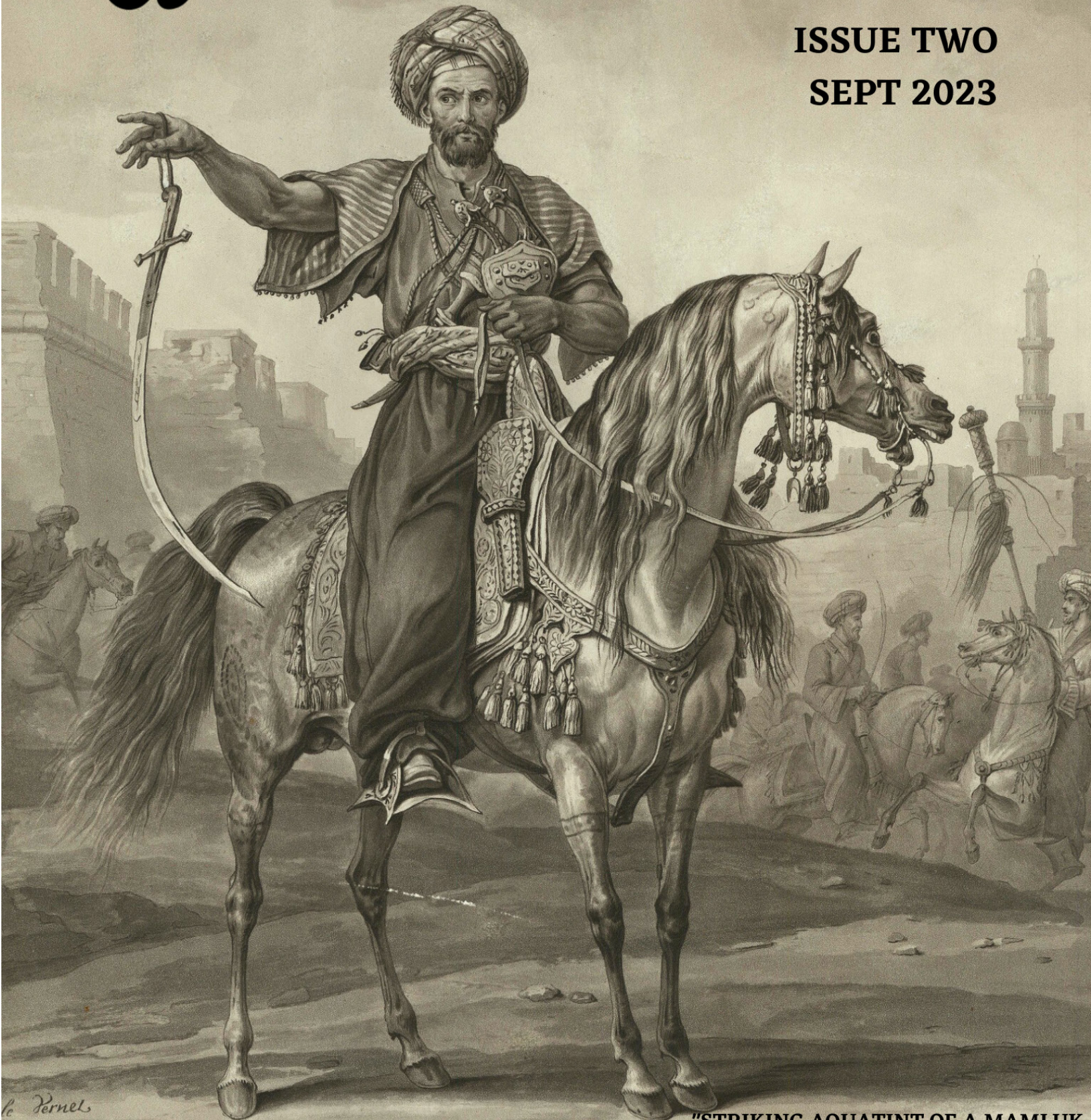




# AWWAM

ISSUE TWO

SEPT 2023



l. Vernet

"STRIKING AQUATINT OF A MAMLUK LEADER" BY CARLE VERNET



IN THIS HOUSE

THERE IS NO DEITY

KIPCHAK LIV

HUMANS EXCEL TH

FEMINISM IS

THE PROPHET ﷺ



E, WE BELIEVE

Y OTHER THAN GOD

VES MATTER

ROUGH DIFFERENCES

POLYTHEISM

IS GOD'S BELOVED





Fall sets in, a time of great change in decay, but our editor **Abdullah Yousef** once again reminds us that this is a time of growth, reflection, and cultivation ahead of winter:



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I've missed you, dear brothers. I hope you all had a great summer. We can at least say it was quite eventful, wasn't it? *Alhamdulillah*, I'm very glad, and quite shocked even, at the incredible response to the launch and first issue of Qawwam. Thousands of downloads from different platforms, and even more views from our new website later, we're glad to present you with the second issue for the fall.

With all honesty, I can say I didn't expect it to be so well received that quickly, especially with the unorthodox format I was going with. Yet, I found out very quickly that this was a form of delivery regular Muslim readers were actually starved of. I've come to call our interconnected groups (whom I arrogantly see as connected through my friends and I) "Alt-Muslim Twitter", and though I feel that isn't 100% accurate, I want to take the opportunity to thank you all, especially to the many new contributors this time around, for their effort and support.

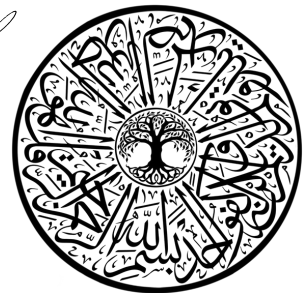
What do we have this time around? From yours truly, I present an essay for our fitness feature on the matter of physicality as a matter of life and culture. From STOIC, we have a reflective article on the effects of modernity on the human mind and our sense of fulfillment. FERDAWS was kind enough to share with us an excerpt from his novel *Creed of the Mountains* for our fiction segment, inspired by his own family's

experience in the Soviet-Afghan war. IBAD brings us, slashing from beyond, a piece about the masculine archetypes that make up the modern day *mujihad*. Two pseudonymous brothers wrote a hard hitting article in defense of polygyny, which I thoroughly enjoyed, and think you will as well. And my favorite segment? A wonderful interview I was able to conduct, the first for Qawwam, with philosopher and author HASAN SPIKER regarding his new book, *Hierarchy and Freedom*, with other related topics.

And so much more, all for your enjoyment. For this fall issue, you'll notice that our particular theme this time around is that of the reflective, uncompromising warrior. The man who does nothing halfway, willing to usher in a better age for himself, his brothers, and all those around him whom he loves. Fall approaches and much of nature has just begun to decay, but the Muslim man does not see that as a time of gloom, but for recharge, reflection, and cultivation as he enters the winter to prepare himself for next season's harvest.

So grab your favorite drink, enjoy, and discuss with friends to your heart's content. The QAWWAM decade approaches!

*Abdullah Yousef*







# QAWWAM

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## **THE ISLAMIC NEED FOR PHYSICAL CULTURE 16**

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## **MODERNITY & THE EXPLOITATION OF THE HUMAN MIND 29**

STOIC continues what has now become our QAWWAM Reflections feature, delivering a contemplative piece on the NPCification of moderns and how to escape it.

## **IN DEFENSE OF POLYGyny 47**

Two pseudonymous writers, ABU ILHAM & SAAD, bring us an unapologetic essay with an unconventional approach to the question: Should Muslim men care about having multiple wives?

## **AL-MALIK AL-ZAHIR BAYBARS 59**

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## **ONE ON ONE WITH HASAN**

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Our founder Abdullah sits down with HASAN SPIKER, philosopher and author from Cambridge, to discuss his latest book Hierarchy & Freedom, and other related topics.





