has led to deep salary cuts which in turn have fuelled further unpopularity to his rule.



Ismail Haniyeh

Political

Country: Palestine

Born: 29 January 1962 (age 59)

Haniyeh was elected as the leader of Hamas' political bureau in May 2017 after his predecessor, Khaled Mashal, had completed his two terms in office. Haniyeh has been a senior political leader of Hamas for over 20 years and led Hamas to a shock win over Fatah in the 2006 elections. He served as one of two disputed prime ministers of the Palestinian National Authority. After being dismissed by President Mahmoud Abbas, Haniyeh continued to exercise prime ministerial authority in the Gaza Strip until 2014 when Hamas and Fatah agreed on a reconciliatory deal. Haniyeh is a popular figure in Gaza, where he lives, and has broadened the appeal of Hamas in Gazan politics.



HE Samia Suluhu Hassan (new)

Political

Country: Tanzania

Born: 27 January 1960 (age 61)

Hassan is the current president of Tanzania. Born in 1960 in the Sultanate of Zanzibar, she ran for public office in 2000 and was elected as a special seat member to the Zanzibar House of Representatives. In 2010, she was elected to the National Assembly and was appointed as the Minister of State for Union Affairs. In 2015, she became the first female vice-president in the history of Tanzania after John Magufuli was elected president. After Magufuli's death in 2021, she was sworn in as his successor, becoming Tanzania's first female president. Among her first actions as president were enacting nationwide mandates to curb the spread of COVID-19 in the country.



HE Anwar Ibrahim

Political

Country: Malaysia

Born: 10 August 1947 (age 74)

Datuk Seri Ibrahim Anwar was the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1993-98 and was then widely expected to succeed Tun Mahathir Muhammad. A falling out between the two led to Anwar being jailed on controversial charges. He spent the following two decades being charged, imprisoned, freed and in-exile. In 2015, a new opposition coalition named the Pakatan Harapan (Alliance of Hope) was formed with Anwar as the de facto leader. The coalition won the 2018 elections and the chair of the alliance, Mahathir Muhammad became Prime Minister and pledged to release Anwar from prison and step down within two years. After being released from prison, Anwar waited for nearly two years for Tun Mahathir to hand over the premiership to him. Mahathir's resignation and the collapse of the coalition thwarted Anwar and allowed Muhyiddin Yassin to assume power for 17 months before he was replaced by Ismail Sabri Yaakob.



HE Mahathir Mohamad

Political

Country: Malaysia

Born: 10 July 1925 (age 96)



Mahathir is a dominant political figure. In his first tenure as Prime Minister (1981-2003) he won five consecutive general elections. He was the key figure behind the transition of Malaysia's economy from being agricultural-based into a newly industrialized market economy. He is noted for his support for liberal Muslim values and has established Islamic institutions such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia. Mahathir has however, been criticised for his record on civil liberties and for the trials and tribulations that his former Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, endured after being sacked by Mahathir in 1998. After retiring for many years, Mahathir registered a new political party in 2017 and joined the coalition Pakatan Harapan (Pact of Hope) which went on to win the 2018 elections with Mahathir becoming, at 94 years old, the world's oldest sitting head of government. He was expected to serve in this role for a year and then allow Anwar Ibrahim to succeed him, but another falling out between the two prevented this and broke the coalition. Recently, they joined forces again to oust Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

Sadiq Khan

Political

Country: United Kingdom

Born: 8 October 1970 (age 51)



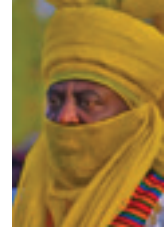
Sadiq Khan, the son of a London bus driver, was elected the Mayor of London in May 2016 and then re-elected in May 2021. His journey to arguably one of the highest posts in the UK included being a human rights solicitor, chair of the human rights group Liberty, councillor for Wandsworth, and then MP 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. President Trump has attacked him via tweets with Khan replying that the President has become a poster-boy for the far-right.

Aminu Ado Bayero

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: Nigeria

Born: 1961 (age 60)



Aminu Ado Bayero became the 15th Emir of Kano on 9 March 2020. His father had been the 13th Emir (1963-2014) but was succeeded by a nephew, who was subsequently dethroned by the Kano state government in 2020, allowing Bayero to claim the title. The emir of Kano is historically the second most important Muslim position in Nigeria after the Sultan of Sokoto. The emir of Kano serves as the leader of the Tijani sufi order in Nigeria.

Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: India

Born: 14 Jan 1947 (age 74)



Maulana Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani is the current Mohtamim (Vice-Chancellor) of Darul Uloom Deoband in India. He was elected as Mohtamim on 23 July 2011 succeeding Maulana Ghulam Muhammad Vastanvi. The Deoband Darul Uloom is where the Deobandi school was established and it is still the centre worldwide, having some 7,000 students. Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani graduated from Darul Uloom Deoband in 1967 and was appointed as Member of Majlis Shura (Governing Body) of Darul Uloom in 1992.

Sheikh Nuh Keller

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: Jordan

Born: 1954 (age 67)



Sheikh Nuh Keller's Reliance of the Traveller is the first Islamic legal work translated into a European language to receive certification from the Al-Azhar University. He also possesses a number of ijazas in various disciplines, most notably as an authorised sheikh of the Shadhiliyyah Sufi order. He teaches students from his zawiya in Jordan as well as at annual gatherings all over the world.

Dr Muhammad Al-Arifi
Preachers & Spiritual Guides
Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 16 July 1970 (age 51)



Dr Al-Arifi is a well-known scholar and lecturer from Saudi Arabia. He is a founding and honorary member of various dawa 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. He has over 42 million followers on social media.

Zakir Abdul Karim Naik
Preachers & Spiritual Guides
Country: India
Born: 18 October 1965 (age 56)



Zakir Abdul Karim Naik is a popular preacher and comparative religion specialist in the mould of the legendary Ahmed Deedat. 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. In 2015, he was awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Services to Islam. Since 2016 he has been resident in Malaysia, but is being investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on incitement to terror and money laundering charges. India has requested extradition so he might stand trial on those charges. In 2021, Naik launched Al Hidaayah, a new platform with educational content from renowned Islamic speakers from all over the world. His Youtube channel has close to 200 million views and he has over 22 million FB followers.

Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri
Preachers & Spiritual Guides
Country: Pakistan
Born: 12 July 1950 (age 71)



Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri is a leader of the Qadiriyyah, Radaviyyah, Attariya branch of the Qadiriyyah Sufi order. Qadiri is a widely-respected sheikh with a significant global following. In 1981, the Sheikh founded Dawat-e-Islami, a Sunni Barelwi revivalist movement with millions of followers in Pakistan and over 180 other countries. It centres on the

propagation of Islamic knowledge and manages two main activities: the Jamia-tul-Madina chain of religious schools, and the non-commercial Madani TV channel. Religious background: Sheikh Muhammad Qadiri studied for 22 years under the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan, Sheikh Mufti Waqar ud Din Qadri Razavi. He has authored over 30 books, including Faizan-e-Sunnat on the merits of good deeds. The Sheikh's fame is matched by his humility; his most famous quote is, "I must strive to reform myself and the people of the entire world."

Ahed Tamimi
Social Issues
Country: Palestine
Born: 31 January 2001 (age 20)



Ahed Tamimi is a Palestinian who has become a globally recognised icon for resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. She confronted Israeli soldiers who entered her yard in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh, and then proceeded to slap and kick them. Her mother was recording the incident and later the video went viral. A few days later, at night, the Israeli army's own camera documented soldiers entering her house, handcuffing and arresting Tamimi. She was then subject to interrogation, a fate common to most Palestinian youth living under occupation, detained for three months and sentenced to eight months in jail. Her mother was also imprisoned but never charged. Ahed was released after serving eight months as a political prisoner and received worldwide support for highlighting the oppressive life faced by Palestinians.

Loujain Al-Hathloul
Social Issues
Country: Saudi Arabia
Born: 31 July 1989 (age 32)



Al-Hathloul is a Saudi women's rights activist who was imprisoned for three years before being released, with strict conditions of no travelling or political engagement, in Feb 2021. She was a fierce critic of the law forbidding women to drive in Saudi Arabia and she used social media to challenge this and the male guardianship system. In 2014, she was detained for 73 days after she attempted to drive into Saudi Arabia from the United Arab Emirates. A year later, Al-Hathloul attempted to stand in the local elections, which marked the first time Saudi women were allowed to vote, but was ul-

timately barred. She was detained again in 2018, but this time she was tortured and held in prison without charges or trial for 10 months, but then charged the following year with attempting to destabilise the kingdom. She was sentenced for 5 years in Dec 2020. Her husband, a Saudi stand-up comedian had also been forcefully returned from Jordan to Saudi Arabia and is currently also under arrest.

Malala Yousufzai

Social Issues

Country: Pakistan

Born: 12 July 1997 (age 24)

Yousufzai's rise to prominence began tragically when the Taliban shot her in a school bus for encouraging girls to go to school in Swat.

After the assassination attempt, Malala was flown to England, where she recovered and continued her schooling. She received high-profile support for her campaign to ensure that all children worldwide be schooled. In 2013, Yousafzai addressed the UN, received the prestigious Sakharov Prize, and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, which she co-received in 2014 at the age of 17, thereby becoming its youngest-ever 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. Now graduated from Oxford University, books published and contracts from media companies, her global profile continues to rise.



Dr Uğur Şahin (new)

Science & Technology

Country: Germany

Born: 1965 (age 56)

Uğur Şahin is an immunologist and CEO of BioNTech, the company which developed one of the major vaccines against COVID-19.

His family emigrated to Germany from Turkey, where he studied medicine at the University of Cologne. He's worked as a professor and lecturer at various university hospitals across Germany. In 2011, Şahin became deputy director of the University Center for Tumor Diseases Mainz and in 2017, Şahin helped establish the new Helmholtz Institute HI-TRON. But it was in 2008, when Şahin founded BioNTech with his wife, Özlem Türeci and mentor, Christoph Huber. Though the main focus of his research work is the discovery of mRNA-based drugs for use as in-



dividualized cancer immunotherapies, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, BioNTech pivoted to using mRNA-based drugs towards fighting this new threat. By the end of 2020, BioNTech developed the BNT162b2 vaccine and reported a 95% efficacy against the COVID-19 disease and became the first mRNA drug approved for human use. Subsequently, Şahin entered a partnership with Pfizer pharmaceutical company to distribute it worldwide.

Sami Yusuf

Arts & Culture

Country: United Kingdom

Born: 19 July 1980 (age 41)

Sami Yusuf is an internationally renowned British composer, producer, vocalist and master musician who has created a revolution in the music industry. Sami Yusuf's works are often inspired by traditional musical systems and mystical poetry that enlightens and inspires the listener. For the past several years, his focus has been on revivifying and promoting musical heritage and he has demonstrated a unique ability to engage contemporary audiences with his dramatically staged performances of his compositions inspired by centuries-old traditions. Performing at sold-out venues on six continents, his music appeals to all age groups, ethnicities and beliefs across the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and North America. With downloads of over a billion, Sami Yusuf has released nine studio albums to date, has over 45 million albums sold, and has 20 million followers across his social media platforms. The artist is also known for his extensive involvement in global charitable initiatives.



Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Al-Sudais

Qur'an Reciters

Country: Saudi Arabia

Born: 10 February 1960 (age 61)

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. In 2005, he was named by the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award (DIHQA) Organising Committee as its 9th annual "Islamic Personality of the Year" in recognition of his devotion to the



Qur'an and Islam. In 2017, Al-Sudais supervised the film *One Day In The Haram*, a film about the Haram in Makkah, told through the eyes of the workers.

Sadio Mane

Celebrities & Sports

Country: Senegal

Born: 10 April 1992 (age 29)



Sadio Mane is a Senegalese footballer, current African footballer of the year and globally renowned as one of the best footballers in the world. He started his career in France before moving to Austria, and then coming to the EPL to join Southampton in 2015 and then Liverpool in 2016. He has been instrumental in Liverpool's success winning the Champions League victory in 2019 and then ending a 30 year wait to win the league in 2020. He also played for the Senegal team which reached the 2020 African nations cup final. He is seen making dua before the start of each match and performs the sajdah every time he scores a goal. He is well known for his modest and humble personality, and has donated significant amounts of his personal wealth to develop the infrastructure in his home town of Sedhiou.

Khabib Nurmagomedov

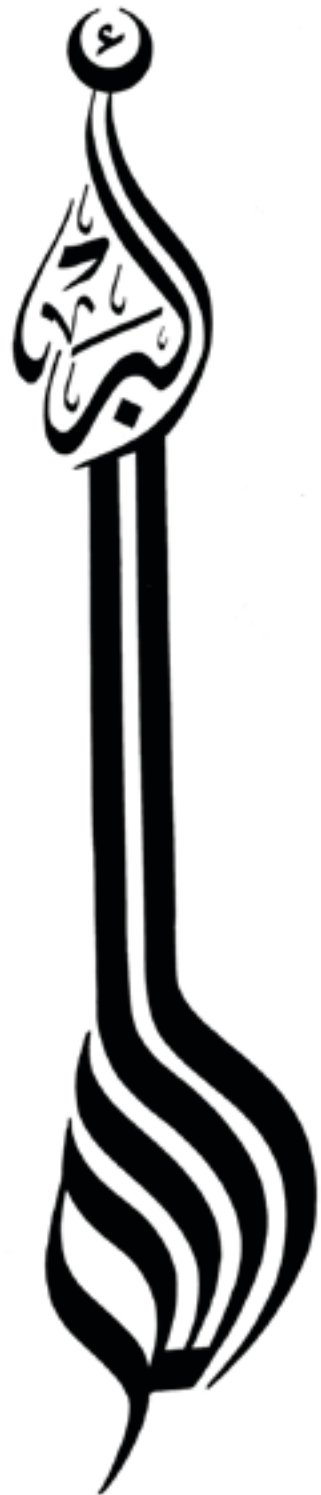
Celebrities & Sports

Country: Russia

Born: 20 September 1988 (age 33)



Khabib Nurmagomedov is a mixed martial artist. As well as being the youngest Russian wrestler in history to compete in the UFC he is also the first Russian and Muslim to win a UFC title. He was the Lightweight UFC champion holding the longest undefeated streak in MMA history with 29 wins before retiring in March 2021. He won a high profile fight with Conor McGregor but was involved in a brawl immediately following the fight which led to both fighters being banned for several months. On his return to the ring in September 2019 he beat the interim champion. He is ethnically from the Russian republic of Dagestan and has chosen the nickname 'the eagle' to pay homage to this region. This has won him great support amongst many Muslim youth not only in Dagestan but also in Chechnya and other ex-soviet Muslim majority countries. His appeal is not limited to these as he has managed to transcend ethnic complexities and become one of Russia's most popular sportsmen.



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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:
Truly those who believe and perform righteous deeds, their Lord will guide them
through their faith. Rivers will flow beneath them in the Gardens of Bliss, and
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'.

Jonah, 9-10

THE 450 LISTS

🌀 The Lists 🌀

Scholarly

page 117

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.

Political

page 127

These leaders possess high positions of power over substantial groups of people and exert influence from their status, reputation, or political clout.

Administration of Religious Affairs

page 136

These agents of change are responsible for founding and/or directing institutions that influence the religious affairs of Muslims.

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

page 144

Preachers rely on charisma to inspire millions through multimedia while spiritual guides traditionally teach through live study circles and individualised directives to their disciples.

Philanthropy, Charity & Development

page 152

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.

Social Issues

page 155

These individuals address various social issues such as health, education, women's rights, the environment, human rights and conflict resolution.

Business

page 165

These entrepreneurs head and direct key organisations in the business world pushing innovation and financial development forward.

Science & Technology

page 169

These are the main figures from the world of science and technology.

Arts & Culture

page 174

These are artists and cultural ambassadors whose work has become part of people's daily lives.

Qur'an Reciters

page 182

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.

Media

page 183

In an age of impulsive news and innovative media, these personalities have garnered influence from their activity in the media world.

Celebrities & Sports Stars

page 187

These instantly recognisable figures have a huge public following due to their prominence in popular culture and sport.

Top Extremists

page 190

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, Mustapha

Prof 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 academic and diplomatic positions including Algerian Minister of Higher Education and Ambassador to Egypt. He was awarded the UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture and the Ducci Foundation Peace Prize in 2013. He is also a member of the World Catholic-Muslim Forum and a permanent delegate at the Arab League.

BAHRAIN

Yaquby, Sheikh Nizam

Sheikh Nizam Yaquby was trained in the Islamic sciences in Bahrain and Makkah, studying under some eminent Sheikhs, before going on to study at McGill University. He sits on a plethora of Sharia advisory boards and has been a visiting lecturer at Harvard University. A highly sought-after expert with an immense breadth of experience with the Muslim community, Yaquby has received several awards, including the Euromoney Award for Outstanding Contribution to Islamic Finance and the Zaki Badawi Award for Excellence in Shariah Advisory.

IRAN

Amoli, Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Jawadi

Honourable Mentions page 108

Dabashi, Prof Hamid

Hamid Dabashi is the Hagop Kevorkian Prof of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in New York. He has written extensively in major publications and peer-reviewed journals on a variety of topics including religion, literature, cinema and philosophy. He founded Dreams of a Nation, a Palestinian Film Project, dedicated to preserving and safeguarding Palestinian Cinema. He is also a public speaker, a current affairs essayist (con-

tributing opinion pieces regularly to the Al Jazeera website, and a staunch anti-war activist.

Damad, 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, and is currently a professor in the Faculty of Law at Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran. 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. He was honoured as a prominent figure of humanities in Iran at the 8th Farabi International Award ceremony in 2017.

Shirazi, Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarim Shirazi

Grand Ayatollah Shirazi is a leading theologian teaching at the Qom Seminary, 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.

Sobhani, Ayatollah Jafar

Sobhani is a leading member of the Council of Mujtahids at the Qom Seminary, one of the two most important centres of learning in Twelver Shi'ism. He is the director of the Imam Sadiq Institute in Iran and was previously a member of the Society of Seminary Teachers at Qom. 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

Fayadh, Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ishaq

Honourable Mentions page 108

Al-Najafi, 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'* but has significant clout in South Asia.

Al-Qaradaghi, Prof Ali Mohyi

Prof Al-Qaradaghi is 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 written more than 30 works.

Al-Sadr, Ayatollah Al-Faqih Seyyed Hussein Ismail

HE 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.

JORDAN

Khasawneh, Sheikh Abdul Karim

Sheikh Khasawneh has served Jordan in his capacity as a religious scholar and mufti in various roles. He is a former Mufti of the Jordanian Armed Forces, served as the Grand Mufti of Jordan between 2010-2017, and was reappointed to this post in 2019. Khasawneh is also a member of the Jordanian Ifta Council and a member of the board of the World Islamic Sciences and Education University.

LEBANON

Qabbani, 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. His is an important voice in a region where tensions can easily escalate.

MOROCCO

Abdurrahman, Prof Dr Taha

Taha Abdurrahman is a Moroccan philosopher famous for his work on the creation of 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. In 2020 he received the Necip Fazil Award.

OMAN

Al-Khalili, Sheikh Ahmad

Sheikh Al-Khalili is the Grand Mufti of Oman. He was born, and lived, in Zanzibar until the end of the Al-Said rule (1964) and then moved to Oman along with many others of Omani heritage. 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

Prof Abu Sway was appointed as the first holder of the King Abdullah II Integral Professorial Chair for the Study of Imam Ghazali's Work at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and at Al-Quds University in 2012. He has been Prof 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 Prof of Islamic Studies at Bard College, NY.

Nusseibeh, Prof Sari

Sari Nusseibeh comes from one of Jerusalem's oldest and most prominent families. He 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 24th in a list of Top 100 Public Intellectuals by *Prospect Magazine* (UK) and *Foreign Policy* (US).

Al-Tamimi, Justice Sheikh Dr Tayseer Rajab

Al-Tamimi is the Chief Islamic Justice of Palestine and a leading scholar. Popular as an outspoken thinker and leader on Palestinian-Israeli relations,

Al-Tamimi is also the head of the Palestinian Centre for Religion and Civilization Dialogue.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Awni, Dr Hatim

Dr Hatim Al-Awni is the General Supervisor of the 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.

Al-Fawzan, Sheikh Salih Bin Fawzan

Sheikh Al-Fawzan is considered to be the most senior scholar of the Salafi movement in Saudi Arabia. He is a member of the Council of Senior Scholars and the Committee for Fatwa and Research. He has authored over 35 books and is one of the major Muftis in the country.

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. A former head of the Sunnah Studies Department at the Islamic University of Madinah, Al-Madkhali is a scholar who has authored over 30 works in the fields of Hadith and Islamic disciplines.

Al-Saffar, Hasan Musa

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

SYRIA

Al-Nabulsi, Dr Mohammed Ratib

The son of a well-known Syrian religious scholar, Dr Al-Nabulsi has represented Syria all over the world in many Islamic conferences. Muslims know him through his 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. In addition to studying in his native Syria, he has also studied in Ireland and France.

Sub-Saharan Africa

ERITREA

Said, Sheikh Faid Mohammed

Sheikh Faid Mohammed Said was raised in Eritrea, where he was educated by Sheikh Hamid, the Senior Judge of the Sharia Court in Asmara. He later moved to Madinah al Munawarah, where he continued his studies under Sheikh Atiyah Mohammed Salim, the Resident Scholar of al Masjid al Nabawi and Senior Judge of Madinah. Since that time, Sheikh Faid has been invited to lecture all over the world, particularly in Canada, Germany, the Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UK. He has also headed Madina College, a centre of learning in London.

ETHIOPIA

Idris, Hajji Omar

Hajji Omar Idris is a mufti and leader of Ethiopian Muslims, who represent 40% of Ethiopia's population. Widely respected, he is a proponent of Muslim unity and was elected as President of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council in May 2019, marking the first peaceful transition of leadership since the council was formed. Hajji Idris is also President of the Fatwa and Da'wa Councils.

GAMBIA, THE

Jah, Ambassador Prof Dr Omar

Jah is an important figure in the Gambian Muslim community and in Gambian scholarship on Islam. Jah was the former Gambian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Secretary of the Muslim Scholars Council of Gambia, and Acting Vice-Chancellor at the Uni-

versity of Gambia. After more than a decade at the University of Gambia, he is now the Pro-Vice Chancellor at the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) Dhaka, Bangladesh, where he was appointed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

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, killed three of his sons and held him under state detention before being released. He was arrested again and is currently undergoing trial.

SOUTH AFRICA

Desai, Mufti Ebrahim

A prominent and world-renowned scholar, Mufti Desai has been issuing fatwas in various fields for more than 25 years. He runs the Darul Iftaa Mahmudiyyah in Sherwood, Durban – South Africa where he trains students to become muftis. He also issues fatwas through the askimam.org website. He is an Islamic finance expert who serves as sharia advisor to various Islamic financial institutions.

Esack, Farid

Farid Esack is a traditionally-trained scholar who is also a successful academic in modern universities. He has authored many famous written works on Islam and is arguably the world's leading Islamic Liberation theologian. He was appointed as gender equality commissioner by Nelson Mandela. Through

the organization, The Call of Islam, Esack played a leading role in the struggle against apartheid. He is an advocate of interreligious solidarity, against all forms of injustice and has worked extensively to support Muslims infected with HIV. He is currently Head of the Department of Religion Studies at the University of Johannesburg and has been a professor at Harvard University. In 2018 he was awarded the Order of Luthuli (Silver), South Africa's highest civilian order for his contribution to scholarship and work for justice.

Moosa, Ebrahim

Ebrahim Moosa is the Mirza Family Professor of Islamic Thought and Muslim Societies in the 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 prize in the History of Religions by the American Academy of Religion. He is the author of *What is a Madrasa?* (2015). Moosa is also regarded as a prominent public intellectual. In 2007 he was invited to deliver the King Hasan Lecture (Durus Hasaniyyah) to HM King Mohammed VI of Morocco in Arabic. He currently directs the Madrasa Discourses project, advancing scientific and theological literacy amongst young theologians (madrasa graduates) in South Asia.

UGANDA

Mamdani, Mahmood

Mamdani is the Herbert Lehman Prof 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.

A Common Word

www.acommonword.com

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 ten 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, and university courses in Jordan, the Vatican, the USA (Yale University, Georgetown University and the College of William and Mary, Fuller Theological Seminary, ISNA, Oregon, 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.
- Being the subject of books, articles, PhDs and over 74 dissertations and reports.
- Founding the regular [every 3 years] Catholic-Muslim

Forum, which was first held at the Vatican in 2008, at the Baptism Site, Jordan, in 2011, and at the Vatican in November, 2014.

- Giving rise to a variety of other events, activities, initiatives and even legislative bills.

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

Insofar 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.

AZERBAIJAN

Pashazade, Sheikh ul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Hummat

Pashazade is the Grand Mufti of Azerbaijan, the elected mufti of the Caucasus region, and the chairman of the Religious Council of the Caucus. Pashazade is also the world's only Sunni-Shia Grand Mufti, giving each group religious edicts (*fatawaa*) according to their own legal methodology (*madhab*), reflecting Azerbaijan's Sunni-Shia mix. He co-chaired the World Summit of Religious Leaders, held in Azerbaijan in April 2010. He has been spear-heading Azerbaijan's initiatives of promoting dialogue between faiths within the region and internationally.

INDIA

Nadvi, Rabey Hasani

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

Nadwi, Bahauddin Muhammed Jamaluddeen

Dr Bahauddin Muhammed Jamaluddeen Nadwi is the founding vice chancellor of Darul Huda Islamic University, Kerala, India. He has authored a number of books, treatises, edited volumes, and translations in Arabic, English and Malayalam spanning Qur'anic sciences, Islamic jurisprudence, Hadith, education, Sufism, Comparative Religion, Arabic Language and Literature, and Islamic History. He is the Editor in Chief of an international Journal of Islamic studies, and a member of regional (Kerala), national, and international organizations.

INDONESIA

Bisri, Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa

Kyai Haji Achmad Mustofa Bisri is widely revered as a religious scholar, poet, novelist, painter, and Muslim intellectual. A graduate of Al Azhar, he is a former Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council and has strongly influenced the NU's (Nah-

dlatul Ulama) social and political development over the past thirty years. He heads the prestigious Raudlatuth Tholibin Islamic Boarding School in Rembang, Central Java. Mustofa Bisri's role in combining spirituality with artistic expression is widely admired in Indonesia, where he is regarded as a cultural icon. Often called the 'President of Poets' he is celebrated for his courage in defending artistic and religious freedom in the face of radical onslaughts.

Maarif, Syafii

Maarif is one of Indonesia's most famous scholars whose political comments regularly attract significant attention. This former president (1998-2005) of the Muhammadiyah organization is actively involved in interfaith and peace movements both domestically and internationally, largely through his Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity. In 2008 he was awarded the prestigious Magsaysay Award for guiding Muslims to embrace tolerance and pluralism. He was also recognized for his role in promoting interfaith dialogue and religious harmony at the Habibie Awards. Maarif is also a Prof of history at the National University of Yogyakarta and a productive author and columnist.

Syamsuddin, Prof Dr M Din

Honourable Mentions page 108

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. 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

As a scholar of Islam, Tan Sri Syed Naquib has made significant contribution to the contemporary world of Islam in the domains of the Islamisation of contemporary knowledge and of Muslim education.

He was responsible for the conceptualisation of the Islamic University, which he initially formulated at the First World Conference on Muslim Education, held in Makkah (1979), and founded and directed the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC). Tan Sri Syed Naquib has written extensively in the fields of Islamic philosophy, theology and metaphysics, history, literature, art and civilisation, religion and education. He is among the few contemporary scholars who is thoroughly rooted in the traditional Islamic sciences, being a competent master in theology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, and literature.

Bakar, Dr Osman

Osman Bakar is currently Al-Ghazali Chair of Islamic Thought at ISTAC-International Islamic University Malaysia and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science at University of Malaya. He was formerly Distinguished Professor at Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS), Universiti Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia Chair of Southeast Asian Islam at the Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington DC. Dr Bakar is author and editor of 38 books and numerous articles on various aspects of Islamic thought and civilization, particularly Islamic science and philosophy and interreligious 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, including UNESCO, the Qatar Foundation, and The European Science Foundation. He was awarded a Datukship by the Malaysian King in 2000.

Kamali, Prof Mohammad Hashim

Kamali was dean and Prof 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 February 2010, he worked on the new constitution of Somalia.

PAKISTAN

Ahmed, Prof Dr Akbar

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Hashmi, Dr Farhat

Dr Farhat Hashmi is an influential Islamic teacher, public speaker, and scholar. She is a prominent name in the burgeoning field of the role of women in Islam. In addition to the academic aspects of Islamic teachings, Hashmi also focuses on its relatable and practical aspects, thereby ensuring that her message resonates with a multitude of women across the globe. She holds a PhD in Hadith Sciences from the University of Glasgow, Scotland. She is the Founder of Al-Huda International, a non-profit institute founded in 1994. Al-Huda promotes Islamic learning and serves in the field of social welfare, and has branches across Pakistan as well as internationally.

Najafi, Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Hussain

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

Al-Qadri, Sheikh Dr Tahir

Sheikh Tahir Al-Qadri is a Prof 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 declaring that terrorists and suicide bombers are 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.

Europe

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ceric, Sheikh Dr Mustafa

Dr Mustafa Ceric is considered one of the most influential Muslim leaders of current times. Schooled at the Gazi Husrev Beg Madrassa in Sarajevo, Al-Azhar

University and the University of Chicago (PhD in Islamic Studies), he became an Imam in Zagreb in 1987 and was the Grand Mufti of Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1999-2012. Dr Cerić is an advocate of cross-cultural engagement as well as a peace activist. In 2006, he issued the 'Declaration of European Muslims' 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, Dr Cerić led the Muslim delegation of the 'A Common Word' initiative to the Vatican, which included a meeting with the Pope. Dr Cerić is currently the President of the World Bosniak Congress as well as an active member of many local and international scholarly organisations and societies.

Karić, Dr Enes

Dr Enes Karić is a Prof of Qur'anic studies and history of the interpretation of the Qur'an at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, 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 has delivered lectures worldwide. He has also won literary awards for his novels which have been translated into many languages.

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 president's Council for Co-ordination with Religious Organizations, he is a key figure in relations between the Kremlin and Russia's Muslim population.

SWITZERLAND

Ramadan, Dr Tariq

Ramadan is a European Muslim intellectual and author about Islam in public life. He was a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University, and holds academic positions at other institutions worldwide. In February 2018, Ramadan was accused of raping two women (a third charge was dropped when the testimony of one of his accusers was dis-

credited) and was arrested in that same month pending his trial. In 2020 he was charged with raping two more women. The French justice system has come under scrutiny for the way it has treated Ramadan since then, denying him bail and putting him in solitary confinement where his physical health has deteriorated (he suffers from multiple sclerosis).

TURKEY

Kalin, Dr Ibrahim

Ibrahim Kalin, PhD, is a senior advisor to the President and Presidential Spokesperson. 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 Alwaleed 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

Abdel Haleem, Prof Muhammad

Prof Muhammad Abdel Haleem is a much loved Prof of Islamic Studies at SOAS, University of London, and editor of the *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*. He was awarded an OBE in 2008 in recognition of his services to Arabic and interfaith understanding. Born in Egypt, Abdel Haleem memorised the Qur'an (this was a prerequisite for entry to Al-Azhar university) before starting his further education. He has many publications including a widely acclaimed translation of the Qur'an.

Hellyer, Dr Hisham

A noted scholar of Politics, International Relations & Islamic Studies, Dr Hellyer is currently a Carnegie Endowment scholar and fellow at the Centre of

Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge. A prominent public intellectual in the West and the Muslim world, his academic and policy career has included positions at Harvard and Warwick universities, as well as posts at Brookings and the Royal United Services Institute. A Council member of the British Board of Scholars and Imams, he was appointed as the first 'senior scholar' of the renowned Azzawia Institute, and the first professorial fellow at Cambridge Muslim College. His books include *Muslims of Europe: the 'Other' Europeans, A Revolution Undone: Egypt's Road Beyond Revolt, A Sublime Path: the Sufi Way of the Makkan Sages* (co-author), and *The Islamic Tradition and the Human Rights Discourse* (editor).

Mangera, Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf

Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera is a British Muslim scholar educated in both the Islamic and Western traditions. He memorised the Qur'an by heart and studied with accomplished scholars in the UK, South Africa, India, and Syria. He holds a PhD from SOAS and has served as an imam in the UK and USA. He is the founder of Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate institute for Islamic scholars. He works on scholarly publications through White Thread Press (www.whitethreadpress.com) with many of his lectures being available on www.zamzamacademy.com.

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

Sheikh Muhammad Imdad Hussain Pirzada has served the global Muslim community for nearly half a century. He is a leading voice in literature, education and training of scholars, and community and

charity work. His books guide on educational, religious, and current issues in multiple languages accessible to scholars and wider society. His 5-volume commentary *Qur'an: The Sublime Word* is acclaimed worldwide in Arabic, Urdu and English. In 2019, he was honoured at the Imam Bukhari Complex in Samarqand to complete his 10-volume commentary *Bukhari: The Sublime Tradition*. Both works are the first to be written in English in the western world. Through Jamia Al-Karam, the institution he founded in 1985, hundreds of male and female British Muslim scholars have studied under his tutelage, who today serve as Imams, chaplains, teachers and community leaders. He is founder of Muslim Charity, a leading international relief & development NGO, and he is president of the World Organisation for Al-Azhar Graduates (UK).

Sardar, Ziauddin

Sardar has been described as "Britain's own Muslim Polymath" by *The Independent* newspaper. He is an award-winning writer who specialises in Muslim thought, futurology, science and cultural relations. He has authored and edited over 50 books and written for various journals (*Nature, New Scientist*) and newspapers. He has worked on numerous ground-breaking initiatives representing British Asian and Muslim communities, producing programmes for national TV. He has taught at UK universities and worked overseas as advisor to Anwar Ibrahim (then Education Minister of Malaysia) and in Saudi Arabia. He currently edits the *Critical Muslim* and has recently established the Centre for Postnormal Policy and Futures Studies.

North America

CANADA

Mattson, Dr Ingrid

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Abd-Allah, Dr Umar Faruq

Dr Umar Faruq Abd-Allah (Wymann-Landgraf) studied Arabic and Islamic studies at the University of Chicago. In 1984, he was appointed to the Department of Islamic Studies at King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, where he taught Islamic stud-

ies and comparative religion for several years. During the time he spent in Jeddah, Dr Abd-Allah was able to study with a number of traditional scholars. He returned to the United States in 2000 to work with the Nawawi Foundation (Chicago), where he remained for more than a decade. He then taught Islamic Studies at Darul Qasim Institute (Chicago) from 2012 to 2013. He currently works under the auspices of The Oasis Initiative (Chicago). He is engaged in independent research, writing, lecturing, and teaching across the United States, Canada, Europe, West Africa, and elsewhere with a focus on Islamic theology, spirituality, law and legal theory, and history.

Huda, Qamar-ul

Qamar-ul Huda is the Founding Director of the Conflict, Stabilization, and Development program at the Center for Global Policy, a think-tank in Washington, DC. He served as a senior policy advisor to former US Secretary of State John Kerry's Office of Religion and Global Affairs. Dr Huda is the editor of *Crescent and Dove: Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam* and the author of *Striving for Divine Union: Spiritual Exercises for Subrawardi Sufis*. His studies and writings, which have been published in international journals and newspapers, are geared toward examining religious identities, comparative ethics, the language of violence, conflict resolution, non-violence in religion and religious education. He is an adjunct associate professor at Georgetown University, an expert for the UN Alliance for Civilizations, worked at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), and contributed to seeding the field of conflict resolution and peace studies in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Jackson, Sherman

Jackson is the King Faisal Chair in Islamic Thought and Culture and Prof 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 Prof of Law, Near Eastern Studies, and Afro-American Studies at the University of Michigan.

Qadhi, Dr Yasir

Yasir Qadhi is one of very few professors of Islamic studies who is also a classically trained scholar. Currently he is the Dean of The Islamic Seminary of America, the Resident Scholar of the Memphis Islamic Center, and a professor at Rhodes College, in Memphis, TN. 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 media outlets and mainstream Americans of different religions to promote a better understanding of Islam, and to challenge stereotypes about Muslims in the US.



Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

El-Sisi, President Abdel Fattah

Former Field Marshal Abdel Fattah Saeed El-Sisi removed Egypt's first democratically elected president (Mohamed Morsi) from power in 2013. Outbreaks of violence ensued across Egypt that included the death of many hundreds of protesters at the hands of pro-military police at Raba'a Al-Adawiya Square in Cairo. Sisi then ran for the office himself and 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. Sisi has inherited a politically and economically battered Egypt, with a weak infrastructure, plummeting currency, and violent insurgency and unrest in Sinai. Under Sisi, Egypt has enjoyed excellent relations with members of the Arab League, most notably with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Sisi supported the blockade on Qatar as well as the GCC-led military intervention in Yemen. He has publically supported the Assad regime in Syria and has called on the Palestinian people to make peace with Israel in his UNGA speech in September 2017, promising the Israeli people "Egypt's unwavering support."

IRAN

Ebtekar, Dr Masoumeh

Dr Ebtekar was the first female Vice President of Iran in 1997. A scientist, journalist, and politician, she frequently writes on environmental, political, social, and women's issues in Persian and English. She is one of the founding members of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front and served as Head of the Environmental Protection Organization under Rouhani and Khatami. Her accolades include the Energy Globe Foundation Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award, being named 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. In 2016, Dr Ebtekar was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Political Science by the Hankuk University of Foreign Stud-

ies, Seoul, Korea. In August 2017, Ebtekar was appointed as Women Affairs' Vice President.

Jafari, Major General Mohammad Ali

General Mohammad Ali Jafari has been the Chief Commander of the Iranian Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (also known as the Revolutionary Guard) since 2007. It is a 300,000 strong elite faction of the Iranian armed forces separate from the armies that report directly to the *Velayat-e Faqih*. The Revolutionary Guard 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.

Raisi, President Ebrahim (new)

Raisi (Sayyid Ebrahim Raisolsadati) is the newly elected President of Iran, having been a runner-up to previous president Rouhani in the 2017 elections. He is seen as more conservative than his predecessor and ran largely on an anti-corruption ticket. Raised in a clerical family, he attended the famous Qom seminary and also attained a PhD in law. He served as Deputy Chief Justice, Attorney General and Chief Justice, before winning the 2021 Iranian presidential election. He's been accused by Amnesty International of overseeing the executions of political prisoners in the 80s and 90s and is currently under US sanctions. Raisi has frequently pressed for economic reform, such as the development of the agriculture sector over the commercial sector, tripling the monthly state benefits, and tackling corruption and increasing employment. He's also a strong advocate of women's rights, as well as the arts and culture sector.

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 with intimate knowledge of the USA he is key to building bridges. Re-establishing the nuclear deal with the new US administration is a high priority.

The Marrakesh Declaration

www.marrakeshdeclaration.org

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 organisations, 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 organised 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 defence, 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 civilised 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 organisations 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

IRAQ

Barzani, Masoud

Barzani entered the political arena at the young age of 16 under the wing of his late father and became the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party in 1979. He played a major role in shaping the new Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. He has been the main force fighting DA'ISH and is adamant about establishing an independent Kurdish state. He was President of the Iraqi Kurdish Region from 2005-2017, but had to resign because of fierce regional opposition to the referendum he held in September 2017 for Kurdish independence (there was overwhelming support for an independent Kurdistan). There are approximately five million Kurds living within the Kurdish region in Iraq, 14.5 million in Turkey, 6 million in Iran, and less than 2 million in Syria.

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 is frequently arrested and imprisoned by the Israeli government and in February 2020, a court in Israel sentenced Salah to 28 months in prison for "inciting to terror", much of which has been spent in solitary confinement.

JORDAN

HRH Crown Prince Hussein Al-Abdullah

Named Crown Prince in 2009, HRH Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah is the eldest son of His Majesty King Abdullah II, making him heir to the throne. 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. In 2015, Crown Prince Hussein became the youngest person to chair a UN Security Council meeting and in 2017 he delivered Jordan's address at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Abu Rashta, Ata

Ata Abu Rashta is the global leader of the Islamic political party Hizb ut-Tahrir. Having worked closely

with the organization's founder, Taqiuddin Al-Nabhani, Abu Rashta gained prominence in Jordan during the First Gulf War when he contested the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In 2003, he became the leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hizb-ut Tahrir is popular in the Levant, the former Soviet Union, South and Southeast Asia, and Western Europe.

KUWAIT

HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

HH Emir Sheikh Nawaf served as Crown Prince from 2006 until the passing of his half-brother, HH Emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah in September 2020. Prior to that he had served as Home Minister for a decade and then Defence Minister from 1988. After the Iraqi invasion of 1991, he served as Social Affairs and Labour Minister. He is now 83 years old and his ascension was quite straightforward, as was the selection of the new Crown Prince, Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

LIBYA

Haftar, Khalifa

Khalifa Haftar rose to prominence after the uprising against the late General Gaddafi, and was the person who announced that the Libyan government had been suspended. A leading figure in Libya's military establishment, Haftar became a major general in the Libyan Army in 2011. Haftar's Libyan National Army is at odds with the UN recognised government and seized control of Libyan oil ports in 2018. The UAE, Egypt, and Russia continue to support Haftar whereas the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) is headed by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj and supported by Turkey and Qatar.

OMAN

HRH Sultan Haitham bin Tariq

Sultan Haitham bin Tariq ascended the throne on the 11th of January, 2020 after the passing of his cousin, Sultan Qaboos bin Said. Previously, Sultan Haitham served as Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as Minister of Heritage and Culture from 2002, a position he held until his inauguration as Sultan of Oman. In his first speech to his nation, Sultan Haitham, promised to "follow the path of Sultan Qaboos and build upon it." Sultan Haitham is a passionate sportsman and was the first to head the Oman Football Association in the early 1980s. He is

also chairman of the “2040 Oman Vision” and was described by *The Economist* as “outward-looking and Western-oriented.”

PALESTINE

Abbas, President Mahmoud

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Haniyeh, Ismail

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Mashal, Khaled

Khaled Mashal was Hamas’ politburo chief from 2004-2017. His term began after the Israeli assassinations of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and Abdel Aziz Al-Rantisi in 2004 and ended in a peaceful transition to Ismail Haniyeh. Mashal saw the organisation through multiple attempts at a roadmap to peace and a major Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip. 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. In 2021, Hamas elected Mashal for a 4 year term as head of its office in the diaspora.

SUDAN

Abdalla, Asma Mohamed

Asma Mohamed Abdalla became Sudan’s first female Minister of Foreign Affairs in early September 2019 in Sudan’s Transitional Cabinet. Previously she had served as ambassador and worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before being dismissed after the 1989 coup d’etat which brought Omar al-Bashir to power. She left Sudan and lived in exile, doing work for IS-ESCO and UNICEF amongst other organisations. During the 2018–19 Sudanese protests, Abdalla joined the Forces of Freedom and Change.

SYRIA

Al-Assad, President Bashar

Al-Assad is president of the Syrian Arab Republic. Since 2011, the civil war between the regime and an assortment of groups (mainly gathered under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army) has resulted in approximately 450,000 people being killed, six million

displaced internally, and about five million having fled the country in a humanitarian crisis which is also having a destabilizing influence on neighbouring countries. In May 2021, Al-Assad won a fourth term in office with 95.1% of the votes.

TUNISIA

Romdhane, Prime Minister Najla Bouden (new)

Romdhane was appointed Prime Minister of Tunisia by President Kais Saied in September of 2021, making her the first female prime minister in the Arab world. Romdhane is a geophysics university professor with little experience in governance, but she has been given the task of forming a government that will lead the nation out of a spiraling political and economic crisis. She has previously implemented some World Bank projects at the Ministry of education but is a surprise choice by President Saied, who has been under pressure to appoint someone after having dismissed the previous prime minister, suspended parliament and assumed executive authority in July.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum

HH 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. In 1995, as Crown Prince of Dubai, his chief objective was to make Dubai 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. He has also launched multiple charity initiatives from Dubai, such as ‘Dubai Cares,’ which has reached over 18 million beneficiaries in 53 countries since its inception in 2007. He has 20 million followers on different social media platforms.

HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed 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. He has made substantial donations to many health institutions around the world, and finances a major housing programme in the Gaza Strip. He has also inaugurated Warner Bros. Plaza at Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, the first in-

door Warner Bros themed amusement park as part of his continued drive to make the UAE a prime tourist destination.

HH Sheikha Lubna Al-Qassimi

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 Economy and Planning from 2000-2004. In 2000, she founded Tejari, the Middle East's first business-to-business on-line marketplace which now has franchises in Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. In March 2014, she was appointed President of Zayed University.

Sub-Saharan Africa

SOMALIA

Adan, Fowsiyo Yusuf Haji

Fawsiyó's influence stems from the fact that she was the first woman to be named 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 RAAD TV aimed at providing a better image of the unstable and war-torn Somalia.