**INTRO TO 40 HADITH ON MASCULINITY 78**

NABEEL AZEEZ from MuslimMan shares with us the introduction to the collaborative book “40 Hadith on Masculinity, How to Be a Good Man”, bringing a sweet deal for QAWWAM readers who are interested in the full thing.

**PORTRAIT OF THE MODERN MUJAHID 95**

An insightful essay from IBAD, fiery and uncompromising, with an interesting take on how the aspects of the Muslim Warrior can be looked at through the Jungian Archetypes to be applied in modern situations.

**THE CREED OF THE MOUNTAINS - AN EXCERPT 102**

For our fiction section, author and martial artist FERDAWS ASHRATI shares an excerpt from his Muslim War novel The Creed of the Mountains, telling the story of a group of Afghan Mujahideen during the Soviet Invasion. Based on true accounts.

**SILENT MINBARS 108**

ABDUL gives a rundown of the contemporary Muslim Zeitgeist, the various challenges and ills facing us, and what can be done as a start to counter it.









Your arms were raised like columns of stone  
That held our sins 'till lead you turned to gold.  
The alchemist decries your perfect face  
Until he turns: repents engrossed with shame.  
Your feet turned red, the earth would shy and turn,  
But still you stood: your tears it wished to earn.

Your luscious beard becoming soaked:  
Repentance pleas for us sad sinful folk.  
You shed an endless stream of pearls alive  
And still you pray whilst hidden from our eyes.  
Each star you graced the earth with clemency  
Would trade its greatest gems for one more peace.

Beneath that honored dirt, you rest today;  
What honor sings the earth to hold you safe.  
This world was only made to sing your praise,  
Mankind was made to only sing your praise.  
Your day of birth, a day to celebrate;  
The day we're raised, the worlds will celebrate.

- Junaid Siddiqui (@jcitykey)



طَائِفَةُ  
عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ  
السَّلَامُ

مَعْرِفَةُ



# ***WANT TO WRITE FOR QAWWAM?***

At QAWWAM, we're always looking for new contributors to add value and help spread our message. If you want to submit an idea (or finished product) for an article, artwork, poetry, short story, or anything you think falls within our brand, shoot an email to [ayousef@qawwam.online](mailto:ayousef@qawwam.online)

## **WORD LIMITS**

***FICTION: 500 - 3,000 WORDS***

***ESSAYS: 500 - 2,500 WORDS***

***EXCEPTIONS APPLY WHEN  
WARRANTED***

***.DOC OR .PDF ONLY***

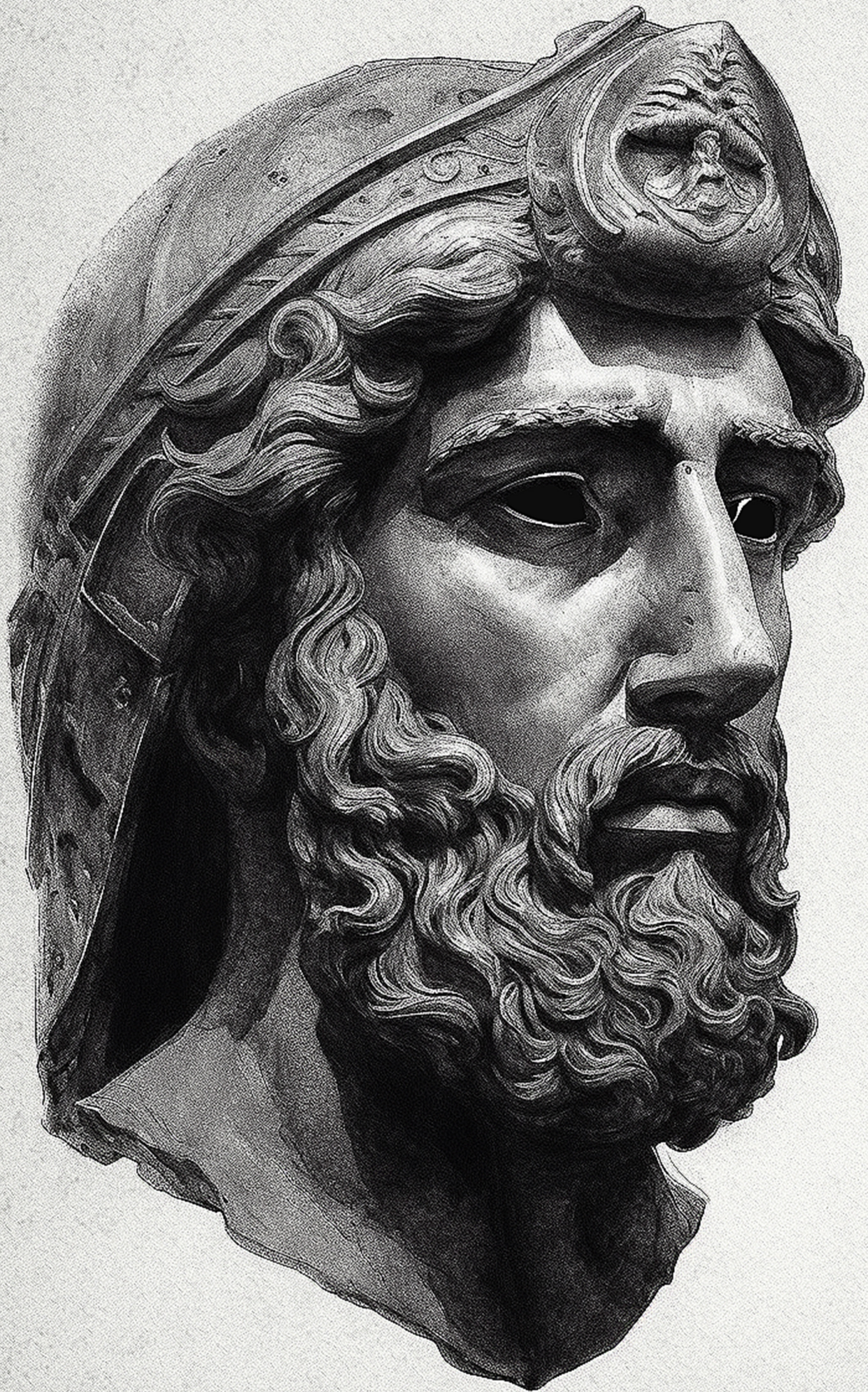




# SARACEN SOUND

WITH ABDULLAH YOUSEF









**JAHANNAM  
DOESN'T  
DISCRIMINATE**





LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

EMIR TATE TO WORLD: YOU'RE F\*\*\*ING POOR

INTELLIGENCE AGENCY CRISIS





**WHOSE GOING TO CARRY THE BOATS**



**AND THE LOGS**

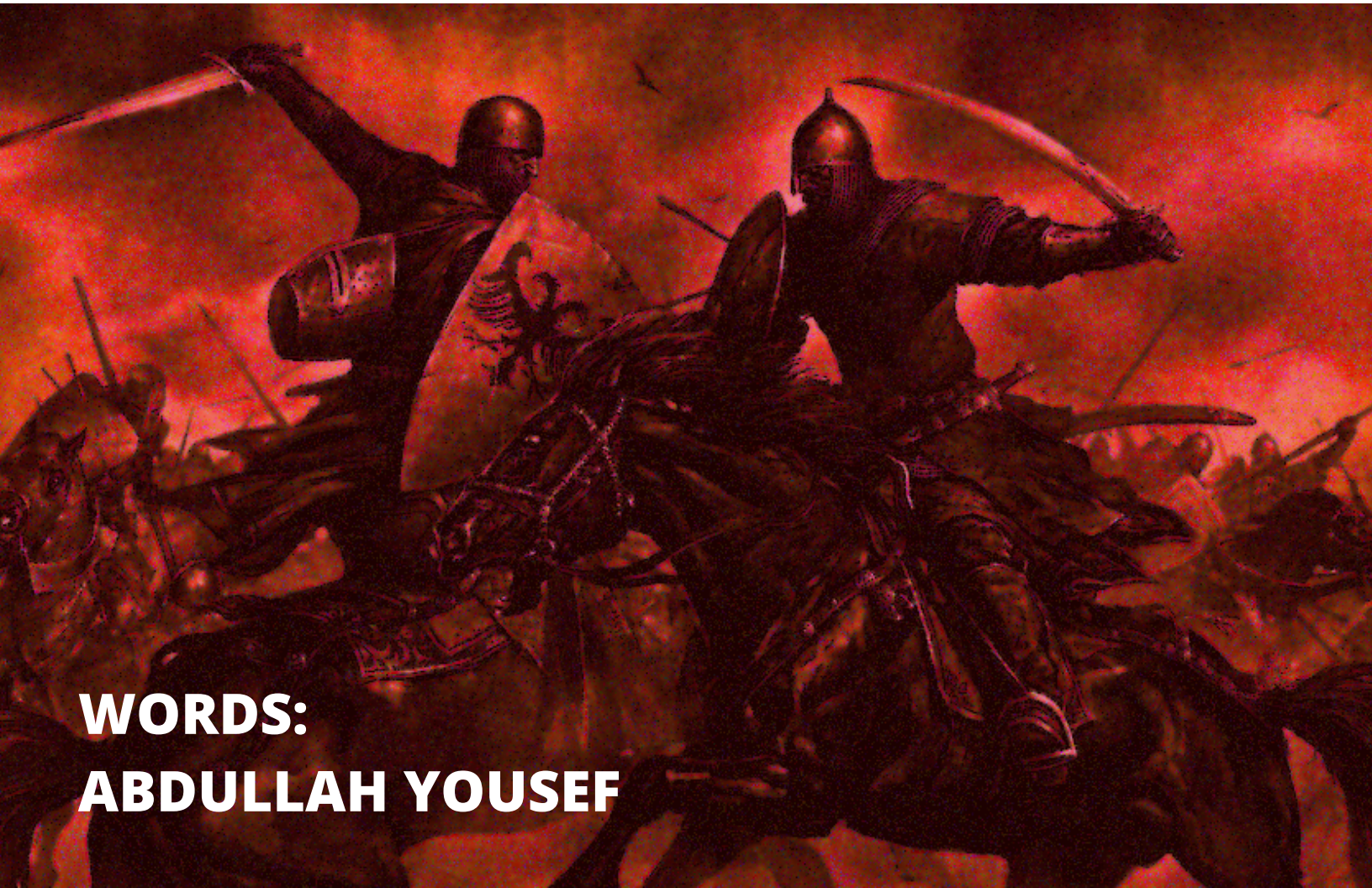


**FROM THE  
EDITOR**

# **THE ISLAMIC NEED FOR PHYSICAL CULTURE**



**WORDS:  
ABDULLAH YOUSEF**





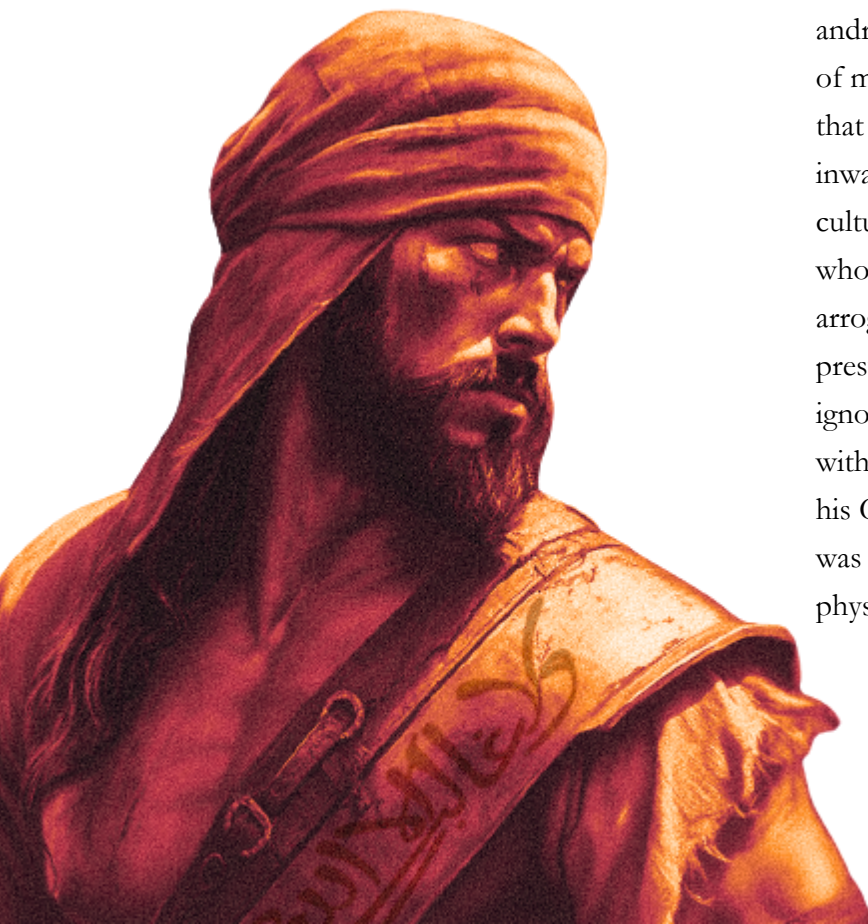


**T**he chronicler Ibn Hisham narrates that during the Battle of the Trench, when the city of Madina was under siege by the pagans of Quraysh, a skirmish broke out between the company of the blessed companion Zubayr ibn Awwam (RA) and some of the pagans. At first encounter, Zubayr cut straight through the man who attacked him — splitting him clean in half. Upon seeing this, the soldiers with him expressed awe at the craftsmanship of his sword; to which he responded, quite angered, that it wasn't his sword, but the strength of the arm that carried it. It's said in another narration that the arms of Ali ibn Abu Talib RA, our rightly guided fourth caliph, were so massive that the average man couldn't wrap his hands around them. Ali was also the greatest duelist of his time — a warrior known for his tremendous strength, speed, and agility in battle that dwarfed most Arab men. Once driven to a rightful rage after his shield

broke during the conquest of Khaybar, he tore the gate off one of the fortresses he invaded with the Muslims — swinging that around instead.

Umar ibn al Khattab, Khalid ibn al-Waleed, Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr — may Allah be pleased with them all — were also just a few among many of the Companions of the great first generation of Muslims known for their physical prowess. Whether it was during wrestling matches for sport and training or to reign supreme on the battlefield, one easily concludes when exploring this history that the brutal conditions of the Arabian Peninsula forced many of its warriors, especially among the Muslims whom Allah bestowed with his *baraka*, to grow into physical specimens to be reckoned with.

Yet, when a Muslim man living in the modern day, both in East and West, recalls the Islamic education he received in childhood, there's little to no mention of the direct physical training performed by the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions. Most Muslims today, unfortunately, who are lay-people to physical fitness only see it as a vain, androcentric, pleasure-seeking hobby that a minority of men engage in. They have the strange impression that our spiritual ancestors were too ascetic and inward to care about such bodily matters or physical culture, and conclude therefore that Muslim men who desire to be strong and handsome are merely arrogant narcissists. These are all based on false presuppositions of the past, and betrays an ignorance of a lived reality that doesn't conform with the kind of vital life that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions actually lived. The truth is that it was a perfect balance between living in both the physical and the spiritual, losing touch with neither whilst enjoying the spoils of both, giving these men the fortitude to live through a variety of difficulties that spanned the masculine Muslim existence.





As of 2023, among the top twenty most obese nations, Muslim countries take eleven spots (with Kuwait ranking as the most obese Muslim nation). Middle Easterners are stereotypically seen, with great merit, as possessing some of the most gluttonous food cultures alongside Americans — except instead of displaying the typical “beer gut”, it’s more like a biryani or mansaf gut.