Dayib, Faduma

Dayib is a development expert and a social change activist. In 2016, defying many death threats, she became the first woman to run for President of Somalia. Despite pulling out at the last minute, she has nevertheless raised awareness on the monumental roles Somali women continue to play in peacebuilding and statebuilding since independence. Born in Kenya to illiterate parents, she didn't learn to read and write until she was 14. At 17, she moved to Finland and completed two masters degrees before winning a fellowship to study public administration at Harvard.

TANZANIA

Hassan, President Samia Suluhu (new)

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Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Baradar, Abdul Ghani (new)

Baradar is the political head of the Taliban and Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Baradar fought against the Soviet invasion until their withdrawal in 1989, then set up a madrasa in Kandahar with his former commander, Mullah Mohammad Omar, which produced the Taliban. During the Taliban's first time in power (1996-2001), Baradar held a number of key posts, including that of Deputy Minister of Defence. In 2010, Baradar was imprisoned in Pakistan and only released after the Trump Administration started talks with the Taliban in 2018. He then became the Taliban's chief ambassador and spoke directly to President Trump.

AZERBAIJAN

Aliyev, President Ilham

Aliyev is the current president of Azerbaijan and Chairman of the New Azerbaijan Party. He came to office in 2003 (succeeding his father) and has won three subsequent elections with voter shares of over 80%. Not being outwardly religious, his advocacy of a moderate cultural Islam is representative of the demands of the population of the country. Azerbaijan, with a population of 9.8 million Muslims (over 80% are Shia Muslim) is an active member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

BANGLADESH

Wazed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

Sheikh Hasina Wazed began her fourth term as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in 2019 after her party won 288 of the 300 parliamentary seats in the elections. She served her first term from 1996-2001, becoming the first Bangladeshi Prime Minister since its independence to complete its entire term. She has survived assassination attempts, corruption charges and vote-rigging allegations. Poverty alleviation has become a priority for one of the poorest but most populous Muslim countries. 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 Uyghur 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 Uyghur women start businesses. She now presides over both the World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur American Association. She is well-known for her work in Europe and North America publicizing the plight of the Uyghur ethnic group, and is partially responsible for raising the issue both in China and abroad. The Chinese government sees Kadeer as an agitator.

INDIA

Farooq, Dr Mohammad Umar

Dr Farooq inherited the 14th Mirwaiz (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. He has been under house arrest since August 2019.

INDONESIA

Parawansa, Khofifah Indar (new)

Parawansa took office as the 14th Governor of East Java in 2019. She had previously served as the Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives and the Minister of Social Affairs. She has been a strong supporter of inter-faith unity and also led a campaign to reduce red-light districts by offering alternative jobs. She was also chairwoman of the Muslimat, a women's group affiliated to Nahdlatul Ulama. She has 2 million followers on social media and is considered a presidential candidate for 2024.

Subianto, Lt Gen Prabowo

Lt Gen Prabowo Subianto was appointed Defense Minister in 2019. He ran for the vice presidency in 2009, and for president in 2014 and 2019, where he

was defeated both times by Joko Widodo. In 2019 his supporters (he has been General Chair of the Gerindra Party since 2014) protested the results leading to violence, but the supreme court decided in Widodo's favour. Prabowo's military past has prompted mixed reactions from various organizations.

Sukarnoputri, Megawati

Megawati Sukarnoputri is the daughter of Indonesia's first President, Sukarno. She served as vice-president from 1999-2001 and then became Indonesia's first female president (from 2001 to 2004) and the fourth woman to be the leader of a Muslim-majority nation. She is the current head of the PDI-P party.

MALAYSIA

Ibrahim, Anwar

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Mohamad, Mahathir

Honourable Mentions page 110

Wan Ismail, Datuk Seri Wan Azizah

Datuk Seri Wan Azizah Wan Ismail was the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia (the first woman to serve in that position) from 2018-2020. Wan Azizah served as a government doctor for 14 years before deciding to support her husband, Anwar Ibrahim, when he was appointed the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia in 1993. Since then, her political journey has been largely defined by his struggles. Following the dismissal and arrest of her husband in 1998, Wan Azizah moved full-time into politics, forming political parties, alliances and winning seats at general elections.

PAKISTAN

Bajwa, General Javed

General Qamar Javed Bajwa is the current Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Pakistan Army having been appointed so in 2016, ahead of two more senior generals, by then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. His tenure of the post was extended for another 3 years by the current Prime Minister, Imran Khan, in August 2019, something which critics point to as further evidence of who is really controlling Pakistan. Others have welcomed the move as necessary in the current climate.

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 religio-political organization, Jamiat Ulema-Islam, or Assembly of Islamic Scholars. Fazlur Rahman leads one of two main branches of the expansive organization which is a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. He has popular support and is a seasoned politician. In 2020, he became the first president of the newly-formed anti-government alliance Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM).

Sharif, Nawaz

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif served as Prime Minister of Pakistan on three occasions: from 1990-1993, from 1997-1999 and from 2013-2017. On the last occasion he was forced to resign over corruption charges and in 2018 was convicted of corruption. He received a ten year sentence and spent two months in prison before the Pakistan High Court suspended the sentence (the same happened to his daughter, Maryam). Sharif was then found guilty of fresh corruption charges and an accountability court sentenced him to seven years in prison and fined him \$25 million. He was allowed to leave for London to receive medical treatment in November 2019 and has yet to return to Pakistan.

PHILIPPINES

Gutoc-Tomawis, Samira

Samira Gutoc-Tomawis is a strong advocate for Muslims in Mindanao. She has particularly strong support in Marawi City, where she runs relief missions to civilians still suffering the results of the five month battle in Marawi between government forces and DA'ISH supporters in 2017. She has been critical of the delayed rehabilitation of the city ravaged by the war and the continued imposition of martial law in Mindanao. She served as a member of the Regional Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and a member of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission. In 2021, she joined Aksyon Demokratiko's national executive board.

Misuari, Nur

Nur Misuari is a revolutionary leader who began his campaign 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. Misuari was charged in connection to the deadly 20-day attack in Zamboanga city in September 2013, which left nearly 200 people dead, but in 2016, Misuari was granted a temporary suspension of his arrest and asked for his help in the peace negotiations in Mindanao. In late 2019, President Duterte appointed Nur Misuari as Special Economic Envoy on Islamic Affairs to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Despite recent pressure to arrest Misuari, he continues to work toward peace with the Philippines' government and has offered to deploy MNLF fighters to help defeat the DA'ISH-backed Maute Group.

SINGAPORE

Rasheed, Zainul Abidin

Rasheed is Singapore's Ambassador to Kuwait and the Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Middle East. In 2017, he was appointed to the Board of Trustees at the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore. He previously served as Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for Singapore and mayor of the city-state's North Eastern district. Rasheed's activities focus on Singapore's diplomatic relations with the Muslim world and sharing Singapore's expertise in inter-cultural and inter-religious relations with nations that have substantial Muslim populations. Rasheed is widely known domestically, having held numerous positions of leadership throughout his career in journalism, organized labour, and representation of Singapore's large Muslim community.

TAJIKISTAN

Rahmon, President Emomali

HE President Emomali Rahmon has been President of Tajikistan since 1992, winning another 7 year term in October 2020 with over 90% of the vote. He has been a supporter of Tajiki cultural roots, changing his name in 2007 from Rahmonov to Rahmon following a decree that banned Slavic name endings and other Soviet-era practices. Many of his family hold senior government roles.

TURKMENISTAN

Berdimuhamedow, President **Gurbanguly Mälikgulyýewiç**

Berdimuhamedow has been the President of Turkmenistan since 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 2017 elections, he was re-elected with 97% of the vote.

Europe

KOSOVO

Jahjaga, Atifete

Jahjaga was Kosovo's youngest and first woman president from 2011 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 and interfaith tensions that exist in Rotterdam. In December 2020, he was confirmed as mayor for a third term.

RUSSIA

Kadyrov, President Ramzan

Ramzan Kadyrov is the President of Chechnya and the son of the former president, rebel leader, and Mufti, Akhmad Kadyrov. In 2016, Kadyrov was re-elected with nearly 98% of the vote. He has overseen a massive reconstruction of Chechnya, and has held several important international Islamic conferences in Chechnya, including one that attempted to define Sunni Islam in 2016. A Putin loyalist, who was recently promoted to the rank of Major General in the National Guard, he has been accused of ruling Chechnya with a heavy hand.

TURKEY

Davutoğlu, Ahmet

Ahmet Davutoglu was Prime Minister of Turkey from 2014, before differences with President Erdoğan saw him resign in 2016. He is a political science academic who was appointed Ambassador, Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and then Prime Minister in rapid succession. In 2019, Davutoğlu resigned from the AKP accusing it of falling into a culture of corruption. He then launched a new political party, the Future Party, becoming its first leader, and now hopes to build it into a political force.

UNITED KINGDOM

Khan, Sadiq

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Warsi, Baroness 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. 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. In 2017, Baroness Warsi published her first book, *The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain*.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Husic, Ed

In 2010, Ed Husic became the first Muslim to be elected to the Australian Federal Parliament. When Kevin Rudd announced the Second Rudd Ministry in 2013, Husic was named as Parliament Secretary to the Prime Minister. Taking his oath on the Qur'an, Husic became the first Muslim sworn in to the Australian federal government frontbench. With his rise in political prominence came growing Islamophobic abuse directed toward him. In November 2020 he was appointed the shadow Agriculture and Resources Minister.

CANADA

Nenshi, Naheed

Naheed Nenshi is the Mayor of Calgary, the most popular politician in Canada (prior to the election of Justin Trudeau), and was elected World Mayor of the Year in 2014. He is the first visible-minority and 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. In 2017, Nenshi was re-elected as Mayor and was awarded the Honorary Peace Patron by the Mosaic Institute for his contributions to strengthening the fabric of Canada. He will not be standing for a fourth term in the October 2021 election.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Carson, Andre

André Carson was the second Muslim to be elected to the US Congress. He was first elected to Congress in 2008, and is now serving his sixth two-year term as representative of Indiana's 7th congressional district. He converted to Islam in the 1990s.

Ellison, Keith

Keith Ellison was the first Muslim to serve in the US Congress. He represented the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota from 2007-2019 before deciding to run for attorney general rather than congress. He was duly elected as the 30th Attorney General of

Minnesota becoming the first Muslim in the US to win statewide office. Ellison has been an outspoken advocate for American Muslims, and his trips to the Muslim world have garnered international support for his outreach to the Muslim world.

Omar, Ilhan

Born in Mogadishu, Somalia, to a Somali father and Yemeni mother, Omar came to the USA in 1995 at the age of 13. She excelled in studies and started work as a community nutrition educator whilst also working as a campaign manager. She is the Director of an association that advocates for women from East Africa to take on civic and political leadership roles. She has been the US Representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district since 2019, (having received the largest percentage of the vote of any female candidate for US House in state history). She is vocal in her support for the working class, students, the environment, Palestinians and other causes. Former President Trump tweeted against her on numerous occasions resulting in death-threats from white supremacists.

Tlaib, Rashida

Born in the USA, Rashida Tlaib won the Democratic nomination for the US House of Representatives seat from Michigan's 13th congressional district in 2018 and was unopposed in the general election thus becoming the first Palestinian-American woman, and joint first Muslim woman, in Congress. She has previously served in the Michigan state house (2009 to 2014), and was the first Muslim woman ever elected to the state's legislature. She has been arrested on several occasions for her political stance; once was against former President Trump and one at a pro-labor rally supporting union rights for fast food workers.



ADMINISTRATION OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Allam, Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim

Allam is the 19th Grand Mufti of Egypt (succeeding HE Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa). In February 2013, he was elected by Al-Azhar's Council of Senior Scholars, headed by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayeb. His election by peers was unprecedented, as the Grand Mufti had previously been chosen by the President of Egypt. Allam is also a professor of Islamic jurisprudence and law at the Al-Azhar University, and has written more than 25 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, he was one of many Muslim Brotherhood leaders arrested. Badie—whose

son was shot dead during one of the counter-protests against the coup—was sentenced to death in April 2015 along with 13 other senior Muslim Brotherhood members. In 2017, the Cassation Court accepted the appeal of Badie and 49 other defendants against their death sentences. He is currently serving multiple life sentences in prison.

IRAN

Rashad, Prof Ali Akbar

Prof Ali Akbar Rashad founded the Islamic Research Institute for Culture and Thought, and has been its president since its establishment in 1994. He is a philosopher and a scholar in the field of Philosophy of Religion and Islamic studies. In addition to translations and ongoing research, he has written over 35 books and 69 articles. He is also active in international scholarly activities and conferences, particularly in the field of interfaith dialogue.

The Muslim Council of Elders

www.muslim-elders.com

The Muslim Council of Elders is an independent international body that was established on 21 Ramadan 1435 Hijri (18 July 2014) in order to promote peace in Muslim communities. The goal of the Muslim Council of Elders is to create secure societies that respect knowledge and scholars; to encourage dialogue, tolerance, respect for others, and peace; to restore the role of scholars by using their expertise to improve muslim societies; and to help eliminate causes of fragmentation and promote conciliation.

The council consists of Muslim scholars, experts and dignitaries known for their wisdom, sense of justice, independence and moderateness. They work together to promote peace, to discourage infighting, and to address the sources of conflict, divisiveness, and fragmentation in Muslim communities.

Based in the United Arab Emirates' capital, Abu Dhabi, the council is the first institutional body that aims to bring the Islamic nation together by extinguishing the fire that threatens Islam's humanitarian values and tolerant principles, and putting an end to the sectarianism and violence that have plagued the Muslim world for decades.

The Muslim Council of Elders was formed as a result of the recommendations of The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, and it is a joint initiative by Grand Imam Sheikh Dr Ahmad al-Tayyib, the Sheikh of al-Azhar, and the forum's chairman scholar Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah.

MOROCCO

Al-Tawfiq, Ahmad

Al-Tawfiq is the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs in Morocco and a strong supporter of Sufi groups. He is a writer for the Association of Moroccan Authors for Publication, as well as the Vice President of the Moroccan Association 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.

PALESTINE

Hussein, Muhammad Ahmad

Hussein was appointed the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in 2006. Previously, he had been the manager and imam of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. He is an outspoken critic of Israeli occupation, and has personally defended the Al-Aqsa Mosque from settlers and the Israeli army. In July, 2018, Hussein issued a fatwa forbidding Muslims from selling or transferring any land in Palestine to Jews.

Sabri, Sheikh Dr Ekrima Sa'id

Sabri is the head of the Supreme Islamic Council and former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine. He remains an imam of the Blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, where he preaches regularly. Sabri is well-respected in Palestine for his forthright views on Israel. He has been at various times banned from entering Al-Aqsa Mosque and arrested.

SAUDI ARABIA

Altwajiri, Dr Abdulaziz Othman

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajiri was the Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), and ex-officio Secretary General of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW) 1991-2019. He established the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture, an alliance designated for work outside of the Islamic world and is a member of numerous International organizations and forums such as the Royal Aal Al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, and the Nizami Ganjavi International Center. Dr Altwajiri is also a staunch advocate of cultural dialogue and the alliance of civilizations and has received high-level distinctions from over 26 countries. He is an accomplished academic, a senior lecturer, eminent writer and poet.

Al-Issa, Dr Mohammad ben Abdel Karim

Dr Al-Issa was appointed secretary-general of the Muslim World League in 2016. Prior to that he had served as Minister of Justice and Head of the Supreme Council for Justice. The Muslim World League is an NGO which was founded in 1962 and is based in Makkah. It propagates Saudi teachings worldwide as well as carrying out social work. Al-Issa visited the Vatican in 2017 where he met the Pope and in 2020 led a delegation of Islamic scholars to visit Srebrenica in Bosnia, and Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland.

Al-Malik, Dr Salim M.

Dr Salim M. Al-Malik was appointed as the new Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) in May 2019 (replacing Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajiri). Dr Salim M. Al-Malik has a PhD in Allergy and Clinical Immunology, and a PhD in Pediatrics. He has previously held various senior positions in Saudi Arabia. ISESCO is based in Rabat, Morocco and strives to strengthen cooperation among member states in educational, scientific, and cultural research, making Islamic culture the focal point of educational curricula at all levels.

Al-Othaimeen, Dr Yousef Ahmad

Dr Yousef Ahmad Al-Othaimeen has been the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation since 2016. Prior to that, Al-Othaimeen was the Minister of Social Affairs for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 2007 to 2015. He holds degrees from Ohio University (1982), and the American University in Washington DC (PhD in 1986). In March, 2018, Al-Othaimeen met with the Pope to discuss the migration crisis and the plight of the Rohingya.

Sub-Saharan Africa

KENYA

Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed

Khalifa is the organising secretary of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya. He encouraged Kenyans to campaign peacefully in the 2017 general elections and to engage in politics on the basis of issues rather than along tribal affiliations.

MOZAMBIQUE

Cheba, Sheikh Muhamad Aboulai

Cheba is the provincial director of 139 registered madrasas (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

Sheikh Abdrahman Olanrewaju Ahmad is the National Missioner of the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, a 96-year-old Islamic organisation established for the purpose of educational, moral, and social development for Muslims. The organisation boasts millions of members, with its achievements spanning Nigeria's faiths and ethnicities.

Ajibola, Prince Bola

HE Prince Bola Ajibola is the former head of the Nigerian High Commission in London and the president and founder of the Islamic Mission for Africa. He also served as a judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague between 1991 and 1994. In 1994, Prince Bola Ajibola was appointed a member to the Permanent Court of 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 of Nigeria, as well as being the former President of the Nigerian Bar Association. He is the founder, proprietor, and president of the Board of Trustee of Crescent University in Abeokuta. Currently he serves as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Muslim Umamah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN).

Bayero, Aminu Ado

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Oloyede, Prof Ishaq Olanrewaju

Prof Ishaq Olanrewaju Oloyede is the Secretary General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council. He also serves as the President of the Association of African Universities (AAU), and is the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin.

Sanusi, Alhaji Dr Sanusi Lamido

In 2014, Sanusi succeeded his late uncle Dr Ado Bayero to become The 14th Fulani Emir of Kano, the second highest Muslim authority in the land (the Sultan of Sokoto being the first). However, in March 2020 he was dethroned by the Governor of Kano on grounds of showing disrespect towards government institutions. He has accepted this and asked his followers to recognise the new 15th Emir. Sanusi is the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (2009-2014) and a respected Islamic scholar who has won numerous awards. He has pointed out corruption in previous governments, pushed for an end to child marriage and been targeted by Boko Haram.

SENEGAL

Mbacke, Serigne Mountakha

Serigne Mountakha Mbacke was appointed leader of Senegal's Mourid Brotherhood in January 2018 after the death of his predecessor, Serigne Cheikh Sidy Mokhtar Mbacke who died at the age of 94. He has become the eighth caliph of the brotherhood which was established by his grandfather, the sufi Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba, who died in 1927 and is buried in Touba. It is estimated that over a sixth of all Senegalese are members of the tariqa, and it is particularly influential in the economic and political spheres. The Grand Magal of Touba is a pilgrimage of millions who converge on Touba to celebrate the life and teachings of Amadou Bamba.

Asia

CHINA

Faming, Hassan Yang

Hassan Yang Faming is the President of the China Islamic Association. This is a government linked body which liaises with China's Muslims. A conservative estimate numbers 30 million Muslims from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The Hui are the most populous but the Uyghur have the greatest concentration in the Xinjiang region, where internment camps hold over a million Muslims in a bid to 're-educate' them. The 'Sinicization' of Islam has stepped up in relentless fashion in the last few years.

INDIA

Ahmad, Sheikh Abubakr

Sheikh Abubakr Ahmad is the General Secretary of the All India Muslim Scholars Association, Founder and Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Markaz Saqafathu Sunniyya, one of the leading educational and humanitarian institution in India. He is often referred to by his epithet 'Abul Aytam' ('Father of Orphans') for his service to orphans and the destitute. He advocates peaceful co-existence, social harmony and its international propagation and has set up thousands of cultural centres and educational institutes in India. Sheikh Abubakr has authored and published more than 60 books on a variety of topics in Arabic, Urdu and Malayalam.

Al-Bukhari, Sayyid Ibrahimul Khaleel

Sayyid Ibraheemul Khaleel Al Bukhari is the founder and chairman of Jamia Ma'din (Ma'din Academy), Kerala, India. It's an umbrella body of various educational and charity ventures where 25,000 students are enrolled for different courses from primary to research level. He is an advisor to the International Interfaith Harmony Initiative, Malaysia; the vice president of the Muslim Educational Board of India, New Delhi; General Secretary of Kerala Muslim Jama'at, the apex body of Muslim community in the Kerala; the President of Sunni Management Association. He is also the Managing Editor of *Armonia Journal* (armoniajournal.com) and has penned 22 books in various languages.

Ul-Hassan, Maulana Zuhair

Maulana Zuhair Ul-Hasan is a leader of the Tablighi Jamat (TJ) group. He was born and raised in Nizamuddin, New Delhi and completed his Islamic studies in Saharanpur. His late father Zubair Ul-Hasan was one of three leaders appointed as members of the leadership council. The TJ has faced unprecedented divisions of late with Maulana Zuhair's followers clashing with followers of Maulana Saad Kandhalvi over who leads the TJ.

Kandhalvi, Maulana Saad

Maulana Saad Kandhalvi is the great-grandson of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, the founder of the Tablighi Jamat (TJ) missionary movement and the grandson of its second ameer. He is currently the head of the TJ centre in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, India. A recent falling out with other leaders has led to some clashes between rival followers and a fatwa

issued by Deoband criticising Maulana Saad's leadership has led to further ramifications worldwide including at Biswa Ijtema, Bangladesh, the second largest religious gathering in the world.

Nomani, Mufti Abul Qasim

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Noorie, Maulana Shakir Ali

Maulana Noorie is the President of Sunni Dawate Islami, a non-political religious organisation in Mumbai, India. Under his leadership, through various religious events, including full-day congregations at state and national levels, the organisation has succeeded in reviving Sunni Islam in India. In particular, the Annual Congregation is one of the largest Sunni Muslim assemblies held in India, attracting around 300,000 people annually into the heart of Mumbai, India's financial capital. The mission has been growing yearly with thousands of members and volunteers across states joining the organisation. Noorie has established schools that provide both modern and religious education, thereby providing a platform for a new generation of Muslim leaders in India.

Owaisi, MP Janab Asaduddin

Barrister Asaduddin Owaisi is an eminent Indian parliamentarian and has served as President of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) since being elected in 2004. Under Owaisi's stewardship, the party won seven assembly seats in each of 2009 and 2014. In 2014, he was also elected to the 16th Lok Sabha (House of the People). An outspoken parliamentarian, Owaisi has been instrumental in persuading the Indian government to establish the Ministry of Minority Affairs to look after the welfare of religious minorities in India, including Muslims. He has over five million social media followers.

INDONESIA

Achar, Miftahul

Miftahul Achar became the Rais 'Aam (supreme leader) of the country's largest Muslim organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), after the resignation of Ma'ruf Amin (now vice-president of Indonesia). The NU was established in 1926 and claims a 90 million membership. It is a charitable body funding schools and hospitals as well as organising communities to help alleviate poverty. The majority of its leaders promote Islam Nusantara, a moderate and compassionate approach.

Amin, Maruf

Maruf Amin was the running mate of Joko Widodo in the 2019 general elections and is now the Vice-President of Indonesia. He is an Indonesian Islamic scholar who was chair of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia and general guide of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest Islamic organisation (he resigned in late 2018). Amin's early education was at a boarding school established by NU founder Hasyim Asyari, before receiving his bachelor's degree in Islamic philosophy. He then started his lifelong activities of working in dawa (religious propagation) and politics, finding success in both.

Nashir, Dr KH Haedar

Dr KH Haedar Nashir was elected as Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Movement in 2015. He previously served in a variety of other roles in the organisation, which has approximately 30 million members. The Muhammadiyah Movement focuses on promoting moral and spiritual ideals through various social activities. It strongly opposes syncretism, but promotes interfaith relations.

Staquf, Kyai Haji Yahya Cholil

Yahya Cholil Staquf serves as General Secretary of Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Supreme Council. As the world's largest Muslim organisation—with over 50 million members and 14,000 madrasahs—the Nahdlatul Ulama adheres to the traditions of Sunni Islam, and teaches that the primary message of Islam is universal love and compassion. Sheikh Yahya also serves on HE President Joko Widodo's Presidential Advisory Council, where he advises the President on religious, domestic and international affairs. Sheikh Yahya co-founded the US-based organisation Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyah Rahmatan li al-'Alamin (The Home of Divine Grace for Revealing and Nurturing Islam as a Blessing for All Creation), to serve as a hub for the expansion of Nahdlatul Ulama operations in North America, Europe and the Middle East.

MALDIVES

Saeed, Mohamed Shaheem Ali

Dr Mohamed Shaheem Ali Saeed is a hafiz of the Qur'an, a licensed lawyer, and former Chancellor of the Islamic University of Maldives (IUM). He resigned from his post as the Minister of State for Islamic Affairs of the Republic of Maldives in 2015 and left politics altogether in 2017. Dr Saeed was central

to the establishment of the Maldives Hajj Corporation, the Maldives Islamic Bank Pvt Ltd, and a waqf fund. He is a member of the Sharia Advisory Council of the Central Bank of the Maldives. Dr Saeed has authored many articles and books on religious issues and has spoken at forums in nine countries.

PAKISTAN

Ul-Haq, Siraj

From humble beginnings, Ul-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 against US drone strikes. In 2019, Ul-Haq was re-elected Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, one of the most influential Islamic movements in Pakistan. He became the Vice President of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal in March 2018. He served as Senator of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the Parliament of Pakistan from 2015-2021.

Naqvi, Ayatollah Sayed Sajid Ali

Ayatollah Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi leads the Shia Ulama Council (previously called Tehrik-e-Jafaria (TJP) of Pakistan). He was chosen by the Supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei, to lead Shia Muslims in Pakistan and is now his religious representative.

SRI LANKA

Mufthi, MIM Rizwe

Mufti MIM Rizwe is the President of the All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama (ACJU), the supreme body of Islamic theologians in Sri Lanka. Inaugurated in 1924, ACJU boasts a 7,500-strong membership of scholars while an executive committee of 33 senior scholars run the organisation's 155 branches throughout the island's 24 Districts. Mufti Rizwe is a specialist in the field of Islamic Jurisprudence, and was instrumental in bringing Islamic insurance, interest-free banking and Halal certification to Sri Lanka. His other contributions that have benefited the Sri Lankan community at large include the Maktab Preliminary Islamic Education System, Careline Islamic Counseling, and Mahmood Institute for Skill Development of Ulama.

TAJIKISTAN

Abdulkorizoda, Saidmukarram

Saidmukarram Abdulkodirzoda is the state-selected Grand Mufti and thus head of Tajikistan's Muslims, most of whom are Sunnis, and whose tradition includes following the Hanafi school in matters of jurisprudence and the Naqshbandi spiritual path. They belong to the Persian-speaking Tajik ethnic group who share a language, culture, and history with Afghanistan and Iran.

UZBEKISTAN

Alemov, 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

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Kavazovic, Husein

Husein Kavazovic has been the 14th Raisu-l-ulama (Grand Mufti of Bosnia) since 2012. Kavazovic 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 primarily with the community of 2.5 million Bosniak Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Bosniak diaspora, who number approximately 1.5 million. He speaks Bosnian, Arabic, and English.

BULGARIA

Hadzhi, Mustafa Alish

Hadzhi is Bulgaria's Chief Mufti. Bulgaria has been referred to as "Istanbulgaria" because of the importance of Turkish-Bulgarian relations. Hadzhi is the leader of the Muslim community in a predominantly Christian state with a large influx of Muslims. He defended 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 written numerous articles, primarily for Islamic magazines such as *Al Islam* of the Islamic Centre of Munich, and *Al Fajr* of the Islamic Centre of Hamburg. He also published newsletters for the Muslim League around the issue of 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. He is also a prominent figure in European relations with the Muslim world. He is Vice President of 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 organises the training of imams in Italian. His father was the late Abd Al-Wahid Pallavicini, the noted preacher and head of the Ahmadiyyah Idrissiyah Shadhiliyyah brotherhood in Italy.

KOSOVO

Ternava, 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 resulted in 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, Cafer

Cafer Nasibullahoglu is the imam of the St Petersburg Mosque. He is also the Mufti of St Petersburg, home to close to one million Muslims. His diverse congregation consists of Muslims of Tatar, Kazakh, Uzbek, Tajik, and Arab origins, among others. The sermon at St Petersburg mosque is often conducted in Arabic, Tatar, and Russian.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ahsan, Dr Muhammad Manazir

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

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Alsuleiman, Imam Shady

Imam Shady Alsuleiman is an Australian born Imam who has strongly connected with the Muslim youth and helped integrate the Muslim community with wider Australian society. Alsuleiman is the president of the Australian National Imams Council (ANIC), which represents over 200 member Imams from each of the Australian States and Territories. It is also the body that elects the Mufti of Australia. He's an international speaker with many followers on social media and has also established one of Australia's largest Youth and community centres known as the UMA.

NEW ZEALAND

Ghani, Dr Anwar

Dr Ghani has been President of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) for 12 years. He is now leading the national and international relations of FIANZ. His work in leading FIANZ has been considerable, building bridges with the government, New Zealand's population as a whole, and leaders of other faiths. Dr Ghani was awarded the title of Member of New Zealand Order of Merit by the government of New Zealand.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Crane, Dr Robert

Dr Crane is the chairman of the Center for Understanding Islam and Muslims, which has produced the influential textbook, *Islam and Muslims: Essence and Practice*. Between 2012-2015 Dr Crane was a professor in the Qatar Foundation's Faculty of Islamic Studies and Director of its Center for the Study of Islamic Thought and Muslim Societies. Earlier in his career, under President Nixon, he was appointed Deputy Director for Planning in the National Security Council, and under President Reagan he was the US Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, charged with initiating two-track diplomacy with leaders, including Tunisia's Sheikh Rachid al Ghanouchi, in branches of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Mohammed II, Warithudeen

Warithudeen Mohammed II is the eldest son of Imam W Deen Mohammed. He is President of The Mosque Cares, a charitable organisation established by Imam W Deen Mohammed. The organisation sponsors classes in Qur'anic Arabic and financial literacy, as well as informational sessions in health and nutrition, and business and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Caribbean

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), founded in 1936. Ali's organisation runs numerous schools and focuses on the importance of education for Muslim youth.

ARGENTINA

Hallar, Muhammad Yusuf

Hallar is an active figure in Argentina, and is 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. He is also a member of the Expert Committee on Minority Rights for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

BRAZIL

Bukai, Sheikh Mohamad

Sheikh Mohamad Bukai was born in Syria and studied at Al Azhar University. He has been living in Sao Paulo since 2007 and is known for his soft speech, kind nature and splendid character. He has previously served as sheikh of the Liga Islamica do Pari and is the imam of the Mesquita Brasil in Sao Paulo and director of religious affairs of the Uniao Nacional das Entidades Islamicas. His page on Facebook often airs live transmissions of his Friday Khutbas as well as short videos on Islam.

ECUADOR

Suquillo, Prof Juan

Prof Juan Suquillo is the president and co-founder of the Islamic Centre in Quito. He received the "National Hero" award in recognition for his services to Ecuador. He is also the general secretary for the Interfaith Council CONALIR fighting for religious rights and anti-discrimination. His books in Spanish have been popular and Suquillo is regarded as a bridge and reference for Latino Muslim leaders and scholars.



God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His Light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star kindled from a Blessed Tree, an olive neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow forth [of itself], though no fire touched it. Light upon light. God guides to His Light whom He will. And God strikes similitudes for men; and God is Knower of all things.

Light

PREACHERS & SPIRITUAL GUIDES

Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Belkaid, Sheikh Abdellatif

Sheikh Abdellatif is well-known in Algeria, Egypt, and Europe as a spiritual teacher and leader of the *Hibriyya tariqa*. He inherited his father's spiritual gifts. The sheikh's students include many highly-placed officials in the Algerian government, as well as the famous Egyptian scholar, Sheikh Sha'rawi, before the latter's death.

Al-Khairi, Sheikh Abdul-Nacer

Sheikh Abdul-Nacer is a master of the *Shadhili tariqa*, and has a wide following in his native Algeria, in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, and various European countries where his students come from all walks of life. He emphasises the recitation of the Qur'an, as well as abundant *salawaat* (praying for the Prophet Muhammad). He is a descendant of the famous Sufi of Prophetic lineage, Abdul Salam ibn Mashish of Morocco.

EGYPT

Abdelkafy, Sheikh Dr Omar

Abdelkafy is an Egyptian preacher and da'wa practitioner. A well-respected hafiz of the Qur'an, he is also the director of the Qur'anic Studies Centre at the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award. In addition to 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. He advocates 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

Honourable Mentions page 110

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Arifi, Dr Muhammad

Honourable Mentions page 111

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. He recently apologised on Saudi TV for his past preaching, calling his prior understanding of Islam 'hardline' and apologising for his past ties with Qatar. He said that he now agrees with the Islamic understanding of Crown Prince MBS. Recently, he was moved to intensive care in a hospital in Riyadh after his coronavirus symptoms worsened.

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. Best known for his TV program *Khawatir* (2005-2015), Al-Shugairi took a break for a number of years before launching *Seen* in 2021, which is proving to be every bit as successful. 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 over 53 million fans across social media platforms.

YEMEN

Al-Zindani, Sheikh Abdul Majeed

Al-Zindani is an active Yemeni politician and preacher. He is the founder of Iman University in Yemen, the founder of the Commission on Scientific Signs in the Qur'an and Sunnah in Makkah, the Chairman of the Shura Council of the Islah party (the Yemeni Congregation for Reform), and the head of the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen. He has been a vocal critic

of terrorism and any killing of civilians. At the same time, he is an outspoken critic of US policies, declaring that jihad against any army that invades Yemen is self-defence and is the right of its citizens. The US Treasury labelled him a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) for his indirect association with Al-Qaeda. In 2020 he moved from Saudi Arabia to Turkey.

Sub-Saharan Africa

GHANA

Sharubutu, Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu

Sheikh Dr Osmanu Nuhu Sharubutu is an Islamic scholar, National Chief Imam of Ghana, member of the National Peace Council and founder of The SONSET Fund and IPASEC. He has worked tirelessly on religious, social and educational issues, helping to promote disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in Ghana. This has enabled him to transcend religious boundaries and be respected by all sectors of the country.

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. Additionally, millions of West Africans listen to it on the radio or buy recordings. He has critically engaged with puritanical Islamic schools of thought since the early 1980s. In July 2014, he escaped a suicide bombing attack which killed 23 people.

Katsina, Sheikh Yakubu Musa

Sheikh Yakubu Musa Katsina is a popular preacher in Nigeria. He is also the leader of the Izala revivalist sect in Katsina. The Izala, or Jama'at Izalatil Bid'iya Iqamatus Sunnah (Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy) is an activist Sufi brotherhood that 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.

Maqari, Sheikh Prof Ibrahim Ahmad (new)

Sheikh Maqari completed his studies at Al-Azhar in 1999 and then his doctorate at Bayero University Kano in 2009. He has lectured across Nigeria as a professor of Arabic and linguistics. Sheikh Maqari has multiple published books and articles in international journals, and is a member of the Assembly of Muslims in Nigeria, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and Founder of Tazkiyyah Educational Resource Center.

ZIMBABWE

Menk, Mufti Ismail Musa

Dr Ismail Menk is the Mufti of Zimbabwe under the Majlisul Ulama Zimbabwe, an Islamic educational and welfare organisation that caters to the needs of the country's Muslims. Mufti Menk is very well-known internationally and is invited frequently to give lectures. His ability to relate religious principles to contemporary settings has made him particularly influential amongst the Muslim youth. His eloquence and humour have endeared him to many non-Muslims as well. He currently has a combined online following of more than 20 million.

Asia

INDIA

Azmi, 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 worldwide. At the age of 18 he established Al-Jameatul-Islamia, which is now recognised as one of India's top Islamic universities. For over 50 years, he has been building organisations, institutions, mosques, colleges, and universities around the world.

Madani, Maulana Syed Arshad

Madani is the President of the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, a group which strongly opposed the creation of a separate Muslim state of Pakistan. In 2006, Maulana Syed Arshad Madani succeeded his brother, Maulana Syed Asad Madani, but since 2008, the group has been split into two factions. Maulana Arshad is also a noted scholar. He is the Principal of Darul Uloom Deoband. He also supervises much social work and heads a number of Islamic seminaries and bodies and

is an adviser to eight international Islamic schools.

Naik, Zakir Abdul Karim

Honourable Mentions page 111

Saifuddin, Syedna Mufaddal

Saifuddin is the 53rd Dai Al-Mutlaq (Unrestricted Missionary) of the Dawoodi Bohras, a subgroup within the Mustaali, Ismaili Shia branch of Islam. He succeeded—but not without dispute—to the office after his father, Syed Mohammed Burhanuddin, passed away in 2014. In 2017, he inaugurated the 14-acre Nairobi campus of Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, a Dawoodi Bohra institute of higher learning. Kenyan President Kenyatta awarded him the Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart as a result. He also met Egyptian President El-Sisi in 2016 and donated 10 million EGP to the Long Live Egypt fund. He is the spiritual leader of 2-5 million people living in 100 countries.

INDONESIA

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. His regular audience boasted over 80 million Indonesians and had an approval rating that peaked at 91%, leading to Gymnastiar being courted by several political parties as a potential vice presidential nominee. In 2006 Gym announced a polygamous marriage and immediately saw a huge backlash from his mainly female audience: his ratings dropped and his commercial enterprises took a huge hit. Over the past several 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). He has over 16 million fans on social media.

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 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. He was awarded a medal for his achievements by Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly in 2020.

MALAYSIA

Awang, Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin

Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi bin Awang is the current President of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS. He was recently appointed as the Prime Minister's Special Ambassador to the Middle East with ministerial status. He is also the Vice President of the International Union of Muslim Scholars. He was former Chief Minister of the state of Terengganu in Malaysia from 1999-2004, Member of Parliament for Marang Terengganu, and a state lawmaker for Rhu Rendang. He has written several books related to democracy and politics in Islam. Awang's Friday morning lectures at Rusila Mosque draw thousands of people.

MrGlani, Sheikh Dr Mahmoud

Born in Madinah to a family of Prophetic lineage, Sheikh MrGlani himself belongs to the Shadhili Sufi tariqa but strongly emphasises the need to recognise all authentic Islamic Sunni Sufi tariqas and sheikhs. His teachings emphasise the need to establish love for the Prophet. To this end, he has founded a number of *zawiyahs* around the world to re-establish the practice of regular and abundant *dhikr* and *salawaat*. For the past several years, he has been delivering a series of widely-attended public lectures titled "Divine Gifts on the Path to Allah" in major Malaysian cities and universities. He encourages people around the world to rediscover and practice their core human values, to oppose colonial and oppressive thinking, and to espouse mutual respect and tolerance among followers of all the heavenly religions.

PAKISTAN

Bukhari, Khanum Tayyaba

Bukhari is one of very few female religious scholars in Pakistan and has significant influence. She is a sought-after speaker who excels in six languages: Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, Punjabi, and Sirai-ki. She also has a large following in Europe, North America, and Australia. Ms Bukhari is the founder of Bukhari Relief Foundation, a well-known, non-governmental charitable organisation that helps people all over Pakistan who have been displaced by major natural disasters.

Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi is a Pakistani public intellectual and Qur'an scholar. He is the founder of Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences and its sister organisation, Danish Sara. He was a member of the Council of Islamic Ideology and in 2009, Ghamidi was awarded *Sitara-i-Imtiaz*, the third highest civilian honour of Pakistan. He appears regularly on TV shows and has a large middle-class professional following.

Qadiri, Sheikh Muhammad Ilyas Attar

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SINGAPORE

Alattas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad bin Salim

Syed Hassan, more affectionately known as Habib Hassan, has been a pillar of strength and unity in building religious harmony in Singapore and throughout Southeast Asia. He has condemned acts of terrorism and has been the force behind bringing Islam together with 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 work and contributions toward building a harmonious nation.



Recite: In the Name of your Lord Who created

The Clot 96 : 1

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Europe

ALBANIA

Naci, Elvis (new)

Naci is an Albanian imam and director at the Islamic Community of Albania. He's extremely popular in Albania and regularly appears as a guest on talk shows. He also has an active Facebook and Youtube profile. In 2019, he was named Man of the Year by several magazines in Albania.

BELGIUM

van Ael, Sheikh Sulayman

Sulayman van Ael converted to Islam in 1994 at the age of 18, after which he travelled to the desert of Sudan to memorize the Qur'an. He studied under numerous scholars and received authorisation (*ijazat*) in the ten *Qira'at* (recitations) and transmitting the books of hadith. He also holds a Bachelors in Theology, and pr. Masters in Mental Care, and is completing a Bachelors in Psychosocial Counseling at NHA. He previously was host professor of Islamic sciences at Erasmus College and Fisb University and at the University of Applied Sciences Rotterdam and currently teaches at the Cambridge Muslim College. He was also religious advisor and chaplain at University of London colleges including LSE, Imperial College and SOAS.

GREECE

Metso, Mufti Djemali

Mufti Djemali Metso was one of the Muftis in Greece's Western Thrace cities of Komotini and Xanthi who were retired compulsorily by the Greek government recently. The Western Thrace region of Greece is home to a Muslim Turkish minority of around 150,000 people, and Mufti Metso had served the community for over 30 years in his capacity as Mufti of Komotini. He still enjoys a close relationship with the community, who look upon him as not only a Mufti but as a spiritual leader.

TURKEY

Gülen, Fethullah

Fethullah Gülen is a preacher, intellectual and educator, who assumed the leadership of the Nurcu religious movement started by Said Nursi (1878—1960

CE). He enjoyed huge support among all of Turkey's religious population until he was accused of orchestrating the attempted coup of 15 July 2016, and his organisations and supporters subsequently bore the brunt of Erdoğan'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 (over 500,000 people have been detained since the coup). Turkey has formally asked the United States to extradite Gülen.

Haqqani, Sheikh Mehmet Adil

Sheikh Mehmet Adil Haqqani is the sheikh of the Naqshbandi Haqqani Order, 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 own sheikh - Sheikh Abdullah Fa'izi Dagestani. With an uncanny resemblance to his father, and a soft, humble approach, Sheikh Mehmet is currently teaching thousands of students worldwide.

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, focuses heavily on charitable work. He has written works in history, literature, religious sciences, and poetry. Translations of his works span 43 languages, including English.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ali, Sheikh Hasan

Sheikh Hasan Ali is a popular preacher and reputable figure in London. In addition to volunteering his expertise at local mosques, community centres, and secondary schools, he contributes to local interfaith programs and various community events. He is the founder of Safar Academy and holds a master's degree in Educational Psychology in addition to his Islamic training.

Babikir, Sheikh Ahmed

With his gentle and warm disposition, Sheikh Babikir is a popular figure in the UK. He studied Islamic Sciences in Sudan and is fully authorised in a host of Islamic disciplines, including fiqh, hadith, creed, and Sufism. He holds an undergraduate degree in mathematics and a Masters in Management from 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 an Islamic Scholar and a popular speaker. Having completed his undergraduate studies at University College, London and his PhD at the University of Exeter, he went on to study at the Islamic Seminary in Damascus, Syria. He was a visiting scholar at the Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge and then moved to the USA to become the inaugural holder of the Imam Ali Chair for Shii Studies and Dialogue among Islamic Legal Schools at the Hartford Seminary. Dr Nakshawani is a former associate at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer center for Science and International Affairs.

North America

CANADA

Philips, Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal

A notable Jamaican-Canadian Muslim convert and Islamic scholar, Dr Bilal Philips is founder of the first accredited Islamic university in India in 2009: Preston International College, Chennai. However he is most notably the founder and chancellor of the Islamic Online University AKA International Open University (iou. edu. gm), which currently has over 450,000 registered students studying accredited English-medium degree courses in Islamic Studies (Sharia), Education, Psychology, Banking and Finance, IT and Business Administration, and a BA in Arabic language and literature. The IOU has the distinction of having the most diverse student body of any university in the world. Dr Bilal also reaches mass Muslim audiences through his television appearances on global satellite channels like Peace TV, Huda TV, and Islam Channel as well as through his official Facebook page. He has over ten million social media followers.

Rabbani, Sheikh Faraz

Sheikh Rabbani is the founder, education director, and an instructor at SeekersGuidance Canada, 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 utilising the latest web technologies and services to teach Islam in the West for over a decade. He serves as a partner and legal advisor with StraightWay Ethical Advisory.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Kabbani, Sheikh 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

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 millions of social media followers, Nouman is one of the most influential young western scholars. He has retained this influence despite being recently embroiled in controversy about aspects of his personal life.

Al-Ninowy, Sheikh Dr Muhammad bin Yahya

Sheikh Dr Muhammad al-Ninowy is a Syrian-American scholar and author based in Atlanta, Georgia, whose lineage is traced back to the Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him). Al-Ninowy is considered a scholar in hadith. In addition to a PhD in Islamic studies, he also holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from the University of Illinois, and a Doctor of Medicine degree. He is the founding director of Madina Institute and Seminaries, the Center for Non-Violence and Peace Studies, and the charitable organisation Planet Mercy, globally. Al-Ninowy

is also leading a reformist Rifa'i Shadhili Sufi school aiming to completely realign Sufi principles, litanies, and practices to the Qur'an and Sunnah in an effort to revive the school of Tasawwuf of Ahl al-hadith. His latest release is: *The Book of Love*; a reflection on Islam from the perspective of love

Shakir, Imam Zaid

Zaid Shakir is a senior faculty member and co-founder of Zaytuna College, Berkeley, California, the first accredited Muslim undergraduate college in the USA. Shakir accepted Islam in 1977 while serving in the United States Air Force. He obtained a B. A. in International Relations and later earned his MA in Political Science. In 2001, he graduated from Syria's Abu Noor University with a BA in Islamic Studies. He is one of America's top Islamic scholars, a voice of conscience, and a compelling force for the improvement of race relations for non-Muslims in America. He co-founded the New Brunswick Islamic Center, formerly Masjid al-Huda in NJ, , Masjid Al-Islam in New Haven, CT, , and more recent the Lighthouse Mosque, in Oakland, CA. He led the funeral prayer for the late boxing champion and human rights icon, Muhammad Ali. Inspired to work with religious groups on sustainable living and climate change, he is a Green Faith partner in action for the earth. Imam Zaid recently assumed leadership of Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA).

Suleiman, Omar

Imam Omar Suleiman is the President of the Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research and a professor of Islamic Studies at Southern Methodist University. He started his journey of Islamic learning in the year 2000 and studied in various countries in the Middle East as well as Malaysia. He has become a hugely popular speaker, delivering regular online lectures which have reached millions; as well as writing frequently for various media outlets. In the 2000s, he was noted on a national level as being a strong advocate of community service, interfaith dialogue, and social justice, and was awarded for his outstanding civic achievement by the Mayor and City Council of New Orleans.

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 August 15, Siraj Wahhaj Day in honour of his "lifetime of outstanding and meaningful achievement."

Webb, Imam Suhaib

Suhaib Webb is a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma with a background in Education from the College of Sharia, Al-Azhar University. Imam Suhaib has served various communities in North America and is currently the founder of SWISS. On 1 December 2011, Webb was inaugurated as the Imam of the Islamic Society of Boston's Cultural Center (ISBCC), the largest Islamic centre in New England. He helped raise \$20,000 for widows and children of firefighters killed in the 9/11 attacks. He has spoken out against radical clerics that seek to prey on insecure youth and their American identities. He frequently shares advice, lessons and "SnapWas" on his SnapChat. He currently resides in New York serving as Scholar-in Residence at the Islamic Center at NYU.

Caribbean

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 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 related to eschatology, politics, and the economy.

BRAZIL

Hammadeh, Sheikh Jihad

Sheikh Jihad Hammadeh has a long history of contributions to dawah in Brazil. His educational background includes a theological course at the Islamic University of Madinah, a bachelors in History and a masters in Social Communication. Besides being vice-president of the Uniao Nacional das Entidades Islamicas, he presides over two other islamic institutions. He regularly appears on national TV in Brazil and other media outlets speaking about Islam and has also worked as a consultant for two Brazilian soap operas on the theme of Muslims and Muslim-majority countries.



Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Might, [exalted is He] above what they allege! ﷻ And peace be to the messengers. ﷻ And praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.

Those Who Set The Ranks, 180 - 182

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 UK 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.

JORDAN

HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah is the wife of HM King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, but is also in her own right an educational activist with global appeal. Through sheer hard work, she has developed one of the largest virtual followings of any Muslim in the world (over 33 million followers), and she defends and humanises Islam and Arab causes in-and-to-the West as effectively as any Muslim scholar in the world. She 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. In 2017, Queen Rania received the Global Trailblazer Award and the Fellowship Award from "Fashion for Relief" in recognition of her humanitarian efforts towards children caught in conflict.

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 organisations 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

QATAR

HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned

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 an iconic TV personality and is internationally recognised as a leader in the fields of philanthropy, media and social impact. She is one of the founding co-hosts of the social issues show *Kalam Nawaem*, which was ranked number one across the Arab World for eleven 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 while managing one of the largest Muslim foundations. Recently, AbuSulayman has successfully launched, managed, and scaled multiple businesses and is running a Social Impact investment fund and consultancy that focuses on finding "Big Ideas that Work" to solve problems in education, gender inequalities, sustainability and social cohesion.

Al-Madani, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali

Al-Madani is the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), which aims to provide short and long-term solutions to poverty alleviation in the Muslim world. The IDB is the principal financing institution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Al-Madani is keen on taking the IDB to the next level of excellence with Vision 1440H, a plan

that aims at alleviating poverty, eradicating illiteracy, providing better health facilities to people, strengthening ties with the private sector and NGOs, and women's development. 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.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

HH Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qassimi

Sheikh Sultan is the ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah. He had the educational vision to start University City in 1997, 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). He is also an accomplished poet and an academic.

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 organisation of African origin on the African continent. His organisation has delivered over \$103 million in aid to 41 countries around the world. The organisation 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. In 2016, he received the Global Citizen Award from Henley and Partners in London.

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. In 2011, he was awarded *Padma Vibhushan*, the second highest civilian award by the Government of India. In 2013, he signed the Giving Pledge, agreeing to give away at least half of his wealth and has given away billions in charity since then. The Azim Prenji Foundation supports programs that reach more than 2.5 million children. It also pledged \$134 million towards providing aid for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Qasmi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal

Maulana Badruddin Ajmal is a prominent Indian businessman who runs the Ajmal Group of Companies, which sells attar perfume, oils, and textiles. He is a proponent and member of various social service organisations 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 one of the top ten richest Malaysians. He owns a variety of companies including the Malaysian Mining Corporation, a behemoth that has been awarded multiple, multi-billion dollar projects. He was recently awarded a 5G contract from the government, showing his political connections. He has established many humanitari-

an 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

The wife of the late Abdul Sattar Edhi, Bilquis Edhi is a professional nurse and philanthropist in her own right. She runs several non-profit organisations 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.

Rizvi, Prof Dr Adib

Dr Rizvi is one of Pakistan's leading humanitarians, having established the largest free health organisation 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 organisation in Pakistan. SIUT provides free and comprehensive services in urology, nephrology, transplantation, and liver-related diseases. He is the recipient of many awards for his life's work.

SINGAPORE

Faizal, Mohamed

Mr Mohamed Faizal is a passionate champion of educational initiatives who has conceived of scholarship programs specifically targeted at lower-income students. He has received the President's Volunteerism and Philanthropy Award, being the second Muslim in its history to receive it. Many in Singapore's Muslim community consider him the foremost jurist on the MUIS Appeal Board, the city-state's highest body of Islamic law. He is the only Muslim Senior Counsel in Singapore.

Europe

UNITED KINGDOM

Al-Banna, Dr Hany

Al-Banna founded Islamic Relief, the largest Western-based international Muslim relief and development NGO. Established in 1984, the organisation provides assistance in over 30 countries worldwide. HM Queen Elizabeth honoured Al-Banna's work, giving him an OBE for his services to the community. In 2015, Islamic Relief signed a memorandum of understanding with the African Union, formalising a partnership to tackle poverty in the continent.

Ismail, Sufyan

Sufyan Ismail is an award-winning entrepreneur and philanthropist whose enterprises have been featured in *The Sunday Times* Top 100 listings. Having retired from business in 2014, aged 38, he founded Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) to tackle Islamophobia. MEND engages in media monitoring, advocacy in Parliament, works with police forces, local councils and most importantly, empowers grass-roots Muslim communities. Today, MEND employs dozens of staff members across 5 offices nationally. Over 40,000 Muslims have sat through MEND's Islamophobia presentations and around 3,500 people have been trained on its media/politics masterclasses. The World Economic Forum and the EU's *The Parliament* magazine have commended MEND.



Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Karam, Dr Azza

Dr Azza Karam is the Secretary General of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. She previously served as the senior advisor on social and cultural development at the United Nations Population Fund, and was a senior policy research advisor at the United Nations Development Program, where she coordinated the Arab Human Development Reports. She also holds the endowed professor position of Religion and Sustainable Development at Amsterdam's Vrije Universiteit.

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.

MOROCCO

Al-Soufi, Nawal

Nawal al-Soufi won the UAE 'Arab Hope Maker' Prize in 2017 and was awarded 1 million AED. She was rewarded for her dedication to the cause of helping refugees. She arranged rescue missions for Syrian refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean Sea.

PALESTINE

Abu Elaish, Dr Izzeldin

Izzeldin Abu Elaish is a Palestinian physician and internationally recognized peace and human rights activist devoted to advancing health and educational 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*—the story of his loss of his three daughters, Bessan, Mayar, and Aya, and their cousin Noor to Israeli shelling in 2009 and his subsequent transformation—has achieved critical acclaim. Published in 2010 and translated into 17 languages, the book has become an international best seller. It is 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, including The Public Peace Prize in 2014.

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 a former 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, and a TED fellow in 2014. He was the First Intercultural Innovation Award winner, an award issued in partnership by the UNAOC and BMW. Aziz has published articles at *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Alarabiya*, *National Geographic* and others. His new book, *Crossing Boundaries*, a Traveler's Guide to World Peace, was published in 2020.

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 women outside the Middle East as well. She ranked number 10 in the 100 Most Powerful Arab Women in 2012 by *CEO Middle East* and *Arabian Business* magazines. An award winning documentary, *The Judge*, was made about her life in 2018.

Al-Hroub, Hanan

A school teacher from occupied Palestine who won The Global Teacher Prize in 2016, Hanan Al-Hroub started teaching traumatized Palestinian 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 nor-

UN World Interfaith Harmony Week

www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com

In September 2010, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan proposed a World Interfaith Harmony Week at the Plenary session of the 65th United Nations General Assembly in New York. This was a call to establish a week every year where people of all faiths, and those of no faith, would promote the message of *'Love of God, and Love of the neighbour'*, or *'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'*. The Draft Resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week was later written and presented by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Personal Envoy of King Abdullah II, before the United Nations General Assembly where it was unanimously adopted on 20 October 2010.

UN Resolution A/65/PV. 34; the World Interfaith Harmony Week, as it is called, recognises the first week of February of every year as a time when people of all faiths, and those of no faith, work together to promote and celebrate religious and cultural understanding and cooperation, to address each other in favourable terms drawn from their own traditions and to accept and respect 'the other' based on the foundations of *'Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour'*, or *'Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour'*. Remarkably the World Interfaith Harmony Week excludes no one and includes and unites everyone.



The HM King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize

The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan established the World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize in 2013 to recognise the three best events or texts organised during the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week (first week of February) which best promote the goals of the World Interfaith Harmony Week. Prizes are awarded to each event or text that is judged to have been most successful in promoting interfaith harmony and impacting religious understanding. Since 2014, this prize has been known as the King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize. The prizes are:

- | | |
|--------|----------------------------|
| First | \$5,000 and a gold medal |
| Second | \$3,000 and a silver medal |
| Third | \$1,000 and a bronze medal |

In 2021, over 1,020 events held in over 50 countries were registered on the site. They were arranged by groups as diverse as government agencies, social groups, schools, private individuals and of course the numerous interfaith organisations that exist worldwide.



mal childhood in her students. She published a book entitled *Play and Learn* that includes educational games that help children overcome the challenges they face.

Tamimi, Ahed

Honourable Mentions page 111

QATAR

Al-Thani, Dr Abdulla bin Ali

Dr Abdullah bin Ali al-Thani is the President of the 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 educational initiatives, and is leading the way to transform Qatar's education system.

HH Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh bin Nasser Al-Thani

Sheikha Aisha al-Thani is the founder of the Doha Academy and board member of Reach Out to Asia, Qatar. She is also a member of the Qatar Supreme Education Council, the highest education authority in Qatar. She is a modernist development thinker who promotes a more pronounced and well-judged engagement with people of faith. Sheikha Aisha's perspective resonates with the more concerted efforts by humanitarian organizations to look at the networks of people of faith as a solution to practical development problems.

SAUDI ARABIA

Badawi, Samar

Samar Badawi is a Saudi Arabian human rights activist. She has been arrested several times, imprisoned and been subject to a travel ban. She has campaigned for women driving, women voting and other women and human rights issues. She has received international recognition for her activism. Her recent arrest in 2018, alongside fellow activist Nassima al-Sadah, prompted a defence from Canada and then a response from Saudi Arabia leading to a major diplomatic falling out between the two countries. She was released from prison in June, 2021.

Al-Hathloul, Loujain

Honourable Mentions page 111

Obaid, Thoraya Ahmed

Thoraya Obaid is one of the few Saudi women on 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 national to head a UN agency and was also Chair of the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the principal inter-agency organization for coordinating management matters within the UN. She underlined religion and culture as important aspects for the agency's development work.



Barakat, Maha

Maha Barakat was appointed Director-General of the recently established Frontline Heroes Office (The Fakhr Al Watan Office) which aims to support all frontline workers in the UAE. She also serves as the Board Chair of the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, having previously been the Director General of the Health Authority Abu Dhabi from 2013-2018. Prior to that she worked at the Imperial College London Diabetes Centre which she founded in Abu Dhabi. She was awarded an OBE in 2010 and given the Imperial College Medal in 2013. An outstanding academic with a PhD from Cambridge University, she serves on various boards and committees related to research and development issues in the medical field.

Mattar, Dr Maryam

Dr Maryam Mattar is Director General of the Community Development Authority (CDA), a newly launched Dubai government authority that takes responsibility for setting up and developing frameworks for social development. She is also the founder and Executive Director of two non-profit civil associations: UAE Down's Syndrome Association and UAE Genetic Diseases Association. She has also initiated several national community outreach programs such as UAE Free of Thalassemia by 2012 and established a number of wellness centres. She received the Arab Women's Pioneer Award for Health Innovation 2019.

YEMEN

Karman, Tawakkol

Karman was one of three women jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. She is a Yemeni journalist and activist who has regularly led protests against the government. Over the past several years, she 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. More recently, she has spoken out against both the Houthi coup and the "the Saudi-UAE occupation" of Yemen.

BURKINA FASO

Aboubakary, Maiga

Aboubakary is the Secretary General of the Burkina Faso Islamic Organization for Population and Development. His organization promotes family planning in mosques around the country. The tremendous growth rate in Burkina Faso has put great strain on the economy there and threatens to sharpen the already serious problem of poverty.

BURUNDI

Nkunduwiga, Haruna

Nkunduwiga is the Secretary General of the Muslim Community of Burundi. He has been working recently to battle the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Burundi with other faith leaders by raising awareness and asking people to "stay clean". HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Burundi, affecting close to 20 percent of the urban population and nearly 10 percent of the rural population.

COTE D'IVOIRE

Abdoulaziz, Sheikh Sarba

Abdoulaziz is the leader of the Association Soulatine pour les Actions de Bienfaisance. He works in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso on the development of the Muslim community and the fair treatment of Muslims. He has been active at major international conferences that 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 has been the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor since June 2012, after having served as a Deputy Prosecutor in charge of the Prosecutions Division of the ICC since 2004. She is the former Attorney General and Minister of Justice of The Gambia. In September 2020, the Trump administration named Bensouda a "specially designated national" forbidding all US persons and companies from doing business with her. The Biden administration revoked this in 2021.

GHANA

Ibrahim, Sheikh Mustapha

Sheikh Mustapha Ibrahim is a religious scholar who has written over twenty books. He is among the few Islamic scholars in Ghana who have had the benefits of both classical Islamic training (the madrasa study circle) and the modern secular model. He founded the Islamic Council for Development and Humanitarian Services (ICODEHS) in 1996 to help reduce the high level of poverty in society and empower the less privileged. In collaboration with several partner NGOs in the Arab and Muslim world, ICODEHS' humanitarian footprints have spread throughout Ghana and into 12 other countries in West Africa.

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 and exploitation issues as well as building bridges with non-Muslims in Malawi. He also fought against the forced teaching of religious texts to school children.

NIGER

Mindaoudou, Dodo Aichatou

Mindaoudou is a former Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and African Integrity. She has served the government since the mid-1990s and is also the former Secretary-General for the Network for Rural Law. Ms Mindaoudou has written extensively about economic development and women's issues. She is one of the most senior-level women politicians in West Africa having been the UN Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire, Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) from 2013-2017 and in 2020, appointed co-chair by the World Health Organization (WHO) of an independent commission to investigate claims of abuse by aid workers.

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 leaders encouraged hatred of others, but they changed their ways after being injured and affected by inter-religious violence. Pastor Wuye and Imam Ashafa have gained a worldwide audience and intense interest in their story by speaking about their successful work in resolving conflicts. In April 2013, they were awarded the first prize in the World Interfaith Harmony Week 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 Sénégal (Alwahda), the largest Islamic organization in Senegal, having over 40 Islamic associations operating within it. Kane works on the improvement of living conditions for rural women in Senegal. She has written many articles and is frequently interviewed by the media.

SOMALIA

Elmi, Asha Haji

Asha Haji Elmi is a peace activist and a former 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

AFGHANISTAN

Joya, Malalai

Malalai is 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. She is renowned for her attempts to teach women and girls 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.

Samar, Dr Sima

Sima Samar is a medical doctor who lived as a refugee for over a decade. She established the Shuhada Clinic to provide health care for fellow Afghan women refugees in Pakistan. Upon her return to Afghanistan she served as Minister of Women's Affairs of Afghanistan (2001 to 2003). She has established an institute of higher education and carries on human rights work both nationally and internationally. She was State Minister for Human Rights and International Relations in Afghanistan before the ministry was dissolved in 2020.

BANGLADESH

Hossain, Dr Hameeda

Dr Hossain has published many books and articles relating to human rights and women's issues in Bangladesh and around the world. She is a founding member of Ain o Salish Kendra, a legal aid and human rights organization. She received the Bangladesh Development Initiative's (BDI) Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021.

Sultana, Razia

Razia Sultana is a Bangladeshi lawyer and human rights activist who has worked tirelessly for the Rohingya people. She interviewed hundreds of Rohingya women and published their accounts of sexual violence by the Burmese security forces. She is a coordinator of the Free Rohingya Coalition (FRC) and a director of the Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO). She won the International Women of Courage Award 2019.

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 focus on creating economic and social development, helping the impoverished escape poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them, and teaching them sound financial principles. Yunus' work has 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. In 2016, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appointed him to the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. Recently, he has represented the People's Vaccine Alliance and initiated the 'Make COVID-19 Vaccine A Global Common Good' campaign.

CHINA

Tohti, Ilham

Ilham Tohti is the most renowned Uyghur public intellectual in the People's Republic of China. For over two decades he has worked tirelessly to foster dialogue and understanding between Uyghurs and Chinese. Frequently harassed and arrested, in 2014 he was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of separatism. Much of the evidence against him included his teaching materials and interviews with foreign journalists. For his work in the face of adversity he was awarded the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award (2014), the Martin Ennals Award (2016), the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize (2019), and the Sakharov Prize (2019). Current reports estimate over a million Uyghurs have been detained in internment camps undergoing 're-education' and forced abortions and sterilisation as the intensity of the Chinese crackdown on Muslim practice in the eastern region continues.

INDIA

Bano, Bilkis

Bilkis Bano, known popularly as Dadi (grandmother), is an 82 year old woman who inspired protests in India against the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC); both of which discriminate against Muslims. Her Gandhian style of protest attracted thousands of mainly Muslim women in the Delhi locality Shaheen Bagh and continued unabated for 100 days until a COVID-19 lockdown was enforced. The Indian government's arrests and assaults on the protests are another front in the battle for India's soul (Gandhi vs RSS – Hindu Nationalism) and democracy.

Khan, Dr Saniyasnain

Dr Khan has been a prolific writer of children's books. He established Goodword Books in 1999 and has published over 100 titles. His books focus on Islamic themes and have been translated into many

languages. He is a regular contributor of articles in various newspapers and magazines as well as hosting a weekly TV show.

Ramzan, Dr Mubeena

Dr Mubeena Ramzan educates and empowers women in Kashmir. She runs the Jamia Islamia Mahdul Muslimat, based in Sopore and in Srinagar and also heads a socio-religious organization, Ansar un Nisa. The former institute graduates *aalimah* (religious scholars) whilst the latter provides a helping hand to the needy, would-be brides, widows and orphans and also establishes vocational training centres.

MALAYSIA

Anwar, Zainah

Zainah Anwar co-founded two ground-breaking women's groups to promote the rights of women living in Muslim contexts. She is the co-founder and Director of Musawah: A Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family. Prior to this, she founded and was 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 addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos and delivered a keynote address at Harvard University titled *Islam, Human Rights, and Activism*. *Newsweek* and *The Daily Beast* named Anwar one of the 150 women “Who Shake the World”.

NEPAL

Siddiqui, Mohammadi

Mohammadi Siddiqui is a pioneering 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

Mazari, Muniba

Muniba Mazari is an artist, motivational speaker, humanitarian, TV host, model and Pakistan's First Goodwill Ambassador to UN Women Pakistan. She derives her strength from the tragic car accident that took place when she was 21 which left her wheelchair-bound. Since then, she has been a pioneering voice heard in different countries around the world; being a motivational speaker through TEDx, Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), VCon Malaysia, VCon Dubai and several others. In June 2019, Muniba was appointed by the current Prime Minister, Imran Khan, to be a part of Pakistan's first ever National Youth Council. She has over 5 million followers on different social media platforms.

Yousafzai, Malala

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PHILIPPINES

Rasul, Santanina Tillah

The first Muslim woman elected to the Senate of the Philippines, former Senator Santanina Tillah Rasul is also the founder and Chair of the Magbassa Kita (Let us Read) Foundation Inc, which focuses on literacy and education. She is noted for her work on 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. She also 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. In 2019 she was conferred the Tandang Sora Award.

Rasul-Bernardo, Amina

Amina Rasul-Bernardo, an advocate for peace and democracy, is President and co-founder of the Philippine Centre for Islam and Democracy (PCID) and a columnist with *Business World*. 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 led the organization 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 also led the development of an Islamic Model for Peace Education for Mindanao. The UN Act for Peace Programme named her the Mindanao Peace Champion in 2010. In 2013, she won second place in the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize.

SRI LANKA

Ismail, Jezima

An educator for over three decades, Jezima Ismail is the Chairperson of People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL), President Emeritus and Founder of the Sri Lanka Muslim Women's Conference (SLMWC), Founder and Chairperson of the Academy of Adult Education for Women (AAEW), Member of the Board of Management for the Center for Human Rights at the University of Colombo, Coordinator of the Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum, Vice President of the Girl Guides Association, and a member of the Board of Directors of Helpage in Sri Lanka. In 1989, the Government of Sri Lanka conferred on her the title of Deshabandhu, the third highest national honour.

Marsoof, Justice Saleem

Justice Dr Saleem Marsoof is a former President of the Court of Appeal, a Judge of the Supreme Court and Acting Chief Justice. Throughout his career Justice Marsoof has played major roles in the fields of higher education and law reform as well as major contributions in the field of Company Takeovers and Mergers, Arbitration Law and Muslim Matrimonial Law. He is the founding President of the University of Colombo Muslim Majlis, Vice President of the YMMA Central and Chairman of the Zahira College Colombo Board of Governors.

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 1990s, Sabur served as coordinator of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (AC-

FOD). 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, Prof Dr Rusmir

Rusmir Mahmutćehajić is a Bosnian academic, author, and former statesman. Considered one of Bosnia's leading intellectuals and public figures, he is the foremost advocate of the idea of a diverse Bosnia. A scholar of the Muslim intellectual tradition and a contributor to contemporary Muslim thought and the liberal interpretation of Islam, Prof 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

Henzell-Thomas, Dr Jeremy

Dr Henzell-Thomas has been a major force as a writer, editor, lecturer and advisor in the campaign to reform education in the Muslim world and the way Islam tends to be treated in Western educational circles. He founded the Book Foundation, served as first Chair of FAIR (UK Forum against Islamophobia and Racism) and now serves as Associate Editor of *Critical Muslim*. He remains a Research Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies at Cambridge, serves as an Executive Committee member of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists UK and is a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts. His most recent publication is *Rethinking Reform in Higher Education: From Islamization to Integration* (co-authored with Ziauddin Sardar).

Qureshi, Khawar

Khawar Qureshi QC is one of the world's leading advocates on international arbitration, administrative and constitutional law, public international law and commercial litigation. He was the youngest advocate ever to have appeared before the International Court of Justice in 1993 for Bosnia's genocide case against Yugoslavia. From 1999 to 2006, he remained one of only 20 barristers which the UK government had appointed for representing it in civil matters. He routinely appears at the International Court of Justice, most recently as the counsel for Pakistan in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case; the Indian spy convicted on charges of terrorism, espionage and sabotage. He has been a Deputy High Court Judge and Bencher of Middle Temple since 2014, as well as having taught Commercial Law, International Law and International Arbitration at Cambridge University, King's College, the University of London.

Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Chowdhury, Sheikh Tawfique

Chowdhury is the Founder, Chairman, and CEO of Mercy Mission, one of the world's fastest-growing Muslim social enterprises. Its premier program is the AlKauthar Institute (alkauthar.org), which offers courses in Islamic disciplines to the general public through a medium that is accessible to working professionals. When AlKauthar initially launched in 2005, its offerings were limited to Australia. AlKauthar Institute has since spread its reach across the Western world, South Africa, India, Bangladesh,

Indonesia, and Malaysia. A medical doctor by profession, Chowdhury studied Islamic theology in Madinah, specializing in Islamic finance, personal law, and Islamic medical ethics. He also runs a successful multinational IT company, and is a corporate trainer and business coach to many successful people worldwide.

North America

CANADA

Dayrit, Flordeliza (new)

Flordeliza Dayrit is the co-founder and COO of MuslimKids TV, the category leader in children's streaming services for Muslim audiences. The MuslimKids TV platform has over 5,000 video titles, interactive games, and eBooks available in over 60 countries. Flordeliza began her career in 2004 as co-producer of the documentary series *A New Life in a New Land: The Muslim Experience in Canada* (Vision TV, SCN, CLT). In 2006, Flordeliza worked as an Art Director for several TV projects in Cairo, Egypt. She then started writing and directing TV series in 2007 with the *Hurray for Baba Ali* series, which has been viewed over 17 million times on YouTube.

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 principal lawyer at Kutty & Associates, 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 Canadian Council on American Islamic Relations (now renamed the National Council of Canadian Muslims). He is a widely invited public speaker and has written numerous op-eds, academic articles, papers, reviews and essays on topics ranging from national security to religion and law. He has taught at law schools in the USA and Canada and is Associate Professor of Law, Emeritus at Valparaiso University.

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 extremist teachings promoted by DA'ISH.

Beydoun, Khaled

Khaled A Beydoun is a scholar on Islamophobia, civil liberties and constitutional law. He lectures frequently and regularly writes for media outlets. His 2018 book, *American Islamophobia: The Roots and Rise of Fear* has been published to wide acclaim. He serves as an Associate Prof of Law at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville School of Law, and currently serves on the US Commission for Civil Rights. In a Twitter campaign, Beydoun asked his followers to "Boycott the 2022 Olympics in Beijing China — where a Uyghur Muslim genocide is currently taking place".

Khan, Salman

Salman Khan is a pioneer of online learning, having founded the Khan Academy in 2008. The online educational website features more than 5,500 mini-lectures, free of charge, to anyone in the world. The videos are hosted on YouTube and teach a variety of subjects, such as: mathematics, history, healthcare, medicine, finance, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, economics, cosmology, organic chemistry, American civics, art history, macroeconomics, microeconomics, and computer science. They are available in several languages through subtitles. The Khan Academy channel on YouTube has more than 6.7 million subscribers and the Khan Academy videos

have been viewed more than 1.8 billion times. Khan published his international best seller, *The One World School House*, in October 2012.

Magid, Imam Mohammed

An outstanding figure in interfaith activities, Imam Magid is the Executive Director and Imam of the ADAMS Centre in Virginia, and former President of ISNA. He is an advocate for youth and women, and serves on the FBI's Muslim, Sikh, and Arab Advisory Committee. In recognition of his efforts toward interfaith bridge-building, Imam Magid was among the ten Washingtonians of the Year in 2010 presented with Washingtonian Magazine's award for outstanding leadership. He has served as an advisor to many in Washington, including President Obama.

Mogahed, Dalia

Dalia Mogahed is the Director of Research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding. She was previously a senior analyst and Executive Director at the Gallup Centre for Muslim Studies, as well as the Director of the Muslim West Facts Project. President Obama appointed her to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, making her 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*.

Sarsour, Linda

Linda Sarsour is an American-Palestinian human rights and social justice activist, and a campaigner against increasing Islamophobia in the United States. Sarsour 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 numerous distinctions include: the White House's Champion of Change, the New York City Council's Shirley Chisholm Women of Distinction Award, and CAIR's inaugural American Muslim of the Year. Linda has also written for—and been featured in—local, national, and international media on issues related to Arab-Muslim American communities, immigration, criminal justice issues, and Middle East affairs. In March 2020, Simon & Schuster published Sarsour's autobiography, *We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders*.

Middle East and North Africa

BAHRAIN

Al-Zayani, Afnan

Afnan Al-Zayani is the CEO of Al-Zayani Commercial Services (AZCS), a multimillion dollar corporation. 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. In 2010, she received the Leadership in Public Life Award from Vital Voices, a women's empowerment organization. In 2016, she was honoured by the IWEC Foundation at the annual conference in Belgium.

EGYPT

Helal, Lobna

Lobna Helal was appointed by a Presidential decree as Deputy Governor of Egypt's Central Bank in 2016 after having served as the first woman to serve on its board, as Second Deputy Governor from 2011-2013. Helal also holds key positions such as the deputy chair of the Egyptian Banking Institute and recently joined Telecom Egypt's board.

IRAN

Ansari, Anousheh

Anousheh Ansari is Chairman, CEO, and co-founder of Prodea Systems, a private US-based company offering technological solutions for businesses. In 2006, she became the first privately-funded woman, and first Iranian, to explore space. In 2015, the National Space Society awarded Ansari the Space Pioneer Award for her service to the space community. She received an Honorary Doctorate of Science from Utah Valley University. In 2017, Ansari co-represented Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi at the 89th Academy Awards, accepting the Oscar on his behalf for his film *The Salesman*. Farhadi did not attend himself due to his opposition to President Trump's immigration ban.

JORDAN

Abu-Ghazaleh, Talal

Abu-Ghazaleh is the Chairman and founder of the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization. He is credited with introducing the concept of intellectual property to 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 who is not from one of the G8 countries to be listed in the IP Hall of Fame in Chicago, US.

KUWAIT

Al-Bahar, Sheikha

Shaikha Al-Bahar is the Deputy CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait, valued at over \$100 billion in total assets. She is in charge of loans, investment banking, marketing, and treasury. Al-Bahar is also Chairperson of Al-Watany Bank of Egypt, Vice Chair at NBK Capital (a subsidiary of the National Bank of Kuwait), and sits on the board of the International Bank of Qatar. She studied at Harvard Business School, Stanford, Duke, and the University of California.

Al-Ghunaim, Maha

Al-Ghunaim is a pivotal figure in Arab and Kuwaiti 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 onto the London Stock Exchange in 2008, making it the first Kuwaiti company to be listed there. The firm is also listed on the Kuwait, Dubai, and Bahrain stock exchanges.

MOROCCO

Bouhia, Hynd

Hynd Bouhia is CEO of Global Nexus, a management investment fund focusing on clean energy and innovation. Prior to this she was the General Director of the Casablanca Stock Exchange. In 2004, the then Prime Minister of Morocco appointed her as his economic advisor. Bouhia was also a Special Assistant to the World Bank's Vice President for Middle East and North Africa, specifically in economic,

technical, and diplomatic issues. She was inducted into John Hopkins Society of scholars in 2018.

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 November 2017, Al-Amoudi, alongside several Saudi princes and other billionaires, was detained in an anti-corruption crackdown. He was eventually released in January 2019.

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. His company is responsible for construction projects in the Al-Haram Al-Makki in Mecca, 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. In November 2017, he was detained, along with several Saudi princes and billionaires, on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018.

Olayan, Lubna

Lubna Olayan is internationally recognized as Saudi Arabia's top businesswoman. She was 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 was reappointed in January 2020 to serve a three year term at Saudi British Bank, and assumed the position after the merger between SABB and Alawwal Bank.

HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Al-Saud

Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal is a member of the Saudi royal family who built his 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. In November 2017, he was one of several Saudi princes and billionaires detained on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018. In April 2020, Al-waleed Philanthropies allocated \$30m to the battle against COVID-19.

Al-Suhaimi, Sarah (new)

Al-Suhaimi is the first woman to chair the Saudi Arabian stock exchange (*Tadawul*), which is the largest in the Middle East. Additionally, she holds the position of CEO and Member of the Board of Directors of NCB Capital, where, in 2014, she was tasked with reviving the flagging investment bank and raising morale in the workforce. Within the next two years, she had reversed NCB Capital prospects and returned it to growth. Previously, she held the position of CIO at Jadwa Investment.

SUDAN

Ibrahim, Dr Mohamed "Mo"

Mohamed Ibrahim—more commonly known as Mo Ibrahim—is a Sudanese-born entrepreneur currently based in the UK. A successful telecommunications businessman, he founded one of Africa's largest cellular phone companies, Celtel. He came into prominence for establishing the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership in 2017, an award that provides the recipient a \$5 million initial payment, plus \$200,000 annually for life. The prize was conceived as a way to promote good governance and curb corruption by African leaders seeking financial security when they leave office. The prize is believed to be the world's largest, surpassing the \$1.3 million Nobel Peace Prize.

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.

Al-Gurg, Raja

Raja Al-Gurg is Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al-Gurg Group LLC (ESAG). Al-Gurg is the first Emirati woman on the board of HSBC Bank Middle East Limited and is also on the advisory board of Coutts Bank, the wealth management division of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. She also plays an active role in several philanthropic, social, and women's societies, including serving as Deputy Chair of the Dubai Healthcare City Authority and President of the Dubai Business Women Council. Her autobiography: *Raja Al Gurg - An Autobiography* was published at the end of 2019.

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 is also a regular speaker at economic 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 has been featured in *Forbes* and *Arabian Business*.

Al-Rostamani, Hana (new)

Al-Rostamani is the Group CEO of the First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) and was responsible for turning the bank's focus towards a digital-first approach. Previously, she held the position of independent director in Emirates Integrated Telecommunication Company (Du) and vice-chairperson of the Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Services. She has over 20 years experience in the financial world and was ranked 3rd in *Forbes* Middle East's Power Business Women 2021 list.

Sub-Saharan Africa

NIGERIA

Dangote, Alhaji Aliko

Dangote is the Chairman and CEO of the Dangote Group, the largest industrial group in Nigeria. Aliko is the richest man in Africa in 2021, with an estimated net worth of \$12.1 billion. In January 2009, Dangote was honoured for being the leading provider of employment in the Nigerian construction industry. In 2011, Dangote was also awarded Nigeria's second highest honour, Grand Commander of the Order

of the Niger (GCON) by the President of Nigeria. As a philanthropist, he has donated to the National Mosque, the Presidential Library, and a host of charities. In March 2020, Dangote donated 200 million Naira towards curbing the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.

Asia

BRUNEI

HM Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah

HM Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah has been the Sultan of Brunei since 1967. Following the death of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 2016, the Sultan is the wealthiest monarch 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 is one of a few Indonesian policymakers with an international profile. During her time as Finance Minister, Southeast Asia's largest economy became one of the 20 leading economies in the world and one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, partly thanks to a combination of sound economic policies and a stable political environment. She was appointed Managing Director of the World Bank in 2010, where she served until 2016.

Europe

TURKEY

Sabancı, Güler

Sabancı is a renowned, award-winning Turkish businesswoman and the chairperson of the family-controlled Sabancı Holding, a \$25 billion industrial and financial corporation, the second largest in Turkey. Ban Ki-moon appointed Sabancı as a member of the Board of United Nations Global Compact, the UN's highest-level advisory body involving business, civil society, labour, and employers' organizations. She

was recently honoured with the David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award for her philanthropic contributions.

Ulukaya, Hamdi

Hamdi Ulukaya is the founder and CEO of the multi-billion dollar yogurt business, Chobani. He immigrated to the USA in 1994, purchased a yoghurt factory in 2005 and developed his own recipe based on his Kurdish ancestry and the eastern Turkish farm he grew up on. He has developed a humane working culture for his 2,000+ employees. He focused on employing from the local community as well as refugees and has given his employees a 10% stake in the company. He has won numerous awards.

UNITED KINGDOM

Aziz, Asif

Asif Aziz is the founder and Chief Executive of Criterion Capital, which manages a £2 billion property portfolio across London and South East England. He has made significant charitable contributions across a range of sectors in the UK, and is currently chair of the Aziz Foundation, which runs a huge postgraduate scholarships program for British Muslims. He is also a key donor to various projects in Malawi, his country of birth.

Randeree, Shabir

Randeree is a hugely successful entrepreneur and philanthropist and was recognized for his efforts with a CBE. He is the Chairman of DCD Group, Deputy Chairman of Al Baraka Bank South Africa and founder director at IBB Bank plc. He is the Chair of Mosaic (founded by HRH the Prince of Wales) and involved in a number of other educational institutes. He has served on government task forces and in 2016 was inaugurated as the new chancellor of the University of East London. In 2020 he was elected the new Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Woolf Institute.

Shafik, Nemat

An active economist who has held significant positions in international organizations, Shafik became Director of the London School of Economics in September 2017. She was the youngest ever Vice President of the World Bank, at the age of 36, served as the Bank of England's Deputy Governor of Markets and Banking, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, and Permanent Secretary of the United Kingdom Department for International

Development. She has written extensively on the fields of globalization, 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 List. In 2020, she was permanently selected as a member of the British House of Lords.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

El-Erian, Mohamed

El-Erian's career started at the International Monetary Fund, where he worked for 15 years and served as Deputy Director. He also served as Managing Director at Citigroup in London and PIMCO, a global investment management firm and one of the world's largest bond investors, where he was CEO and CIO. He is currently Chief Economic Adviser at Allianz, the world's largest insurance company, and President-Elect of Queens' College, Cambridge. In 2012, President Obama appointed him Chair of the Global Development Council. El-Erian contributes to major economic publications such as the *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg*, *Business Insider*, *CNN*, and *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy* named him on the list of the "top 100 Global Thinkers" for four years in a row. He has authored two New York Times bestselling books, sits on several boards, and received various professional and philanthropic awards.

Khan, Shahid

Khan moved to the USA from Pakistan in 1967, aged 16, graduated in Industrial Engineering and since then has gone on to become a billionaire businessman. His main company is Flex-N-Gate, which manufactures components for companies in the automobile industry. It currently has a revenue of over \$6 billion and a workforce of 13,000 employees. He is also the owner of the American national football league team, the Jacksonville Jaguars and the English football team, Fulham. More recently he has launched All Elite Wrestling, a professional wrestling entertainment company and is a major financial backer of Black News Channel, a 24 hour cable news channel.

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

El-Baz, Farouk

Farouk El-Baz is a geologist who worked with NASA on the selection of landing sites on the moon and the training of Apollo astronauts in visual observations and photography. He is well-known for applying satellite images to groundwater exploration in arid lands. The Geological Society of America established two awards in his honour: the Farouk El-Baz Award for Desert Research (1999) and the Farouk El-Baz Student Research Award (2007). He has received numerous honours and awards, including Egypt's Order of Merit (First Class). El-Baz ranked no. 51 in the Power 100 of *Arabian Business*. In 2019, NASA named an asteroid after Farouk El-Baz in recognition of his outstanding scientific contributions.

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 in geology. He has published close to 200 academic articles and scientific studies. He also works for the Arab Development Institute.

IRAN

Khademhosseini, Prof Ali (new)

Dr Khademhosseini is the CEO and Director of the Terasaki Institute in Los Angeles, one of the leaders in researching the use of nanotechnology for minimally invasive medical procedures. Formerly, Khademhosseini was the Levi Knight Professor of Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering, and Radiology at UCLA and a professor at Harvard Medical School. He is the author of more than 650 peer-reviewed journal articles, editorials and review papers and holds more than 70 patents. He is the recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) and for the past five years, Khademhosseini has been selected by Thomson Reuters as one of the World's Most Influential Minds as a Highly Cited Researcher. He has been awarded many

more honors, such as the Mustafa Prize, the Pioneers of Miniaturization Prize from the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) and the Clemson Award of the Society for Biomaterials.

Salehi, Dr Ali Akbar

Dr Ali Akbar Salehi was appointed 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. Salehi was part of the 2015 Geneva Iran P5+1 nuclear talks to discuss technical aspects of Iran's nuclear program.

Shokrollahi, Prof M Amin (new)

Dr Shokrollahi is a renowned Iranian mathematician working in the field of information communication. He is the inventor of tornado codes and one of the principal developers of raptor codes and chordal codes, which are specifically designed for communication on electrical wires between chips. Shokrollahi holds over 150 patents in the area of information transmission and was the Chief Scientist of Digital Fountain, which Qualcomm Inc acquired in 2009. Most recently, he is the CEO and Founder of Kandou, a research firm in Switzerland specializing in improving speed and efficiency in communication between microchips. Shokrollahi has won multiple awards for his work, including the IEEE IT Best Paper Award (2002), the ISSCC Jan van Vessem Award (2014), and the Mustafa Prize (2017).

JORDAN

Dajani, Prof Rana

Rana Dajani is a professor of molecular biology and a powerful advocate for science education for women. She has also founded the initiative, "We Love Reading", which develops changemakers through reading aloud. This earned her the Jacobs Social Entrepreneurship Award 2018. In 2017 she was selected by Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study as a fellow of the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. Her awards include: the UN Science, Technology and

Innovation Award 2019, the UNHCR Nansen refugee award 2020, and the Schwab Social Entrepreneur Award 2021.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Namankany, Dr Abeer

Dr Al-Namankany made history when she developed a new standard for measuring patient anxiety and treating it with drug-free psychotherapy, thereby protecting patients from the risks of general anesthesia and the side-effects of sedatives. She is the winner of six distinguished clinical and research awards from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry, the Emirates Medical Association, and others. In addition to her brilliant medical career, Dr Al-Namankany is also 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 is Advisor to the President of Saudi Arabia's Islamic Development Bank Group on Science, Technology and Innovation. 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 20th 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. Her other distinctions include membership at the Clinton Global Initiative 2014 and receiving the Leadership in Civil Society Prize.

Altafsir.com

www.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.

Over
147 MILLION
visitors to altafsir.com

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 (asbāb al-nuzūl); 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 with a special emphasis for mobile devices. You can now read tafsir wherever you go by visiting www.GreatTafsirs.com and downloading the app for Android or iOS.

INDONESIA

Mumpuni, Tri

Tri Mumpuni spent 15 years improving rural communities in Indonesia through 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 2012. Mumpuni is the Executive Director of IBEKA, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote community development via the provision of local energy, mainly hydroelectricity, and also clean water. She pioneered a community private partnership model to build small power plants equally owned by the community and private sector, and is responsible for introducing an energy garden to remote villagers.

MALAYSIA

Shukor, Dr Sheikh Muszaphar

Dr Shukor, an orthopedic surgeon by profession, was the first Malaysian in space. He was selected as one of two astronauts to be trained at Star City in Russia and was 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. He is the author of best-selling books including *My Way of Parenting* and *49th Rule*. Dr Shukor is currently at the National University of Malaysia UKM as a Research Fellow focusing on global issues like climate change, world hunger and humanitarian aid.

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 tech-

nology activities among the OIC member states. In 1999, he became the first Muslim scientist to win the UNESCO Science Prize. In 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 Prof Atta-ur-Rahman. In 2014 he was awarded the International Cooperation Award, the highest award of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In 2016, he was elected as Emeritus Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, thereby becoming the first scientist from the Islamic world to be granted this honour. The same year, Prof Rahman was appointed Co-Chairman of a United Nations Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation covering the member countries of UNESCAP.

Saif, Umar

An award-winning scientist, entrepreneur, innovator, and a tech tycoon, Dr Saif studied at Cambridge University and was a core member of the \$50 million Project Oxygen at MIT. He created the first startup incubators in Pakistan: the Saif Center of Innovation. He is also the founding Vice Chancellor of the Information Technology University in Punjab and is one of the main forces behind the IT ecosystem in Pakistan. The MIT Technology Review named Saif in its list of the "World's Top Young Innovators for the year 2011", and he was named "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum in 2010. In recognition of his services to the country, in 2014 the Government of Pakistan conferred on him the *Sitara-i-Imtiaz* (Star of Excellence), one of the highest civilian awards in Pakistan. In 2017, he received the British Council Alumni Award for Professional Achievement. In 2019 he received an investment directly from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop innovative Artificial Intelligence models for data collection.