One has to think: doesn’t this plant a demoralizing contrast for Muslim boys growing up when they come across examples such as those listed, yet when they look around at their own families and boys their age this instead is the state of the average man — bloated, immobile, and too weak to even resist the forces of gravity as they age?

All this does is solidify the myth that continues to grow in commonality among this new breed of modern males in the world: that these wondrous aspects of strength were part of the past, that such men were strong out of necessity for warfare only, unlike today, so striving for such aims is a “waste of time.” This isn’t the talk of a Muslim male, however, who is fully secure in himself and in touch with the undeniable physical aspects of our religious tradition. This is the speech of men who have allowed an essential quality of their being to be trivialized, medicalized even, such that they’ve become easy targets for regime and corporate consumerist manipulation. In fact, I’m even willing to argue that theologically, it’s Islamically obscene to be slovenly in any manner as either a man or woman.

Far above the examples I mentioned, lies the example of our beloved Prophet ﷺ, the Man of Praise, in this regard as well. Most of us are

familiar with his qualities — how elegantly he was physically put together as a man, his thick bones and versatile frame that allowed him to perform all burdensome tasks necessary in labor and conquest throughout his middle age and more as a Prophet and Commander of the Muslims.

When speaking purely of “battle”, or that fateful word “jihad”; this doesn’t hold the weight it does anymore for Muslims in the modern world, who for the first time in their history aren’t living under a central Islamic authority, but also for many centuries haven’t been subjects of a conquering one like the Umayyad or Ottoman Empires. Today we are dissolute, some of us spread out like the Jews after liquidation by the Romans, with very little political fortitude. Nor are any of us witnesses to a cause where righteous offensive jihad exists, that would be worth risking our life for that isn’t a 70 IQ Dostoevsky-like impulse funded by deep state stooges. That’s what makes our physical ineptitude that much more humiliating. In olden times Muslims would get fat in times of ascent, during golden periods of luxury attained through the conquest of their forefathers. Today we’re fat, weak, and defeated all at once.

**The great Imam Bukhari, may Allah be pleased with him, records: *It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: One who died but did not fight in the way of Allah, nor did he express any desire (or determination) for Jihad died the death of a hypocrite.***

**\*Abdullah bin Mubarak said: *We think the hadith pertained to the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Sahih Muslim 1910***

The note from Mubarak is important, noting that we can't label those who never thought of Jihad after the time of the Prophet ﷺ as hypocrites in the Islamic sense — however, as the hadith indicates, it's a sign of faith to meditate on, think of, and desire fighting; to prepare yourself physically and spiritually for war, even if you don't expect or plan for one due to political circumstances. What's pertinent in the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ most of all when reading the battles he and his Companions took part in was the fact these men weren't exactly Spartans — Abu Bakr and Uthman, may Allah be pleased with them, were known to be slim men with lean builds that didn't appear suited for close combat, yet when the times of conquest came they performed and fought as necessary, earning their stripes in front of Allah and their Muslim brothers.

That is how you must see your pursuit of strength — fitness isn't something you put off your entire life for, it's something you incorporate in your life and that of your sons so that in times of crisis you're physically and spiritually prepared with the hardened will to act. The latter part is missed by many, if they never trained in a weight room or a boxing gym before they think that the struggle of progress is merely a physical one. They don't know that in addition to awakening man to the physical reality of what's around him as he strengthens himself in musculature, it also builds his emotional, mental, and spiritual fortitude.

Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, may Allah have mercy on him, though well known for his many works in the spiritual realm, had a lesser-known treatise he wrote: *al-Musār'ab ilā al-Musār'ab*, Swiftly towards Wrestling, in which he extolled the virtues

and goals in the Sunnah for Muslim men to learn and practice wrestling:

*"There is no doubt that wrestling is in our sharia, for it is not pointless — it is a blessed sport the skills of which become useful for battle (jihad), and to benefit from in times of dire need, and thus it is both permissible and encouraged by Allah for this reason [...] it strengthens the body, for this was a way that our Prophet ﷺ tested the strength of some teenage boys among the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, to see their suitability for taking them to battle."*

Al-Suyuti also mentions, of course, the famous story from the Prophet ﷺ when Rakana ibn Yazid, a man who thought himself the strongest wrestler in Quraysh, was challenged by the Prophet in a wrestling match that humbled him to such a degree he accepted Islam because of it. Rakana embodied, in the bluntest sense, the manifestation of the warrior who communicated with force and physicality rather





than logos, the initial words that moved many of the Companions to accept Islam themselves, and thus our Prophet ﷺ recognized immediately and utilized his own physicality to proselytize the truth in the form of strength. In one of the narrations Suyuti mentions, Rakana says that he accepted Islam from the incident because he knew that the strength he experienced firsthand came from another, more singular source.

The role of eugenics as well is often ignored, and this applies to both men and women. In a 2016 study by Godfrey et al at the University of Southampton, children born to obese women were at higher risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes, asthma, poorer cognitive function, and neurological diseases; all due to the epigenetic changes that long term obesity occurs in women over time. Your and your spouse's level of athleticism is directly correlated to the health of your offspring. Thinking about this at a macro level, it's a catastrophe even at the theological level, especially considering the hadith above, to allow the Muslim Ummah at large to grow this weak and slovenly on a mass scale. The goal isn't for us all to be bodybuilders, but a culture that keeps even the most lazy of us at some level of acceptable physical health, and not in a state that leaves us vulnerable to dysgenic ruining of our own progeny over multiple generations. The effects compound, and the worse it gets, the harder it gets to fix. All men need to be engaged in some form of athletic work. It's highly preferable to lift weights and/or pick up cardio in the form of a combat sport, but the end goal is to NOT BE FAT. Your stomach should not bounce up and down as you run. That is the bare minimum goal.



For women, it's a very different framework but with similar solutions. Due to the strange, overtly sexual culture we live in today, most women (including our own) have grown to see physical fitness as merely a means of increasing their sexual appeal, and as an infiltration into a fitness culture that seems to have become very appealing for attention farming due to the highly metrosexual men who built it up over the past few decades. I find this wrong and dumb for a number of reasons. First, most women don't need to have a strict lifting regimen to look attractive to the vast majority of men. They just need to PUT DOWN THE FOOD (and in a minority of cases, eat a lot more quality food, but this is increasingly rare). This is contrary to what you may have been told by Tiktokers, but yes, you should be feeling a little hungry to lose weight. Most women besides this aspect of diet will do just fine with basic exercises to keep their cardio/stamina up. The latest social media trends coming up now of women building their upper bodies to balance out their lower figures is just backward and homosexual.

And back to the men, though I suspect this is more obvious to you guys, your goal isn't to be a muscular, shredded mass monster that's useless.




You need to have musculature, yes, but you also need to be faster, more agile, and possess enough stamina that you won't collapse if, Allah forbid, you're called upon by fate to assume certain responsibilities for the welfare of your community in times of crisis. This is what's truly meant by a "physical culture" and what embodied the everyday lives of the Messenger's ﷺ warriors. Things like physical fitness and the capacity to fight weren't separate areas of being that existed outside of civilian life — they lived a martial life where knowing your way around a sword, spear, and bow were just parts of being a man. The women in early Islam didn't see their health and physical appearance purely in terms of sexual appeal and inspiring lust — they directly associated it with their capacity to bear healthy children and the upkeep of being working mothers and guardians in the absence of their husbands who roamed the wild. It's this mentality, also, of separating the rest of life from fitness and turning it into its own "culture" that puts off many people from it, especially Muslims who do to our situation are more prone to compartmentalize it as a strange thing that only vain youngsters do.

Another part that's de-emphasized as well, is the role that training for combat plays in politics, and our perception of it. Many of you are familiar with the articles written by oblivious leftists that men who do martial arts, lift weights, etc. are far more likely to be right-wing, or at least be critical of liberal social policies. "Lifting will make you transphobic!" is no longer a meme, but a lived reality to many leftists who realized that these physical areas of competition were breeding grounds for young

men who despised toxic political ideologies. If none of the benefits I just mentioned to you existed, this one alone would be worth a heavy Muslim presence in.