Siddiqi, Irfan

Irfan Siddiqi is an award-winning pioneering scientist who is best-known for the development of the Josephson bifurcation amplifier. He was born in Karachi and moved to the USA where he studied at Columbia, Harvard and Yale universities. He is Director of the Advanced Quantum Testbed and professor of Physics at the Quantum Nanoscience Laboratory (established by him) and the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley. In 2021, he received the Joseph F. Keithley Award.

THAILAND

Dahlan, Prof Dr Winai

Prof Dr Winai Dahlan is the Founding Director of the Halal Science Center Chulalongkorn University (HSC) in Thailand, named the best innovation in the halal industry and the world's first halal science institution by Malaysia's *Halal Journal*. HSC promotes halal industry and commerce through digital platforms, namely SPHERE, HALPLUS, and scientific regional cooperation with halal laboratories in Indonesia, Malaysia and worldwide. Dr Winai Dahlan has produced many intellectual properties and written more than 50 books and several thousand articles on science and nutrition.

TURKEY

Gelenbe, Prof Sami Erol (new)

Dr Gelenbe was born in Istanbul and completed his PhD there before moving to France. He is a pioneer in the field of modelling and performance evaluation of computer networks and the inventor of the random neural network and the eponymous G-networks. He currently holds the position of professor in the Institute of Theoretical and Applied Informatics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Consultant to Huawei's Ireland Research Centre and is affiliated with the I3S CNRS Laboratory of the University of Cote d'Azur, Nice. Gelenbe holds multiple fellowships and honors for his work, including the Knight of the Légion d'Honneur (France) in 2014, ACM SIGMETRICS Life-Time Achievement Award, the Oliver Lodge Medal of the UK's Institution of Engineering and Technology (2010) and the Mustafa Prize (2017).

İmamoğlu, Ataç

İmamoğlu is an award-winning physicist whose alma maters include the Middle East Technical University in Istanbul and Stanford. He was a Prof at the University of California and then the University of Stuttgart before becoming the head of the research group on Quantum Photonics, at ETHZ (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), Switzerland. His academic interests are quantum optics, semiconductor physics, and nonlinear optics.

Sancar, Aziz

Sancar was co-awarded (along with Tomas Lindahl and Paul Modrich) the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2015 for his work on DNA repair. His contributions over the years have shed light on the processes

of aging, causes of cancer and how cells work. Sancar studied at Istanbul University before moving to the USA where he is currently a Prof at the University of North Carolina. He is also a co-founder of a foundation which promotes Turkish culture and supports Turkish students in the USA (the Aziz & Gwen Sancar Foundation). He is the 2019 recipient of the Hyman L. Battle Distinguished Cancer Research Award.

Europe

FRANCE

Guiderdoni, Dr Bruno Abd al Haqq

Dr Guiderdoni is an astrophysicist and French convert to Islam. A specialist in galaxy formation and evolution, he has published more than 140 papers and organized several conferences on these subjects. Guiderdoni serves as Director of the Observatory of Lyon. Besides his extensive writings on science, he has also published around 60 papers on Islamic theology and mysticism and is now Director of the Islamic Institute for Advanced Studies.

GERMANY

Şahin, Dr Uğur (new)

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UNITED KINGDOM

Al-Hassani, Dr Salim

Dr Salim al-Hassani is a former Prof 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. The Foundation partners with the Abdul Latif Jameel Foundation, a British charity which showcased the 1001 Inventions Global Touring Exhibition across the UK, United States, and Turkey in 2010.

CANADA**Ghilan, Mohamed**

Mohamed Ghilan is a Canadian Muslim who has managed to combine a high degree of learning of modern science and traditional Islam. Born in Riyadh, to parents from Sudanese and Yemeni backgrounds, he attended high school and university after immigrating to Canada. In 2007 Mohamed began his full time studies in the Islamic Tradition after having made connections with several Muslim scholars. In May 2015, Mohamed earned a PhD in neuroscience at the University of Victoria, where he studied synaptic plasticity in Huntington's disease, as well as the effects and molecular mechanisms of stress on the brain in Fragile X syndrome. He hopes his research can eventually be used to develop new therapies which can be used to assist individuals with movement disorders or intellectual disabilities.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**Khan, Mehmood**

Dr Mehmood Khan recently joined Life Biosciences as their Chief Executive Officer and member of board of directors. He was the former PepsiCo Vice Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer. 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.

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 and received The 2019 Marconi Prize with Paul Kocher.

Siddique, Teepu

Prof Siddique is a neurologist and scientist known for his ground-breaking discoveries concerning ge-

netic and molecular abnormalities. He was head of the team that discovered the cause behind the mysterious and deadly disorder known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He studied at Dow Medical College in Karachi, where he earned his medical degree in 1973 before moving to the USA. He was a Prof of neurology and cell and molecular biology at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine before becoming director of the university's division of neuromuscular medicine.

Ying, Jackie

Prof Jackie Y Ying, heads the NanoBio Lab at the Agency for Science, Technology and Research in Singapore. She received her PhD from Princeton University and was Prof of Chemical Engineering at MIT before becoming the 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 350 articles and has over 170 patents issued or pending. In 2017, she was awarded the Abdeali Taybali Lifetime Achievement Award and also was named a Fellow of the United States National Academy of Inventors (NAI). In 2018 she was awarded the TÜBA Academy Prize and in 2021, she was elected to the National Academy of Engineering.

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. Written in Arabic, the book has sold over a million copies. She earned her PhD at Sorbonne in France and now lives in Beirut. 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. In 2016, she was named UNESCO Artist for Peace. She has over 14 million social media followers.

EGYPT

Al-Aswany, Alaa

Alaa Al-Aswany is the recipient of many distinguished international literary honors and awards. His novels are acclaimed in the field of contemporary literature, selling millions of copies in three dozen languages and adapted into film and theater performances. Al-Aswany reached international literary acclaim with his ground-breaking 2002 novel *The Yacoubian Building*. Through the prism of a fashionable downtown Cairo building, he exposes the corrupt dealmaking and exploitative relationships of power in Mubarak's Egypt. His latest novel *The Republic, As If*, published in 2018, is set during the events of Egypt's 2011 revolution. Al-Aswany is the author of seventeen books—novels, short story collections, and compendiums of his articles. He has taught and lectured at universities and leading cultural institutions around the world. A leading democracy advocate, his op-eds have appeared in influential publications and he also pens a weekly column for Deutsche Welle's Arabic news site.

Badreya, Sayed

Badreya is an Egyptian-born actor who played significant roles in a number of Hollywood films such as

Iron Man and *The Dictator*. His production company Zoom in Focus emerged with the purpose of showing the world the Arab-American story. Much of his efforts in this regard have been publicized in prominent news outlets such as *The New York Times*, BBC, ABC, and Fox News.

El-Wakil, Abdel-Wahed

Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil is an international architect and a contemporary icon of Islamic architecture. A student of the famous Hassan Fathy, El-Wakil has designed over 50 buildings around the world, including one for the Prince of Wales. He is the two-time recipient of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and received first prize for the design of contemporary mosque architecture in Riyadh.

IRAN

Alidoosti, Taraneh

Taraneh Alidoosti was named as one of the best actresses of the decade by *Film Monthly Magazine* and was the youngest person ever to win the Crystal Simorgh for Best Actress. She starred in *The Salesman* which won the Oscar for best Foreign Language Film in 2017. She boasts over 6 million followers on different social media networks. She recently received a suspended sentence for criticizing the Iranian government.

Farhadi, Asghar

Asghar Farhadi is an award winning Iranian film director and screenwriter who explores the depths and complications of everyday relationships and themes of jealousy and trust in an evocative way and often includes strong female leads. He has won two Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film for his films *A Separation* (2012) (becoming the first Iranian to win an Oscar) and *The Salesman* (2016), as well as receiving a Golden Globe Award and numerous other awards. He famously did not attend the 2017 Academy Awards citing President Trump's travel ban as the reason. He sent two famous Iranian Americans to receive the Oscar on his behalf. In 2021, he received the Cannes Film Festival's Grand Prix for his film *A Hero*.

Majidi, 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, he released the first part of an intended trilogy on the life of the Prophet, with *Muhammad: The Messenger of God* being the most expensive film in Iranian movie history (\$40 million). His film *Sun Children* was shortlisted for the 2021 Oscars best foreign-film.

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 2014, Nazeri received France's *National Order of Merit*.

JORDAN

Al-Baghdadi, Abbas Shakir Al

Abbas Al-Baghdadi is one of the world's foremost experts in Islamic calligraphy. Born in 1951 in Baghdad, he 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 the Al-Hakawati Theatre Company and the Shams Cultural Cooperative for Youth in Theatre and Culture, an organization providing underprivileged individuals with a forum for self-expression through drama.

MOROCCO

Lalami, Laila

Laila Lalami is an award-winning novelist and essayist. Her many books include *The Moor's Account*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction and *The Other Americans*, a finalist for the National Book Award in Fiction. Her opinion pieces and political commentary appear regularly in the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, and *The New York Times*.

She has received a British Council Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, and has been honored by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader. She is currently a professor of creative writing at the University of California at Riverside.

PALESTINE

Al-Barghouti, Tamim (new)

Tamim Al-Barghouti is a Palestinian poet and columnist who has a weekly programme on AJ+ entitled Ma' Tamim. Al-Barghouti has been nicknamed the "Poet of Jerusalem" and has been compared to the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish. Tamim's rousing poetry is eagerly anticipated on social media. Al-Barghouti has a PhD in political science from Boston University and he has taught at the American University in Cairo, the Free University of Berlin and Georgetown University. His 2007 critically acclaimed poem 'Fil-Qudsi' (In Jerusalem), which he presented on the Emirati television show Amir al-Shu'ara (Prince of Poets), has been watched by millions. His first book, *In Jerusalem and Other Poems* was translated into English and published by Simon & Schuster.

QATAR

HE Sheikha Al-Mayassa Al-Thani

Sheikha Al-Mayassa is the Chairperson of Reach Out To Asia, an NGO under the Qatar Foundation that contributes to the development of societies in Asia, including the Middle East. Its specific area of emphasis is 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.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Esa, Majed

Al-Esa has produced several music videos which have gone viral online. The video 'Hwages' highlights issues faced by women in Saudi Arabia and has already more than 65 million views on YouTube, bringing the total number of views of all his videos to over 214

million. Al-Esa is connecting to the younger generation of Saudis and his videos are causing concern in more conservative circles.

Sub-Saharan Africa

MALI

Keita, Salif

Known as the "golden voice of Africa", Salif Keita is an Afro-pop singer-songwriter from Mali. His West African music is combined with influences from Europe and the Americas. In 1977 Keita received a *National Order Award* from Guianese President Sekou Toure. His music is very popular in the Francophone world, and more broadly in Europe. After a 40-plus-year career and having produced over 25 albums, Keita released his final album *Un Autre Blanc* in October 2018.

NIGER

Souleymane, Mahamadou

Mahamadou Souleymane, known as Mdou Moc-tar, is a Tuareg songwriter, musician and actor from Agadez, Niger who became famous through a music trading network of cell phones and memory cards in West Africa. He is one of the first musicians to perform modern electronic adaptations of Tuareg guitar music. He reached a global audience when Sahel Sounds released his music on the *Music from Saharan Cellphones: Volume 1* compilation. His fifth studio album *Ilana* (The Creator), released in 2019 to international acclaim, has been called "the most fiery psych-rock of the 21st century" and one of "the 25 best psychedelic rock albums of the 2010s". He also has the starring role in the 2015 film *Akounak Tedalat Taha Tazoughai*, which translates as "Rain the Colour of Blue with a Little Red in It". It is the world's first feature film in a Tuareg language.

SENEGAL

N'Dour, Youssou

Youssou N'Dour became Senegal's Minister of Tourism and Culture in April 2012. He is a world-famous composer, singer, percussionist, and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. In 2005, N'Dour received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Music Album for his album *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 English nasheed songs. He is a much-loved household name amongst Muslims worldwide. He is also known for his collaborative efforts with other prominent Muslim entertainers, including Yusuf Islam and Dawud Wharnsby-Ali. Bhikha writes and directs plays as well as holding creative expression workshops conducted specifically within schools. He has released over ten albums in his career spanning twenty-five years.

TANZANIA

Gurnah, Abdulrazak (new)

Abdulrazak Gurnah was awarded the 2021 Nobel Prize for Literature. He writes on culture and post-colonialism and is the author of ten novels, some of which have been shortlisted for the Booker prize, the Whitbread Prize and the Los Angeles Times Book Award. Born in Zanzibar, Gurnah emigrated to Britain as a student in 1968, at the age of 20, and went on to become professor of English and Postcolonial Literatures at the University of Kent.

Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Hosseini, Khaled

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. Following the USSR invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, his family was granted political asylum in the United States. Hosseini earned a medical degree in 1993. In March 2001, while practicing medicine, Hosseini began writing his first novel, *The Kite Runner*, which launched his literary career, and today, Hosseini is one of the most recognized and bestselling authors in the world. His books, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, and *And the Mountains Echoed*, have been published in over seventy countries and sold more than 40 million copies worldwide. In

2006 Khaled was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. Inspired by a trip he made to Afghanistan with the UNHCR, he later established The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, a nonprofit, which provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. He lives in Northern California with his wife and two children.

Sayed, Aryana (new)

A singer, songwriter and TV personality, Sayeed emigrated from Afghanistan with her family at the age of 8. Her family eventually settled in Switzerland, where at the age of 12, she was admitted to a music school where she would often perform with a choir. She released her first music single in 2008 and soon went on to become a household name in Afghanistan. She has won numerous music awards and in 2017, she was named "Voice of Afghanistan" by the Afghanistan National Television and Radio Network. She continued her musical success with a television career, where she judged at talent shows, such as *Afghan Star* and *The Voice of Afghanistan*. She fled the country when US troops withdrew and the Taliban took control.

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" series.

CHINA

Noor Deen, Haji (Mi Guang Jiang)

Haji Noor Deen Mi Guang Jiang is a renowned master of Arabic calligraphy. He was born in Yucheng in the Shandong Province of China in 1963. 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—often as the first Chinese-Arabic artist—in galleries and museums around the world, including the British Museum, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the National Museum of

Scotland, and the Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS) at Harvard University. The focus of his work is writing Arabic using a combination of traditional Chinese calligraphic brushes with quick organic strokes in order to uniquely fuse both the Chinese and Arabic arts. Also, he was awarded the Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre 2016 Islamic Economy Award in the category of Islamic 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, Azmi won the National Film Award for Best Actress five times and garnered several international honours. She has also received four Filmfare Awards. In addition to her successful career, Azmi is a social activist and supports issues such as women's rights, child survival, and fighting AIDS and injustice through 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. She was conferred with an honorary doctorate by TERI University in 2014.

Khan, Aamir

Aamir Khan is one of the leading stars of Bollywood. His phenomenal success has won him awards in India and acclaim abroad. 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

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 the soundtrack of *Slumdog Millionaire*, a movie 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 prolific Indonesian author, songwriter, and international public speaker who has written over 56 books, including short stories, novels, and nonfiction on topics such as self improvement, instilling *sakinah* in the family, parenting, and motivational books. Ten of her books have been made into movies, and four books became TV series. She is also a producer of Islamic movies, a columnist for *Republika* daily newspaper since 2011 and a hijab traveler who's been to 69 countries and 485 cities. Nadia also established the I Can Write Community which aims to help young writers and has opened 262 libraries around Indonesia for unprivileged children and youth.

Rosa, Helvy Tiana

Helvy Tiana Rosa is a prominent literary writer who has written more than 60 books in various genres. Her works have been translated into several international languages, and a few titles have been made into movies. In a writing career spanning over 30 years, Helvy has won 50 national and international awards in literacy and women empowerment. Helvy founded the writing community Forum Lingkar Pena (FLP) in 1997 which has spread to over 200 cities in Indonesia and abroad and inspired many popular writers, especially in the Islamic literary genre. Currently, Helvy is the Vice Chairperson of the Art and Culture division of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Board of Ulama).

Sulis (new)

Born in 1990 in Java, Indonesia, Sulis grew to fame as a protege of the famous nasheed singer, Haddad Alwi. At nine years old, she released her first album with her teacher, Alwi, called *Cinta Rasul Vol. 1*. Millions of copies were distributed across Indonesia and she quickly gained popularity nationwide. This was later followed by six more albums in the *Cinta Rasul* series. As part of the new wave of nasheed singers, she's known for incorporating guitars and drums in her tracks as backing instruments to her vocals.

MALAYSIA

Hamidun, Hafiz

Hafiz Hamidun is currently the most influential nasheed singer in the Far East. He is a multi-platinum award winner with approximately 4 million followers on social media. His albums have sold more than five million copies and have more than 300 million streams. Besides being a nasheed singer, Hamidun is also an award-winning music producer and music arranger.

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 to charitable venues, and was one of the recipients of the Icon of Malaysia Award. She has over 14 million followers on different social media outlets.

PAKISTAN

Ismail, Al-Hajj Siddiq

Al-Hajj Siddiq Ismail is a world-renowned naat and hamd reciter, philanthropist, and 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 Pakistan's national award, the *Sitara-i-Imtiaz*, and the prestigious Pride of Performance Award, which he donated to the victims of Swat and Malakand.

Obaid-Chinoy, Sharmeen

Obaid-Chinoy is an internationally acclaimed journalist, filmmaker and activist. Initially known for her film work highlighting women's rights. She has gone on to win two Oscars, six Emmy awards for her films (three personally), and become the first artist to co-chair the World Economic Forum. The Government of Pakistan has honoured her with the *Hilal-i-Imtiaz*, the second highest civilian honour in the country, and Canada has awarded her a *Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal*. In 2020, it was announced that Sharmeen will be co-directing the Ms. Marvel series for Disney+, bringing a Muslim super-hero to the big screen.

Parveen, Abida

Abida Parveen is an internationally acclaimed vocalist, often referred to as "the Queen of Sufi mystic singing". She is the only woman to reach this level of influence in devotional music. She specializes in

traditional ghazals, and often performs before stadium-sized audiences across South Asia and globally. In 2017, she was designated a Peace Ambassador by SAARC. In 2020, Parveen received the PISA Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2021 was awarded the highest civilian award, the *Hilal-e-Imtiaz*, by the President of Pakistan.

Qadri, Muhammad Owais Raza

With millions of followers, Qadri is considered a legend in the field of naat recitation. 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. He has over 4 million followers on social media and his Youtube videos have over 235 million views.

Europe

IRELAND

O'Connor, Sinéad

Sinéad O'Connor is an international pop star who has achieved platinum and Grammy success since the late 1980s. Her signature shaved head and powerful voice make her instantaneously recognisable. Outside of singing, her views and actions have also attracted much attention. She holds strong political, social and religious views and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in 1999 with a church not affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church (an institution she has heavily criticised). In October 2018, aged 51, she converted to Islam and took the name Shahada Sadaqat. Almost a year later, she returned to the stage after a 5 year hiatus and performed her most famous hit *Nothing Compares 2 U*—dressed in a red abaya and matching hijab—to rave reviews.

NETHERLANDS

El Mouhandiz, Rajae

Rajae El Mouhandiz is a Dutch/Moroccan/Algerian interdisciplinary artist, producer, curator, art consultant and policy advisor, with extensive experience in the arts/culture sector in the Netherlands and abroad. In 2005 she started her own label; Truthseeker records, in 2015 she transformed it into Kahina Productions and in 2019 she launched Ellae Foundation, to counter the gender and culture gap in the arts/culture sector. Currently she is developing Ellae,

curating NITE hotel for dance company Club Guy & Roni and is deputy director of Caravane Earth Foundation.

SWEDEN

Zain, Maher

Multi-platinum award-winning Swedish singer, songwriter and music producer of Lebanese origin, Maher Zain is a household name across global Muslim audiences. Maher's debut album Thank You Allah reached the number one spot on Amazon's World Music charts. He is the most popular Muslim artist on social media with 37 million fans and the most viewed Muslim artist on YouTube with over 6 billion views. Maher has performed in over 100 charity concerts across 35 countries and is a high profile supporter of UNHCR.

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 Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

Duzyatan, Engin Altan

Engin Altan Duzyatan is a Turkish actor who plays the starring role in the hit Turkish drama: *Dirilis Ertugrul* ('Resurrection Ertugrul') which is about the legendary father of Osman the First, the founder of the Ottoman Empire. The series centres around the migrations of the Kayi Tribe and their struggles against betrayal from within as well as battles against the Templars, the Mongols, Crusaders and the Byzantine Empire. It also gives a prominent role to the famous mystic Ibn al-Arabi. The series has captivated audiences not just in Turkey, but also huge numbers of Muslims globally. Engin is also well-known for his charitable works in Africa where he has set up access to clean drinking water for over 100,000 people.

Pamuk, Orhan

Pamuk is one of Turkey's most prominent writers and was the first ever Turkish Nobel laureate. His ten novels to date have been translated into over 60 languages and sold more than 13 million copies. His novels explore many aspects of Turkey's rich culture

past and present as well as philosophical questions. As an academic and intellectual, his voice is important nationally and internationally and he has voiced opinions on Kurds, Armenia and the current presidency. He teaches at Columbia University, USA.

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

The multi-talented Riz Ahmed continues to advocate for a variety of issues ranging from fundraising for Syrian and Rohingya refugees to highlighting the lack of positive representation of Muslims in the media at the British House of Commons. Riz became a household name through his acting work in films such as *Star Wars: Rogue One*, *Nightcrawler* and 2018's *Venom* along with his Emmy-winning turn in HBO's *The Night Of*. His performance in *The Sound of Metal* was met with critical acclaim and earned him his first Academy Award nomination for best actor which he followed up with his feature writing debut, *Mogul Mowgli*, which touched on a number of the themes of his 2020 album, *The Long Goodbye*. All these achievements, alongside his continuous and outspoken activism led to Riz being listed in *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world in 2017.

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 have probably made him the single most influential figure in the field of arts and culture in the Muslim world. 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 made a gradual return to music over the past five years with his latest albums *An Other Cup* and *Roadsinger*. He was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014. Islam received three distinctions in 2015: the Global Islamic Economy Award,

the Steiger Award, and BBC's Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2019, Islam was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Sanders, Peter

Peter Sanders has been a professional photographer for over fifty years. He began his career in the mid 1960s photographing the iconic musicians of that time including Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and the Doors, the Rolling Stones and many others. He first photographed the Hajj in 1971 and has continued to photograph in the Kingdom for nearly fifty years. He regularly undertakes international photographic workshops 'The Art of Seeing' with young people throughout the world. He continues to act as a translator of Islam to those interested in acquiring a greater understanding and to encourage broader and deeper interactions between people of different races and faiths.

Yusuf, Sami

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North America

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. His songs have influenced a whole generation of English speaking Muslims by promoting the spirit and love of Islam.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Aden, Halima

Halima Aden is a trailblazer in the world of fashion and beauty. She was the first ever contestant to wear a hijab and burkini in a USA pageant. She was the first hijab-wearing model to be signed by a major modelling agency and the first to appear on the front cover of *Allure*, *Vogue*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Essence* magazines wearing a hijab and burkini. Aden quit the industry in November 2020, citing that the profession was not compatible with her beliefs, but she seems to have returned a year later. All this is a far cry from her birth in a Kenyan refugee camp to Somali parents 24 years ago.

Friedlander, Shems

Shems Friedlander—writer, artist, filmmaker, photographer and educator—has published his 10th book, *Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi's Forgotten Message*. The book contains interactive digital content via QR codes. Among his other books are *Winter Harvest*, *Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes* and *When You Hear Hoofbeats Think of a Zebra*. Friedlander has recently been appointed Emeritus Prof at the American University in Cairo where he taught graphic design and painting for 20 years. He has won over 30 awards for graphic design. Friedlander has also written two monodramas and his documentary films have been shown at film festivals in the US and abroad.

Henry, Aisha Gray

Aisha Gray Henry is the Founder and Director of the charitable foundation and publishing company Fons Vitae, which is currently engaged in bringing out Imaal-Dinm Al-Ghazali's *Ihya Ulum al-Din* in English for parents and teachers as well as adapting it to accommodate children's workbooks and school curricula. It will also publish an instructional DVD. *The Book of Knowledge* and *The Principles of the Creed* educational sets are available and in use internationally with *Purity and Prayer* nearing completion. Translations into Urdu, Arabic, and Malay are underway. Fons Vitae also has a children's interactive website www.GhazaliChildren.org, and has established a pilot school project and prison program. The Fons Vitae Ghazali Project has been launched to great acclaim in Morocco, Canada, Indonesia, England, and the USA.

Wilson, Willow

Wilson is a writer and artist, notable for her works such as *Alif the Unseen*, which won the World Fantasy Award in 2013. She is also known for her comic series, *Ms. Marvel*, featuring a Muslim teenager who becomes a superhero. *Ms. Marvel* won the Hugo award for best Graphic Novel in 2015. Wilson has received multiple awards and nominations throughout her career and is currently contributing to Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* comic book series.

Youssef, Ramy

Ramy, a comedian, actor and writer is best known for his eponymously titled show which explores an Egyptian-Muslim family navigating the various challenges of reconciling their religious and cultural identity within 21st Century America. Ramy Youssef created, co-wrote, executive produced and played the

titular role of the show which won him the Golden Globe Award for best actor in a TV series (musical or comedy) ahead of Hollywood heavyweights like Paul Rudd and Michael Douglas. A second series of *Ramy* debuted in 2019, and in its second season added multiple Oscar winner Mahershala Ali to the cast.

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 Center 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 2009, 2011 and 2013. He has been featured in several movies, including the 2002 PBS documentary *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*.

South America

GUYANA

Shah, Ryhaan

Ryhaan Shah is considered to be among the best contemporary writers in Guyana and the Caribbean, best known for her 2005 novel *A Silent Life*. Shah is also an active public figure as the president of the Guyanese Indian Heritage Association. She came under criticism for race baiting in Guyana's 2015 election.

QUR'AN RECITERS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Sobhi, Islam (new)

Sobhi is an Egyptian medical student who started reciting Qur'an and uploading his videos on YouTube, now reaching more than 300 million views. His beautiful voice has attracted millions of followers, and the young reciter boasts more than 5 million followers on different social media outlets.

KUWAIT

Al-Afasy, Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid

Al-Afasy is an imam at Masjid Al-Kabir in Kuwait, and is also a singer of Arabic-language nasheed. He has gained international acclaim through his innovative use of technology to promote Islam through two satellite channels, a website (www.alafasy.me), and videos on YouTube. He has more than 41 million followers on social media.

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.

Al-Ghamdi, Sheikh Saad ibn Said

Al-Ghamdi has served as imam to Muslim communities across the globe, and is currently the imam of Kanoo Mosque in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. Al-Ghamdi studied *usool al-deen* (fundamentals of Islam) and *isnad* (hadith transmission), and is recognized as an influential Saudi theologian. In 2009, he was appointed by Royal Decree as a co-imam for the taraweeh prayers in the Al-Haram Al-Madani in Madinah.

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 a leading reciter of the Qur'an. Although he studied accounting, he became increasingly influential for his recitation of the Qur'an at international Islamic events, particularly across the Middle East and in Saudi Arabia. He is now based in London.

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 *usool al-deen* (fundamentals of Islam) in Saudi Arabia before becoming a teacher, and subsequently became imam of the Grand Mosque in Makkah. He recently created a Twitter account which had close to 3 million followers before it was deleted.

Al-Sudais, Sheikh Abdul

Honourable Mentions page

Asia

INDONESIA

Ulfah, Hajjah Maria

Hajjah Maria Ulfah is an internationally acclaimed reciter of the Holy Qur'an, and is the first woman to win an international Qur'an recitation competition. She has popularized the Egyptian style of recitation, and currently serves as Director of the Women's Department at Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an in Jakarta. She also lectures at the Islamic University of Indonesia.

Middle East and North Africa

ALGERIA

Benganna, Khadija (new)

Benganna is an award winning journalist who began her journey at Algerian TV and radio station. She went on to become part of the founding team at Al-Jazeera, where she remains as senior news anchor and journalist. Benganna has covered major historical and political events, interviewed heads of state and key personalities in government. In addition to being a renowned journalist, Benganna has worked with the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees and boasts over 14 million followers on different social media outlets.

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 ground-breaking 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. He is best known for his coverage of wars, most prominently in Iraq and Afghanistan from where he published more than 1000 reports. He is also the presenter of a widely watched TV program *Bela Hodod* (Without Borders) and *Shabed Ala Al-Asr* (A Witness to History). He was arrested in Berlin by German police at the request of the Egyptian government, but was later released. Mansour has published 25 books.

JORDAN

Al-Fares, Ola

Al-Fares is a Jordanian lawyer, TV presenter and journalist currently working for the MBC channel. She has over 13 million followers on various social media outlets and has won several awards including: Young Arab Media Professionals Award (2009), Best Jordanian Media Award (2009), Creative Youth Shield (2010), Jordanian Model for Successful Youth (2011) and Arab Woman Of The Year (2015). She is considered to be one of the most influential media figures in the Arab world.

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* one of the top 20 trends sweeping the globe. He was 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.

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 rank among the highest in the Middle East. Suwaidan is also prominent as a motivational speaker and author of books on Islam. Suwaidan has over 20 million social media followers and uses the *Seerah* as a source for leadership and strategic skills.

PALESTINE

Khanfar, Wadah

Khanfar was at the helm of Al Jazeera for eight years as Managing Director and Director General. During that time, the network transformed from a single channel into a media network. During this period, the Arab world witnessed historic transformation, including the Arab Spring. 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. He is currently the President of Al Sharq Forum.

El-Kurd, Mohammed, El-Kurd Muna (new)

During the most recent crisis in Palestine, the evictions at Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, twins Mohammed and Muna El-Kurd were amongst the few activists to post daily on social media and keep the world updated. Their message resonated globally and contributed to widespread rallies opposing the relentless continued displacement of the Palestinian people and the Judiazation of Jerusalem. It marked a shift in the media discourse, which managed to connect the current aggression as a continuation of the plight of the Palestinians over the past 70 years.

Omer, Mohammed

An award-winning journalist, Mohammed Omer has been credited with reporting on the crisis in Gaza for major media outlets including the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, Al Jazeera, the *New Statesman*, *Pacific Radio*, *Electronic Intifada*, and *The Nation*. He was raised in the Rafah refugee camp and, despite calamities faced by his family—his father was imprisoned, his teenage brother was killed, and his mother was injured in a demolition—he dedicated himself to journalism and reporting on the crisis. He is the recipient of the 2008 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism. He is the author of *Shell Shocked: On the Ground Under Israel's Gaza Assault*, a book that received testimonials from a wide range of well-known authors, including Noam Chomsky.

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, as well as her self-titled *Nashwa* talk show on Dubai TV. *Forbes* listed her among The Top 100 Most Powerful Arab Businesswomen 2020 while the *Hollywood Reporter* selected her as one of the 25 Most Powerful Women in Global TV.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Ibrahim, Waleed bin Ibrahim

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 2003, he launched Al Arabiya, a 24-hour news channel. MBC now includes 11 channels catering to all viewers in Arabic, English, and Persian. In November 2017, he was detained, along with several Saudi princes and billionaires, on an anti-corruption drive. He spent three months at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Riyadh before being released in January 2018. The government of Saudi Arabia arranged to acquire 60 percent of MBC, leaving the remaining 40 percent of the company in Al-Ibrahim's hands.

Omran, Lojain (new)

Omran is one of the most famous Arab television presenters across the MENA region. She started in shows such as *Ya Hala* and *The Situation with Lojain*. Most recently, she hosts the popular show *Good Morning, Arabs!* which is based in Bahrain. She has also worked as a UNHCR Ambassador to refugee camps across the Middle East. She has over 9 million followers on Instagram and over 1 million followers on Twitter.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Al-Awadhi, Najla

HE Najla Al-Awadhi is a former Member of Parliament (the Federal National Council) of the United Arab Emirates 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 of being the youngest parliamentarian in the UAE. During her four-year term in parliament, 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 organization. With a particular focus on television, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of Television Channels at Dubai Media Incorporated.

Al-Kaabi, Noura

Noura bint Mohammed Al-Kaabi was appointed the Minister of Culture and Youth in 2020, having previously been the Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development for the United Arab Emirates since October 2017. She was also the Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs from February

2016 to October 2017. Educated in the UAE and London, she has a broad range of experience and has been recognised for her efforts. As of March 2018 she has been a board member of the UAE National Media Council, Image Nation, the Abu Dhabi Sports Council and the United Arab Emirates University.

Asia

AFGHANISTAN

Mohseni, Saad

Mohseni is a successful businessman, as well as the founder and head of the Moby Group, Afghanistan's largest media company. The Moby Group has interests in television, radio, print, production, online news services, directories, IT&T, and retail. In 2011, *Time* magazine named him one of the world's most influential people.

CHINA

Hoja, Gulchehra

Gulchehra Hoja was a prominent figure in various Chinese media, including producing and hosting the first TV programme in Uyghur for children. With the Chinese crackdown on anything Uyghur, her image was banned on Chinese media and she was forced to flee the country. She has continued to speak out for the rights of the Uyghurs despite huge personal loss; 25 members of her family are currently held in 're-education' camps which aim to remove all traces of Uyghur identity and replace it with the majority Han culture. This policy extends to those Uyghurs who are also not in camps by having Han Chinese officials forcibly live in Uyghur houses and report on 'unChinese' behaviour. In 2020, Hoja received the Courage in Journalism Award by the International Women's Media Foundation.

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. His criticisms of the regime resulted in the magazine being forcibly closed twice by President Suharto's New Order administration. He has 1.39 million followers on Twitter.

PAKISTAN

Hamid, Zaid

One of the most influential television and social media personalities in Pakistan, Zaid Hamid is a security consultant and strategic defense analyst by profession. He is also a popular political commentator, former host of a highly popular TV series on geo-politics and Islamic history, and is the founder of *Brass Tacks*, a Pakistani think tank on global politics. He maintains a huge audience within Pakistani society, with millions of followers on social media, especially among the youth and Armed Forces. In 2015, he was arrested by Saudi authorities while on Umrah because of his opposition to the proposed Pakistani participation in the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen. He was released shortly afterwards after intervention by the Pakistani army.

Iqbal, Salman

Salman Iqbal owns ARY Digital Network, the largest media network in Pakistan. The network's reach covers Pakistan, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and many other regions of the world. He is recognized as an independent media voice 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. The Geo TV network and Jang Group are both under this umbrella organization. Shakil-ur-Rahman is also President of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society and the Chief Executive and Editor-in-Chief of the Jang Group, which publishes a number of newspapers and magazines in Urdu and English. Shakil-ur-Rahman was arrested on 12 March 2020 on the allegation of land fraud and was granted bail after eight months.

Europe

UNITED KINGDOM

Hasan, Mehdi

Mehdi Hasan is a leading Muslim political journalist whose analysis and comments on contemporary issues find resonance with many Muslims, especially the younger generation. He has worked as political

editor for *Huffpost UK* and is a columnist and senior contributor at *The Intercept*. He has hosted Al Jazeera English's *Head to Head* and other weekly interview and discussion programs. He now hosts his own show, *The Mehdi Hasan Show*, on NBC's streaming channel, the Peacock, which continues to promote an understanding of events in a wider context and to feature Hasan's characteristic insightful reporting and probing interviews that hold people in power to account.

Husain, Mishal

Husain has worked as a producer and presenter for the BBC for more than 20 years. As well as being a newsreader for BBC TV and BBC Radio, Husain has hosted high-profile shows which have seen her interview figures such as Boris Johnson, San Suu Kyi, and Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. She has won a variety of awards including the Broadcaster of the Year Award at the London Press Club Awards in 2015. She is a judge for the Amnesty International Media Awards and is an ambassador for the charity Mosaic which supports young people from deprived communities. She has recently written a book entitled *The Skills: From First Job to Dream Job—What Every Woman Needs to Know*, which has been described as "the ultimate handbook for women".

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 1991-2006 when he moved to Al Jazeera English. At AJE, he presented the documentary series *Witness* and hosted his own show called *The Rageh Omaar Report*. In 2013, Omaar became a special correspondent and presenter for ITV News, reporting on a broad range of news stories and producing special, in-depth reports. He also occasionally presents the ITV Lunchtime News including the ITV News London lunchtime bulletin and the ITV Evening News.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mohyeldin, Ayman

Ayman Mohyeldin is an MSNBC anchor, analyst, and morning show host. He has interviewed world

leaders, politicians, and diplomats, including President Erdoğan after the failed coup attempt in Turkey. He reported on DA'ISH in Iraq, Syria, Europe, and Turkey. He participated in the network's coverage of the 2016 US Presidential Elections. Mohyeldin was previously an international correspondent. He covered the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine, the revolutions of the Arab Spring, and the attacks on the US Consulate in Benghazi, where he was one of the first journalists to report the situation. His coverage of the 2014 Israeli War was widely cited and praised. Prior to joining NBC News, Mohyeldin was a correspondent for Al Jazeera English. From 2008-2010, he was the only foreign broadcast journalist based in the Gaza Strip, and during the 2008-2009 War on Gaza, he was the only American journalist reporting live from Gaza.

Oz, Dr Mehmet

Dr Oz hosts a hugely popular television show which focuses primarily on medical issues and healthy living. He first came to prominence in 2004 with appearances as a health expert on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. A cardiothoracic surgeon and a Columbia University professor, he is a proponent of alternative medicine and often draws upon his Turkish heritage when giving advice. He has co-authored, with Michael F. Roizen, six New York Times best sellers, and has a regular column in *Esquire* magazine amongst others.

Zakaria, Fareed

Fareed Zakaria is one of the United States' foremost public intellectuals. He hosts CNN's *Fareed Zakaria GPS* and is a *Washington Post* columnist. Prior to this, he was Editor-at-Large for *Time* magazine and Editor of *Newsweek International* and *Foreign Affairs*. His book, *The Post-American World: Release 2.0*, is an expanded version of his international best-seller. In 2013 he became one of the producers for the HBO series *Vice*, serving as a consultant.

CELEBRITIES & SPORTS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT

Aboutrika, Mohamed

Aboutrika is regarded as one of the best African football players of all time having lifted 28 major titles, including three Africa Cup of Nations titles over his 16-year career. He has also been named UNDP Goodwill Ambassador and is widely followed, having almost 12 million fans on different social media outlets. He has criticised African fans for excessively following European football clubs and for European football not acknowledging African leagues and merely using the talent of their players.

PALESTINE

Assaf, Mohammed

Mohammed Assaf won first place in the popular TV program *Arab Idol 2013* after his final performance of *Ali al-Keffiyeh* (Raise Your Keffiyeh), a nationalistic Palestinian song and de facto anthem which has now garnered over 90 million views. Raised in Khan Yunus refugee camp in the Gaza strip, he has become the face and voice of Palestinian youth and the voice of its peoples suffering. Assaf became UNRWA's Goodwill Ambassador, was named Ambassador of Culture and Arts by the Palestinian National Authority, and was given a position with diplomatic standing by the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. He has over 22 million fans on social media.

TUNISIA

Jabeur, Ons (new)

Jabeur is a professional tennis player, who is currently ranked 22 by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA). In 2020, she became the first Arab woman to reach the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam tournament (Australian Open), a feat she repeated at Wimbledon 2021. In the same year she also became the first Arab or North African woman to lift a WTA singles trophy. Born and raised in Tunisia, Jabeur started her trailblazing career by winning the junior Grand Slam title in 2011, the first for a North African woman.

Sub-Saharan Africa

SENEGAL

Mane, Sadio

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Asia

CHINA

Lei, Wu

Wu Lei was the youngest football player to appear in the Chinese league at the age of 14 and went on to become the all-time top goal scorer for Shanghai SIPG with 169 goals. In 2019 he transferred to Espanyol in La Liga and his debut attracted 40 million viewers in China. He is ethnically Hui, which has a population of around 10 million. They are composed of mainly Muslim Chinese who emigrated from Persia and Turkey during the time of Mongol rule in China.

MALAYSIA

Yusof, Vivy

Vivy Yusof is an entrepreneur, a fashion icon and a social media influencer with millions of followers. She co-founded the international e-commerce fashion company Fashion Valet and the dCK group, which focuses on hijabs. She has won multiple prestigious awards, including in the fields of entrepreneurship and social media. Her popular show *Love Vivy* which follows her life as a mother, and businesswoman is in its third season.

Europe

DENMARK

Nadim, Nadia (new)

Nadim fled Afghanistan and settled in Denmark where she started playing professional football in

2005. After eight years, she moved to the USA to play in the NWSL before spending a season in the UK with Manchester City and then winning the national league with Paris Saint-Germain in 2020. She then returned to the NWSL where she currently plays for Racing Louisville FC. She has played for the Danish national team since 2009, quickly becoming one of their most important players. In parallel to her sports career, she has continued her medical studies and will soon qualify as a surgeon. She also speaks 9 languages and was awarded the title, UNESCO Champion for Girls and Women's Education, in 2019.

FRANCE

Pogba, Paul

Pogba was the most expensive footballer in the world when he moved to Man Utd from Juventus for £89 million in 2016. A talented midfielder, he was part of France's 2018 winning World cup side and scored in the final. Pogba was born to Guinean parents and is one of a growing number of European Muslim football players who rank among the best in the world. He has more than 79 million followers on social media. He has frequently documented his visits to Makkah on social media.

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 on the personal, club, and country levels and winning player of the year three times. In 2018, Zidane, managing Real Madrid, became the first manager in the history of football to win three consecutive UEFA Champions League titles. A few days after the victory, he resigned as Real Madrid coach. After Real Madrid's poor performance the following season, Zidane returned and won the La Liga for the second time in his managerial career before leaving again.

GERMANY

Özil, Mesut

A key member of Germany's World Cup 2014 winning team, this former Real Madrid and Arsenal playmaker of Turkish descent was awarded the Bambi award in 2010 for being a prime example of successful integration into German society. In 2018, after receiving criticism for posing with Turkey's President and Germany's poor World cup performances, Ozil

announced his retirement from international football. He said "I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose." He has a massive social media following—with a staggering 112 million online fans. He received backlash from the Chinese government after vocally speaking out against mistreatment of the Uyghur population. In 2021, after joining Fenerbahçe on a free transfer, he was vocal about Palestine, wearing a "Free Palestine" T-shirt along with other Fenerbahçe footballers.

RUSSIA

Nurmagomedov, Khabib

Honourable Mentions page 113

UNITED KINGDOM

Farah, Mohamed

The most successful British athlete ever, Farah won the gold in the 5000m and 10,000m at the 2012 and 2016 Olympic games as well as 6 other global golds. Born in Somalia but raised in the UK from the age of 7, Farah 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 and knighted in 2017, the year he announced his retirement from track running. His winning celebration, the 'mobot' is mimicked internationally.

Hussain, Nadiya

Since winning the BBC's *The Great British Bake Off* in 2015, Nadiya Hussain has gone from being the most famous British baker to being a columnist, author and television presenter. She has produced a popular documentary giving insight into Bangladesh, her country of origin, as well as a TV cooking series. She has become a household name and an instantly recognisable face in the UK, Bangladesh and for Muslims worldwide. She was bestowed the honour of being asked to produce a cake for the 90th birthday celebrations of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Oceania

NEW ZEALAND

Williams, Sonny

Sonny Williams is an international rugby player and former heavyweight boxing champion from 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 winner's gold medal to a young supporter just after the 2015 final.

North America

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Kareem, Abdul-Jabbar

Abdul-Jabbar played basketball for 20 seasons for the Milwaukee Bucks and the LA Lakers before being honored as one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History. In 2012, he was selected by the Secretary of State to be a US Global Cultural Ambassador and in 2016 he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian honor. Abdul-Jabbar is

also a best-selling author of 17 books and is a 5 time Columnist of the Year for his essays in *The Hollywood Reporter*. He has acted in numerous television series and movies including *Airplane*, *Game of Death* and most recently FXs number one rated comedy, *DAVE*. He has also taken on activism in his later years, speaking out against Islamophobia and other forms of social injustice. In 2021, The NBA created the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Social Justice Champion Award.

Tyson, Mike (Malik Abdul Aziz)

Tyson won his first title in 1986 at 20 years old making him the youngest heavyweight champion in history. His dominance in the ring faded as his wild personal life grew out of control leading him to serve 3 years in prison where he converted to Islam. After his release, he went on to regain his WBC and WBA titles, becoming one of the few men to do so. He retired in 2006 and was inducted in both the International Boxing Hall of Fame and the World Boxing Hall of Fame. After his retirement, Tyson went on to publish books and act in television and movies. In 2012, he launched a foundation for troubled youth. Though he has had episodes of controversial behavior after retirement, his sincerity in trying to uphold the values of his religion and improve himself morally and spiritually inspire millions.

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت، قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:
ادروا الحدود عن المسلمين ما استطعتم فإن كان له مخرج فخلوا سبيله
فإن الإمام أن يخطئ في العفو خير من أن يخطئ في العقوبة
رواه الترمذي مرفوعاً وموقوفاً

On the authority of Aisha رضي الله عنها: the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:
"Avert the infliction of prescribed penalties on Muslims as much as you can. If there is any way out, let a man go, for it is better that a leader make a mistake in forgiving than make a mistake in punishing."