This happens because it's very unlikely you'll live in a fantasy land where trans women are women when you've actually felt what it's like to punch and be punched, to prevail over an opponent in a boxing match (or be beaten) or successfully tap out someone larger than you through your own strategizing and strength of will. These are all qualities realized to their fullest in the physical realm (hence the strong tradition in many cultures of one on one dueling to settle disputes), and that those inept in politics lack, as it opens up a whole other dimension to the mind when you as a man come into contact with the reality of hierarchy between men when such silly things as "constitutions" and "laws" are replaced with masculine fervor.

So, don't be fooled. Don't allow yourself to descend to the spiritual qualities of a slave even if it's not explicitly written out for you in the law. Do not be like the man our Caliph Omar (RA) passed by, who enjoyed his own gluttony and curse believing it to be a blessing. Challenge yourself first in this area of contending, and you'll notice how quickly the rest of your life, relationships, raising of your own children, and connection to God gains traction and a spirit you didn't think it had beforehand. 

**Want to write for the next Qawwam Fitness section? Shoot me an email at [ayousef@qawwam.online](mailto:ayousef@qawwam.online)**





# TRAVERSING TRADITION

THE PREMIER PLATFORM FOR MUSLIM DIALOGUE

ISSUE 01



muslimgirl







**There's still a way out.**







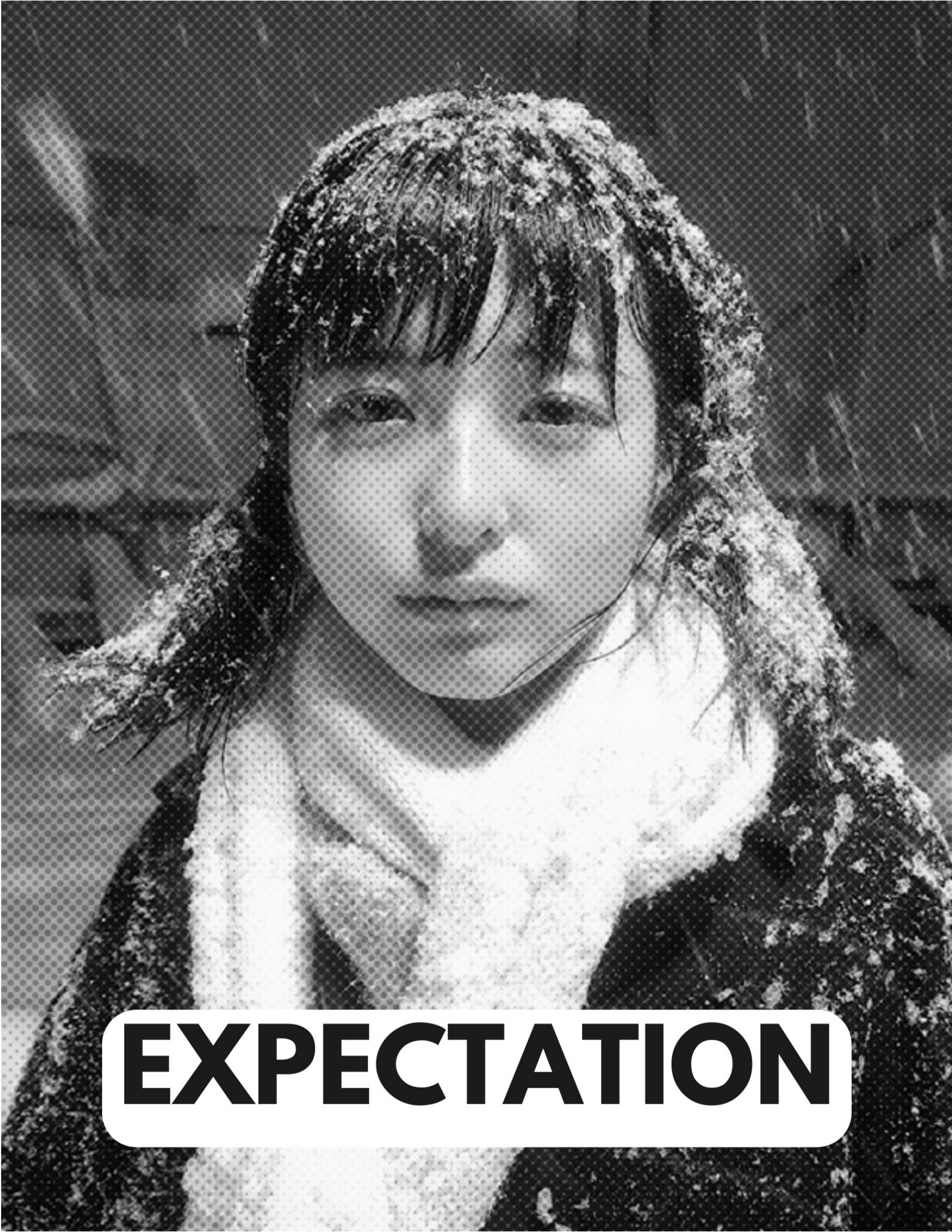
Men  
and  
Gender  
in  
Islam

*Why Muslim men today should accept a  
ruthless matriarchy their ancestors would  
have rather died than be subject to*



Celene Ibrahim





**EXPECTATION**





**REALITY**



**Did  
you  
know?**

**هل  
تعلم؟**

**The Bronze Age Collapse,  
on an Islamic timeline,  
occured sometime  
between the times of  
Prophets Moses (AS) and  
David (AS)**







# AWWAM

## *REFLECTIONS*



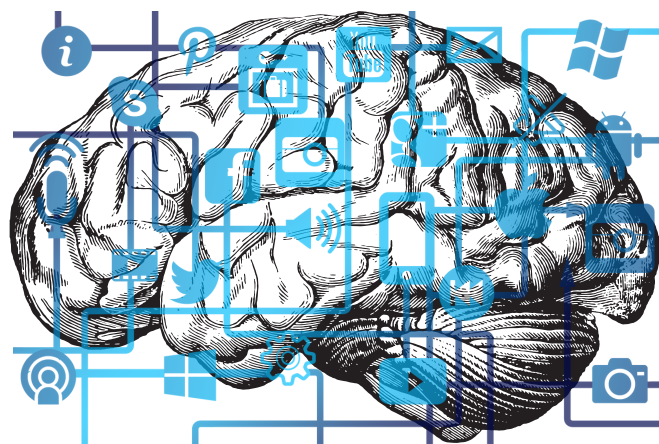
# MODERNITY AND THE EXPLOITATION OF THE HUMAN MIND

WORDS: STOIC

@STOIC



**Allah said, “Descend as enemies to each other. You will find in the earth a residence and provision for your appointed stay.”  
Quran (7:24)**



**N**ietzsche argued if there is no God then morality does not exist, and humans “make” their own morality. This creation of individualistic morality is fairly evident in the modern Western world. It is based on hedonistic desire and degeneracy, the “self”.

*We said, “O Adam, dwell with your mate in paradise, and eat thereof freely whenever you wish; but do not approach this tree, lest you should be among the wrongdoers.” Quran (2:35)*

To understand the graveness of pursuing worldly desire and pursuit of self-pleasure, let us first visit the account of Adam, Eve, and the Forbidden Tree to surgically break down the inclinations of the human mind.

Allah created Adam in his image. He then created Eve from Adam’s rib and tells them to enjoy the wonders of the Garden of Paradise. He tells them there is just one rule to living in that Garden, and that is not to eat the forbidden fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The two obey His word, until Satan tempts them to eat from the tree, stating: ‘Your Lord has only forbidden you from this tree lest you should become angels, or lest you become immortal.’  
Quran (7:20)

Adam & Eve follow suit, and after eating the fruit, are awakened to a new reality.