Narrated by al-Tirmidhi with a chain of transmission traceable back to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Calligraphy by M AbdulJaleal Nasreddin

TOP EXTREMISTS

Middle East and North Africa

EGYPT



Al-Zawahiri, Ayman

Ayman Al-Zawahiri has been the leader of Al-Qaeda since the killing of Osama bin Laden. Born into a prosperous medical family in Egypt, he completed his medical studies and set up a clinic. In the 1980s he was already part of the Islamic Jihad group in Egypt and was arrested and tortured in prison. He went on to become the leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad, which he merged into Al-Qaeda in 1998. He emerged as bin Laden's personal advisor and physician. He is often credited with being the "real brains" of Al-Qaeda. Despite a huge US bounty on his head, he has managed to evade capture and with the demise of DA'ISH he may move to the fore again.

JORDAN



Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad

Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi (born Isam Muhammad Tahir Al-Barqawi) is a Jordanian-Palestinian Salafi leader who became a mentor for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, while they were in prison together. Al-Maqdisi's writings are still a source of inspiration for many Salafi-Jihadis despite his criticism of the extreme violence of Al-Zarqawi and other jihadis. He is especially known for his book in which he declared takfir on the Saudi regime. Al-Maqdisi was recently found guilty on terrorism charges and sentenced to five years in prison by a Jordanian court.

SYRIA



Al-Julani, Abu Muhammad

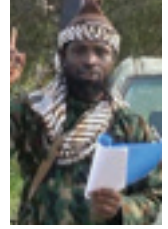
Al-Julani is the current Emir and founder of the Syrian militant group now known as Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS). This group was formed in 2017 with the merging of several other militant groups. It is the main force fighting the Syrian regime and until recently was allied to Al-Qaeda. It formally renounced 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.

Sub-Saharan Africa

SOMALIA

Umar, Ahmad

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 carries out terrorist attacks in Mogadishu, Somalia, despite the presence of thousands of Somali government and African Union troops. They have targeted hotels and resorts as well as Ugandan and Kenyan troops.



Asia

INDONESIA

Bashir, Abu Bakar

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. In August 2014, he publicly pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, leader of DA'ISH, and his declaration of a caliphate. In 2021, Bashir was released from prison and put onto a deradicalisation programme.



There is no god except You! Glory be to You! I have indeed been one of the wrongdoers.

The Prophets, 87

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POLITICAL

- Abdul Ghani Baradar, Afghanistan
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OLYMPIANS




AZERBAIJAN

-  Haji Aliyev Wrestling
-  Rafael Aghayev Karate
-  Rafiq Huseynov Men's Greco-Roman


BELGIUM

-  Bashir Abdi Marathon





BULGARIA



-  Taybe Mustafa Yusein Wrestling

CANADA


-  Mohammed Ahmed 5000 metres

EGYPT


-  Feryal Abdelaziz Karate
-  Ahmed El-Gendy Modern pentathlon
-  Giana Farouk Karate
-  Hedaya Malak Taekwondo

-  Mohamed Ibrahim El-Sayed Men's Greco-Roman
-  Scif Eissa Taekwondo








FRANCE

-  Rayan Helal Track cycling



INDONESIA

-  Rahmat Erwin Abdullah Weightlifting


IRAN

-  Javad Foroughi Shooting
-  Mohammad Reza Geraei Men's Greco-Roman
-  Sajjad Ganjzadeh Karate
-  Ali Davoudi Weightlifting
-  Hassan Yazdani Wrestling
-  Amir Hossein Zare Wrestling
-  Mohammad Hadi Saravi Men's Greco-Roman



JORDAN

-  Saleh Al-Sharabaty Taekwondo
-  Abdelrahman Al-Masatfa Karate


KAZAKHSTAN

-  Darkhan Assadilov Karate
-  Kamshybek Kunkabayev Boxing
-  Nurislam Sanayev Wrestling
-  Saken Bibossinov Boxing
-  Yeldos Smetov Judo
-  Zulfya Chinshanlo Weightlifting




KOSOVO

-  Distria Krasniqi Judo
-  Nora Gjakova Judo


KUWAIT

-  Abdullah Al-Rashidi Shooting


KYRGYZSTAN

	Aisuluu Tynybekova	Wrestling
	Akzhol Makhmudov	Men's Greco-Roman
	Meerim Zhumanazarova	Wrestling




MALAYSIA

	Azizulhasni Awang	Track cycling
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MOROCCO

	Soufiane El Bakkali	3000 metres steeplechase
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NETHERLANDS

	Sifan Hassan	5000 metres
		10,000 metres
		1500 metres


QATAR

	Fares El-Bakh	Weightlifting
	Mutaz Essa Barshim	High jump
	Ahmed Tijan and Cherif Younousse	Beach volleyball

RUSSIA

	Abdulrashid Sadulaev	Wrestling
	Musa Evloev	Men's Greco-Roman
	Zaur Uguev	Wrestling
	Muslim Gadzhimagomedov	Boxing
	Gadzhimurad Rashidov	Wrestling
	Imam Khataev	Boxing
	Madina Taimazova	Judo
	Niyaz Ilyasov	Judo
	Tamerlan Bashaev	Judo
	Zemfira Magomedalieva	Boxing

SAUDI ARABIA

	Tareg Hamedi	Karate
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SYRIA

	Man Asaad	Weightlifting
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TUNISIA

	Ahmed Hafnaoui	Swimming
	Mohamed Khalil Jendoubi	Taekwondo



TURKEY

	Busenaz Surmeneli	Boxing
	Mete Gazoz	Archery
	Buse Naz Çakıroğlu	Boxing
	Eray Şamdan	Karate
	Ali Sofuoğlu	Karate
	Ferhat Arıcan	Gymnastics
	Hakan Reçber	Taekwondo
	Hatice Kübra İlgün	Taekwondo
	Merve Çoban	Karate
	Rıza Kayaalp	Men's Greco-Roman
	Taha Akgül	Wrestling
	Uğur Aktaş	Karate
	Yasemin Adar	Wrestling



TURKMENISTAN

	Polina Guryeva	Weightlifting
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UNITED KINGDOM

	Galal Yafai	Boxing
	Mohamed Karim Sbihi	Rowing

UNITED STATES

	Dalilah Muhammad	4 × 400 metres relay
		400 metres hurdles

UZBEKISTAN

	Akbar Djuraev	Weightlifting
	Bakhodir Jalolov	Boxing
	Ulugbek Rashitov	Taekwondo
	Bekzod Abdurakhmonov	Wrestling
	Davlat Bobonov	Judo



	Sevda Valiyeva	Judo
	Khanim Huseynova	Judo
	Huseyn Rahimli	Judo
	Hamed Heidari	Men's javelin throw
	Elvin Astanov	Men's shot put
	Lamiya Valiyeva	Women's 400 metres
		Women's 100 metres
	Orkhan Aslanov	Men's long jump
	Raman Salei	Swimming
	Vugar Shirinli	Judo
	Dursadaf Karimova	Judo
	Raman Salei	Swimming (2 events)
	Vali Israfilov	Swimming
	Ilham Zakiyev	Judo
	Parvin Mammadov	Powerlifting
	Namig Abasli	Judo
	Said Najafzade	Men's long jump

ALGERIA

	Cherine Abdellaoui	Judo
	Skander Djamil Athmani	Men's 400 metres
	Safia Djelal	Women's shot put
	Asmahan Boudjadar	Women's shot put
	Nassima Saifi	Women's discus throw
	Skander Djamil Athmani	Men's 100 metres
	Abdelkrim Krai	Men's 1500 metres
	Kamel Kardjena	Men's shot put
	Hocine Bettir	Powerlifting
	Mounia Gasmii	Women's club throw
	Walid Ferhah	Men's club throw
	Lynda Hamri	Women's long jump

AZERBAIJAN

	Shahana Hajiyeva	Judo
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BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



	Bosnia & Herzegovina men's national sitting volleyball team	Sitting volleyball
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ismet Godinjak • Adnan Manko • Stevan Crnobrnja • Asim Medić • Mirzet Duran • Nizam Čančar • Dževad Hamzić • Jasmin Brkić • Safet Alibašić • Sabahudin Delalić • Ermin Jusufović 	

EGYPT


	Sherif Othman	Powerlifting
	Rehab Ahmed	Powerlifting
	Mahmoud Attia	Powerlifting

	Fatma Omar	Powerlifting
	Mohamed El-Zayat	Taekwondo
	Mohamed Elefat	Powerlifting
	Hany Abdelhady	Powerlifting

FRANCE

	Riadh Tarsim	Cycling
	Souhad Ghazouani	Powerlifting




INDONESIA

	Khalimatus Sadiyah	Badminton
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IRAN




	Rouhollah Rostami	Powerlifting
	Vahid Nouri	Judo
	Mohammadreza Kheirollahzadeh	Judo
	Amir Khosravani	Men's long jump
	Mahdi Olad	Men's shot put
	Hashemiyeh Motaghian	Women's javelin throw
	Sarch Javanmardi	Shooting
	Saeid Afrooz	Men's javelin throw
	Zahra Nemati	Archery
	Hamed Amiri	Men's javelin throw
	Iran men's national sitting volleyball team	Sitting volleyball

- Mehrzad Mehravan
- Morteza Mehrzadselakjani
- Meisam Ali Pour
- Davoud Alipourian
- Morteza Ramezani Gerakoei
- Seyed Mohammed Hossein Hosseini Jed
- Sadegh Bigdeli
- Majid Lashkarisanami
- Hossein Golestani
- Mohammed Nemati
- Ramezan Salehijahjokolaei
- Mahdi Babadi






	Asghar Aziziaghdam	Taekwondo
	Amir Jafari	Powerlifting
	Amanolah Papi	Men's javelin throw

	Alireza Mokhtari	Men's shot put
	Hamed Solhipour	Powerlifting
	Mansour Pourmirzaei	Powerlifting
	Ramezan Biabani	Archery
	Mahdi Olad	Men's discus throw
	Ali Pirouj	Men's javelin throw
	Mahdi Pourrahnama	Taekwondo
	Sadegh Beit Sayah	Men's javelin throw
	Sajad Mohammadian	Men's shot put
	Saman Razi	Powerlifting






IRAQ

	Garrah Thaiash	Men's shot put
	Faris Abed	Powerlifting
	Wildan Nukhailawi	Men's javelin throw



JORDAN

	Omar Qarada	Powerlifting
	Abdelkareem Khattab	Powerlifting
	Jamil Elshebli	Powerlifting
	Ahmad Hindi	Men's shot put
	Khetam Abuawad	Table tennis


KAZAKHSTAN





	David Degtyarev	Powerlifting
	Anuar Sariyev	Judo
	Temirzhan Daulet	Judo
	Zarina Baibatina	Judo
	Nurdaulet Zhumagali	Swimming: Men's 100 metre breaststroke

KUWAIT

	Ahmad Al-Mutairi	Men's 100 metres
	Faisal Sorour	Men's shot put

MALAYSIA




	Bonnie Bunyau Gustin	Powerlifting
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	Cheah Liek Hou	Badminton
	Abdul Latif Romly	Men's Long jump
	Jong Yee Khie	Powerlifting
	Chew Wei Lun	Boccia


MOROCCO

	Abdeslam Hili	Men's 400 metres
	Zakariae Derhem	Men's shot put
	Ayoub Sadni	Men's 400 metres
	El Amin Chentouf	Men's marathon
	Youssra Karim	Women's discus throw
	Mohamed Amguoun	Men's 400 metres
	Fouzia El Kassoui	Women's shot put
	Azeddine Nouiri	Men's shot put
	Saida Amoudi	Women's shot put
	Hayat El Garaa	Women's discus throw
	Morocco men's national football 5-a-side team	Football 5-a-side
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samir Bara • Houssam Ghilli • Imad Berka • Elhabib Ait Bajja • Zouhair Snisla • Kamal Boughlam • Said El-Mselek • Ayoub Hadimi • Abderrazak Hattab • Abdellali Ait Al Hakem 	

NIGERIA

	Latifat Tijani	Powerlifting
	Olaitan Ibrahim	Powerlifting
	Tajudeen Agunbiade	Table tennis


OMAN

	Mohammed al-Mashaykhi	Men's shot put
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PAKISTAN

	Haider Ali	Men's discus throw
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QATAR

	Abdulrahman Abdulqadir Fiqi	Men's shot put
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SAUDI ARABIA

	Abdulrahman Al-Qurashi	Men's 100 metres
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TUNISIA




	Raoua Tlili	Women's shot put
	Walid Ktila	Men's 100 metres
	Raoua Tlili	Women's discus throw
	Walid Ktila	Men's 800 metres
	Ahmed Ben Moslah	Men's shot put
	Rouay Jebabli	Men's 1500 metres
	Yassine Guenichi	Men's shot put
	Mohamed Farhat Chida	Men's 400 metres
	Rima Abdelli	Women's shot put
	Somaya Bousaid	Women's 1500 metres
	Rouay Jebabli	Men's 400 metres

TURKEY


	Abdullah Öztürk	Table tennis
	Turkey women's national goalball team	Goalball
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatma Gül Güler • Reyhan Yılmaz • Sevda Altınoluk • Şeydanur Kaplan • Kader Çelik • Sevtap Altunoluk 	
	Bülent Korkmaz & Öznur Cüre	Archery
	Nihat Türkmenoğlu	Archery
	Ayşegül Pehlivanlar	Shooting
	Meryem Çavdar	Taekwondo
	Recep Çiftçi	Judo
	Besra Duman	Powerlifting
	Nesim Turan	Table tennis
	Ali Öztürk	Table tennis
	Kübra Korkut	Table tennis

-  Zeynep Çelik Judo
-  Sevilay Öztürk Swimming: Women's 50 metre backstroke
-  Bahattin Hekimoğlu Archery
-  Mahmut Bozteke Taekwondo





UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

-  Abdulla Sultan Alaryani Shooting
-  Mohamed Alhammadi Men's 800 metres
-  Mohamed Alhammadi Men's 100 metres

UNITED KINGDOM

-  Ayaz Bhuta Rugby

UZBEKISTAN

-  Feruz Sayidov Judo
-  Islam Aslanov Swimming: Men's 100 metre butterfly
-  Nafisa Sheripboeva Judo
-  Sharif Khalilov Judo

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

By the sun and her morning light, ﴿﴾ and [by] the moon when it follows her, ﴿﴾ and [by] the day when it reveals her, ﴿﴾ and [by] the night when it enshrouds her, ﴿﴾. By the heaven and the One Who built it, ﴿﴾ and [by] the earth and the One Who spread it, ﴿﴾ and [by] the soul and the One Who proportioned it, ﴿﴾ and inspired to discern its vices and piety, ﴿﴾. Successful indeed will be the one who purifies it, ﴿﴾ and he will indeed have failed he who eclipses it, ﴿﴾. Thamūd denied because of their rebellious nature, ﴿﴾ when the most wretched of them was dispatched, ﴿﴾. But then the messenger of God said to them, ‘[This is] the she-camel of God, so let her have her drink!’ ﴿﴾ But they denied him, then hamstrung her. So their Lord closed in on them because of their sin, and meted it equally [among them], ﴿﴾. And He does not fear the consequence of it.

The Sun

THE OBITUARIES

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي الْمُلْكَ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مَا أَرِيدُ
 فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنِّي نَادِيكَ ذِي الزُّبُرِ وَالْآخِرَةَ قَوْمِي مَسْلِمِينَ وَالْحَقِّي يَا صِدْقَ الْخَلْقِ

My Lord, indeed You have given me of sovereignty and You have taught me the interpretation of events. Originator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Take me to You in submission and join me to the righteous

Joseph 12 : 101

Calligraphy by Hasan Kan'an © FreeIslamicCalligraphy.com

Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Said Hakim

Scholarly
 Country: Iraq
 Born: 1 February 1936
 Died: 25 February 2021



Grand Ayatollah Hakim was one of the four maraji' of the Hawza Seminary in Najaf, Iraq, and accordingly, was 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 led around five percent of the Iraqi Shia population. His influence also stemmed partly from his relationship to Grand Ayatollah Mohsen Al-Hakim, a former religious leader of the Twelver Shia in Iraq.

Sheikh Mohammed Ali Al-Sabouni

Scholarly
 Country: Syria
 Born: 1 January 1930
 Died: 19 March 2021



Al-Sabouni was 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.

Hisham Djait

Scholarly
 Country: Tunisia
 Born: 6 December 1935
 Died: 1 June 2021



Hisham Djait was a well-known pan-Arab intellectual from Tunisia. A professor of history at the University of Tunis, he wrote important works such as *Al-Fitna* and *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. In 2019, he received the rank of Grand Officer in recognition for all of his academic and intellectual production.

Wahiduddin Khan

Scholarly
 Country: India
 Born: 1 January 1925
 Died: 21 April 2021



Wahiduddin Khan was an Islamic scholar advocating peaceful coexistence, interfaith dialogue, and social harmony. He authored over 200 books on Islam, prophetic wisdom, spirituality and coexistence in a multi-ethnic society. Many of his works expound on the Islamic position on modernity, secularism, democracy and freedom of speech. Khan's English translation of the Quran is widely acknowledged as simple and clear. Internationally recognized for his contributions to world peace, he received the Demiurgus Peace International Award, Padma Bhushan and Sayyidina Imam Al-Hasan Ibn Ali Peace Award by the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies. Khan launched the Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Peace Foundation and Qur'an Foundation to promote the true message of the Qur'an. He also co-founded Goodword Books, a popular publisher of books on Islam.

Imam Sayyed Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi

Political

Country: Sudan

Born: 25 December 1935

Died: 26 November 2020



Al-Mahdi was the president of the moderate National Umma Party and the imam of the Al-Ansar Sufi order. He was Prime Minister of Sudan from 1966-67 and from 1986-89 before the government was overthrown and he was forced into exile. Al-Mahdi returned to Sudan in January 2017 and worked to restore peace and democracy in Sudan. He derived a significant portion of his authority from being a descendant of Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the Mahdi. He also authored of a number of scholarly works.

President Idriss Deby Itno

Political

Country: Chad

Born: 18 June 1952

Died: 19 April 2021



Deby remained the President of Chad since taking power in 1990. He held great domestic authority through his ability to negotiate peace agreements in a country that 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. However, there had been growing unrest over economic conditions, corruption and proposed constitutional changes that would allow Itno to stay in power until 2033. Déby, described as a warrior-president, because of his active military activities, died of injuries following clashes with rebels in the north of the country.

Abidullah Ghazi

Administration of Religious Affairs

Country: United States of America

Born: 6 July 1936

Died: 11 April 2021



Dr Abidullah Ghazi was a prominent writer, speaker, and poet and cofounder of the IQRA' International Educational Foundation, along with his wife Dr Tasneema Ghazi. IQRA' is a non-profit organisation that creates Islamic studies textbooks and educational materials especially for children. The institution has produced a complete system of Islamic education for part-and

full-time schools and a comprehensive madrasa-integrated program for the Singapore madrasa system. IQRA's programs and educational materials are used in the US and worldwide.

Sheikh Dr Thauka Shuaib

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: India

Born: 29 July 1930

Died: 15 June 2021



(Obituary by Idris Kamal)

Shaikh Dr Thauka Shuaib ibn Ahmad Abdul Qadir (*Shams al-'Ulama'*) was born in 1930 in Kilakarai and hails from a distinguished family of saints and savants whose ancestors came from the Arab lands and settled in various coastal towns of South India.

His early education and development [*tarbiyyah*] was in his hometown, under the auspices of his noble father and then he then travelled extensively in India, South Asia, Middle East and North Africa where he sat with many *Auliya* and *'Ulama*—both privately and in institutions. He attained a Bachelor's degree in Sri Lanka and pursued his postgraduate studies in the USA where he attained a Masters, a Ph. D and a D. Litt.

He was fluent in Arabic, English, Malayalam, Persian, Tamil and Urdu. From Mevlana Rumi to Shakespeare and from Arabic *Qasidas* to Urdu *Ghazals*, he had memorised hundreds of lines of poetry. He had a high command of the Tamil language and his long association with countries in North Asia had also made him conversant in Cantonese and basic Japanese.

Professionally, he was based—at various points of his life—in the UAE, Hong Kong, Singapore (Malaya) and Europe. He began by working at a trading company before embarking on a wide array of businesses ranging from gemstones to mining. He used the prolonged stays in the various countries to engage in missionary [*da'wah*] activities and to work on his multi-decade spanning research on Arwi (or Arabic-Tamil).

Tamil Muslims of India, Sri Lanka and the world over are forever indebted to him for the recording of their rich history in an 824-page tome. It was a milestone work for which he earned many accolades and which has the unique honour of being released by the Presidents of 3 SAARC countries—India, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

In addition to his research work, he authored 4 major works and 7 minor treatises. He published 11 bilingual articles that addressed polemical issues that

engulfed the Tamil Muslim community in the 80's and 90's. His arrangement of the 'Arusi-Qadiri liturgy *Ratib Jalaliyyah* has more than 500,000 copies in circulation while his devotional prayer book *al-Munjiyat* has had 6 prints of 37,000 copies since 2006.

In 1994, he was presented with the *National Award for Outstanding Arabic Scholar*—a first for a Tamil Muslim—by the 9th President of India, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma. In 2016, the 7th President of Sri Lanka, Maithripala Sirisena, was the guest of honour at a function in Colombo to felicitate him for his services rendered to Islam and for promotion of religious harmony.

Up till his last breath, he was the patron, founder, president and trustee of multiple institutions and associations in India, Sri Lanka and the Far East. ۞

After the passing of his father in 1976, he became responsible for the 'Arusi-Qadiri affiliated mosques, madrasas, tekkes [*zawiyyah/khanqah*] and other organisations in South Asia and the Middle East. Whenever a construction, renovation or an upgrading work needed to be done for a mosque, madrasa or tekke building, he would be the first to contribute to the fundraising or completely pay for the expense.

His jovial personality, hand of largesse, breadth of knowledge, miracle working and making things easy for people endeared him to one and all. While he was lenient with others, he was always uncompromising on himself, ensuring that even the seemingly smallest *Sunnah* was established. He was steadfast in his adherence to the *Shari'ah* with absolutely no compromise on *Halal* and *Haram* and what is right and wrong.

He had the Prophetic quality of connecting with everyone at their level—be they saints or sinners, laity or leaders. For all his worldly achievements and honours, what really mattered and was of paramount importance to him was guiding the seekers [*salikin*] on the spiritual path and seeing his *muridin* and *muhibbin* reach the Goal.

His constant, ardent prayer was that everyone who took the Sufi path at his hands reach the Divine Presence, attain success in *dunya* and ultimate felicity in *akhirah*, partake in Allah's and the Prophet's a generosity, and realise Allah's and the Prophet's a love. This was his goal, his purpose and his meaning in life—every waking day.

The Shaikh left *dar al-fana'* for *dar al-baqa'* just after midnight on Tuesday, 15th June 2021 | 3rd Dhu l-Q'adah 1442. His last words, as his *ruh* left his body, was *Ya Wāli*. As he desired, he was interred by the

feet of his forefathers l at the '*Arusiyyah Takyah* in Kilakarai, Tamil Nadu, India.

He has left a legacy that will be difficult to emulate and a vacuum that will be hard to fill. Much remains to be said and written about the Shaikh, his works, his philanthropy, his influence in the corridors of power, his impact across the strata of society and his *karamat*. For now, we end with the words of the Prophet a:

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يَسْتَحِفُّ بِحَقِّهِمْ إِلَّا مُنَافِقٌ: ذُو السَّبِيَةِ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ، وَذُو الْعِلْمِ، وَإِمَامٌ مُشِيْطٌ.

*There are three types of people which only a hypocrite treats lightly: someone who grew old in Islam; someone who possesses Islamic learning; and a just leader.*¹

The description in the *hadith* above fits him to the letter: he was 90 (93 *hijri*) years when he was veiled from *dunya*; he possessed sound Islamic learning; and he was a just leader for thousands of students around the globe. Allah u be pleased with him and please him, sanctify his secret, and benefit us by him in both abodes.

وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَلِيهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ
رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ

Sheikh Dr Abdalqadir As-Sufi

Preachers & Spiritual Guides

Country: United Kingdom

Born: 1930

Died: 1 August 2021

Sheikh Dr Abdalqadir as-Sufi was a Sheikh of the Darqawi-Shadhili-Qadiri Tariqa, entering Islam with the Imam of the Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez, Morocco in 1967. His spiritual inheritance came from Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Habib of Meknes and Sheikh Muhammad al-Fayturi of Bengehazi. Sheikh Abdalqadir was responsible for the most far-reaching and successful Islamic dawa of the modern era, founding mosques in England, Spain and South Africa. As a result, communities of his students can be found across the world. His writing encompasses well over 20 books, as well as many essays and articles, covering various topics. Perhaps most notable has been his call for the proper implementation of zakat, a return to just forms of trade, the reviv-



1 Abu Dawud, Ibn Abi Shaiba, al-Bukhari in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, al-Tabarani and al-Baihaqi.

al of Imam Malik's legal school and his emphasis on correct and coherent community and family dynamics. He initiated the translation and publication of translations of the Qur'an into various languages, as well as numerous classical works of Islam, including the Muwatta of Imam Malik and Ash-Shifa of Qadi 'Iyad. He passed away in Cape Town, South Africa.

Sheikha Mariama Niasse

Social Issues

Country: Senegal

Born: 1932

Died: 26 December 2020

Sheikha Mariama Niasse was a revered scholar and leader known as the "Khadimatul Qur'an" (Servant of the Qur'an) for establishing one of the largest and most widely known Qur'an schools in West Africa. The "Dar Al-Qur'an Ecole Sheikha Mariama Niasse" in Dakar houses 1,300 students from preschool to secondary years and instructs Arabic, French and Islamic studies alongside Qur'anic education. She was the granddaughter of Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse, one of the founders of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and one of the greatest icons of the Tijaniyya Sufi order in the 20th century. Sheikha Mariama carried her father's legacy of providing Islamic traditional knowledge and spiritual guidance to thousands of people in West Africa, especially women. She was also well-known for her influence over local and regional politics, and for negotiating conflicts between Senegal and Iran, as well as Senegal and Sudan.



Naushad Merali

Business

Country: Kenya

Born: 2 January 1951

Died: 3 July 2021

Merali was 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 was also chairman of the mobile carrier Bharti Airtel's Kenya operations. Merali appeared in Africa's 50 Richest 2015 by Forbes.



Mohammed Mohibullah

Social Issues

Country: Myanmar

Born: 1975

Died: 29 September 2021

Mohibullah was the chairman of the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights (AR-SPH), one of the leading organisations giving voice to the Rohingya refugees. Following a crackdown by the Myanmar military, 730,000 Rohingya fled Rakhine state for Bangladesh in August 2017. The UN described the action as "textbook ethnic cleansing". Efforts to repatriate the refugees have failed so far as firstly, returnees lack a sufficient guarantee of safety, and secondly, their villages have been systematically destroyed.



Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan

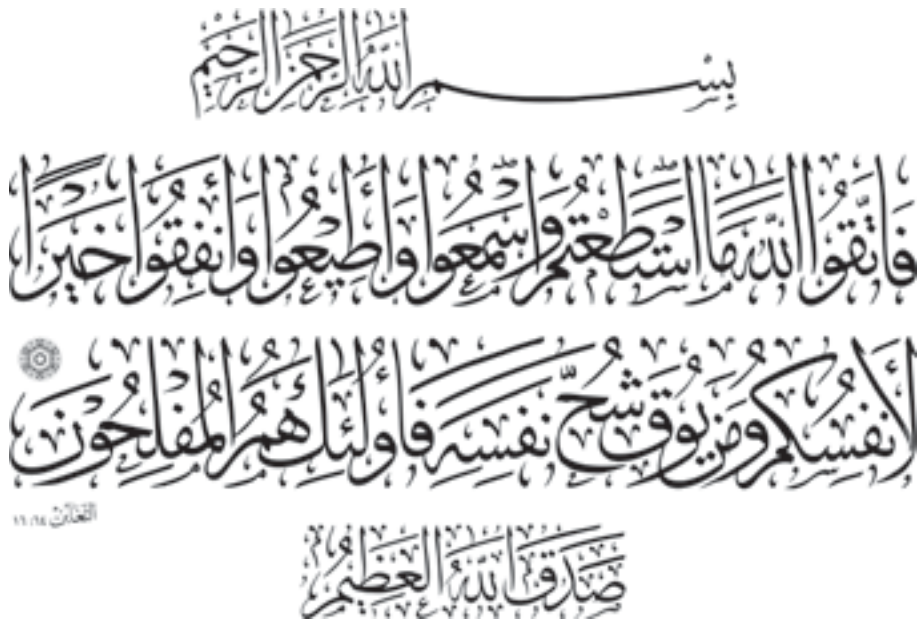
Science & Technology

Born: 1 April 1936

Died: 10 oct 2021

Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan was the scientist who brought nuclear weapons technology to Pakistan in the 1970s, making it the first and only Muslim-majority country to have nuclear weapons. This made him a national hero in Pakistan. His first degree was at Karachi University in 1960, before he went on to study metallurgical engineering in Berlin and then advanced studies in the Netherlands and Belgium. He founded the Khan Research Laboratories in 1976 and was its chief scientist and director for many years, being awarded the Nishan-i-Imtiaz for his services to the country. There were disputes with the government leading to house arrest, but he remained a hugely popular figure with strong grassroots support. He continued to use his financial success and stature to improve the quality of education in Pakistan through building educational institutions for metallurgical engineering.





So fear God as far as you can, and listen, and obey and expend; that is better for your souls.
 And whoever is shielded from the avarice of his own soul, such are the successful.

Mutual Disillusion, 16

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Coronavirus in the Light of Traditional Integral Ecology

by Prof Osman Bakar

THE UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE

In terms of the depth and breadth of impact on the global community, none of the events or phenomena of global significance that have taken place thus far this century can rival the menacing and still-ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has brought our contemporary technological civilisation to a near standstill. All talks and digital chats everywhere on earth are about vaccines and vaccination, which have themselves developed into controversial issues among pharmaceutical companies, medical and health practitioners, and the general public, especially in the United States. The world's focus right now is on the present effects and consequences of the pandemic, particularly health-related issues. This is completely understandable given the questions many people have raised about the efficacy and long-term safety of vaccines that are now in use. However, from the point of view of the future needs of humanity, particularly in the area of health security, it is extremely important that we take a broader view of the pandemic.

SEARCHING FOR THE ROOT CAUSES

By a “broader” view of the pandemic, I mean broadening our concern beyond not only the destructive social consequences it has brought, especially to marginalised and lower-income groups, but also including the issue of the origin of the coronavirus that is believed to be the material cause of the COVID-19. Broader still, I mean including the view that the pandemic has root causes of ecological proportions that run beyond the microscopic terrain of the coronavirus species and deeper into the natural realm. It is the main argument of this article that the origin of the coronaviruses, to which the outbreaks of both SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and COVID-19 have been respectively attributed, may be best understood in the light of an *integral ecology* perspective that comprehends the vast and multi-layered interface between the natural and human worlds. This interface, of which we still have scarce knowledge, may be appropriately described as ecological in nature. It is my contention that the ecological interface in question that was natural and normal for the human con-

dition once upon a time has already entered an abnormal, problematic, and dangerous phase, and it is fast deteriorating in direct proportion to technologically aided human greed! The time span of less than two decades that separates between the outbreaks of SARS (2003) and COVID-19 (2019) is a powerful signal to us humans, whom religions generally consider as divinely appointed guardians of planet Earth (*khalifatu'Llah fi'l-ard*), that we could be witnessing more frequent outbreaks of coronavirus-generated diseases and pandemics if planetary ecological health continues to deteriorate.

The idea of *integral ecology* is important for the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of planetary ecological health and the meaning of a balanced interface between the human and natural orders on which it depends. As we all know by now, human-originated factors, some more than others, could adversely affect the balanced state of ecological interface between the two orders. Greenhouse gas emissions are well-known examples of a major threat to the earth's planetary ecological health. Scientists maintain that it is these gas emissions which cause the earth's global warming and climate change, symptoms of a severe ecological disease that needs to be cured and healed. These emissions are, of course, consequences of excessive human greed that are manifested in the form of overconsumption of natural resources. If in the given example we wish to further pursue and extend the causal chain of ecological disorders that runs through the human and natural realms, then we may view the excessive human greed that produces the emissions as a side effect of our materialist cultural environment.

What we have just seen may be termed a chain of ecological disorders traversing the biophysical and human cultural environments. It may also be described as a cycle of ecological disorders originated by modern man who has lost a sense of the sacred and who is overzealous in the pursuit of material wealth. If the chain or cycle is not soon broken, it could well turn into the proverbial “vicious circle” in which human life would be trapped. This is what the Qur'an terms *da'irat al-saw'*¹ (literally: circle of evil) when referring rather significantly to the consequences of “hypocritical life.” It is extremely important that

¹ *The Qur'an*, 48:6.

VIROLOGY: PROMISES AND PERILS

world bodies like UNESCO take serious efforts to break the ecological vicious circle that appears to be haunting humanity right now. Otherwise, the newly emerging ecological vicious circle could put in jeopardy the United Nations' seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a programmatic initiative for the global community. Through the particular example of the cycle of ecological disorders that I have given, I have demonstrated the practical side of *integral ecology* and its significance to human life on planet Earth. In its ideal form, *integral ecology* refers to the natural state of interrelatedness and interdependence between the natural and human worlds and the balanced state of ecological interface between the two worlds. However, it appears that we are now resigned to the fact that the balanced ecological interface is an earthly paradise lost, not to be regained.

Modern man's appetite for material wealth and power is growing and expanding rather than subsiding and contracting. His consumerism-centred materialist culture, particularly its conspicuous consumption habits, guarantees him a fertile ground to enhance his appetite for material wealth, though not always practically ending in success. For those who have a strong appetite for material power, particularly of the military type, and who are strongly committed to the goal of securing physical superiority of their respective groups or nations in order to dominate and subdue others, technology is the means to achieve this superiority.

The world's forests are on fire

Contemporary man is now encroaching on the viral kingdom that is inhabited by various virus species, including the newly discovered and now famous coronavirus. This he does in the name of scientific inquiry that is widely believed to go hand-in-hand with exploitations of viral resources, mainly by the major corporations, for military and biomedical purposes. The viral kingdom is increasingly viewed as the new frontier of scientific research that could generate new kinds of wealth and power. Virological research for military purposes is an ongoing enterprise, as is research on viral diseases. Virology is a relatively new science, but it is rapidly gaining importance. The present coronavirus pandemic will undoubtedly further its significance and standing. However, virology is also a science that is in greater need of ethical wisdom and guidance than any other biological science. Its research paths are strewn with tempting promises of new and exciting knowledge along with its attending possibilities of new wealth and power. However, it is also fraught with many perils, particularly health hazards to both its working scientists and the general public. We are reminded by the Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwan al-Safā'*), the tenth/eleventh century association of philosopher-scientists in Islam, that the mixing of good and evil in the natural world is in its most complex form in the microbiological order. This observation may help explain the hazardous nature of research paths in virology.



Obviously dangerous to the world human community and the planetary ecological health are the stockpiles of biological weapons that are now in the hands of many countries. According to some reports, sixteen countries so far are known or suspected to be in possession of biological weapons. These countries include the United States, Russia, Germany, Israel, Japan, China, Iran, and North Korea. Regardless of the actual number of countries in possession of such weapons, the mere fact that these weapons exist and that viral research continues to be secretly carried out in various countries with the expressed purpose of producing more lethal biological weapons is sufficient cause for grave concern. Biological weapons, just like their nuclear counterparts, pose the gravest danger to planetary ecological health. These weapons may be misused and abused at any time, especially at the hands of mentally unstable leaders or when they fall into the hands of terrorists. These weapons are ecological time bombs that can explode at any time. From the point of view of planetary ecological health, these weapons of mass destruction have no right or justification to exist. They should be destroyed, and virological research for military purposes should be declared illegal and halted. Even virological research for peaceful purposes needs to be re-examined so that stringent safety measures can be imposed on its pursuit. That is, if it is deemed truly necessary for the benefit of humanity.

A thorough re-examination of the merits and demerits of virological research is called for. Towards

that end, I call for a constructive dialogue that would bring together virologists and scientists in related fields — biomedical scientists and health practitioners, ecologists, philosophers of science, theologians, ethicists, and other pertinent experts — to discuss major issues that arise from scientific explorations of the viral world. I would argue that the concept of *integral ecology*, especially as articulated in traditional Islamic philosophy, may serve a useful purpose in the proposed intellectual dialogue by virtue of its capacity to situate the viral world in its right ontological context independently of the empirical approaches adopted in virology. Or, as I have earlier characterised it, it is by virtue of its comprehension of “the vast and multi-layered ecological interface between the natural and human worlds.”

DEVELOPING A MODERN DISCOURSE ON INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Since the concept of *integral ecology* is still new to many people, I will try to further explain the idea. The term *integral ecology* was first explicitly used by the scientist Hilary Moore in his book *Marine Ecology* (1958), but was left undefined. It was not to be used again until this century, when it was conceptualised and theorised mainly at the hands of Catholic writers. The initial Catholic discourse on the concept of *integral ecology* demonstrated an attempt to provide some kind of conceptual umbrella under which a wide array of political, social, economic, and en-



vironmental problems afflicting the contemporary world could be addressed in an integrated and holistic manner. But more than any other figure, it was His Holiness Pope Francis who helped popularise the concept of *integral ecology* to the world through his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si*.² In my view, it is to date the best single-volume work on integral ecology. In this encyclical, Pope Francis refers to the Vatican position on the environmental and ecological crisis that has progressively been built up through the works of his Papal predecessors. In its content, it reminds us of Seyyed Hossein Nasr's best-seller *Man and Nature*, first published in 1968,³ with which it shares many commonalities, including, most important of all, spiritual and intellectual perspectives on the environmental and ecological crisis. Like Nasr's *Man and Nature*, Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of how humanity has arrived at the present state of ecological crisis. But nearly half a century after Nasr's work, the crisis has worsened. In the light of new manifestations of the crisis in both the human and natural domains, *Laudato Si* proposes *integral ecology* as the framework, including its moral and ethical dimensions, through which it seeks to address the crisis. It has broadened the scope of the ecological crisis discussed by Nasr to include issues of social disorders and cultural upheavals that have disrupted the human ecosystem more frequently than ever before, particularly in the last few decades. With this broader meaning of ecological crisis in mind, the use of the term *integral ecology* appears to gain greater justification.

I have had a good opportunity on several occasions to present an Islamic response to the ecological perspectives of *Laudato Si*, including at three international seminars. In August 2015, soon after its appearance, I presented a paper titled "Planetary Sustainability and Justice: A Response to Pope Francis' Encyclical on Care for Our Common Home" at Caux International Roundtable in Kuala Lumpur on the theme of, "Islamic Contributions to Global Sustainable Development", to which I was invited as a speaker.⁴ In my presentation, I attempted to provide an Islamic response to Pope Francis' position on four main issues, namely: eco-theology, human roots of the ecological crisis, integral ecology, and

solutions to the ecological crisis. In the course of my discussion, I found myself more in agreement with the Pope than in disagreement. I thought then this augured well for the future of Muslim-Christian dialogue on the contemporary ecological crisis and the current global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). My second presentation was in an article published in 2016 as a chapter of a book.⁵ The title of the article was, "Understanding the Challenge of Global Warming in the Light of the Qur'anic Idea of Earth as Our Only Planetary Home." Actually, the published article was an expanded version of a paper I had presented at the International Conference on Ethics, Climate Change and Energy held in Bangkok in November 2014 when *Laudato Si* had not yet been published. But rather fortunately, I was in the midst of revising and expanding the article for publication when the encyclical came into my hands. This unexpected development provided me with a good opportunity to incorporate into the article my critical appreciation of some of the Pope's views on the ecological crisis, since the theme of the Bangkok Conference and the title of my article were close to the heart of the encyclical's ecological concern.

One of the Pope's views I incorporated was his identification of the loss of the traditional appreciation of nature, which combines the spiritual and the scientific, as one of the explanatory factors for the ecological crisis. But he argues that the continuing absence of this traditional appreciation of nature, particularly in the West, proves to be a major obstacle to effective educational programs on planetary care and ecological education. He further argues that a scientific or materialistic appreciation of nature alone would not be able to help sustain the earth's planetary health, as the last two centuries of modern man's exploitation of the earth have clearly shown.

Another international academic event that I would like to briefly mention here in relation to my response to Pope Francis' integral ecology is the RIH International Conference on Environmental Humanities at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in December 2018. The Conference theme on Environmental Humanities is very significant as far as the pursuit of integral ecology is concerned. The term "environmental humanities" itself is laden with meanings that would

2 Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy Father Francis: On Care for our Common Home* (The Vatican Press, 2015).

3 See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Encounter of Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968). In all subsequent editions, the book's main title has been shortened to *Man and Nature*.

4 The event was co-organised by Caux Roundtable, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA and International Islamic University Malaysia on 12-13 August 2015. Caux Roundtable was particularly interested in Muslim responses to Pope Francis' *Laudato Si*.

5 See Imtiyaz Yusuf, ed., *A Planetary and Global Ethics for Climate Change and Sustainable Energy* (Bangkok: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and College of Religious Studies, Mahidol University, 2016); for my chapter, 117-141.

help enhance the epistemological integrity of integral ecology. Guided by this understanding and optimism, I decided to title my paper, "Envisioning the Earth's Multiple Environments in Harmony: Outlines of Islam's *Tawhidic* Integral Ecology." The term "*tawhidic* integral ecology" is understood to refer to the Earth's multiple environments—natural, built, and cultural—viewed as a unified and harmonious system through the lens of Islam's *tawhidic* worldview. The idea of a harmonious interrelationship between the natural, built, and cultural environments may be described as a fundamental feature of Islam's environmental aesthetics. From the Islamic perspective, integral ecology presupposes the epistemological role of both natural theology and spiritual, or metaphysical, anthropology. I could see a broad overlapping in ideas between Pope Francis' Catholic and Islam's *tawhidic* perspectives on integral ecology. However, I would argue that the Pope's integral ecology could easily be integrated into the *tawhidic* perspective given the latter's more comprehensive, and also more detailed, treatment of the subject in question. It is in the light of the envisaged *tawhidic* integral ecology that the issue of the coronavirus pandemic as an ecological disease or disorder should be discussed.

CONCLUSION

It is a challenging task to be able to discover the root causes of the coronavirus pandemic. However, the task has to be undertaken by the world scientific community. This is because the possibilities of more frequent viral upheavals are very real if the root causes are not addressed. As part of discovering the root causes, we have to do some constructive soul-searching to see whether or not we ourselves as global citizens are partly responsible for the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. If our already well-known broken relationship with nature turns out to be one of the causes, then it is a matter of urgency that we seek ways to mend it. But as the foregoing discussion shows, even without knowing the root causes of the pandemic, present-day humanity needs to re-examine its overall ecological relationships with the rest of nature.

Until now, efforts aimed at discovering the root causes of the novel pandemic are still meagre. The

issue has not received the attention it deserves. Unfortunately, this lack of concern with the root causes of human problems, both at the level of ideas and the level of practical life, seems to be characteristic of the contemporary world. As a result, societal problems keep piling up practically in every country without solutions in sight. The origin of COVID-19 is still an unresolved mystery. The world wants to know the origin of the coronavirus that caused COVID-19. From the point of view of the future safety and security of the global community, the issue of the origin of the coronavirus in question is no less important than the issue of safe vaccines and vaccination.

The global community is informed that there are several theories being offered to explain the origin of the new coronavirus. The word 'origin' in the current discourse on the pandemic is understood in three different senses. First, the coronavirus is believed to have originated from a scientific and technological lab that is undertaking some form of viral research. The assumption here is that somehow, a manufactured or scientifically manipulated coronavirus had escaped from a lab, with some fingers pointing to China as the original source. Second, the coronavirus is believed to have been transmitted directly from an animal to the first person in Wuhan, China, to have contracted COVID-19. And third, a Chinese scientist had purposely extracted the coronavirus from an animal for experimental purposes in his lab. None of these claims has been found to be conclusive. It is not the purpose of this article to enter into a detailed discussion of the disputed 'origin.' Hopefully, the mystery of the coronavirus origin will eventually be resolved. However, from the perspective of *tawhidic* integral ecology, it does not matter which sense of origin of the coronavirus turns out to be true. Uncontrolled virological research, which we may associate with the first and third senses of 'origin,' is considered a threat to human life and the planetary ecological order. Even in the second sense of 'origin,' man is not blameless. Many people hold the belief that, upon seeing large-scale human destruction of the world of plants and animals everywhere, the natural hosts of viruses, it is only a matter of time before a major viral upheaval haunts the human species!

Prof Osman Bakar is currently Al-Ghazali Chair of Islamic Thought at ISTAC-International Islamic University Malaysia and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science at University of Malaya.

COVID-19 and its Impact on the World

by Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri

The Corona pandemic that struck the world suddenly at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, heavily impacted not only health, the economy, the structure of state governance and international relations, but also daily life in every home across the world.

Despite the scientific and technological advancements enjoyed by developed countries, which led them to believe that everything was under control and that containing the pandemic would be easy and affordable, the pandemic proved that this attitude was mere arrogance and wishful thinking. The pandemic spread quickly to every part of the world, wreaking havoc in all countries. Millions of people have died and millions have been hospitalized.

The controversy over the source and nature of the virus has not yet been resolved, but it is certain that what happened and is happening is devastating, whether or not we submit to conspiracy theories.

What has appeared to date in terms of changes after the pandemic had struck the world is considered a precursor to what the world will be in coming years. The element of surprise has prompted many countries to work urgently through their strategic centers to develop plans and programs to deal with the challenges sparked by this pandemic, and ways to deal with its ramifications.

No one knows when any country will reach certainty that it has eradicated the virus, not even China, where the virus first emerged, and which announced at one point that the pandemic had ended in its territories. As of now, it is still recording many cases.

The battle with the virus is of a cosmic nature. Unless it is contained throughout the world, it will remain a threat that can strike at any time in different forms, as we have seen recently.

Some countries are in a hurry to end the lockdowns for economic reasons. This might be dangerous: if people freely mingle without strict controls and precautions, it could result in new waves of the pandemic.

COVID-19 revealed the fragility of the existing international system, putting the values and ideals it advocates at stake. Instead of cooperation and solidarity, regression and neglect appeared even within individual systems and countries. In less-developed countries, the elderly and migrants in some cases, were ignored when providing medical services and vaccinations. Many countries could not afford to

provide vaccines to their populations. At the same time, vaccine manufacturers raised their prices.

Meanwhile, the confrontation between the United States and China over the pandemic is actually a confrontation over dominance and markets. This is not a healthy environment, and it threatens world peace and security.

In light of this confrontation, the world will lose the chance to change the idea and means of international cooperation. There is a dire need to adopt new and more humane policies that view the world as a single family united by the pandemic. However, the lack of strong and wise leadership in the world is increasing confusion, and fear is in the air.

In order to prevent the virus from spreading, the pandemic forced the world to implement social distancing measures. This led to the emergence of what is known as 'social isolation', something that the world has never witnessed before. The restriction of movement developed into cancelling travels and meetings: almost everything is conducted online. This situation has created many difficulties and caused numerous problems.

The experience of staying at home during last year had many positive and negative consequences. More than 2.5 billion people were restricted to their residences. Millions did not have the option to choose their places of lodging, as many travellers were abandoned at airports. Many expatriate workers and students remained separated from their home countries and families without any psychological or financial preparation.

The stress and anxiety caused by the fear of contracting COVID-19 coincided with other fears for those around the world who lost their jobs or are expected to lose their jobs. Thousands of factories, along with millions of people, have stopped working, airline companies were shut down, and the tourism industry is in shambles. According to UNCTAD, the loss in tourism alone has been more than \$4 trillion so far. In terms of the world of trade, the loss has reached more than \$4 trillion according to the World Bank.

At a time when world powers are seeking to cover the deficit resulting from the turmoil of the economy and provide urgent direct assistance to their citizens, many developing countries are unable to meet the most basic needs of their citizens, making the gap be-

tween the rich and poor increase continuously.

Education also was impacted at all levels. Students have had to receive instruction online, which is not sufficiently available for millions of students in less-developed countries.

COVID-19 has increased the reliance on technology to run businesses, and the term; 'work from home' became a reality of doing business. Business managers sought to take advantage of the digital development in the way they conducted business in all areas, meaning that the post-Covid world will witness an interest in promoting and developing everything related to digital technologies and their applications at all levels. This in turn will lead to increased networking among countries with well-established structures.

Increased networking promotes knowledge exchange in all areas. This will, of course, provide an economic return. However, less-developed countries will not be able to cope with this change.

The increased economic gap between rich and poor countries will affect the pattern and rates of migration. It will also be reflected in regional and internal conflicts.

The struggle over economic resources, especially in the energy field, will rise, as the oil market will be governed by political competition and the pursuit of market dominance. In addition to energy, there will

be fierce competition over food and its sources. This competition will go beyond the frameworks of cooperation, plans, and programs that were adopted by international and regional groups such as the specialized United Nations organizations. There will be an insatiable interest by rich countries that possess capital and technology in poor countries with untapped virgin land, whether that is due to lack of funds, mismanagement, or conflicts.

The role of international organizations will diminish drastically. This can be seen now in the UN and its specialized agencies, such as WHO and UNESCO.

All countries are now preparing for a post-COVID-19 world, bearing in mind their national interests as a basis that defines the framework of their movement to deal with this new world. They are also reshaping their economies and reducing their expenses to compensate for their incurred losses due to the pandemic.

It is necessary for the world to learn a lesson from this pandemic and produce a unified global vision to create a new world order based on solidarity and sharing.

Viruses are dangerous to people's health and world safety, but greed and selfishness are more dangerous to the world at large.

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri is the Former Director General of ISESCO

Hazardous biowaste from the Covid pandemic



The Humanitarian: The Prophet's Civilising Mission

Shaykh Faid Mohammed Said

Our universal notions of compassion and decency adhere to the laws and institutions that serve mankind, whether spiritual or temporal, insofar as they cultivate innate goodness in humanity. Social constitution in its particularity may determine the nature of manners and morals, and statutes may become obsolete with the passage of time, but the principle of inherent goodness is as universal as it is timeless. And religion, as an organising framework, functions to establish justice, guiding humanity to what is most virtuous and illuminating the unity of innate goodness through diversity.

In this regard, the Muslim belief in the essential unity of God's messengers is particularly illuminating: central to the message of Islam is belief in all divine emissaries and scriptures. Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus—peace on them all—are specifically mentioned as bearers of God's Word (although not all of these messages are extant in record), whilst others are mentioned as inheritors. The Qur'an, being the most universal form of the Divine Word, rounds off the distinguished list of emissaries with Muhammad—on him peace and blessings. The Qur'an thereby addresses the universality of humanity:

*'Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been bestowed from on high upon us, and that which has been bestowed upon Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants, and that which has been vouchsafed to Moses and Jesus, and that which has been vouchsafed to all the prophets by their Sustainer; we make no distinction between any of them. And it is unto Him that we surrender ourselves."*¹

Whilst the centrality of God's Oneness runs like a red thread through all Divine messages, the attention to individual and social responsibility is amplified in both the Qur'an and Islam's secondary literature:

'And remember! We accepted this solemn pledge from the Children of Israel: "You shall worship

*none but God; and you shall do good unto your parents and kinsfolk, and the orphans, and the poor; and you shall speak unto all people in a kindly way [...]"*²

By emphasizing the whole of the 'Children of Israel', the verse just cited draws attention to both the Torah, the Gospel, and the shared testimony of earlier traditions to uphold and spread humane ideals.

The Prophet Muhammad—on him peace and blessings—in his own teachings emphasized the essential connections between all apostles and their missions:

*"I am the nearest to Jesus, son of Mary, in this world and in the next, for all prophets are brothers on their father's side and share the same religion, and there has been no prophet between me and Jesus"*³

And, like his 'brother prophets' before him, the last of God's messengers also valorised personal and civic responsibilities, saying: 'I have been sent only to perfect manners and morals.'⁴

Good morals and humane conduct are coextensive with worshipping God, as evidenced by the injunction to the newest recipients of the Divine Writ and the reminder to earlier recipients. Doing good to one's own ('parents and kinsfolk') as well as the dispossessed in society ('the orphans and the poor'), and good communication (encompassing the ideas of happy coexistence and cohabitation) are therefore inseparable from commemoration of God. In the memorable verse of the Qur'an that enjoins the ritual fast, God reveals, "O you who have attained to faith, fasting is ordained for you as it was ordained for those before you, so that you might remain conscious of God."⁵ Jesus—on him peace—is famously abstemious in older religious literature as well as in the literature of Islam, but in the Qur'an, we find that his self-denial conjoins prayer and alms-giving, thereby underlining the equal importance of self-realization through worship (of which fasting is the highest form), charitableness,

1 Al Baqarah, 2:136

2 Al Baqarah, 2:83

3 Sabih Muslim: 2365

4 Bukhari, Al Adab Al Mufrad: 273

5 Al Baqarah, 2:183

compassionate care, and graceful conduct:

*“And He has made me blessed wherever I may be; and He has enjoined upon me prayer and charity as long as I live. And He has endowed me with piety towards my mother; and He has not made me haughty or bereft of grace.”*⁶

The shared traditions of worship and the pledge to benefit mankind means that Islam, Christianity, and Judaism have always been in conversation, in a past-and-present simultaneity. This is a dialogue that cannot be broken off. The need for dialogue is even greater in the face of the myriad challenges to peaceful coexistence and social harmony in our globalised world. These come not only in the traditional battlegrounds of religion, race/nation, political, and economic organisation, but also in the competition of generations, the so-called battle of the sexes, the destabilization of gender and identity, to name but a few of the challenges faced by humanity.

With their monotheistic counterparts, Muslims share a common fount from which universal principles spring. The Qur’an reveals a relationship conceived and consummated in a primordial realm:

*“And indeed! We did accept a solemn pledge from all the prophets—from thee [O Muhammad], as well as from Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary; for We accepted a most solemn, weighty pledge from all of them; so that He might ask those men of truth as to [what response] their truthfulness [received on earth]...”*⁷

As each of these Prophets was to become a guiding force of human societies—in many cases, as tribal patriarch and common-progenitor of later communities—their collective pledge to convey the Divine Message was always sensitive to time, place and audience. While the Messengers did indeed guide to the truth, by implication we, too, are pledged to uphold the Divine Writ, to ‘perfect manners and morals.’ The ways and means may be conditioned by time and place, but all the principles that pertain to good morals and humane conduct are universal.

Shifts in thought and behaviour are undeniably the cause of variation in environment. Therefore, social interaction necessitates sensitivity and consideration

of others’ psycho-social conditions, best expressed by the formula ‘*you shall speak unto all people in a kindly way*’. Thunderous sermons from the pulpit, threatening fire and brimstone on a society that has lost its moral compass might once have been fashionable in particular settings (its efficacy is debatable), but humans respond far better to reason and humane overtures that adhere to the principle, ‘speak unto all people in a kindly way’.

In this regard, it is well worth remembering that if the Prophet Muhammad—on him peace and blessings—defined his mission as the perfection of morals and manners, he certainly made good on that claim, and to a superlative degree. Where others variously distinguished between Jew and Gentile, freedman and bondsman, between priest and layman, man and woman, the Prophet’s message is an address to all humanity, embracing, in fact, all of our conceptions about the known universe: “*And We have sent thee as mercy towards all the worlds.*”⁸ While the content of the message is obviously universal, one aspect of its dissemination, the Messenger’s living example, is greatly instructive. He patiently received and taught Revelation. Just as patiently, he explained the purpose of his mission, literally winning over a great many with his smile, and a great many others through his sheer forbearance.

If the thematic and formal properties of Qur’anic revelation awed follower and opponent alike, its duration (twenty-three years of the Prophet’s mission) and gradual disclosure allowed for easy ingestion and lasting effect. The Qur’an itself draws attention to the process:

*‘A discourse which We have gradually unfolded, so that thou might read it out to mankind by stages, seeing that We have bestowed it from on high step by step, as one revelation.’*⁹

The point, of course, is that even the best discourse—whether glad tidings of a happy afterlife or exhortations to liberal values and meritorious conduct in civil society—will always find a responsive audience and lasting impression if the approach is compassionate and graceful. For that very reason, the Prophet’s example remains the indispensable model. In commending the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—God commends his timeless example:

⁶Maryam, 19:31-32

⁷Al Ahzab, 33:7-8

⁸Al Anbiyaa, 21:107

⁹Al Israa, 17:106

*“Even as We have sent unto you an apostle from among yourselves to convey unto you Our messages, and to cause you to grow in purity, and to impart unto you revelation and wisdom, and to teach you that which you knew not.”*¹⁰

Embodying what the ancient Roman moralists liked to call virtuoso capacities, involving wisdom, patience, justice, ardent sincerity, courage and liberality, the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—was tireless in his efforts to remedy social malaise, correct misconceptions, and imbue universal values, even when these found expression in other sources. In this, he was true to his word, that he had ‘come to perfect’ (the very expression revelatory of his own deep humility and recognition of the contribution of his brother-prophets).

The Qur’an itself insists that it is a confirmation of what came before, and that the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—is the last, complete, role model. God thus confirms the Prophet’s stature: *“Verily, in the Apostle of God you have a good example for everyone who looks forward to God and the Last Day, and remembers God unceasingly.”*¹¹ As the consummate example for humanity, the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—is the pattern for all times (to ‘the Last Day’), and emulation of the prophetic paradigm is no less than the measure of God-consciousness (‘and remembers God unceasingly’). Translated into lived experience, what defines the prophetic paradigm is the Prophet’s fusion of a moral standard that is, above all, humane and universal, as well as ethical principles laid down in the Qur’an which, broadly speaking, aim at justice and equality, social cohesion, and good governance.

The Prophet’s virtuous conduct—in the classic sense of one in possession of *virtu*—in fact pre-dated his actual ministry, for he was already feted as ‘al-Ameen,’ the Trusted, in his pre-Islamic society. The Prophet’s moral rectitude simply did not permit expediency, whether personal or political. The moral course is always the rational one. His epithet as ‘the Trusted’ was sealed by his refusal to favour any one interest group during the rebuilding of the Ka’ba. All of the special signifiers of virtuous conduct were on display at once in his negotiation of the Treaty of Hudaibiyya: steadfastness, cool courage, temperance,

sincere goodwill, and liberality. If these qualities proclaim God-consciousness, their tangible benefit in the here-and-now is peace and stability.

All the distinctions that we associate with the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—attract superlatives in their own right, but apropos of our discussion, it is the consummation of manners and morals in his own character and conduct that deserve special mention. They certainly elicit the highest praise: *“...Behold, thou [O Muhammad] keepest indeed to a sublime way of life”*¹² Consistent with interpretations of the term *khuluq* in Arabic, ‘way of life’ also encompasses shades of meanings that include ‘character’ or ‘innate disposition’, as well as the concept of ‘habitual behaviour’ or ‘manner’. When asked about the Prophet’s character, the simple reply of the Lady ‘Aisha, God be pleased with her, stressed the same: *“His way of life was the Qur’an.”*¹³

And those who came into contact with him could not fail to be impressed by the Prophet’s special traits, to the extent that in his own lifetime began the ripple effect of elevated thought, individual, and social progress, and universal enlightenment—a phenomenon we may broadly describe as ‘civilization in Islam’. The ‘coming to perfect manners and morals’ is the humanitarian mission of Islam. His companions, most obviously, but also succeeding generations, basked in the honour, glory even, of civilization in Islam precisely because they imbibed those special traits bequeathed by the Prophet—on him peace and blessings.

In one sense, the compilation of the Qur’an, signalling the end of Revelation, announced that ‘perfection’. However, in another sense it set down the pattern for emulation, always accessible and always discernible in the Prophet’s own life. Thus, God says: *‘Say [O Prophet]: “If you love God, follow me, God will love you and forgive you your sins; for God is much forgiving, a dispenser of grace.”*¹⁴ There is an additional set of meanings here: moral standards may be destabilized by variation in environment, but fidelity to God will be measured by emulating the one whose characteristics He has so exalted. Rather than weaken in faith, the Prophet’s example, synonymous with divine love, responds with forbearance and grace.

The Prophet’s humanitarian mission thereby not only wrought an ocean of change in social attitudes that we have elsewhere described as ‘global thinking’,

10 Al Baqarah, 2:151

11 Al Ahzab, 33:21

12 Al Qalam, 68:4

13 Bukhari, Al Adab Al Mufrad: 308

14 Aal ‘Imran, 3:31



but, as a root-and-branch project, it also focused on personal development that sought to elevate the individual from baser instincts. As the basic unit of organized society, the elevated individual would inevitably produce a humane culture. Accordingly, self-image rested not on power over others, but self-control. The literature of Islam abounds with the Prophet's moral didacticism. 'The strong person is not the powerful wrestler. Rather, the strong person is the one that controls their anger,' he counselled in Hadith Tradition.¹⁵

In the same vein, the Prophet—on him peace and blessings—warns against suspicion, which includes notions of slander and baseless rumour, saying: "Avoid suspicion, for it is the falsest speech,"¹⁶ and, "It is enough of a lie for a person to narrate everything that they hear."¹⁷ The larger point here is the Prophet's conflation of individual and social conscience. Our supposedly 'modern' assumptions about motivational drives and impulses have produced conflicting analyses of psycho-social relations in the realms of gender, class, and local and national sovereignty. The Prophet—on him peace and blessings—recognised that personal regulation is complementary to social harmony. He thereby warned against behaviour that presages cycles of violence:

"The bankrupt will arrive on the Day of Resurrection with prayers, fasting, and charity, but having also reviled others, spread falsehood, unlawfully devoured wealth, and attacked and shed blood of others. In recompense, the bankrupt's good deeds will be transferred to their victims. If his good deeds are insufficient, the victims' poor deeds

*will be transferred to the bankrupt, and they will thereafter face severe recompense."*¹⁸

These traditions may be read in conjunction with the explicit warning in the Qur'an against the disruption to communal ties occasioned by suspicion or misrepresentation:

*"...If any iniquitous person comes to you with a slanderous tale, use your discernment, lest you hurt people unwittingly and afterwards be filled with remorse for what you have done."*¹⁹

These are fragmentary insights into the ethical codes and moral precepts that underpin Islam's humanitarian, civilizing mission, which is the foundation of all religious truth. Civilization in Islam, with its heightened focus on human development as the pivotal feature of social progress, effectively turned the page on humanity's dark past and opened a future lit by the sun of freedom. Its rays point to compassion, grace, justice and tolerance. If the sun is momentarily eclipsed, we must nonetheless constantly strive to realize the future in the present. We have the best of guides to lead us into that ever-present future: Muhammad—on him peace and blessings—the one who embraced all humanity and extended his hand to even the most implacable foe.

And God reminds us: "Tell those who are bent on denying the truth that if they desist, all that is past shall be forgiven them..."²⁰ Our world is being shaped by a new era, and we must respond to the challenges that mark this transition with those universal principles that first lit the world.

Sheikh Faïd Mohammed Saïd was raised in Eritrea, where he was educated by Sheikh Hamid, the Senior Judge of the Sharia Court in Asmara. He later moved to Madinah al Munawarah, where he continued his studies under Sheikh Atiyah Mohammed Salim, the Resident Scholar of al Masjid al Nabawi and Senior Judge of Madinah. Since that time, Sheikh Faïd has been invited to lecture all over the world, particularly in Canada, Germany, the Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UK. He has also headed Madina College, a centre of learning in London.

15Bukhari: 6114

16Bukhari: 6724

17Muslim: 05

18Muslim: 2581

19Al Hujurat, 49:6

20Al Anfal, 8:38

Think. Rethink. Think Again

by Qamar-ul Huda, PhD

The pandemic has been a fortuitous time for reflection on our lives, our work-life balance, and an opportunity to re-think what is important to us. A great deal has been written about finding new hobbies or spending more time with family and friends via digital platforms. There are numerous reflections on thinking for creativity, thinking to find a new business, thinking to forget pain and loss, or thinking for self-growth. Thinking during a global pandemic and under unpredictable uncertain times—for some an excruciating time of suffering and loss of loved ones—can illicit thoughts tied to frenetic insecurity and ambiguity. Furthermore, relentless and confusing messages from leaders can result in depressing thoughts or a greater heightened imagination.

During these past eighteen months of the COVID-19 pandemic, a major concern among health experts has been the decrease in routine vaccinations. Some families avoided visits to health-care facilities and resources, and personnel were diverted to focus on the COVID-19 crisis. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), in 2020, twenty-three million children globally missed basic vaccinations. Even in the case of robust government efforts to minimize the spread of the pandemic, health experts, policy-makers, and researchers needed to think of new strategic ways to manage many moving parts.

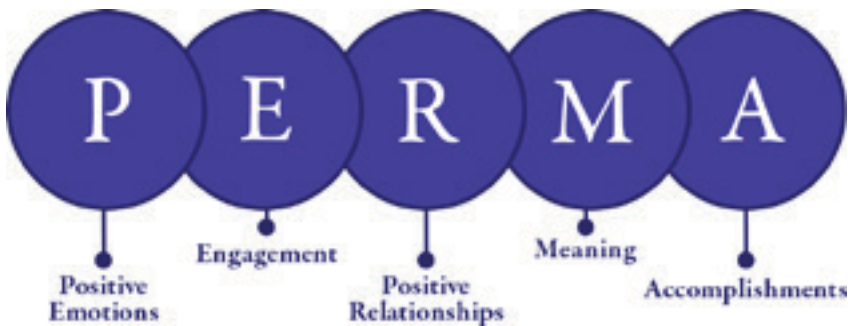
The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated that health security is no less essential than physical security and national security. Economists have stressed that for any real economic growth to return, governments must work with industry leaders towards an astute and aggressive pandemic policy. In the midst of this pandemic, the role of technology has proven to be inexorably tied to work and the economy. Through

high-speed internet access, our lives have become dependent on digital technology. Digital technology has allowed us to modestly continue our lives, with several modifications, in the areas of education and professional work. Reliance on digital technology has meant thinking of new ways to manage our personal lives and business and political affairs, from conducting global diplomacy to adjusting conventional commerce.

THINKING TRENDS:

There is a plethora of books dedicated to thinking better, thinking for progress, and efficient, result-oriented thinking. The field spans self-help, psychology, behavioral sciences, education, management, business, philosophy, religion, new-age, meditation, finances, and other related fields. To navigate through these books, one needs to understand what writers really mean by the term ‘thinking’, and how thinking should function in our daily lives. By examining key thought leaders in the field of ‘thinking’, we can appreciate the diverse perspectives and approaches employed, as well as the obvious gaps in these works.

Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania, the father of positive psychology, speaks of the five pillars of well-being: positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and purpose, and accomplishment, or PERMA. Seligman’s popular work suggests that reducing disabling conditions like isolation, poverty, disease, depression, aggression, negative thoughts, and ignorance is only part of what is involved in recuperating. Seligman thinks that modern scientists and public policy practitioners are only remediating disabling conditions, which his PERMA framework suggests is insufficient. Ac-



According to Seligman, if one wishes to flourish personally by eliminating depression, anxiety, anger, loneliness, and pain, then one needs to focus on positive thinking and the discipline of practicing PERMA.

Helen Fisher, an expert in biological anthropology, focuses on thinking of and understanding personality as the essential building block of the self. Fisher asserts that personality is composed of two fundamentally different types of traits: 'character' and 'temperament'. Our character traits stem from our culminating experiences: our childhood games, our family's interests and values, how people in our communities express love and hate, what relatives and friends regard as courteous or perilous, how those around us worship, what they sing, when they laugh, and how they make a living. Innumerable cultural experiences build our unique set of character traits. Simultaneously, the balance of one's personality is one's temperament: all the biologically based tendencies that contribute to one's consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving. Self-knowledge is attained by thinking about how personality and temperament conflict with or complement each other.

Kathryn Schulz, an expert in the field of 'wrongology', highlights the importance of regret, commonly referred to as the psychology of regret, where individuals find optimism through the pessimistic meta-induction of the history of science. She thinks that since we now know that scientific theories of the past have often been wrong, it's safe to assume that our own present-day theories are quite possibly wrong as well. By being wrong on topics, we can uncover mistakes to revise and improve our understanding of the world. The idea is that error, failure, misunderstanding, and uncertainty are not only common to both the scientific method and the human condition, but also essential in order to refine thinking. Failure, or more accurately, failed thinking, is not something to be avoided, but rather, something to be embraced. This is not limited to the scientific method and improvements to laboratory research. Rather, for these scholars, the same approach can be applied to design, arts, information technology, sports, engineering, entrepreneurship, and even daily life. All creative avenues can yield maximum insights when failures are embraced and not ignored.

The key question is: what scientific concept will improve everybody's cognitive toolkit? A group of influential scientists, authors, and thought architects believe there is a toolkit to thinking in *This Will Make You Smarter: New Scientific Concepts to Improve Your Thinking*. This is an impressive anthology of essays

by 151 major thinkers on subjects as diverse as the power of networks, cognitive humility, the thinking paradoxes of daydreaming, the information flow of thinking, collective intelligence, and a diverse range of other, related topics. Together, they construct a powerful toolbox of thinking called 'meta-cognition', a new way to think about thinking itself. John Brockman, editor of the anthology, states the term 'scientific' is to be understood in a broad sense. For him, the 'scientific' method is the most reliable way to gain knowledge about anything, be it human behavior, corporate behavior, curing illnesses, the fate of the planet, or understanding the universe. It is scientific thinking that is the rigorous tool for thinking about and understanding the world.

Adam Grant, a professor of psychology at The Wharton College of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and the author of *Think Again*, *Originals*, and *Give and Take*, urges us to constantly re-think our beliefs about politics, science, work, and relationships. Like Kathryn Schultz, Grant believes we can be earnest in our ability to seek the truth while acknowledging we may be wrong about certain ideas at the present time. During this process of discovery, it is important to share our uncertainties and information gaps with others in order to achieve a 'confident humility'. This is achieved by seeking out information that goes against our views and resisting the temptation to preach, prosecute, or politick. In this way, Grant believes that our thinking will mirror that of a scientist. Big ideas, i. e. pioneering original ideas, come from seeking out new thinking patterns.

Both psychological behavioral sciences and management sciences are influential within the wider field of thinking. There is an advocacy element to use the "scientific method" of thinking and re-thinking to reach truth. Behavioral scientists, anthropologists, biologists, humanists, and cognitive psychologists are defining the thinking field with a strong emphasis on neurology and brain activity. For example, Vendantam Shankar and Bill Mesler's *Useful Delusions: The Power and Paradox of the Self-Deceiving Brain* emphasizes consequences and effective outcomes. It is not veracity, virtue, real truth in thinking models, or even a belief that makes thinking principled or ethical. Rather, it is whether the thinking process produces the desired results. It is not ethics, character, or even evolution, that is the issue here, but whether we can trick our brain in thinking how to work for us. 'Delusional decision-making' can in effect redirect the brain to produce the needed outcomes. Vendantam and Mesler's approach to thinking is utilitari-

an: what works is what matters to the brain. This is because thinking is essentially tied to manipulating brain activity to reach desired results. In order to lose weight, trick the brain; to overcome depression or excel professionally, trick the brain.

INTELLECTUAL ROOTS:

The intellectual roots of thinking are traceable to Socrates 2,400 years ago. He advocated a method of probing questioning to reach the point where people could not rationally justify their confident claims to knowledge. Many questions produced confused meanings, self-contradictory beliefs, no evidence, and empty rhetoric. This questioning system by Socrates established the fact that one cannot completely depend upon those in authority to have sound knowledge, insight, or even clarity of thinking. He demonstrated that people may have power and be respected for their high positions, but still be deeply confused and irrational. Socrates' contribution to thinking was establishing the importance of asking deep questions that probe profoundly into thinking before accepting ideas as worthy of belief. He valued the importance of seeking evidence, closely examining assumptions and reasoning, analyzing basic concepts and foundations, and examining implications, not only of what is said, but of what is done as well.

His method, known as 'Socratic questioning', is still the best-known critical thinking teaching strategy. In this teaching mode of questioning, Socrates highlighted the need for clarity in thinking, logical consistency, and rational discourse.

Socrates set the foundations for the intellectual tradition of critical thinking: to reflectively question common beliefs and explanations, and to distinguish those beliefs that are reasonable and logical from those which serve our interests. Thinking, therefore, was critical thinking: it involved adequate evidence, rational discourse, and a tested foundation to warrant acceptance.

After Socrates' practice of thinking, Plato continued Socrates' thought and approach, followed by Aristotle and the Greek skeptics, all of whom emphasized that things are often very different from what they appear to be, and it is only a trained mind that can see beyond the surface and delusive appearances.

Beneath the surface of the deeper realities of life, ancient Greek tradition developed the need, for anyone who aspired to understand the deeper realities, to think systematically and trace implications broadly and deeply. For thinking to be comprehensive, it

needed to be well-reasoned, responsive to logical arguments, and survive critical objections.

CRITICAL THINKING:

Education specialists emphasize thinking within the terms of critical thinking. That is if true education is to be meaningful, then students should be able to utilize critical thinking 'skills' to effectively evaluate, assess, and understand a variety of complex issues. The crisis in national educational reforms, according to this particular school, is due to the lack of critical thinking skills taught to students. While students are graduating from colleges with specialized technical knowledge, they lack the ability to analyze and critique methodically.

Stephen D. Brookfield, author of *Teaching for Critical Thinking*, argues that critical thinking is needed across disciplines and that it can be taught by teachers and learned by students. Critical thinking cannot be an abstract philosophical exercise. Rather, it needs to be integrated into all curricula by utilizing models such as Crisis Decision Simulation, Critical Debate, and Exemplars and Flaws. Brookfield's approach holds that critical thinking can be attained by learning its techniques and tools, as well as when students should apply it to reading, writing, and debating.

Education reformers claim that students are not learning to think as good citizens concerned with the public interest or as global citizens. They are not learning to be good parents or local community members. They assert that students graduate from college without the intellectual skills they need to survive the enormous, complex realities that they will face, much less prosper. Critical thinking advocates these skills as a social learning process. By collectively listening to others deconstructing and analyzing complex problem sets, students learn and practice divergent ways to think critically.

Essentially, critical thinking is divided into three areas: (1) learning to analyze thinking, which means identifying objectives in thinking, the questions being asked, the information being used, the assumptions being taken for granted, the concepts guiding the thinking, reasoning, logic, and rhetoric (*trivium*); (2) learning to assess thinking itself by using intellectual parameters such as clarity, accuracy, depth, breadth, fairness, significance and relevance; and, (3) developing intellectual traits, such as intellectual integrity, intellectual humility, intellectual perseverance, empathy, impartiality, comprehension, and an intellectual sense of justice. The *trivium* and

the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, astronomy, music, and geometry) allowed students in the liberal arts to perceive a unified conception of reality. Commonly called the 'Arts of the Word', the curriculum focused on different ways to navigate words. For instance, grammar is used in logic, which is used in rhetoric. Thinking is the way we communicate in a natural order with numbers and in quantities. By discerning these natural relationships, we come to a better understanding of the cosmos and our place in it.

Psychiatrists who are also critical thinking educationists identify the ability to explicitly self-examine one's thinking as something that supports mental health. Richard Paul, Carmen Polka, Brian Barnes, and Linda Elder claim that critical thinkers understand egocentricity and socio-centricism, and that they actively combat these biases to improve intimate relationships. Critical thinkers have a deep sense of understanding and balance of thought, feelings, and desires. Accordingly, critical thinkers strive to 'self-actualize' in order to have a heightened understanding of themselves. They are emotionally healthy, socially intelligent, have a deep connection to their communities, easily empathize with others, and view their efforts as aiding in the betterment of humanity.

THINKING FOR ILLUMINATION:

Absent in modern trends in thinking, or critical thinking, are the connection to, and development of, morality, character, and inner guidance within an ethical framework.

After Socrates, the ancient Hellenistic schools of philosophy diverged into schools of Cynicism, Plato's Academy, and the Stoicism of Zeno and Epictetus. Stoicism grew in popularity under emperor-philosopher Marcus Aurelius (160-181 BCE). The Stoics adopted Socrates' classification of the four aspects of virtue, which they believed were critically interlinked character traits: practical wisdom, courage, temperament, and justice. Practical wisdom allows us to make decisions for a moral, meaningful life (*eudaimonia*). These character traits in Stoicism and the Socratic method insisted that conflicting virtues cannot be practiced independently: one cannot be both intemperate and courageous.

Within the Islamic tradition from 700-1350, critical thinkers were less engaged with debates on juristic literalism and more concerned with spiritual purification, moral character, and ascetic practices which detached them from worldly distractions. Within



Mullah Shah Badakhshi, portrait from the Mughal dynasty

the Qur'an and within God's signs in creation, one can find an inner meaning whose implications go further than the exoteric, literal, and surface meaning. Typical examples of the works of critical thinking 'spiritualists' include Abu Talib al-Makki's (d. 996) *Nourishment of the Hearts* (*Qut al-Qulub*), Ibn 'Abbad's (d. 1390) *Letters of Spiritual Direction* (*Rasā'il kubrā wa Rasā'il 'ughrā*), Ibn 'Ata Allah al-Iskandari's (d. 1309) *The Book of Illumination* (*Kitāb al-Tanwīr fī Isqāt al-Tadbīr*) and Abu Hafṣ 'Umar al-Suhrawar-

di's (d. 1235) *The Benefits of Intimate Knowledge* ('*Awarif al-Ma'arif*'), to name a few.

Ibn 'Ata Allah's *The Book of Illumination* is typical within the literature of illumination (*irfan*) but atypical in modern thinking and modern western theological paradigms. Esoteric and exoteric knowledge examine the spirituality of ego economics': how we earn, save, consume, and plan to spend. Ibn 'Ata Allah's works attempt to understand how humans exist in this world with their selfish machinations while seeking spiritual illuminations (*tanwir* and *tadbir*). Ibn 'Ata's enlightenment, or 'exceptionally high level of thinking', is integrally connected to the inner illumination of the heart. For many scholars, he can be easily regulated to the mystical theological tradition, but this work is an insightful critique of anxious energy situated in an egoistic corrosive soul and the practical wisdom of liberating the self.

Incredibly central to spiritual masters of the Islamic tradition are reliance on God, servitude, and recognizing that all matters are under God's control, whether beneficial or harmful, pleasant or unpleasant, comprehensible or incomprehensible. Thinking is tied to knowing; knowing is tied to obeying; and obeying is tied to sufficiency and surrendering the self to divine will. This does not mean that critical thinking or questioning does not exist, rather critical thinking within this context is part of a broader tradition of seeking divine love and contentment. The basis of love is knowledge, and knowledge directs the curious seeker to contemplation and deep, self-critical assessment (*mushabada*).

In assessing thinking or critical thinking, we need to question what approaches, frameworks, and practices, are dominating popular trends. Moreover, we also need to examine why moral realism is non-existent. Why is teaching critical thinking void of moral and ethical foundations? How has the study of thinking become dominant in behavioral, psychological, and management sciences but rarely found in religious studies or political philosophy? Is it possible to trace the loss of ethical foundations in thinking to the rivalry of the moral realists and moral romantics of the eighteenth century? Moral realists like Jean-Jacques Rousseau were weary of inner weakness but emphasized the power of the inner goodness of human beings. As a key thinker of the Enlightenment, he distrusted institutions, tradition, and customs.

On the other hand, Romantic thinkers trusted the self over conventions of the world. It was the role of the individual to logically think about the outcomes of their fate, not that of the church, government, historical cultural norms, or popular beliefs. This may or may not be the origin of the fragmentation of 'thinking'. However, modern thinking and critical thinking do not even possess the vocabulary of ethics or the literacy of historical moral foundations. Today, experts accept that the foundations of thinking are that one be like a scientist. Adam Grant's works, which empower modern thinking to find big ideas -- original ideas that are pioneering by designing 'new' thinking patterns based on science -- are not interested in historical contributions to the field of thinking. The push to use the 'scientific method' is a disconnect from the broader historical field of thinking and philosophy.

In the pre-modern period, eminent thinkers like Shaykh al-Ishraq Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi (1153-1191) and Ibn 'Arabi (1165-1240) harmonized spirituality and philosophy. The result was training the intellect through philosophy and disciplined purification of the heart (*tazkiyah*) through *tasawwuf* with illumination. Together, these transform one's being and bestow true knowledge.

Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi's *The Theosophy of the Light* (*Hikmat al-Ishrāq*) and *On the Reality of Love* (*Fi haqiqāt al-'ishq*) created a vast philosophical synthesis of nearly six centuries of Islamic thought. *Ishrāqi* philosophy, commonly understood as theosophy, is essentially the light that orients the metaphysics of human beings. This school advanced the thinking of inner knowledge by establishing that nothing other than eternal wisdom (*sophia perennis*) illuminates and transforms, deconstructs and resurrects, until the individual understands the essence of the cosmos.

During contemplation, the great spiritual masters referred to terms and practices of self-discipline, surrender, poverty, fasting, soul, primordial nature, renunciation, transcendence, reliance, obedience, repentance, etc. This is the way they breathed and the way they lived. If we are going to think and rethink in order to find ways to be critical thinkers, then illumination needs to be central to this venture. It appears more than ever that we need to find ways to integrate thinking into the tradition of illumination.

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The War on Terror and “Dangerous” Muslim Men

by Isobel Ingham-Barrow

The twentieth anniversary of the War on Terror coincided with poignant images of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, images of desperation and fear that triggered an international outcry, particularly on behalf of Afghan women who would undoubtedly bear the brunt of repression and mistreatment as the Taliban solidified its power over the country. In the UK and many Western countries, calls quickly emerged to secure the safety of women and children fleeing Afghanistan. These were unquestionably important calls and necessary conversations to have. However, there was something missing from many of these discussions; family units do not always consist of just women and children, nor are women the only target of Taliban oppression (despite being the most obviously vulnerable group). So, we must ask: where do vulnerable Afghan men fit within these humanitarian discussions, and why was their presence so notably absent?

The following discussion is an exploration of the ways in which Muslim men are presented in Western public and political discussions. These representations of Muslim men have cemented their status in the Western consciousness as uniquely and inescapably dangerous—a dangerous nature that not only poses a threat to Western values and freedoms, but which also activates the Western role of the ‘white saviour’ on behalf of Muslim women.

In a process that has been fuelled by the cultural project embedded within the War on Terror, I argue that this representation has led to Muslim men becoming ‘othered’ and dehumanised in such a way that they are presented as no longer entitled to, nor worthy of, the rights, freedoms, entitlements, and protections deemed to be central to Western value systems. At the same time, the focus on the perceived deficiencies and threats posed by Muslim men provides a vehicle through which Western hegemony is maintained over acceptable forms of masculinity whilst distracting attention from deep issues of misogyny that are pervasive throughout Western societies themselves.

THE WAR ON TERROR: IMAGINING THE ENEMY

The weeks, months, and years following 9/11 witnessed a continuing interplay between racist foreign policies and structurally Islamophobic domestic policies that were shaped by global political discus-

sions of race and otherness. These policies and the discourses surrounding them ultimately fuelled a cultural project destined to redefine what it means to ‘belong’ in Western societies.

Moving beyond the pre-existing and longstanding orientalist understandings of Muslims within the Western consciousness, at the heart of the War on Terror’s cultural project were justifications built upon progressive liberalist frameworks of individual rights and freedoms, particularly with regards to women’s rights, sexual freedom, and LGBTQI+ rights. In this way there is a particular sexualised racism underpinning the rhetoric of the War on Terror that places the Muslim man as the ultimate vehicle of aggressive otherness, with the broad racialised mythology being that sexual repression and anxieties combined with religious fervour and socio-cultural

An Afghan with ice cream cones



pressures have created endemic social dysfunction, inadequacy, and hostility to the freedoms that the West represents. It is thus this understanding of the Muslim man that shapes popular Western conceptions of Muslim communities.

As Louise Archer observed in the early 2000s,¹ “balanced and positive images of ‘normal’ Muslim masculinity appear to be rather thin on the ground.”² Nearly two decades later, this situation has made little (if any) progress. Indeed, the past two decades of Western media has been replete with representations of Muslim men as misogynistic, angry, and violent, with common themes emerging, including their status as a sexual threat, security threat, or criminal threat to Western societies. Following 9/11, scholars noted that there was a marked shift from an orientalist and exotic stereotyping of Islam to a focus on perceived Muslim fanaticism,² presenting Muslims in terms of global terrorism, fundamentalism, and authoritarianism.³ By the early 2010s, European media in particular had expanded this representation of war-mongering Muslim men to draw upon latent racialised mythologies that have been applied to migrant groups for centuries, from Jewish and Black communities, to Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities. Such depictions draw on themes of drug use, benefits claiming, fraud, criminality, and sexual violence⁴—particularly the sexual threat directed at ‘our’ women. Examples of criminality were held up within Western discourse as evidence of a failure of multiculturalism and a result of Western munificence to the undeserving.

Thus, the War on Terror swiftly became a fight to defend ‘our’ way of life from those who would seek to undermine and destroy it. Consequently, with revelations of torture at Guantanamo Bay and secret prisons across the world, as well as the implementation of the PATRIOT Act and anti-Shariah legislation in the US, and provisions such as the PREVENT strategy in the UK, standards such as international law, due process, civil liberties, and human rights gained the aura of indulgences of a benevolent civilisation that could no longer be afforded in light of the threat posed by the inherent evil that lived both within and across the world.

At the same time, the presentation of a threat so grave as to take the West to the seemingly unprecedented precipice of having to restrict such fundamental freedoms heightened the perception of the evil that this enemy must pose within the public understanding. In actuality, oppression and restrictions on the freedoms of undesirable groups is far from unprecedented in Western history. However, increasing technologies, including growing global media and internet communications throughout the early 2000s, resulted in a mass public knowledge of torture and other violations conducted in the name of the War in Terror that exposed the practices of state violence on a scale that had not previously been experienced.

This abandonment of rights’ obligations in the face of an ‘inhuman’ enemy is exemplified by headlines in right-wing newspapers in the UK such as a 2005 article in *The Daily Mail* entitled *Our lunatic laws just help Al-Qaeda*, which noted that: “Nothing, no human rights convention, no fear of being ‘racist’, no determination to avoid ‘Islamophobia’ (or whatever politically correct garbage Sir Ian Blair can come up with)—can, in a time of attack like this, be allowed to stand in the way of protecting our people and standing up for our way of life against those who would destroy it... Home Secretary Charles Clarke, tiptoes through the nonsense of our human rights laws to try to work out whether he is allowed to deport anybody.”⁵

In addition to the waiving of rights’ entitlements to the perceived enemy group, this short exert is demonstrative of a myriad of themes common to the War on Terror: the juxtaposition of ‘us’ vs ‘them’, the threat posed to ‘our’ way of life, and the xenophobia reasserting the ‘foreignness’ of the enemy combined with suggestions to physically deport those deemed not to belong. In this way we can see the intersection between security and immigration as a dominant preoccupation of War on Terror discourse that dehumanises Muslims and reinforces the notion that they are innately foreign (regardless of where they were born) and so far beyond the realms of acceptable humanity that they forfeit any claim to Western constructs of freedom and rights.

1 Louise Archer, *Race, Masculinity and Schooling: Muslim Boys and Education* (Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: Open University Press, 2003), 1.

2 Brown M (2006). Comparative analysis of mainstream discourses, media narratives and representations of Islam in Britain and France prior to 9/11. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26(3): 297–312.

3 El-Aswad ES (2013). Images of Muslims in Western scholarship and media after 9/11. *Digest of Middle East Studies* 22(1): 39–56.

4 Sian, et al. “The Media and Muslims in the UK”, *Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies*, March 2012. Accessed: 16th September 2021. <https://www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/tolerance/media/Working%20paper%205/The%20Media%20and%20Muslims%20in%20the%20UK.pdf>.

5 “Our lunatic laws just help Al Qaeda”, *Daily Mail*, July 2005. Accessed: 15th September 2021. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/columnists/article-356821/Our-lunatic-laws-just-help-Al-Qaeda.html>.

THE 'ACCEPTABLE MUSLIM MAN': THE CO-OPTED AGENT OF THE STATE

Muslim masculinities are accordingly regulated within Western social power structures such that they must be made 'acceptable' through excessive displays of loyalty and distancing from 'suspect' Muslim practices and identity demonstrations. In the US, an example is Humayun Khan, the first US soldier to be killed in Iraq and who rose to national attention during Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign as an example of a Muslim American who sacrificed his life for his country. Similarly, Captain Mohsin Naqvi enlisted four days after 9/11 and was posthumously awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with valour after being killed in Afghanistan. At Naqvi's funeral, his father famously stated that: "...first [Naqvi] was American. Then he was Muslim."⁶ The elevation of these examples of acceptable Muslim masculinity rely upon an exceptionally high threshold of loyalty to be demonstrated—the willingness to sacrifice life itself and the requirement for national identity to supersede one's religious identity.

However, service to the Western collective and cultural project is still no guarantee of full recognition and acceptance into the collective as a matter of belonging. This is acutely demonstrated by Western governments' failure (and in many cases pointed refusal) to evacuate Afghan staff and interpreters,⁷ not to mention the seemingly reckless disregard for their safety in the case of the British Embassy in Kabul where paperwork containing their personal details was left scattered on the floor for Taliban forces to find.⁸ It is almost exclusively in this context of co-opted agents of the state that any mention of the need to protect Afghan men can be found within recent discussions of Afghan refugees in the Western context. This is symbolic of the seemingly insurmountable barrier of otherness that has been fortified by the War on Terror's cultural project and which perhaps permanently excludes Muslim identities from full membership, regardless of their adherence to Western prerogatives, particularly those of men heralding from non-Western countries.