Thus he brought about their fall by deception. So, when they tasted of the tree, their nakedness became exposed to them, and they began to stitch over themselves with the leaves of paradise. Their Lord called out to them, **‘Did I not forbid you from that tree, and tell you, “Satan is indeed your manifest enemy?” Quran (7:22)**

The account of Adam & Eve points to the inherent proclivity of human beings to fall into selfish desire. Adam was promised immortal life, free of worry and burden. So then, why the allure of a fruit hanging from a tree to risk it all? Adam and Eve’s salivary response to the fruit is a demonstration of “the never-ending chase” of self-gratification. Better yet, it can be viewed as the Brownian motion of ricocheting from one “high” to the next in search of purpose and fulfillment.

The Declaration of Independence asserts that every person possesses three “inalienable rights” —“life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”. This phrase rolls off people’s tongues 247 years later, devoid of meaning. The wise Thomas Jefferson strategically took the phrase “pursuit of happiness” from John Locke while writing the Declaration of Independence and placed it last in the collective. Time and time again, this pursuit has been interpreted as hedonism and avoidance of



pain/distress. A journey of self-centered degeneracy. The Founding Fathers were wealthy by the standards of 1776. Have you ever stopped to wonder why there is no mention of “material prosperity”? Now, in no way are we contesting against pursuing financial freedom or glorifying poverty. But one thing is clear, the Founders indirectly provided a juxtaposition of the factors providing “meaning” to society and “material gain” by not mentioning the latter at all.

***“And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion” Quran (57:20)***

Islam poses a pragmatic truth in explaining our finite time on Earth. Death is inevitable and this makes worldly pleasure temporary. No amount of wealth, status, power, or longevity hacks can save any human being.

Alexander the Great had three wishes on his deathbed when he fell ill. One of them was to leave both of his hands hanging outside of the coffin. He wanted people to know that despite all of the wealth and power he acquired, he departed the world in the same condition he came into existence. We come into this world empty-handed and will leave the same. A purpose rooted in anything tied to the temporary i.e. money, power, women, etc. will always lead to disappointment.

***I have put my trust in Allah, Who is my Lord and your Lord. There is no moving creature which He does not hold by its forelock. Surely, My Lord is on the straight path. Quran (11:56)***

The “forelock” in this quote is referring to the pre-frontal cortex of the brain, which is referred

to in the Quran multiple times whenever the act of intentional lying is mentioned.

Dissecting the anatomy of the brain reveals a heavy bias in the mass of the frontal lobe. This area of the brain provides us with the ability to use rationality and deploy analytical skills. One may argue then, why emotions have not been completely weeded out by the process of natural selection. The fact of the matter is that emotions have been identified by the adaptive process to provide a net positive impact on the continuation of the human species. Experts in the field of neurology argue that depression is merely the brain’s way of protecting an individual from risky and hopeless situations.

*“For countless generations, our biochemical system adapted to increasing our chances of survival and reproduction, not our happiness. The biochemical system rewards actions conducive to survival and reproduction with pleasant sensations. But these are only an ephemeral sales gimmick.” — Yuval Noah Harari, Homo Deus*

The limbic system, also identified as the “monkey brain” is just as the name suggests, absent of all logic. This is the part of the brain that overrides the decision-making, rational, pre-frontal cortex when one feels a wave of emotions. The limbic system is essentially present to protect when one senses danger in any sense (fight or flight response is triggered) as well as being the brain’s reward pathway.

Posing the notion of happiness as being an abstract idea may seem purely negative. However, thinking about this further leads to the consolation that the feeling of being dissatisfied is a fluctuation that makes one human.



At a surface level, the groundwork has been laid to understand the nature of the human mind and the constant search for purpose, fulfillment, happiness, etc. All these ideas in a vacuum along with the accompanied journey of cognitive mindfulness may provide the bearer with a powerful arsenal of tools. Enter the brainwashing of modern-day consumerism, heavily pushed political agendas, mass censorship, and the all-powerful engineered grip of social media via dopamine manipulation and society is left with the inability to use individualistic thinking. This leads to the perpetuation of dangerous ideas (such as materialism, hedonism), failure to engage in logical discourse without the fear of being antagonized, herd thinking, weaker minds, and ultimately, the devolution of society.

*“Zina (Fornication) will become widespread”  
(Sabih Bukhari, Vol 1: book 3: 80),*

*“A man will pass by the grave of another and wish he was  
in the latter’s place  
(Sabih Bukhari, Vol 9: book 88: 237)*

*“Wine (intoxicants, alcohol) will be drunk in great  
quantities” (Sabih Bukhari, Vol 1: book 3: 80).*

Not much needs to be stated to provide further context. Fornication, alcohol & drug addiction, and suicide rates are at an all-time high.

Pairing the unexamined mind with a purpose rooted in worldly desire has a high potential of leading to catastrophe with one of the outcomes being modern-day slavery i.e., a vicious cycle of feeling unfulfilled and continuing to seek

validation through a forced rat race to fuel a purposeless life filled with consumption.

## ***The Proposed Framework for Cognitive Freedom***

The following is a proposed framework for aiding in the attempt of breaking the shackles:

*“We did not create the heaven and the earth and everything  
between them in vain. That is the assumption of those who  
disbelieve,” Quran (38:27)*

Existential angst is inherently present in human beings if the purpose does not transcend impermanent parameters, this angst will tirelessly chip away at your consciousness. Seek purpose that is rooted in belief & faith.

- Actively seek challenges and obstacles to overcome with the context of providing meaning to the “suffering”. Any unintended hardship can be dealt with the same way (by giving it meaning).
- Understand that the brain is a poor judge of “good” and “bad” events as it is merely focused on the comparison of desired reality vs. perceived reality (both of which are assumed) to discern between “good” and “bad” external events.
- Study the self and become a master of your cognition. Understand the wiring of the software.
- Seek experiences and/or pursue the learning of skills that provide a “state of flow”. Pursue this state vehemently.
- Nurture individualistic thinking and grow the ability to rationally break down opposing ideas and thought processes while separating emotion.



- Become a master of emotional control. This does not mean to be devoid of emotion. It means to have the ability to feel emotions and recognize them for what they are.
- Seek excellence in the optimization of physical health. Cherish the vessel through which life is experienced.
- Practice mindfulness i.e., practice the ability to periodically dial back the time horizon to the present moment.
- Study cognitive biases and work on the ability to identify and then re-frame “faulty” mental frameworks you might have.
- Pursue the “ideal self”—What does your ideal self look like (in every form)? How would your ideal self react? What are your values? Why are these values important to you?

The examples provided herein—The Original Sin, The Declaration of Independence, and an overview of the design of the human mind, juxtaposed with the teachings of the Quran and Prophet (ﷺ) all highlight the incessant need for purpose and the elusiveness of fulfillment. Modern-day society is creating a pressure cooker of societal cognitive devolution that is preying on the inherent search for fulfillment of the unexamined mind with a purpose that is rooted in worldly desire.

To traverse the arduous path to freedom of thought, it is vital to understand and acknowledge the current push towards self-gratitude, hedonism & materialism. This must be counter-acted with a purpose rooted in faith that life on earth is a temporary illusion and an all-encompassing, sole pursuit of worldly pleasures is but a never-ending chase of emptiness. 🐦

***Stoic tweets @Stoiiic,  
and writes at  
stoicc.medium.com***



# *This Ken*



# Has 4 Barbies



# **The Big Step**

How To Survive Islam  
In The Anglosphere



*by* **Mahdi Lock**

**"Teach your children swimming,  
archery, and horse riding"  
Umar Ibn al-Khattab (RA)**







**Sultan al-Zahir Baibars  
Abdullah Yousef**



رِسَالَةٌ لَطِيفَةٌ فِي

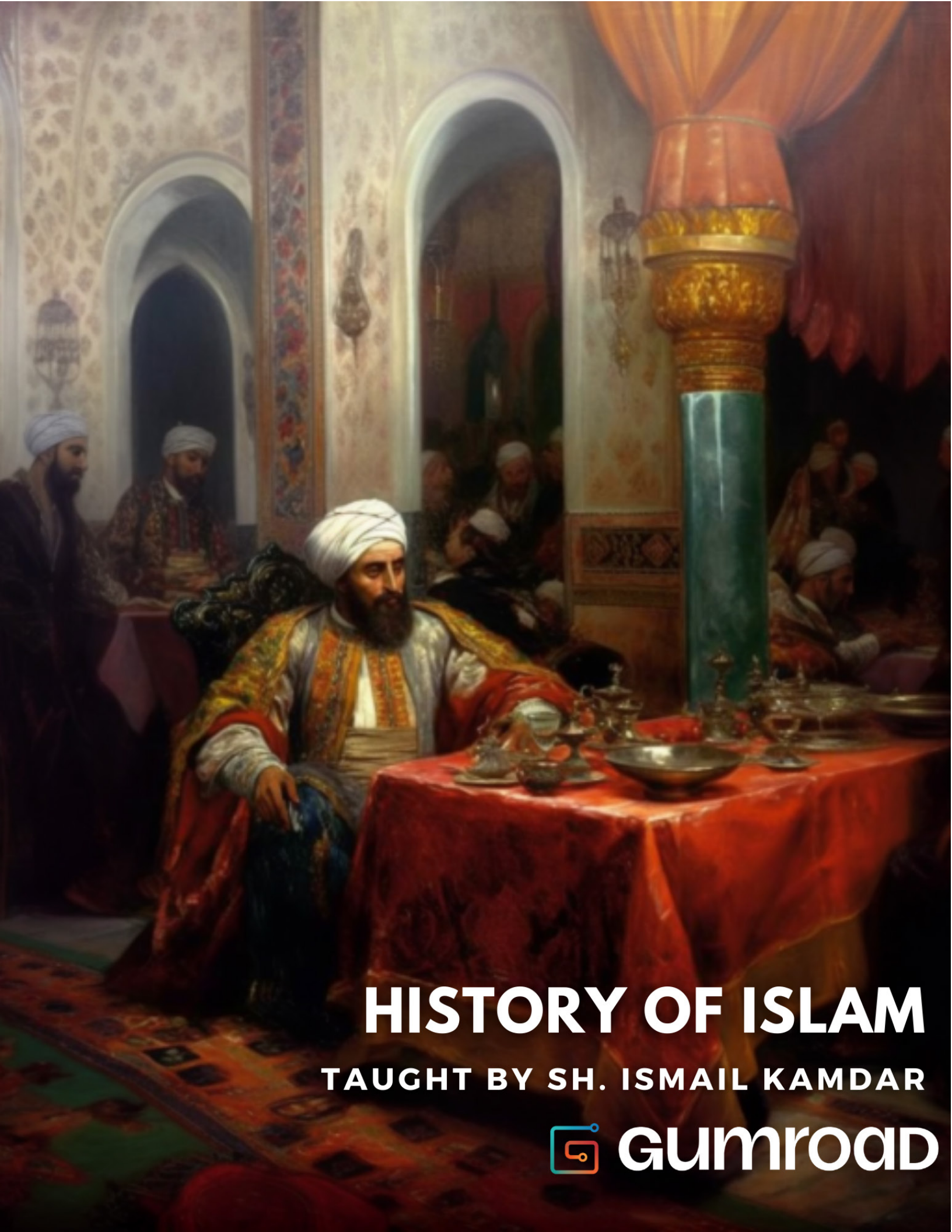
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IBN TAYMIYYA'S  
CORDIAL LETTER OF  
ADVICE TO  
THE SHIA

AUTHOR:  
AHMED IBN 'ABDILHALIM  
IBN TAYMIYYA

TRANSLATOR:  
ABDULLAH AL-RABBAT





# HISTORY OF ISLAM

TAUGHT BY SH. ISMAIL KAMDAR

 GUMROAD



# BATTLE OF CHALDIRAN

Çaldıran Savaşı

23rd August 1514

60,000 - 100,000~

Türks (estimate)

40,000 - 80,000~

Safavids (estimate)



Sultan Selim I



Shah Ismail I





In 1512, once Selim secured his position as Sultan, he turned his attention to the unrest in his country caused by the Qizilbash, the Shia militant groups in Anatolia that had supported his brother whom he usurped. After executing 40,000 Qizilbash, he wrote to Shah Ismail declaring he and the Muslims saw him as a disbeliever and heretic and threatened to march for his destruction.

Selim started his march east, and Ismail gathered his armies and went to meet them, but were ambushed by the Uzbeks, also enemies of the Safavids for years. Ismail decided instead to employ a scorched earth policy against the Ottomans. The combined rough terrain of Armenia, the moral discontent amongst Selim's men (particularly the Jannisaries) for fighting against another Muslim sect, and the turmoil from Ismail's scorched earth campaign piled on Selim. When he learned that the Safavids were gathering at Chaldiran, he moved against them to stifle any chance of rebellion by his men.

The Ottomans were decisively victorious. Their use of Jannisaries armed with gunpowder and artillery decimated Ismail's ranks which couldn't contend with traditional weaponry. The victory enabled the capture of the Safavid capital of Tabriz, but the city couldn't be kept for long. Two years later, Selim would attack the Mamluks and defeated them in a year, incorporating all of Arabia into the Ottoman fold.