On the other hand, there are Muslim men across the Western context who have managed to gain sig-



nificant political power and capital based upon their presentation of an 'acceptable' model of Muslim masculinity; usually a model that deprioritises practice and adherence to religious precedents in favour of removing elements of Muslim identity deemed 'uncomfortable' or suspect to a secular-liberal Western audience. Examples include figures such as Ed Husain, Majid Nawaaz, Raheem Kassam, Sajid Javid, and Tawfik Hamid, to name but a few. Such figures arguably owe their success to their compliance with the enforcement of the cultural project, particularly through their validation and active promotion of state and government policies that securitise and restrict Muslim communities. By adhering to the dominant socio-gendered power structure, such individuals maintain their own prestige and privilege whilst simultaneously serving the hegemony of Western models of masculinity through discrediting models of Muslim masculinity that disrupt this hegemony.

⁶ Daniel Bates, "American Muslims Who Died Fighting for Their Country after 9/11 Revealed," Daily Mail Online, July 29, 2016, accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3715233/Faces-American-Muslims-died-fighting-country-9-11-revealed-fallen-soldier-s-father-tells-Trump-sacrificed-no-one.html>

⁷ "Britain Must Not Desert Its Afghan Interpreters | Letters," The Guardian, August 08, 2021, accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/aug/08/britain-must-not-desert-its-afghan-interpreters>

⁸ Anthony Loyd, "British Embassy Left Details of Afghan Staff for Taliban to Find," News | The Times, August 27, 2021, accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/british-embassy-left-details-of-afghan-staff-for-taliban-to-find-pr7vh5db0>

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN: MUSLIM WOMEN AND DISTRACTION GAMES

As previously mentioned, the sexualised racism underpinning the rhetoric of the War on Terror cannot be separated from Western perceptions of Muslim women and Muslim femininity. Whilst representations of Muslim men centre on aggression and criminality, depictions of Muslim women overwhelmingly focus on their perceived oppression, language barriers, and vulnerability to Muslim male violence.

Despite the focus on women's rights as the rallying cry for restricting Muslim male identities and the apparent need to 'rescue' Muslim women, the apparatus of the War on Terror has not protected Muslim women from surveillance and discriminatory measures. Rather, it has increased scrutiny, with normative practices of Muslim femininity (such as wearing hijab) becoming simultaneously a symbol of extremism and cultural invasion, whilst also a symbol of Muslim women's perceived lack of personal agency and therefore a reason to exclude their voices from public discourse due to their disruption of a distinctly white Western feminist framework. As such, the message of female empowerment and equality promoted by the War on Terror rhetoric is not a message intended to engage a Muslim audience. In reality, it is a message intended solely for a Western gaze as a mechanism for reinforcing the *a priori* knowledge of cultural superiority and the necessity of imperialist control over non-Western identities.

By largely avoiding critical engagement with Muslim women themselves, the cultural project is able to secure the unquestioned image of Muslim men as innately dangerous, and therefore present them as the core threat to all women's rights and safety. One advantage of this process is the ability to distract attention from misogyny and violence against women and girls that remains pervasive throughout Western societies, regardless of any claims to gender equality

and sexual enlightenment. Indeed, it is hard to marry political statements surrounding the dangers posed by Taliban rule in the early 2000s with reports of sexual assault within the US military, with one in three female US service members being raped by colleagues during their service.⁹

As one inescapable example, starting in the early 2010s, UK media was rocked by 'grooming gang' scandals involving groups of South Asian men (amongst others) systematically abusing young people across the UK. These instances were capitalised upon by the now defunct Quilliam Foundation, which produced a report (which has since been removed) arguing that 84% of grooming gang offenders in the UK are Asian, with the majority being of "Pakistani origin with Muslim heritage".¹⁰ Under academic scrutiny, this statistic and accompanying report were exposed as deeply flawed and described as "a case study in bad science: riddled with errors, inconsistencies, a glaring lack of transparency, sweeping claims and gross generalisations unfounded its own 'data'".¹¹ However, the report had already been circulated by international media outlets and mobilised by far-right politicians and pundits to justify anti-Muslim and anti-immigration agendas. Such misrepresentation of horrific abuse and exploitation as a uniquely Muslim phenomenon sacrifices the opportunity to engage in genuine approaches to solve these pressing issues.

In England and Wales, two women are killed by a current or former partner every week,¹² and during the year up to March 2020, 1.6 million women reported domestic abuse,¹³ with the actual figures likely to be significantly higher. In March 2021, Sarah Everard was kidnapped from a London park, raped, and murdered by a serving police officer. In August 2021, a shooter inspired by incel ideologies shot and killed five people in Plymouth. When critically and honestly analysed, genuinely tackling violence against women and girls often feels like an insurmountable challenge. Having said that, the solution

9 Sarah Lazare, "Military 'rape Epidemic,'" Asia | Al Jazeera, October 20, 2011, accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/10/20/military-sexual-assault-and-rape-epidemic>

10 Haras Rafiq and Muna Adil, "Group Based Child Sexual Exploitation: Dissecting Grooming Gangs," The Quilliam Foundation, accessed September 14, 2019, <https://www.quilliaminternational.com/shop/e-publications/group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-dissecting-grooming-gangs/>

11 Malik, Kenan. 2020. "We're Told 84% Of Grooming Gangs Are Asian. But Where's The Evidence?" Kenan Malik'. *The Guardian*. accessed September 15, 2021 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/nov/11/84-per-cent-of-grooming-gangs-are-asians-we-dont-know-if-that-figure-is-right>.

12 "The Facts," Refuge Charity - Domestic Violence Help, October 26, 2020, accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/domestic-violence/domestic-violence-the-facts/>

13 "Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview: November 2020," Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview - Office for National Statistics, November 25, 2020, accessed September 14, 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2020>

will not be found in political distractions deflecting the underlying causes of these problems onto minority communities.

CONCLUSION

The successful dehumanisation of Muslim men conducted through the cultural project undertaken by the War on Terror has regulated Muslim models of masculinity within the Western context to the extent that domestic and foreign policies designed to control Muslim populations have been met with little resistance across the West. This has justified the pursuit of a myriad of Western interests allegedly in the name of self-preservation.

Central to this has been the reproduction of sexualised and racialised mythologies surrounding violence, abuse, and misogyny as a key component of a uniquely and exclusively Muslim masculinity. It would be ludicrous to say that these issues do not exist amongst Muslim communities—misogyny and violence is a problem universally witnessed and in urgent need of address in every society. However, inscribing the threats that women face exclusively upon

Muslim male bodies relieves the pressure for self-inspection on the part of the beneficiaries of the cultural project of the War on Terror. Such a situation can only frustrate attempts to meaningfully address these challenges.

At the same time, Muslim women's empowerment cannot be served without direct engagement with Muslim women themselves. To continue to represent them purely as a mechanism to further entrench Islamophobic narratives about the danger of Muslim men, thereby reinforcing Western control over Muslim identities, is disingenuous at best and exploitative at worst.

Recognising and confronting the power of Islamophobia and sexualised racial mythologies embedded within current political discourses is thus the first essential step in successfully pursuing the equality, freedoms, and opportunities for all that Western liberalism claims to hold so dear and which were a central justification for the War on Terror. Ironically, in order to achieve these proclaimed aims of the War on Terror, we must first dismantle the logics that perpetuated it.

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The Military Coup d'Etat in Myanmar Could Brighten the Outlook for the Rohingya

by **Dr Azeem Ibrahim**

With the Rohingya of Myanmar we have learned to expect the worst, year after year, for more than a decade. But from their exile in the refugee camps in Bangladesh, the Rohingya may well look back to Myanmar with perhaps a little glimmer of hope, after the past year's events in their native country. This new hope is, unfortunately, born of further tragedy, but it is no less real because of it.

The domestic situation in Myanmar has changed drastically since November 2020. That was the time of the country's last federal election, which the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Aung San Suu Kyi, dominated as expected. For a number of reasons, some clear, others less so, the leadership

of the Tatmadaw, the military of Myanmar, decided to illegitimately contest the election result in a manner very similar to the protests of Donald Trump in the United States. And then, on February 1, the military asserted itself by force: they arrested the entire leadership of the NLD and others in the hierarchy of the civilian government, installing their own leader, General Min Aung Hlaing, as head of a new military government.

This kind of coup had been entertained as an ever-present possibility in the minds of people, both in Myanmar and in the international community, ever since the Tatmadaw originally relinquished some of their control of the country with the 2008 Consti-

tution, which was supposed to set Myanmar on the path to democracy. But though expected, it was not accepted by anyone.

To the surprise of the generals themselves, as well as to most international observers, the people of Myanmar have responded very robustly in their resistance to the coup. Large-scale protests took a couple of weeks to get off the ground, but once they did, they have been relentless and steadily growing in the months since February. The military crackdown has been brutal, but this only seems to have steeled the resolve of the protesters. It has reached the point where we are now in a very dangerous situation, with civilians across the country forming local militias to defend themselves from the ongoing abuses of the Tatmadaw, sending the country down a path to what may well end up as a full-blown civil war.

The international response has also been surprisingly robust. Myanmar's regional neighbours in ASEAN have all come out with full throated condemnations of the coup despite their historical tradition of keeping out of each others' domestic affairs. Under the new Biden administration, the West has fulfilled its traditional role with respect to issues of democracy and human rights. Even China, Myanmar's most-likely ally, has decided to remain neutral in the dispute between the military and the former civilian government, thus depriving the generals of their most-needed international alliance.

With their leaders all under arrest, the organisation of the ousted civilian government was expected to crumble quickly. For the first two months of the coup's new regime, that is what appeared to be happening. However, since April, they came back swinging. On April 16, they announced the formation of the National Unity Government of Myanmar, a shadow government that included the leaders of the previously elected civilian government. Also, crucially, representatives of every ethnic minority in the country—minorities which have been marginalised in the Burmese-dominated political process in Myanmar and then brutalised by the military for their dissent for almost the entire post-independence history of the country. This was the first time that a democratic alliance representing the ethnic Burmese majority and all of the country's diverse minorities came together for a shared political project since independence. It is the best hope that genuine democracy may yet come to Myanmar—that is, if the NUG can overcome the Tatmadaw in this dispute.

The Tatmadaw have the experience, capacity and inclination to impose their will on Myanmar by force

and rule the country with an iron fist, just as they have done for decades. But they have never had to contend with such fierce opposition across the board.

So how does this domestic chaos in Myanmar help the Rohingya? At first glance, it does not. Quite the opposite. The civilian government that was removed was at least nominally entertaining discussions with Bangladesh about allowing the Rohingya to return to Myanmar. Those discussions were dishonest and mostly empty political theatre, but at least they were happening. That committed the state of Myanmar to accepting the principle that the Rohingya had a right to return. Since the coup, the new military leadership has withdrawn from all such talks and has explicitly rejected that the Rohingya have any place in Myanmar.

But then, as the anti-coup protests started ramping up in Myanmar during March and April, the Tatmadaw deployed the "anti-insurgency" tactics they had used to eject the Rohingya from the country against Burmese pro-democracy protesters in the heartlands. Everything that the Rohingya had reported of the abuses they had to endure at the hands of the Tatmadaw in their remote borderlands was now witnessed first-hand by Burmese civilians in Yangon, Mandalay, and Naypyidaw. An unexpected outpouring of regret and support for the Rohingya by the protesters and Myanmar's civil society swiftly followed. While the Rohingya had been dehumanised and attacked by decades of military regimes as an "enemy within" that had to be "dealt with", a sudden realisation now dawned upon the breadth of Myanmar society that the real enemy was the Tatmadaw, those who kept brutalising people in the country for decades in the name of "security".

A few months later, after demands from the international community, the NUG, which was now organising the resistance against the ongoing military domination of the country, also invited the Rohingya to send representatives on the same basis as every other minority group in the country, despite them having been mostly physically removed from the territory of Myanmar. Furthermore, the NUG promised full repatriation.

This is a huge step forward for the Rohingya. It does not improve their immediate physical situation, but it is the first time they have been recognised as a full and proper part of Myanmar by a significant authority in the country since their formal citizenship status had been degraded by the Citizenship Law of 1982, which formally excluded them from citizenship in the country of their forefathers.

Material change to the fate of the Rohingya remains contingent on whether the NUG is successful in reversing the February coup. That is still a remote prospect for the time being. Not only is it remote, it is also dangerous, as the looming civil war would be an absolute disaster in terms of human suffering. However, at least now there is a future on the table where

the Rohingya are recognised as a people and can take their rightful place in the country of their birth as normal and full citizens. This is no small thing. It bodes well not just for the Rohingya, but also for the future of their native Myanmar as a country. Hope can be a very powerful thing, and it can now drive the Rohingya through the dark days just ahead.

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Hijrah Movement: A New Wave of Islamic Piety in Indonesia

By Hamdan Hamedan

As early as 2018, a religious movement called, 'The Hijrah Movement' was afoot in Indonesia. It would influence how Islam would be perceived and practiced in the largest Muslim country in the world. Spearheaded primarily by celebrities and a new breed of Islamic scholars, the Movement has continued to gain traction within Indonesia's younger generation. This segment of the population is critical to amplifying the message of the Movement across the archipelago, not only because it comprises a significant portion of the country's demographic, but also because of its familiarity with technology and social media.

At its core, the Hijrah Movement calls upon fellow Muslims to abandon their less Islamic ways for a more Islamic way of life. Many Muslims, especially millennials, see this as an opportunity to change into better versions of themselves, versions that are closer to God. In 2019, IDN Research Institute found that

72.8% of Indonesian millennials claimed that they were currently undertaking 'hijrah'. Both inward and outward changes often manifest in those who partake in this 'hijrah'. Sartorial and appearance changes are usually the first to manifest outwardly, followed by other changes in behavior, lifestyle, and social interactions.

Such transformation can be gradual or abrupt, depending on the individual and which scholars and teachings they adhere to. From celebrity-cum-preachers, to Middle-East graduates with Salafi leanings, to moderate and modern scholars, this new wave of piety undoubtedly has no shortage of scholars. Although one could argue that certain strains of Islam, particularly Salafism, seem to ride the biggest wave.

Nonetheless, the positive impacts of the Movement are impossible to deny. More and more Muslims are (re)learning their religion, flocking to

Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta, Indonesia



mosques and *majelis* (Islamic study groups) instead of malls. They pray *tabajjud* (night prayer) instead of dancing in nightclubs. They have also left behind their less-than-Islamic lifestyle. This newfound spiritual revival has influenced societal and economic changes, too. Ensuring that every single product used and consumed is halal-certified has resulted in a boom in demand for halal products, from the need to put money in exclusively Sharia-based institutions to the ever-growing modest and Islamic clothing and cosmetics industries.

TAKE THE GOOD, LEAVE THE BAD

Islam is, without a doubt, a religion that values learning. Its first revelation was “*Iqra*” (‘read’ or ‘recite’). Given that the society in 7th century Arabia was mostly illiterate, this command was a powerful, transformative action.

The Prophet of Islam ﷺ himself also champions learning. He ﷺ states, “Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim” (Sunan Ibn Maʿjah 224). While not a hadith, there is a generally accepted apothegm that Muslims should, “Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.” Or in today’s parlance, Muslims should be lifelong learners.

As the Hijrah Movement gains momentum, the need to find spiritual teachers for the eager learners inevitably grows. In olden times, one would need to attend Islamic schools or Islamic boarding schools (known as *pesantrens* in Indonesia) for years to learn various Islamic sciences properly. Even after such a lengthy educational process in *pesantrens*, many graduates often feel they have just barely scratched the surface.

In this day and age, however, such accretion and extensive processes are often bypassed. Smartphones and social media now enable Muslims to learn Islam at the tip of their fingers. While these indubitably have their upsides in augmenting one’s knowledge of Islam, they are not without their downsides.

In Indonesia, less-than-qualified preachers now suddenly have the opportunity to attempt Qur’anic exegesis and derive rulings from *Sahih al-Bukhārī* without even the requisite mastery of Arabic and other prerequisites sciences, let alone an *ijāza* (authorization) from respected scholars or universities. Despite the apparent lack of qualifications, these preachers gain popularity and reach thanks to the algorithms of social media that are indifferent to expertise while valuing clicks and controversial content.

Sunni Islam is particularly challenged in that it

does not have a single religious authority that assigns imamhood to those who qualified, thereby settling religious debate. Even within the Hijrah Movement, differences of opinion exist. Permissibility of celebrating the Prophet’s birthday (*mawlid*), for instance, often becomes the source of contention between scholars and their followers within the Movement. Another hot-button issue is whether today’s Indonesian government should be obeyed or replaced by the Islamic caliphate. Nevertheless, these last two issues are seldom discussed openly.

For laypeople, differentiating between real and pseudo-scholars can be tricky, as is choosing whom to follow. They naturally gravitate toward scholars who can convey the teaching of Islam in a simple manner combined with the utmost certitude. They certainly cannot be faulted for favouring a quick religious verdict on an issue instead of a rumination on several positions within the four Islamic schools of thought (*al-Madhāhib al-Arbaʿah*). That is simply beyond the scope of their competence. Simply put, they have no training for it, and thus, to some extent, find it to be confusing, if not boring.

In the simplicity and decisiveness department, perhaps nothing could compete with Salafi scholars, who are part-and-parcel of the Hijrah Movement. Their simplistic teaching of Islam, that one needs only the Qur’ān and major ḥadīth collections to understand the religion, appeals to many. Their decisiveness, especially in declaring “haram” or “bid’ah”, even on matters where legitimate differences of opinion exist, appeals to some as maintaining purity in an adulterated world. It is no surprise, then, that Salafism has probably got the most gains from the Hijrah Movement.

All was arguably well until the rise of “instant experts” and “bid’ah police”. With access to the Qur’ān and major ḥadīth collections online (often relying on translations), they began pontificating and attacking some practices that they deemed heretical. Social media is laden with this unfortunate diatribe. Traditional Muslims in Indonesia, who belong either officially, nominally, or culturally to Nahdlatul Ulama or Muhammadiyah, often suffer the brunt of these attacks. They, too, fire back, labeling these Hijrah-Salafi devotees as self-study neophytes whose superficial knowledge of Islam is either unable (or unwilling) to grasp the complexity of the religion. Rather than ‘hijrah’ (emigration), the traditionalists prefer the term ‘tawbah’ (repentance). They also suggest that those who are newly Hijrah/Tawbah strive to learn Islam from a teacher who is well-grounded in the tradition

through an established chain of teachers going all the way back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ —not relying so much on Shaykh Google or Imam YouTube.

Ultimately, both parties can learn from each other. Those who are currently undertaking ‘hijrah’ could benefit from classical Islamic training in *pesantrens* under the tutelage of Kiais/Nyais (male and female traditionalist scholars). And *pesantrens* could open their doors for them to learn the comprehensive approach to Islamic scripture. Meanwhile, traditional-

ist scholars should redouble their efforts in utilizing the Internet and social media to share their knowledge in a way that resonates well with a broader audience, particularly younger urbanites. Being adaptive, moderate, valuing mutual consultation, respecting scholars, and being courteous in matters of disagreement, have been the hallmarks of Islam in Indonesia throughout the years. After all, these are what Indonesian Muslims are all about.

Hamdan Hamedan is an Indonesian Islamic Writer and app developer & CEO of KESAN, an Islamic lifestyle app.

Young Translators Bringing Forth Our Heritage

by Saad Ansari

“Reading Malcolm X’s biography changed my life,” a friend once mentioned, making me curious about the power of stories and knowledge to change people. I had just explored the University of Chicago’s Islamic studies library stacks—row and rows of thousands of books in Arabic and other languages, often lonely and unvisited - so naturally I wondered “how many more lives would have been changed if each of those books had made it to someone who needed it?” A book on navigating sorrow and loss might have salvaged someone’s grief, another on Rabia al-Basri might have spurred an exploration in spirituality, while Imam Razi’s tafsir could’ve sparked a passion for theoretical physics. Consider this, the great scholar Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1449) wrote a book on the Plague after he had lost his three daughters to it. Wouldn’t *millions* have benefited from his empathetic insights at outset of our own pandemic? (Thankfully, a translator has taken on this text).

“There are so many patents here that never matched to good business models,” an MIT professor lamented to me “it’s billions of dollars in lost opportunity cost.” The lost value of Islamic texts should feel at least as painful—we lose not only personal change, but ideas from a scholarly tradition that could have changed our societies, and we don’t even realize it. When asked how the Islamic classics had informed a major American Muslim public policy leader, he could only reply “I don’t see how those are relevant.” Meanwhile, Western progressive leaders propose ideas that might have been found in Islamic legal treatises (including the obvious, a 2% wealth tax to

alleviate poverty). Fortunately, language barriers can be unlocked and lowered, and have been so before. Great translation movements inspired entire societies in the Middle East, Spain, Indonesia, and more. And can do so again.

BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM OF TRANSLATORS....

*O self, by their taqwā the right-acting have won,
They see the truth while my heart is blinded by lies,
As the night veils them, to goodness they run,
Their light dims even the starry skies!*

*Throughout the night His remembrance they sing,
Drawing serenity as each singer hears.
Besides Him their hearts fill with no other thing,
Like pearls flow down their tears.*

*They illuminate before the sun rises,
With their prize, robes of the forgiven.
Alas, O self, ere the last of life’s surprises,
Should I not to wakefulness be risen?*

*Your time has spilt in play and waste,
So redress matters now with haste!*

This poetry excerpt is from *Lata’if al-Ma’arif*, a book by Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali about the Islamic months and seasons. It was translated by first-time translators working with Turath’s Young Translators’ Program. The program uses a collaborative, team ap-

proach to produce ready-to-publish translations and graduate experienced translators. A translation team can consist of one senior translator coaching a team of three or so junior translators, for instance. Training translators in such a team solves a critical problem of scale. Scale, simply put, means more translators to connect the roots of our heritage to our future.

We've learned that nurturing translators rapidly accelerates growth, many aspiring translators are hungry for the opportunity to learn and grow, and collaboration should be at the heart of any institution supporting translators. Here we share some specific lessons about team translation.

...WITH A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH...

Some see translation as a solo linguistic exercise, a transmutation of words from one language to another. Universities structure their programs atop this view. A scholar who previously translated texts was asked why he had stopped and moved onto other projects. "Translations don't get you tenure" he replied, frankly.

However, collaboration can produce better translations. It "engages the social aspect of language and comprehension" since it forces translators to think about their audiences immediately, noted Yaseen Andrews, a Turath translator, now Oxford DPhil. Tactically, it requires translators to add comments about confusing word choice or sentence structure. The team communicates about these difficult parts, with a senior editor in attendance, and adds new agreed upon decisions to either the style guide or glossary. Neither is translation solely linguistic, although that's where it starts. Translators intend for their works to reach an audience and to do so are pushed to explore new forms of media, whether audiobooks or adaption to screenplays, to meet their readers where they are.

Gradually, rules of thumb are discovered to help translators gauge the quality of their work, e. g. "Could someone else reverse translate this back into Arabic accurately?" or "Did the author intend to use this word at this level of specificity?" or "Does this choice add to the reader's understanding or not?" For some Arabic words that are naturally multifaceted, like *birr*, endnotes for the reader are added about the specific word selection, as well as explanations for concepts the translators informally use among themselves, like *prism words* - a word that shows varying facets of itself depending on the context. *Birr* might

be translated as dutiful, pious, righteous, and so on, each translation fronting a slightly different angle of the word.

The rigorous process also makes better translators, and perhaps *insha Allah*, better people. "It's very important to open yourself to feedback" another translator notes. Virtues like intellectual humility balanced with creative courage, fidelity towards the original balanced with empathy for readers are evident and valuable almost immediately. Even the day I am writing this, I listened to three translators eagerly discuss how to translate a three-word sentence for nearly an hour as they cycled through options, pros, and cons. At the end of this session, they thanked each other for how delightful every perspective was. Translators struggling with Arabic can, with practice and effort, become great. However, someone who can't take feedback and becomes defensive, or won't sacrifice his or her solo opinion to align with broader editorial agreements will have a hard time.

Collaborative translating also gives translators a chance to specialize, and benefit from the specialized knowledge of other translators. One of our translators has a sub-specialty in *hadith* (prophetic narrations), for instance, and helps others with translating and explaining technical hadith terms. Poetry consistently challenges even highly seasoned translators, and many choose to translate it as prose. Turath decided to translate all poetry since the intent of poetry is to aid reaching an audience through phonetic beauty. Without a collaborative approach however, where some translators decided to focus on learning this craft to help the others, such a decision would be very difficult to uphold.

Therefore, a translation that starts off as,

*The elect of those who fast regularly, their fasting
is guarding the tongue from lies and slander.
Gnostics and the people of intimacy, their fasting
is guarding the heart from veils and otherness.*

Can keep its meaning and rhyme in English,

*The elect of those who regularly pursue fasting,
Their fast is to avert slander and lies.
But Gnostics and the people of intimacy everlasting,
Their fast is to guard against veils and ties.*

(From the Book of Ramadan in *Lataif al-Ma'arif*, publishing soon).

...CAN INSPIRE CHANGE

“People’s hearts are naturally attracted to everything new, and God gives them at each time knowledge clothed in the form best suited to their age.”

(Imam Haddad, Book of Assistance, Tr: Mostafa al-Badawi)

I once visited a Muslim Cham community in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta. My host opened his backdoor and fished us some dinner—his house was stilted over a river. I didn’t speak a word of Cham and less than ten of Vietnamese, but by the evening we had figured out a way to communicate. In a masjid with a few others from the community, we opened a copy of the Quran with both Arabic and a Vietnamese trans-

lation and pointed out verses which the other would then read in their own language. After a while (not easy), they had managed to express their sense of loss over not having the schooling opportunity to learn Arabic *and* Cham, meaning they were forced into a situation where they would have to cut off one of two of their original sources of heritage (also, some Cham was written in Arabic script). I pointed to the verse “truly where there is hardship there is also ease.” As they looked to the Vietnamese translation, they visibly seemed more tranquil. If we think about our relationships with our heritage, we should also feel what we are missing, and seek out the relief of reconnection. Our path there is translation and media.

Saad Ansari helps organize Turath’s Young Translators’ Program and edits poetry. He has three kids. See *Book of Counsels* on page 246 for Turath Publishing’s Ghazali translation.

A man in Timbuktu examines the remains of manuscripts burned by Islamist Khawaraj Hyenas. Now that France has pulled out of Mali, the fate of Muslims and Islamic culture are at risk to the butcheries of extremists.



The Quest for Prophetic Equilibrium: The Revival Tradition of Deoband

by Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera

A sense of community based on a shared faith; hundreds of students wearing traditional clothing with a white cap atop their head; the melodic sound of teachers reading from traditional Arabic texts as students take meticulous notes and send salutations on the Beloved Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace). Most of us can't recall the early years of our lives, but there are certain formative experiences that are etched within us and continue to shape us into adulthood. To this day, for me, the years spent in a Deoband seminary (*madrassa*) evoke nostalgic memories of energy, optimism, and vibrancy. Growing up, the most pivotal figures in my life, such as my father, grandfathers and at least two uncles, were immersed within the Islamic educational tradition. Their education within the Deoband system had a lasting and profound impact on how our home functioned and on my intellectual pursuits. When I first entered a Deoband seminary, I did not fully appreciate the depth, nuance, and scope of its instructional method. However, when I exited years later, I was awakened to the advantages of its methodology—modes of instruction and teaching that I continue to benefit from and have chosen as the pathway for my own children.

My training in the Islamic sciences began at Darul Uloom Bury, the oldest and first full-fledged Islamic seminary established in the UK probably of any Islamic intellectual tradition, and perhaps, the first outside the Indian Subcontinent and Muslim world. In later years, I had the opportunity to study across four continents and travel to more than fifty countries, spending time studying with scholars in places such as India, South Africa, and Syria. My travels led me to meet countless teachers, learning and benefiting from their practices and traditions. I then completed my doctorate work at SOAS, University of London. Being in that setting gave me an intimate understanding of the Western model of academia and its intellectual rigor. These different educational experiences made me more appreciative of the vision and teaching methods employed by the Deoband system and how it nurtures a wholesome love for the Prophetic way.

Being in these diverse settings also gave me a first-hand vantage point; I was able to see other educational approaches and traditions in motion and

experience being part of them. Despite the benefits and strengths of each, it was the Deoband model that left the most indelible impact on my educational and spiritual development. While for some, being in different educational milieus may bring about confusion, uncertainty, or mixed loyalties; for me, the exposure to other systems and traditions cemented the beauty of the Deoband tradition, its teachers, and students. I have never felt the need to trade it for a different tradition, even though I have benefited from others and hope to continue to do so.

Some of the modalities of learning I saw relied on a singular focus. Certain sufi groups, for example, actively discouraged students from studying *fiqh*, hadith or any other Islamic discipline and advocated for complete immersion in the service of their mentor and tradition. Other groups called for study of hadith without contextualizing its knowledge with an understanding of *fiqh*. Some movements focused purely on political aspects and engaged themselves in vigorous activism, always thinking about others, but neglecting their own basic devotion and practice. Some focused on learning, but were lax or even disdainful about the outer expression of the Prophetic Sunna. What I realized through my exposure to these various groups was the equilibrium inherent within the Deoband system.

Throughout history, there have been movements that holistically addressed the educational and spiritual needs of a community. At its core, the Deoband movement brought balance to the study of advanced Arabic, its grammar (*nabw*) and literature (*adab*), theology (*aqida*), Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), prophetic traditions (*hadiths*), sacred law (*fiqh*) and its principles (*usul*), and spirituality (*tausawwuf*), where each informed and perfected the understanding of the other branch providing a much needed synthesis—a student of knowledge was incomplete until he grasped the realities of both the inner and outer aspects of faith. I realized the teachers of the Deoband system valued having this complete system of education. No branch was elevated above another; rather, each was important in how it connected to the other and led to growth. What benefit is there in a jurist who has not wrestled with purification of his inner ego, a gnostic that lacks clarity on the limits of

the sacred law, or an activist who loses focus of the sacredness of his mission and does not carry the guiding lights of *fiqh* and *'aqida*. It is only when these conditions are in harmony with one another that a person is opened to the beauty of Islam and the Prophetic equilibrium. The six-to-ten-year seminary course, sometimes referred to as the *Dars Nizami*, but now only vaguely related to the original in its condensed and modified version, if studied well, is unparalleled anywhere for its comprehensiveness and scope.

During my travels, I had also seen that colleges, seminaries and universities associated with many traditions were primarily for the benefit of men. While these schools focused on one segment of society, the Deoband model stood in stark contrast. Its approach was inviting, open, and simultaneously invested in the educational nurturing of men, women, and children, fulfilling the recommendation of studying from cradle to grave, by establishing schools for each. As students graduated from the founding seminaries in Deoband and Saharanpur, and later ones in Moradabad, Karachi, Lahore, Dabhel and Rander, they purposefully established more and more *madrasas* everywhere they went. It was the case of one lamp lighting another, and very soon it led to an exponential growth in the number of schools across the world, and allowed for easy and open access to traditional knowledge. While other renowned and historical institutes, such as Al-Azhar in Cairo or the Qarawiyyin in Fez, required you to travel to their countries, the Deoband system was being exported worldwide, making its educational platform accessible to anyone interested. The number of educational institutions established through the efforts of Deoband graduates can be seen around the world and are literally beyond enumeration.

Countries such as the UK are a further testament to the success of the Deoband system in educating across ages and genders and introducing new generations to the Qur'an and Sunnah. For instance, within seven miles of where my humble abode is in London, there are approximately fifteen seminaries of various sizes where the full curriculum to an advanced level is taught to males and females, and probably four times as many *maktabs* (beginner schools) for children. The number of *huffaz* (memorisers) of the entire Qur'an that graduate from Deoband *madrasas* and local after-school *maktabs* is impressive and probably unmatched in the West, with maybe a thousand just in my area of London alone. For myself, the creation of Whitethread Institute is a way to pay homage to what I have gained from the Deoband system, to continue

its legacy in the West at a postgraduate level, and to fill the gap for the thousands of English-speaking *madrasa* graduates around the world.

Also, if we were to look around just the various boroughs of London, one would notice the vibrancy of Islam in those areas that are served by male and female graduates of Deoband seminaries. They offer multiple classes, lectures, seminars, and other activities for nearly all segments of the community; children, stay-home mothers, working women, youth, and adult men. There is a stark difference between those boroughs and the other areas of London where home-grown graduates do not exist. This heritage is the product of the sacrifices of the first residents of these areas, working class people who were inspired by the elders of the Deoband tradition in their countries of origin, and who made these areas home. Wherever they went, they first established mosques, nearly always with an adjoining *maktab* for their children. They nearly always brought their scholars with them to teach and to lead them in prayer. Then, when their children were old enough, they sent them off to study at *madrasas* in the UK or abroad, so they could return and cater for the needs of the community with their acquired knowledge. They are reaping the fruits of this today in these areas.

As someone who has found a home in the Deoband system, I see the greatest challenge now as nurturing its growth and allowing it to continue its reform work and flourish, especially in a Western context. The mistake would be to take the system, in its entirety with its minutiae, and simply transplant it. The world has changed more in the last few decades than it probably had for the last several centuries. A case in point is the change in the *jamra* pillars that a pilgrim pelts as a rite of the pilgrimage. In a National Geographic picture story from 1953, the pillar was maybe the height of two humans. During my first visit for *haji* in 2001, it had been extended to the height of three stories due to the increase of pilgrims. However, after 2004, the pillars were replaced by a 26-metre-long (85 ft) wall that now rises five stories. Changes in global transportation among other things have required this to happen. I would guess that the short pillars from 1953 would have been the same pillars for the preceding centuries and have only grown exponentially in the last few decades, symbolizing the changes in the world. The world has changed in technology, communication, social media, industry, finance, military, transport, science, mass production techniques, secularism, capitalism, liberalism, post-modernity, globalization,

and even biology, which obviously requires adaptations of some viewpoints. The civilisation of Muslims today is no longer purely spiritually 'Islamic' in all its contents. A *fatwa* that was relevant for a village in rural India before may not reflect the reality for even a small town in the UK or Norway now; the dynamics, attitudes, social practices have completely changed.

The formula for success will be in how the scholars of Deoband continue to balance adherence to the sacred law and the essence of legal edicts with the realities of living in a non-traditional world as they have always done. The Deoband system and world view has from its inception been one of reform and contextualisation. The legacy they inherited from Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624), the Waliyullah family (1700s), Sayyid Ahmad Brelwi Shahid (d. 1831), and Shah Muhammad Ishaq Dihlawi (d. 1846) and beyond has been reformist. Much work is being done in this regard now, especially at *madrasas* in Karachi, through annual seminars held by the Jamiat-i Ulama and the Islamic Fiqh Academy in India, and at other seminaries and institutes in the UK and South Africa, to name but a few. Our late Shaykh Yusuf Sulay-

A typical classroom at Darul Uloom in Deoband, India



man Motala (d. 2019) has blazed a pioneering path through his graduates at the Darul Uloom in Bury for what Islamic scholarship should look like in the 21st century in the West. Interestingly, this is becoming ever more relevant for the East too as globalisation and social media spreads its tentacles in all directions. The need to traverse the old and the new many a time leads to a chasm of sorts between those who do not embrace change easily and those who advocate for a more conciliatory approach. As a student of the Deoband system, I firmly believe the continued success of the tradition depends on scholars pushing for the middle path—those who balance the spirit of the law with the reality of where we find ourselves, as has been the hallmark of its founders.

Unfortunately, just like with any other system, there are weaknesses and deficiencies to be found within the tradition. Not all seminaries are perfect. Not all Deoband inspired movements are flawless. Not all scholars who have been tutored under the tradition are exemplary. Perfection belongs only to Allah Most High and His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace). There are also some who have drunk from the fountains of the Deoband tradition, and the sacred knowledge they possess has been acquired from its streams and oceans, but for one reason or another they have become disenchanted. There are those who say one must not wear the Deoband affiliation on their sleeve, while others even call for giving up the affiliation altogether. While I agree that it should not be an overt badge to carry, giving up affiliation entirely or being embarrassed by it would be ingratitude of the highest order. I would argue that many of the people who find themselves with a voice today as Muslim scholars may never have been honoured with an advanced study of Islam at all, had it not been for their parents' affiliation to the Deoband tradition, either through Tablighi Jamaat or connection with its scholars; they would probably not have studied the religion in such depth or chosen the sacred scholarly path. Opportunities for an advanced study of the faith are just not so widely available, if at all, outside of the Deoband tradition in many countries around the world; especially in the West. There is a lot to give thanks for.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of knowledge of the tradition, its founding struggles, its profound and comprehensive vision, and maybe even a lack of access to good representatives or role models in some places. Many are unaware of the giants of this tradition, the founders, their heritage, efforts, knowledge, insight, intellectual acumen, spiritual light, and

worldview. Some are left bewildered, wondering what is so significant about the Deoband tradition and its people. The tradition could never have spread and endured over multiple generations for over one and a half centuries had it not been one of substance. It could have never inspired for so long or enthralled the minds of so many men and women. The intellectual acumen and formidable visionary force of Imam Qasim Nanautawi (d. 1880), the spiritual insight and the zero-tolerance attitude to reprehensible innovations of Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (d. 1905), the academic prowess and prolific writings of Hakim al-Umma Mawlana Ashraf'Ali Thanawi (d. 1943), the sincere and unrelenting missionary zeal of Mawlana Ilyas Kandhlawi (d. 1944), and the soft power and spiritual emanations of their mentor par excellence Haji Imdadullah (d. 1899), help lay the solid foundations of this reformist movement of classical Islam. They were simply inheritors, interpreters, and revivers of the great luminaries of the past, and guides and pioneers into the future. So vital has their work been that in its outlines and bases it remains to our day unshaken and intact. The world would have been a very different place today had it not been for the tradition.

The need to establish the seminary in Deoband arose from the cataclysm of the mutiny against British rule in 1857, its invasive reforms, harsh land taxes and persecution of many Muslim scholars. Thousands were put to death, five hundred in Delhi alone, for supporting the independence movement. Many of the earlier *madrasas* in Delhi (about one thousand) and other places had been destroyed or dismantled. Christian missionary activities had been significantly stepped up. Scholars therefore felt an urgent need to establish several *madrasas* in key locations across the northern part of India to preserve Islamic teachings and produce scholars that could continue to rejuvenate and preserve people's faith. After some deliberation, Deoband, in the Northern Province, was chosen as a location for the first seminary, and the Dar al-'Ulum was founded there. The first lesson took place under a pomegranate tree in the courtyard of the Chatta Masjid, and interestingly both the first teacher's name and that of his first student happened to be Mahmud al-Hasan. This was followed six months later by the Mazahir 'Ulum seminary in Saharanpur among several others.

Mazahir 'Ulum had more senior teachers and at the beginning may have attracted more students, many even from outside the country. The scholars at Deoband however were more active in politics, and over time Deoband became more renowned and influential, even though the various *madrasas* always enjoyed close affiliation with one another. In a stark contrast to the past, the teaching at both Deoband and Saharanpur was organised in a very systematic way. This included formal administration, fixed staff and a syllabus collectively taught by the teachers, which was a departure from the earlier tradition of students studying with individual teachers, receiving authorisations, and moving onto other teachers, with no formal exams or the like. The new system was hugely successful and was replicated as other seminaries were established.

The other more significant change they implemented was to run on donations (however meagre) from the general public, rather than rely on large endowments from rulers or the national treasury. Funding for Islamic education had been stopped by the British anyway, who were establishing their own schools and granting jobs to those who conformed to their way. Therefore, a sustainable source of funding could only be the general public, and the founders also felt that this increased their reliance upon Allah, rather on any one worldly source. Above all, it also allowed for them to remain completely independent of outside influences, something they have guarded fiercely until today. These are some of the details of the humble beginning of this great movement. I would doubt that the founders of the Dar al-'Ulum ever envisaged the education and ethos and the spirit and tradition they imparted at their seminary (and sister seminaries) to spread all over the world and become one of the most influential reform movements in modern Islam. That is what it became.

It is through the legacy of their balanced approach that I see students young and old alike inspired to advance spiritually and further the reach of the Prophetic tradition—one that continues to etch itself in the fond memories of our world's future scholars and inculcate a love for our Lord and His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) for generations to come.

Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera has memorised the Qur'an and studied with accomplished scholars in the UK, South Africa, India, and Syria. He holds a PhD from SOAS and is the founder of Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate institute for Islamic scholars.

وهي سبع آيات

نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ
الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

من العنكبوت والفرار العنكبوت



سورة فاتحة الكتاب

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الَّذِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ

وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا سَعَادًا

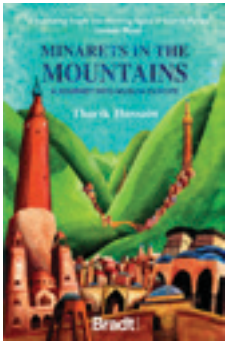




In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Say: 'O disbelievers! ﷻ I do not worship what you worship, ﷻ and you do not worship
what I worship, ﷻ nor will I worship what you have worshipped, ﷻ nor will you
worship what I worship. ﷻ You have your religion and I have my religion.

The Disbelievers

BOOK REVIEWS



Tharik Hussain

Minarets in the Mountains: A Journey into Muslim Europe

Bradt Travel Guides

Review by Nasim Ahmed

The story of Europe's encounter with Islam is in desperate need of retelling. Plagued by an identity crisis, fuelled in part by refugees fleeing Muslim majority countries, and the rise of far-right political parties threatening to undermine its multiracial foundation, the continent is once again at a cultural and political inflection point which will not only determine the future of its 44 million Muslim citizens, but also the direction and role that Europe will take in the 21st century.

More than ever, the continent is crying out for a people's history; a history that serves the higher purpose of telling stories, as the glue that can bind our multi-ethnic communities together and illuminate our present course in addressing the shared problems we face as a culture and civilisation. The past needs to be viewed through fresh eyes in search of a new history of Europe's encounter with Islam.

Whether intended or not, author Tharik Hussain's fascinating book *Minarets in the Mountains: A Journey into Muslim Europe*, serves this higher purpose. Nominated for the most prestigious award in non-fiction literature, The Baillie Gifford Prize, the magical volume offers a portrait of the continent that may be unfamiliar to most as the home of so many rich, colourful and vibrant indigenous Muslim communities.

How many of us are aware of the many centuries of co-existence between Europe's Muslims and its other faith communities? I suspect not many. Far fewer are likely to be able to count Europe's Muslims who have weathered war and persecution to plant roots in Europe that run as deep as any other community's.

The author's search for a "living indigenous Muslim Europe" began after a trip to Bulgaria in 2014. After discovering ancient Muslim villages co-existing miraculously without any sign of tension, Hussain set off with his wife and young daughters across the western Balkans two years later to discover what can best be described as Europe's lost Muslims. Over the course of several weeks, he visited towns and villages, and met many wonderful people, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia,

Albania and Montenegro. Each of the countries is home to a sizeable Muslim community established centuries ago during the Ottoman era.

Hussain dispels the popular image of Eastern Europe as a secular, harsh, grey place ravaged by decades of communist rule and ethnic wars. Like so many second-generation Muslims, his impression of the region was shaped by the horrors of the Bosnian war (1992-1995). Knowledge of the region's culture was superficial at best, with footballing icons like Hristo Stoichkov being seen as the greatest export. This image completely ignored the region's six centuries of Muslim history and its huge native Muslim population.

Accompanying Hussain and his family as they journey through the Balkans—that's exactly how the author makes the reader feel with his vivid and colourful prose—he guides us through "the fairy tale" house in Bosnia, a Sufi lodge perched beautifully beside a waterfall, and many magical places that literally takes one's breath away. He visits historic mosques, ancient bridges and Ottoman *hammams*, while weaving-in tales of sultans and imperial architects seamlessly.

Who knew Serbia's "dirty little secret"? Who knew that despite the country's bloody past there existed a "Muslim Serbia" which was once the heartland of the medieval Serbian state of Raška? Today it is the cultural centre of southern Serbia's Sandzak region with a majority Muslim population. In this idyllic place, lanky minarets are as common as some of the most sacred Orthodox sights, a UNESCO-listed monastery and the oldest church in the country.

With a style that mixes travel writing with history and storytelling, *Minarets in the Mountains...* weaves the past with the present to great effect. The author's literary companion is the famous Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi, who also wrote his own travel diary while visiting the Balkans in the 17th century. Çelebi is a major character in the book. Examples of his travel writing are presented masterfully and contrasted with Hussain's portrait of the Balkans.

Çelebi isn't the only historical figure whose appearance enriches the book. Mimar Sinan, the Ottoman architect and civil engineer for Sultan Suleiman

the Magnificent, also features heavily. Described as the “Turkish Michelangelo” Sinan’s legacy spans the Balkans and he is credited with being a figure so important that his genius and fame transcended European hostility against Muslims.

That’s not to say that the modern-day characters who Hussain encounters in his journey through the Balkans are any less interesting. On one wonderful occasion in Serbia, the author met a character embodying to perfection Prophet Muhammed’s instructions on generosity (peace be upon him). In this particularly moving episode, a vendor refused to take money for his daughter’s candy floss, an act of kindness which triggered a wave of emotion and an overwhelming sense of hope for humanity.

Tharik Hussain comes upon a Europe that would be unrecognisable to most of us who call the continent home. He found towns where “everything was halal” and the sound of the Muslim call to prayer is

as normal as the ringing of church bells. This was not the constructed Europe found in books on politics and philosophy that tries to make the case for co-existence. The Europe he discovered is “organic” and “natural”; not just existing, but also flourishing with the confidence of that which is anchored deeply and proud.

Besides being educating and entertaining, *Minarets in the Mountains: A Journey into Muslim Europe* presents the story of European Muslims in an invaluable way, helping to heal the wounds of the “war on terror”, the legacy of which is the demonisation of Muslims and their faith, Islam. The author has kick-started a new conversation about Islam’s indigeneity to Europe, which may go some way towards making the case for us to refer to the continent’s Judeo-Christian-Islamic heritage rather than the more usual and surely less accurate “Judeo-Christian”. We can but hope.

Nasim Ahmed is a political analyst, writer and commentator on the Middle East and political Islam.



Claire Chambers

Dastarkhwan: Food Writing from Muslim South Asia

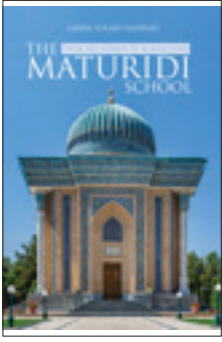
Beacon Books

The kitchen is often the heart of South Asian homes. Muslim South Asian kitchens, in particular, are the engines of an entire culture. The alchemy that takes place within them affects nations and economies, politics and history, and of course human relationships. There is proof of it in *Dastarkhwan*, Claire Chambers’s anthology of essays, stories and recipes supplied by some of the region’s most well-loved writers, historians and chefs.

An unexpected revelation awaits Nadeem Aslam in a London restaurant as he yearns for a special delicacy from Pakistan. Kaiser Haq takes us from the foods of his rural Bangladesh to the Dhaka street

food of 2020. Meanwhile Indian masterchef Sadaf Hussain recounts how the samosa came to be paired with chai, and of his own newly discovered love for the beverage. Sanam Maher uncovers the fascinating history of the burger’s arrival in Pakistani restaurants. Uzma Aslam Khan tells the tale of a young time-travelling daughter mourning the death of her confectioner father. And Gulla puts his heart into making the perfect Kashmiri nadroo yakhni but is taken aback by a hairy surprise in Asiya Zahoor’s story ‘The Hairy Curry’.

A multitude of flavours blend with love, joy, grief, regret and nostalgia in this book which is not only a beautiful collection of food writing, but also a rich helping of the histories and cultures of Muslim South Asia and its diasporas.



Shaykh Gibril Fouad Haddad

The Maturidi School: From Abu Hanifa to Al-Kawthari

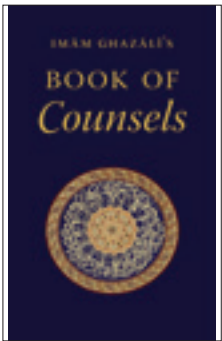
Beacon Books

The doctrinal creed of the largest denomination of Muslims that came to be known as ‘The Adherents to the Sunna and the Congregation’ found staunch defenders in the school of the ‘Arch-master of guidance’ (Imām al-hudā) and ‘Standard-bearer of guidance’ (‘Alam al-hudā) of Samarqand, Abū Mansūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/945), who codified the theology of ‘the Greatest Leader’ (al-Imām al-‘Azam) Abū Hanīfa. This work is a survey of the most important Māturīdī authorities and their doctrinal textbooks with a condensed overview of the bio-bibliography of Māturīdī scholarship in descending order of antiquity. It highlights their resolutions (taqīrāt) as the defining parameters of Sunnism and can serve both as an introductory synopsis of the great themes of

Maturidism and as a tool for the study of the school’s theology from its early founders to our time.

About the Author:

A Lebanese-born Islamic scholar, hadith expert, author and translator of classical Islamic texts, Gibril Fouad Haddad was featured in the inaugural list of 500 Most influential Muslims and has been called “one of the clearest voices of traditional Islam in the West”. A staunch defender of the traditional Islamic schools of law, he holds ijazas from over 150 scholars across the Muslim world and was a visiting fellow (2013-2015) then senior assistant professor (2015-2018) at the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Center for Islamic Studies, University Brunei Darussalam, where he lives.



Abu Hamid al-Ghazali

Book of Counsels

Turath Publishing

The title of this treatise by Imam Abū Hāmid Muhammad al-Ghazālī (505 AH/1111 CE) is al-Mawā‘iz fī al-Ahādīth al-Qudsiyyah, or Counsels from Divine Narrations. It is a collection of thirty-eight hadiths likely intended to fulfil the purpose of a statement attributed to the Prophet about the merits of collecting forty hadith: ‘Whosoever from my community preserves forty hadith regarding religious matters, Allah will raise him on the Day of Resurrection among those with understanding (fuqahā’) and the scholars (ulamā’)’.

Al-Ghazālī compiles powerful spiritual lessons and reminders, weaving hadith into direct speech

and presenting it to the reader. This is a book that is intended to stir the heart to submission and mindfulness of Allah. This translation has sought to retain the literary aspects of this collection while also applying an attentive engagement with the hadith employed within.

“This short, lovely and spirituality transformative text by Imam Ghazali is an invaluable addition to the library of Islamic books in English. It is based on Ahadith Qudsiyyah. Turath is to be congratulated on another first. The Young Translators’ Program is to be congratulated on their loving and painstaking efforts.”

—HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad



Nadeem Haque, Al-Hafiz B. A. Masri, Mehran Banaei

Ecolibrium: The Sacred Balance in Islam

Beacon Books

Ecolibrium: The Sacred Balance in Islam presents the precepts and applications of a totally rational belief system where the distinction between religion and secularism is meaningless. The book demonstrates that the optimal solution to our mounting socio-environmental problems is achievable if only we were to return to an integrated way of thinking

and living—of indeed organizing human society—so that it organically co-evolves as a natural component of the panoply of the rest of creation. In short, the authors call for a radical transformation in our relationship to ecology and the universe itself, which is different not only in degree but also in kind; they elaborate on these ‘changes in kind’ that are needed, with an optimistic view to inspire the development of a global, compassionate and concerned society in this pivotal 21st century and beyond.

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Qari Muhammad Tayyab Qasmi

The Way of the Scholars of Deoband

Turath Publishing

Review by Ismaeel Nakhuda

Global geopolitics over the last twenty years has been such that Deoband and the scholars affiliated

to it have prominently appeared in the public conscious. What and who the scholars of Deoband are, what they believe in and their positions on issues seem complex, and can confuse journalists, academics and even common Muslims. There are some whose explanations are on mark but the attempts of the majority remind one of the famous parable of the blind men and the elephant.

Mawlana Rumi includes a version of this story in his *Mathnawi*. In his retelling, the elephant is in a dark house in India with people entering the darkness to see it. Seeing it with the eye is impossible and so they feel it in the dark and depending on where they touch it, they believe it is like a water-pipe (trunk), a fan (ear), a pillar (leg) or a throne (back).

Since its humble inception in 1866 beneath a pomegranate tree in Deoband’s old Chattah Masjid (Beehive Mosque), Deoband has today become a global movement with graduates of the Dar al-‘Ulum and its affiliated *madrasahs* found across the world. With the scholars of Deoband involved in different activities and working in diverse fields, it often happens that journalists and academics, similar to the

people in Mawlana Rumi’s parable who enter the darkness to see the elephant, end up interpreting the way (*maslak*) of Deoband according to their own perceptions.

In respect to the people observing the elephant, Mawlana Rumi mentions that “if there had been a candle in each one’s hand, the difference would have gone out of their words.” When it comes to understanding and explaining the theory that underpins the way of the scholars of Deoband, the author of this book, Mawlana Qari Muhammad Tayyab (d.1983), was not just someone who carried Mawlana Rumi’s proverbial candle, but was in fact a bearer of a blazing torch who meticulously detailed the way and methodology of the scholars of Deoband.

There is a popular Arabic proverb that “the owner of the house knows what is in it” (*sabib al-bayt adra bi ma fihi*), and this quite rightly applies to Qari Muhammad Tayyab, whose unique and privileged position enabled him to elucidate the way of Deoband. After all, he was not just the grandson of Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanawtawi (d.1880), the founder of Dar al-‘Ulum Deoband, but was also Deoband’s chancellor (*muhtamim*) for more than half a century from 1929 until 1980.

As a proficient author of some 59 works, Qari Muhammad Tayyab wrote two Urdu books on the

way of Deoband. Both books present the theory of the Deobandi way, demonstrating that it sits in the middle between two extremes. This translation is of the shorter book and also includes a brilliant introduction by Shaykh al-Islam Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

With lots of people fudging in dark rooms try-

ing to understand Deoband, it is as Barbara Metcalf mentions that “the need to understand Deoband and other Islamic movements in their own terms ... continues to be of greater urgency in the plural, global world of today.” This translation is an attempt to meet this need.

Mawlana Ismaeel Nakhuda is a graduated from the Dar al-‘Ulum Bury, UK, as well as holding undergraduate and post graduate degrees in journalism. He is fluent in Arabic, English, Urdu and Gujarati, and currently resides in the UK.



He said, 'My Lord, expand my breast for me. And make easy for me my affair.'

Tâ Hâ, 25 - 26

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MAJOR EVENTS

Major Events

2020

OCTOBER

- 5 • India COVID-19 death toll passes 100,000, with 6.6 million known cases, 3rd highest death toll in the world behind the US and Brazil
- 12 • UK PM Boris Johnson announces a new three-tier system for COVID-19 restrictions as cases surge
- 14 • French president Emmanuel Macron announces a public health emergency and a curfew of 9 pm for nine cities due to surge in COVID-19 cases
- 16 • French teacher Samuel Paty beheaded by 18 year-old Islamist militant in Paris suburb of Éragny
- 20 • Nigerian police open fire on protesters in Lagos amid escalating protests against police violence around the country
- 21 • FBI says Iran and Russia have US voter information and are trying to influence outcome of US election
- 22 • Goldman Sachs agrees to pay record \$3 billion to end probe into its role in 1MDB corruption scandal to regulators in the US, UK, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia
- 24 • Deadliest shipwreck of the year claims 140 lives on a ship that sank with 200 migrants on board off the coast of Senegal
- 26 • Pakistan's first metro line, the Orange Line, opens in Lahore
- 27 • WHO confirms Europe is in the midst of a 2nd COVID-19 wave with cases rising rapidly, 30% in a week, deaths rising 40%
- 28 • French President Emmanuel Macron announces France will enter a new 4-week lockdown October 30 in televised address
 - Global COVID-19 cases record one-day increase of more than 500,000 for the first time, rising 25% in under two weeks according to Reuters
- 29 • Former leader Jeremy Corbyn is suspended from the British Labour Party after saying a report into antisemitism in the party was "overstated"
 - India records more than 8 million COVID-19 cases, the second country after the US, with a death toll of 120,527
 - Three people stabbed to death in church in Nice, France, in an terrorist attack, after similar attack and President Macron's defense of right to publish cartoons of Prophet Muhammad
- 30 • 7.0 magnitude earthquake in the Aegean Sea kills at least 64 in Turkish city of Izmir and Greek Island of Samos
 - UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson announces a second four-week lockdown for England

NOVEMBER

- 2 • Gunmen storm Kabul University, Afghanistan, shooting at least 22 dead with Islamic State group claiming responsibility
- 4 • Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed orders military offensive and state of emergency in northern region of Tigray, amid fears of a civil war
- 7 • Former Vice-President Joe Biden declared the winner of the US Presidential race, four days after the US election, defeating sitting President Donald Trump
- 8 • Global recorded cases of COVID-19 pass 50 million, with the known death toll at 1,245,240 (Johns Hopkins data)
 - More than 50 people beheaded in latest attack by Islamist militants in Cabo Delgado province, northern Mozambique
- 10 • Ceasefire announced signed between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia ending military conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh region after over a month of fighting

- 19 • Inquiry find “credible evidence” elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan civilians
- 26 • Turkey gives life sentences to 337 military officers and others involved in 2016 coup
- 27 • Iran’s most senior nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh assassinated outside Tehran, escalating tensions in the region
- 28 • At least 110 people killed in attack on Koshobe village in north-east Nigeria by Boko Haram jihadist group
- 30 • Australia condemns doctored photo of Australian soldier threatening Afghan child with knife on Chinese official’s Twitter, marking new low in the two countries relationship

DECEMBER

- 6 • US President Donald Trump orders about 700 troops withdrawn from Somalia
- 9 • Citing an 86% effectiveness, United Arab Emirates is the first country to authorize China’s Sinopharm vaccine for COVID-19
- 11 • More than 300 students kidnapped after gunmen storm a school in Kankara, Katsina state, northern Nigeria (Boko Haram later claims responsibility)
- 16 • 14 people found guilty of 2015 terror attacks on Charlie Hebdo office and supermarket in Paris
- 17 • More than 300 school boys rescued after they were kidnapped from their school in Katsina state, northern Nigeria

2021

JANUARY

- 5 • In a turnaround, six Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, sign an agreement to ease the blockage with Qatar, in place since 2017
- 11 • In Malaysia, King Al-Sultan Abdullah declares a state of emergency over COVID-19 until 1 August, suspending parliament and giving the government new powers
- 13 • Israel launches deadliest air raid on Syria since 2018, when 57 were killed in attacks on military positions
- 15 • An earthquake, registering 6.2-magnitude on the richter scale, strikes Indonesia’s island of Sulawesi killing at least 42 with hundreds more injured
- 19 • US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accuses China of committing genocide of Uighurs and other Muslim people

FEBRUARY

- 4 • US President Joe Biden announces an end to US support for the Saudi-led offensive in Yemen’s civil war
- 9 • United Arab Emirates becomes the fifth entity to successfully orbit a probe around Mars. The probe, Hope, begins a study the planet’s atmosphere.

MARCH

- 6 • Pope Francis meets with Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani in the Shiite cleric’s home in Najaf, during his first visit to Iraq
- 27 • Iran and China sign major agreement in Tehran, guaranteeing Chinese investment of \$400 billion and Iranian oil supply in return

APRIL

- 14 • “It’s time to end America’s longest war”, says US President Biden confirming his decision to withdraw all US troops from Afghanistan by Sept 11
- 24 • A fire at Ibn Khatib hospital in Baghdad, Iraq, kills 82 COVID-19 patients with more than 100 injured
- Joe Biden becomes the first US President to officially recognize the Armenian ‘genocide’ by the Ottoman empire during WWII

- 26 • President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announces a full lockdown throughout Turkey until May 17 to curb the COVID-19 surge as the country battles the world's 4th highest caseload

MAY

- 1 • India becomes the first country to record more than 400,000 new COVID-19 cases in one day (401,993)
- 4 • Halima Cisse, a Malian woman, gives birth to nonuplets (nine babies) in Morocco, only the third known case in the world
- 5 • Days of unrest starts in Jerusalem, injuring hundreds, following the eviction of Palestinian families from a historic Jerusalem neighborhood
- 8 • At least 50 people killed, mostly teenage girls, in bombings outside a school in Kabul, Afghanistan
- 10 • Violence escalates between Palestinians and Israelis after Israeli officers storm Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Rockets fired from Gaza and airstrikes from Israel kill at least 31.
- 13 • Israel strikes in Gaza kills 103 people, including 27 children. More than 1000 rockets fired into Israel by Gaza militants killing seven, while city of Lod becomes the center of street fighting.
- 16 • Death toll in Gaza passes 200 from Israeli airstrikes, as 42 more people killed and three building flattened
- 18 • India records the highest recorded daily COVID-19 death toll in the world with 4,529 deaths
- 19 • Israel and Hamas agree to a bilateral ceasefire in Gaza after nearly two weeks of fighting, amid international diplomatic efforts
- 24 • India's official COVID-19 death toll passes 300,000 (303,720), the third country to do so, with experts saying it is a vast undercount
- Deposed Myanmar civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, appears in court against charges laid by the military government
- 25 • Colonel Assimi Goïta ousts Mali's civilian President Bah Ndaw and Prime Minister Moctar Ouane, arresting them both

JUNE

- 1 • Amid a record 9,020 new COVID-19 cases recorded on May 29, Malaysia begins a full two-week lockdown to mitigate the spread
- 5 • Solhan, Burkina Faso: At least 160 killed by suspected Islamist extremists amid a security crisis in the region
- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan promises to save the country's shores from a build-up of 'sea snot' (marine mucilage) due to pollution and climate change
- 6 • Four members of a London, Ontario, family killed when they are struck by a truck in an anti-Muslim hate crime
- 7 • Two passenger trains collide in the Sindh province of Pakistan, killing at least 40
- 10 • In the District of New Jersey, Zahid Quraish is confirmed as America's first Muslim federal judge by the US Senate
- 13 • Benjamin Netanyahu ousted after a record 12 years after Israel's Knesset votes in a new coalition government with Naftali Bennett as Prime Minister
- 18 • Amid low turn out, jurist and conservative Ebrahim Raisi elected President of Iran
- 27 • Boat sinks off Tunisia, drowning 43 migrants with 84 rescued by Tunisian navy
- 30 • Bangladesh begins a one-week lockdown as COVID-19 cases surge due to the Delta variant

JULY

- 1 • Indonesian President Joko Widodo announces a two-week lockdown for the islands of Java and Bali amid the worst COVID-19 outbreak in South East Asia
- 8 • US President Joe Biden says US troops will withdraw from Afghanistan will by August 31, despite increased Taliban gains across the country
- 12 • A fire in a COVID-19 hospital ward kills at least 92 people in the city of Nasiriya, Iraq

- 19 • Bomb attack on al-Wuhailat market in Baghdad, Iraq, ahead of Eid al-Adha festival, kills 25 people
- 23 • At least 164 people die in floods and landslides caused by heavy rain in Indian state of Maharashtra
 - Indonesia posts a record daily number of COVID-19 deaths at 1,566
- 26 • Tunisian President Kais Saied sacks Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi and suspends parliament with the help of the army due to its handling of the COVID-19 crisis
 - Ship carrying migrants wrecks off coast of Al-Khums, Libya, killing at least 57
- 29 • Flash floods kill at least 60 people in Kamdesh, Afghanistan

AUGUST

- 1 • 394 migrants rescued from a stricken vessel by humanitarian NGO ships in Tunisian waters
- 3 • 132 wildfires in Turkey's southern coastal Manavgat district burn 118,789 hectares of land in six days, killing eight people
- 7 • Sifan Hassan makes history, winning the 10,000m gold medal in 29:55.32 at the Tokyo Olympics to claim the 5/10k double
- 8 • Three regional Afghan cities, including the city of Kunduz, captured by the Taliban
 - Attacks in northern Mali by Islamic jihadists kill more than 50 people
- 10 • Forest fires kill 65 people, including 25 soldiers, in the Algerian Kabylie region among an ongoing heatwave
- 11 • 77 killed and more missing after torrential rains cause flash flooding in Turkey's northwestern provinces of Kastamonu, Sinop and Barti
- 15 • Afghan President Ashraf Ghani flees the country in helicopter, with tens in thousands in cash, as Taliban forces take Kabul
 - Petrol tanker explosion kills 27 and injures 79 in al-Tleil, Lebanon, amid a deepening economic crisis
- 16 • Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and his cabinet resign after losing their majority amid political turmoil
 - US President Joe Biden says "I stands squarely behind my decision" to withdraw US troops from Afghanistan, despite sudden collapse of the country to the Taliban
- 19 • Iran's official COVID-19 death toll passes 100,000 amid its fifth wave of infections, according to its Health Ministry
- 20 • Yusuf Buhari, son of Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, marries Zahra Nasir Bayero, daughter of the emir of Bichi, Nasiru Ado Bayero
- 26 • Multiple bomb blasts at Kabul Airport, Afghanistan, kills over 60 people, including Taliban and US soldiers, amid evacuation efforts. ISIS claims responsibility.
- 29 • Missile and drone attacks in Yemen target the al-Anad airbase, killing at least 30 soldiers
- 30 • America officially ends its longest-ever war in Afghanistan as the last military evacuation plane leaves Kabul
 - Algeria stops selling leaded petrol, the last country to do so, ending 99 years of the gasoline use world-wide

SEPTEMBER

- 4 • Twitter suspended indefinitely in Nigeria, after it removed a post by President Muhammadu Buhari
- 7 • Taliban announce interim government, with Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund in the most senior role
- 8 • A fire kills forty-one prisoners at Tangerang prison, near Jakarta, Indonesia
- 12 • Taliban says women and men must study in gender-segregated classrooms in Afghanistan
- 13 • Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett makes first official visit to Egypt in a decade for talks with President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi in Sharm el-Sheikh
- 16 • French President Emmanuel Macron says France has killed leader of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi

- 19 • US apologizes for an Afghan airstrike that killed 10 civilians, including seven children
- 20 • Pfizer announces they have developed a safe COVID-19 vaccine for 5-11 year olds with the dose 1/3 of the strength
- 29 • Tunisian President Kais Saied appoints Najla Bouden Romdhan as Tunisia's and the Arab world's first female prime minister

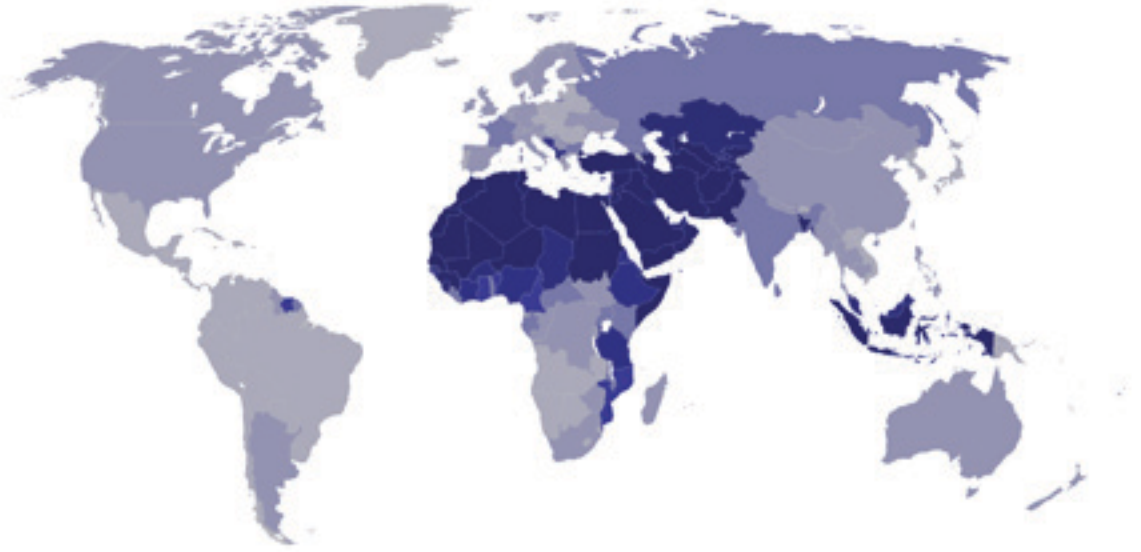
OCTOBER

- 3 • Pandora Papers investigation reveals secret wealth of 30 current and former world leaders including Czech PM Andrej Babis and former UK PM Tony Blair
- Tropical Cyclone Shaheen makes landfall in Oman and Iran, killing at least nine people



APPENDIX I
Population Statistics

World Muslim Population



Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Afghanistan	37,135,000	99.7	37,023,595
Albania	3,057,220	58.8	1,797,645
Algeria	41,657,488	99.7	41,532,516
American Samoa	50,826	< 0.1	< 51
Andorra	85,708	2.6	2,228
Angola	30,355,880	0.3	91,068
Anguilla	17,422	0.6	105
Antigua & Barbuda	95,882	0.3	288
Argentina	44,694,198	0.9	402,248
Armenia	3,038,217	0.1	3,038
Aruba	116,576	0.4	466
Australia	25,700,000	2.6	668,200
Austria	9,000,000	8	720,000
Azerbaijan	10,046,516	96.9	9,735,074

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Bahamas	332,634	0.1	333
Bahrain	1,442,659	73.7	1,063,240
Bangladesh	170,000,000	90.4	153,680,000
Barbados	293,131	1.5	4,397
Belarus	9,527,543	0.8	76,220
Belgium	11,570,762	7.6	879,378
Belize	385,854	0.2	772
Benin	11,340,504	27.7	3,141,320
Bermuda	71,176	1	712
Bhutan	766,397	0.2	1,533
Bolivia	11,306,341	< 0.1	< 11306
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,849,891	50.7	1,951,895
Botswana	2,249,104	0.4	8,996
Brazil	210,000,000	0.5	1,050,000
British Virgin Islands	35,802	1.2	430
Brunei	450,565	80.9	364,507
Bulgaria	7,057,504	13.4	945,706
Burkina Faso	21,382,659	63.2	13,513,840
Burundi	11,844,520	10	1,184,452
Cambodia	15,552,211	2	311,044
Cameroon	25,640,965	30	7,692,290
Canada	35,881,659	3.2	1,148,213
Cape Verde	568,373	2	11,367
Central African Republic	5,745,062	15	861,759
Chad	15,833,116	58	9,183,207
Chile	17,925,262	< 0.1	< 17925
China	1,390,000,000	2	27,800,000
China	1,390,000,000	2	27,800,000
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	596	80	477
Colombia	48,168,996	0.2	96,338
Comoros	821,164	98.3	807,204
Congo	5,518,087	2	110,362
Cook Islands	9,038	< 0.1	< 9

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Costa Rica	4,987,142	< 0.1	< 4987
Côte d'Ivoire	26,260,582	42.9	11,265,790
Croatia	4,270,480	1.5	64,057
Cuba	11,116,396	0.1	11,116
Cyprus	1,100,000	25.3	278,300
Czech Republic	10,686,269	0.2	21,373
Denmark	5,809,502	5.4	313,713
Djibouti	884,017	97	857,496
Dominica	74,027	0.2	148
Dominican Republic	10,298,756	< 0.1	< 10299
DR Congo	85,281,024	10	8,528,102
East Timor	1,325,897	0.1	1,326
Ecuador	16,498,502	< 0.1	< 16499
Egypt	95,000,000	92	87,400,000
El Salvador	6,187,271	0.1	6,187
Equatorial Guinea	797,457	10	79,746
Eritrea	6,000,000	44.5	2,670,000
Estonia	1,244,288	< 0.1	< 1244
Ethiopia	110,871,031	31	34,370,020
Falkland Islands	3,198	< 0.1	< 3
Faroe Islands	51,018	< 0.1	< 51
Fiji	926,276	6.3	58,355
Finland	5,537,364	1.8	99,673
France	67,000,000	8.8	5,896,000
French Guiana	281,612	0.9	2,535
French Polynesia	290,373	< 0.1	< 290
Gabon	2,119,036	10	211,904
Gambia	2,092,731	95.7	2,002,744
Georgia	4,926,087	10.7	527,091
Germany	83,100,000	6.6	5,484,600
Ghana	28,102,471	17.6	4,946,035
Gibraltar	29,461	4	1,178
Greece	10,761,523	3.5	376,653

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Greenland	57,691	< 0.1	< 58
Grenada	112,207	0.3	337
Guadeloupe	402,119	0.4	1,608
Guam	167,772	< 0.1	< 168
Guatemala	16,581,273	< 0.1	< 16581
Guinea	11,855,411	89.1	10,563,171
Guinea-Bissau	1,833,247	45.1	826,794
Guyana	740,685	7.3	54,070
Haiti	10,788,440	< 0.1	< 10788
Honduras	9,182,766	0.3	27,548
Hong Kong	7,213,338	4.1	295,747
Hungary	9,825,704	0.5	49,129
Iceland	343,518	0.2	687
India	1,370,000,000	14.6	200,020,000
Indonesia	266,500,000	86.7	231,055,500
Iran	83,000,000	99.4	82,502,000
Iraq	40,194,216	95.7	38,465,865
Ireland	5,068,050	1.4	70,953
Isle of Man	89,407	0.2	179
Israel	8,424,904	18	1,516,483
Italy	62,246,674	4.8	2,987,840
Jamaica	2,812,090	0.2	5,624
Japan	126,000,000	0.1	126,000
Jordan	10,458,413	97.2	10,165,577
Kazakhstan	18,744,548	70.2	13,158,673
Kenya	48,397,527	11.2	5,420,523
Kiribati	109,367	< 0.1	< 109
Kosovo	1,907,592	95.6	1,823,658
Kuwait	2,916,467	74.6	2,175,684
Kyrgyzstan	6,500,000	85	5,525,000
Laos	7,234,171	< 0.1	< 7234
Latvia	1,923,559	0.1	1,924
Lebanon	6,100,075	57.7	3,519,743

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Lesotho	1,962,461	0.1	1,962
Liberia	4,809,768	20	961,954
Libya	6,754,507	97	6,551,872
Liechtenstein	38,000	5.4	2,052
Lithuania	2,793,284	0.1	2,793
Luxembourg	605,764	3	18,173
Macau	606,340	0.1	606
Madagascar	25,683,610	10	2,568,361
Malawi	19,842,560	20	3,968,512
Malaysia	32,730,000	61.3	20,063,490
Maldives	374,775	100	374,775
Mali	18,429,893	95	17,508,398
Malta	449,043	2.6	11,675
Marshall Islands	75,684	< 0.1	< 76
Martinique	385,551	0.2	771
Mauritania	3,845,430	99.9	3,841,585
Mauritius	1,364,283	17.3	236,021
Mayotte	256,518	97	248,822
Mexico	127,000,000	0.01	12,700
Micronesia	115,023	0.1	115
Moldova	3,437,720	0.4	13,751
Monaco	30,727	0.8	246
Mongolia	3,103,428	5	155,171
Montenegro	614,249	19.1	117,322
Montserrat	5,315	0.1	5
Morocco	38,314,130	99	37,930,989
Mozambique	27,233,789	17.9	4,874,848
Namibia	2,413,643	0.4	9,655
Nauru	10,084	< 0.1	< 10
Nepal	29,218,867	4.2	1,227,192
Netherlands	17,400,000	5.1	887,400
Netherlands Antilles	304,759	0.2	610
New Caledonia	278,500	2.8	7,798

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
New Zealand	4,903,800	0.9	44,134
Nicaragua	6,284,757	< 0.1	< 6285
Niger	21,466,863	98.3	21,101,926
Nigeria	200,000,000	53.5	107,000,000
Niue	1,611	< 0.1	< 2
North Korea	25,610,672	0.1	25,611
North Macedonia	2,118,945	33.3	705,609
Northern Mariana Islands	56,200	0.7	393
Norway	5,328,212	3.2	170,503
Oman	4,633,752	86	3,985,027
Pakistan	220,000,000	96.5	212,300,000
Palau	17,900	< 0.1	< 18
Palestine	4,780,978	97.5	4,661,454
Panama	4,158,783	0.7	29,111
Papua New Guinea	8,558,800	< 0.1	< 8559
Paraguay	7,052,983	< 0.1	< 7053
Peru	31,237,385	< 0.1	< 31237
Philippines	109,000,000	8	8,720,000
Poland	38,430,000	0.02	7,686
Portugal	10,291,027	0.4	41,164
Puerto Rico	3,337,177	< 0.1	< 3337
Qatar	2,450,285	77.5	1,898,971
Réunion	865,826	4.2	36,365
Romania	19,524,000	0.5	97,620
Russia	144,350,000	12.5	18,043,750
Rwanda	12,001,136	4.8	576,055
Saint Helena	4,534	< 0.1	< 5
Saint Kitts & Nevis	46,204	0.3	139
Saint Lucia	178,844	< 0.1	< 179
Saint Pierre & Miquelon	5,794	0.2	12
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	109,557	1.7	1,862
Samoa	199,052	< 0.1	< 199
San Marino	33,344	< 0.1	< 33

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
São Tomé & Príncipe	199,910	3	5,997
Saudi Arabia	34,220,000	98.2	33,604,040
Senegal	15,726,037	96.1	15,112,722
Serbia	7,001,444	3.1	217,045
Seychelles	94,205	1.1	1,036
Sierra Leone	7,719,729	78.6	6,067,707
Singapore	5,866,139	15.6	915,118
Slovakia	5,443,120	0.1	5,443
Slovenia	2,066,880	3.6	74,408
Solomon Islands	667,044	< 0.1	< 667
Somalia	11,000,000	99.8	10,978,000
South Africa	57,725,600	1.9	1,096,786
South Korea	51,635,256	0.1	51,635
South Sudan	12,323,419	20	2,464,684
Spain	46,659,302	2.6	1,213,142
Sri Lanka	21,700,000	9.7	2,104,900
Sudan	40,825,770	97	39,600,997
Suriname	600,000	14.3	85,800
Swaziland	1,160,164	10	116,016
Sweden	10,182,291	8.1	824,766
Switzerland	8,492,956	5.2	441,634
Syria	18,000,000	87	15,660,000
Tajikistan	9,540,000	97.9	9,339,660
Tanzania	54,199,163	35.2	19,078,105
Thailand	70,000,000	5.4	3,780,000
Togo	7,352,000	20	1,470,400
Tokelau	1,499	< 0.1	< 1
Tonga	100,651	< 0.1	< 101
Trinidad & Tobago	1,356,633	5.8	78,685
Tunisia	11,446,300	99.8	11,423,407
Turkey	83,155,000	89.5	74,423,725
Turkmenistan	6,031,187	93.7	5,651,222
Turks & Caicos Islands	37,910	< 0.1	< 38

Country	Population	Percent Muslim	Muslim Population
Tuvalu	10,640	0.1	11
US Virgin Islands	104,425	0.1	104
Uganda	38,823,100	14	5,435,234
Ukraine	42,263,873	1.5	633,958
United Arab Emirates	9,541,615	76	7,251,627
United Kingdom	66,040,229	6.3	4,160,534
United States	327,827,000	1.1	3,606,097
Uruguay	3,505,985	< 0.1	< 3506
Uzbekistan	34,036,800	88.7	30,190,642
Vanuatu	304,500	< 0.1	< 305
Vatican City	800	0	0
Venezuela	31,304,016	0.4	125,216
Vietnam	96,160,163	0.1	96,160
Wallis & Futuna	15,714	< 0.1	< 16
Western Sahara	603,253	99.4	599,633
Yemen	28,036,829	99.2	27,812,534
Zambia	16,887,720	1	168,877
Zimbabwe	14,000,000	0.7	98,000
TOTAL	8,941,789,927	22	1,938,613,645

Muslim population statistics taken from Wikipedia. org. World populations taken from www. worldometers. info.



Folio from the "Blue Qur'an"

This folio comes from a sumptuous, multivolume Qur'an with indigo pages and silver verse markers.

Gold and silver on indigo-dyed parchment, made in Tunisia, possibly Qairawan, mid-fourth century Hijri.

APPENDIX II
Social Media Statistics

Top Social Media Statistics of *The Muslim 500*

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
1	Salman Khan	55	India
2	Shahrukh Khan	55	India
3	Mesut Özil	32	Germany
4	Paul Pogba	28	France
5	Mohamed Salah	29	Egypt
6	Mustafa Hosny	43	Egypt
7	A. R. Rahman	54	India
8	Ahmad Al Shugairi	48	Saudi Arabia
9	DJ Khaled	45	USA
10	Tamer Hosny	44	Egypt
11	Aamir Khan	56	India
12	Amr Diab	59	Egypt
13	Amr Khaled	54	Egypt
14	Shaquille O' Neal	49	USA
15	Ice Cube	52	USA
16	Muhammad Alarefe	51	Saudi Arabia
17	Ahmed Helmy	51	Egypt
18	Sheikh Mishary bin Rashid Alafasy	45	Kuwait
19	Aidh Al-Qarni	62	Saudi Arabia
20	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	67	Turkey
21	Khabib Nurmagomedov	33	Russia
22	Maher Zain	40	Sweden
23	HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah	51	Jordan
24	Ahlam Alshamsi	52	UAE
25	Atif Aslam	38	Pakistan
26	Imran Khan	69	Pakistan
27	Zinedine Zidane	49	France
28	Haifa Wehbe	49	Lebanon
29	Kadim Al Sahir	64	Iraq
30	Salman Al Ouda	64	Saudi Arabia
31	Muhammad Assaf	32	Palestine
32	HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum	72	UAE
33	Bassem Youssef	47	Egypt
34	Lt Gen Prabowo Subianto	69	Indonesia
35	Tareq Al-Suwaidan	67	Kuwait
36	Abdullah Gymnastiar	59	Indonesia

Occupations	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Total
Actor	51m	43m	44m	137m
Actor	43m	42m	26m	110m
Footballer	38m	26m	24m	88m
Sports	25m	9m	48m	82m
Footballer	15m	15m	44m	73m
Preacher	35m	11m	16m	61m
Musician	25m	24m	6m	54m
Show Host	21m	18m	14m	53m
Musician	21m	5m	26m	52m
Musician	24m	4m	21m	47m
Actor	18m	26m	3m	47m
Musician	22m	11m	13m	46m
Preacher	31m	11m	4m	46m
Sports	9m	16m	20m	44m
Rapper	17m	6m	21m	44m
Scholar	23m	20m	0m	42m
Actor	17m	9m	16m	41m
Qur'an Reciter	22m	15m	6m	41m
Scholar	16m	20m	4m	40m
Politician	10m	18m	10m	37m
Sports	5m	2m	30m	37m
Musician	29m	2m	5m	35m
Royalty	18m	10m	6m	34m
Musician	10m	9m	13m	32m
Musician	24m	1m	6m	31m
Politician	11m	14m	6m	30m
Sports	0m	0m	29m	29m
Musician	14m	7m	8m	29m
Musician	15m	7m	4m	25m
Scholar	7m	13m	2m	22m
Musician	13m	3m	6m	22m
Royalty	4m	11m	6m	20m
Show Host	5m	11m	4m	20m
Public Speaker	10m	5m	5m	19m
Show Host	9m	10m	0m	18m
Preacher	7m	4m	7m	17m

Top Social Media Statistics of the General Public

This is a list showing the most popular social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).
(Rounded values in millions)

Rank	Name	Age	Country
1	Cristiano Ronaldo	36	Portugal
2	Justin Bieber	27	Canada
3	Selena Gomez	29	USA
4	Ariana Grande	28	USA
5	Beyonce	41	USA
6	Lionel Messi (Leo Messi)	34	Argentina
7	Kim Kardashian	41	USA
8	Dwayne Johnson (The Rock)	49	USA
9	Taylor Swift	31	USA
10	Katy Perry	36	USA
11	Rihanna	33	Barbados
12	Neymar	29	Brazil
13	Jennifer Lopez	52	USA
14	Virat Kohil	32	India
15	Kendal Jenner	25	USA
16	Miley Cyrus	28	USA
17	Shakira	44	Colombia
18	Barack Obama	60	USA
19	Nicki Minaj	39	USA
20	Demi Lovato	29	USA
21	Kevin Hart	42	USA
22	Lady Gaga	35	USA
23	Drake	34	Canada
24	Narendra Modi	70	India
25	Chris Brown	33	USA
26	LeBron James	36	USA
27	Justin Timberlake	40	USA
28	Vin Diesel	53	USA
29	Will Smith	53	USA
30	Eminem	48	USA
31	Akshay Kumar	54	Canada
32	Deepika Padukone	35	India
33	Adele	33	UK
34	Ronaldinho Gaucho	41	Brazil
35	Britney Spears	39	USA
36	Snoop Dogg	49	USA

Occupations	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Total
Footballer	150m	9m	340m	499m
Musician	78m	114m	195m	387m
Musician	61m	65m	261m	387m
Musician	34m	84m	265m	383m
Musician	60m	16m	296m	371m
Footballer	93m	3m	263m	358m
Reality Star	30m	70m	252m	351m
Wrestler	58m	15m	268m	341m
Musician	70m	89m	178m	336m
Musician	67m	109m	135m	310m
Musician	86m	103m	107m	295m
Footballer	73m	55m	161m	288m
Musician	51m	45m	175m	271m
Cricketer	48m	44m	153m	244m
Model and Media	22m	32m	189m	242m
Musician	45m	46m	144m	235m
Musician	103m	53m	71m	225m
Politician	57m	130m	35m	222m
Musician	41m	23m	157m	220m
Actress - Musician	35m	55m	115m	205m
Comedian	36m	37m	123m	195m
Musician	57m	84m	49m	189m
Musician	53m	39m	92m	184m
Politician	47m	71m	60m	177m
Musician	51m	32m	93m	176m
Athlete - NBA	27m	50m	98m	174m
Musician	43m	63m	62m	167m
Actor	100m	0m	66m	165m
Actor	110m	0m	55m	165m
Musician	94m	23m	32m	148m
Actor	48m	42m	55m	144m
Actress	49m	28m	60m	136m
Musician	68m	26m	39m	134m
Footballer	52m	20m	59m	131m
Musician	41m	56m	34m	130m
Musician	44m	19m	65m	128m



Folio from a Qur'an Manuscript
Ink and gold on parchment, made possibly in Iraq, mid-fourth century Hijri.

GLOSSARY OF ISLAMIC TERMS

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, “The People of the Prophetic Practice and Community”; refers to Sunni Muslims as a community.

Al-Fatiha: Literally, “The Opening” or “The Beginning”. This is the title for the first chapter of the Holy Qur’an that is recited as a fundamental part of Muslims’ daily prayers.

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: From Arabic khalifa (“successor”), the head of the entire community of Muslims, either current or in the past. Is also used by certain sects and Sufi tariqas to refer to their own leader his successor.

Chador: A loose cloth traditionally worn by Muslim women usually covering the body from head to foot.

Da’i/ Da’ee: Islamic missionary.

Da’wa: Islamic missionary work; literally ‘inviting’ to Islam or to acts of virtue.

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 its time, place, people, and other details. Unlike the ruling of a judge (qadi), it is not normally binding.

Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence. A branch of the Sharia that deals with rulings related to human actions, as opposed to faith or spirituality.

Fiqh al-Aqaliyyat: Islamic rulings for Muslims living as minorities in predominantly non-Muslim lands.

Ghazal: Love poetry used for describing the beauty of the loved one as well as the emotions the poet has towards the beloved.

Hadith: Literally “saying”. These are a collection of sayings—or direct observations—of the Prophet Muhammad. There are numerous ahadeeth (plural of “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, and until today, the authenticity of Qur’anic transmission is based primarily on oral, then written, transmission.

Hajj: The pilgrimage to Makkah, one of the five pillars of Islam. It is a once-in-a-lifetime obligation upon every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it. The pilgrimage occurs from the 8th-12th days 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, Medina, or al-Aqsa, this term means “invulnerable”. 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 women to preserve their modesty. It obligatory by the consensus of all classical Islamic schools of thought. In some contexts, it can mean segregation, as in between genders.

Hijaz: The region along the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula that separates Najd in the east from Tihamah in the west.

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 the 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).

Ijtihad: 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 sermon of the Friday (Jumu'ah) prayers; 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 of the 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 jihad 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 Arabic calligraphy, which is the artistic practice of handwriting Arabic phrases, often in the form of verses of the Qur'an or Islamic prayers.

Khateeb: Refers to the person who delivers the Islamic sermon (khutbah) during certain occasions such as the Friday or Eid prayers. He is usually the imam or leader of the prayer.

Khalifa: See "caliph".

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 and poor Muslims.

Madhab: A traditional school 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 (literally "one who is worthy of being imitated"), they have the authority to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law for laymen and less-qualified 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 is 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 daf, 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 civilized 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: Prayers of peace upon the Prophet which have many distinct formulas, often consisting of the basic *Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ala ahlihi wa sallim* (O God send your prayers and blessings 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 or tribal 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 Shia Islam.

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 “The 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 ten-

et of the Shia Usuli school of Islamic law.

Tariqa: any particular brotherhood of Sufism (spiritual travel) 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, 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: Mandatory distribution of excess wealth to the poor, and one of the five pillars of Islam. It typically consists of distributing 2.5% (one fortieth) of one’s excess wealth every year, as well as mandatory charity during Eid al-Fitr, following Ramadan.

Zawiya: See khanqah, above.



Bifolium from the "Nurse's Qur'an" (Mushaf al-Hadina)

This double-page from a Qur'an comes down to us with the fascinating information that the nursemaid to one of the Zirid rulers of North Africa commissioned it for donation to the Great Mosque of Qairawan.

Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on parchment, made in Tunisia, probably Qairawan, 410 AH.

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Portrait of Emperor Muhi-ud-Din Muhammad (1068-1118 AH)—'Ornament of the Throne and Conqueror of the World' Mughal miniature painting, c. 1040 AH

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