ABDULLAH YOUSEF



**BLOOD**  
OF THE  
**LEVANT**



**Abdullah Quilliam  
(1856 - 1932)  
Founder of  
England's first  
masjid**



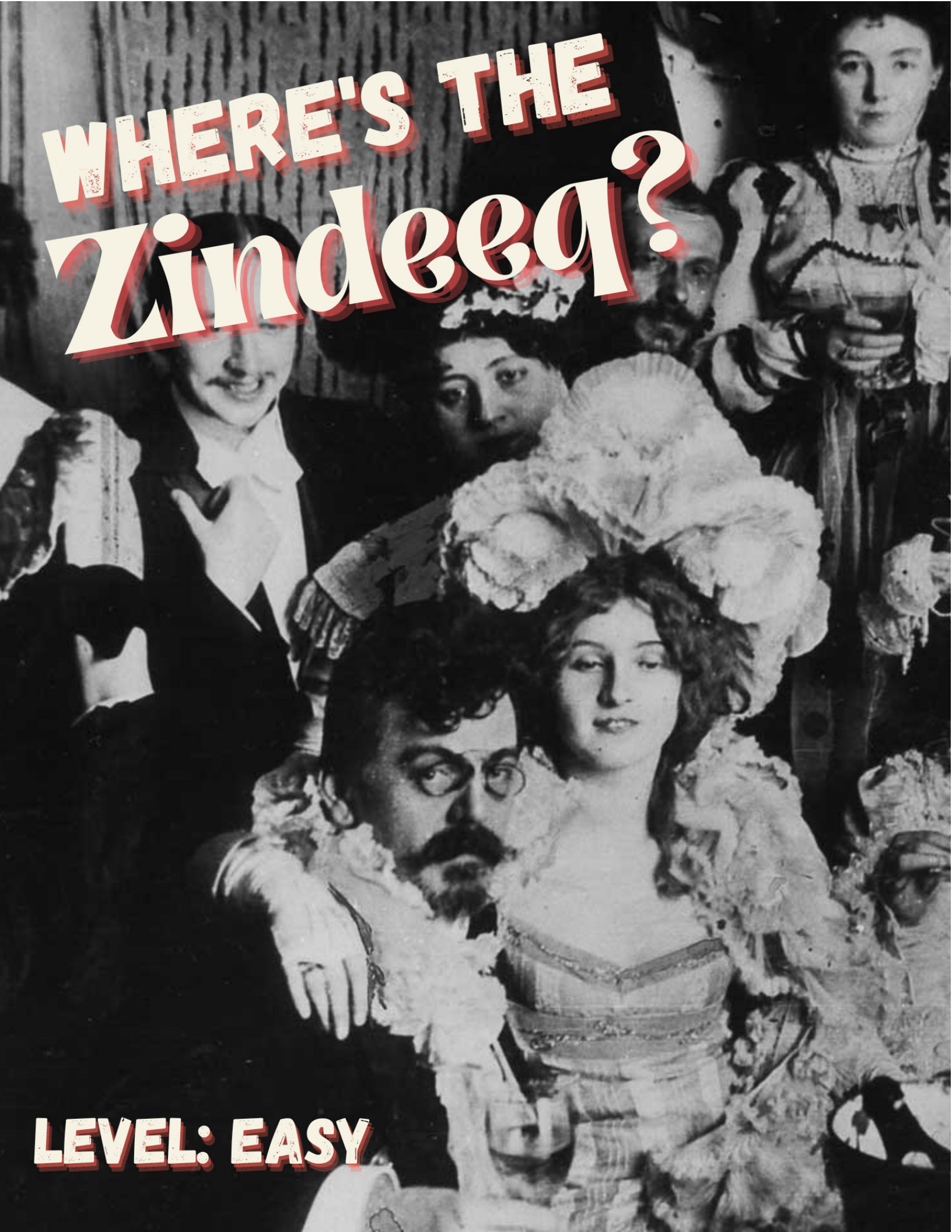
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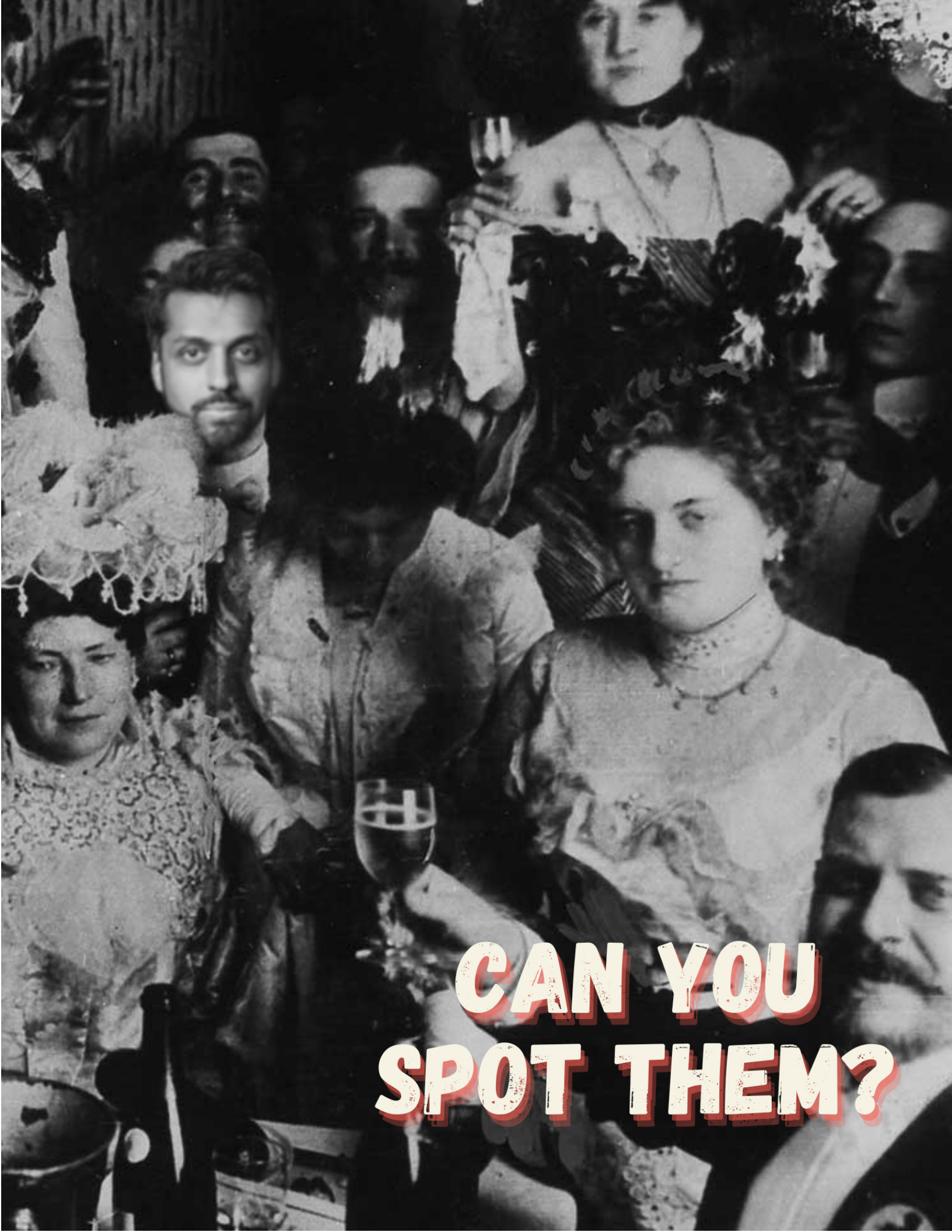


# WHERE'S THE Zindeed?

**LEVEL: EASY**







**CAN YOU  
SPOT THEM?**





dawah

دَعْوَةٌ

dialogue

حوَارٍ

[dawahlogue.netlify.app](http://dawahlogue.netlify.app)



# IN DEFENSE OF POLYGYNY



WORDS: ABU ILHAM  
& SAAD





# A tool kit for the Rijaal:

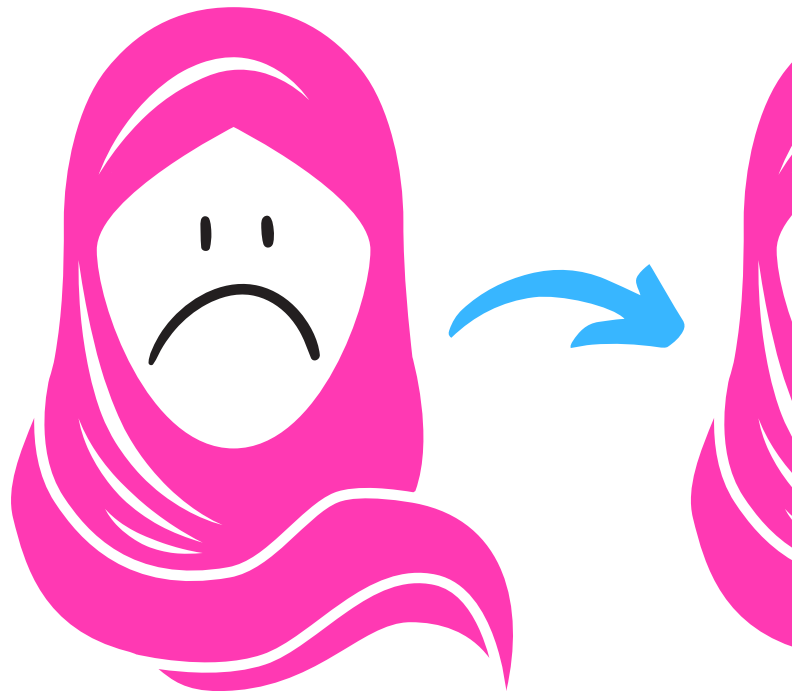
**I**t has come to my attention upon introspection and advice, that the situation of women's opinion on polygyny cannot be rectified without first providing clarity, resolution, and equipping men with the tools and arguments necessary to shift the mindset of their womenfolk.

In the following essay, I wish to illustrate an argument that various societal and practical obstacles make polygyny untenable given the existing makeup of western civilization where Muslims live and I would like to contend that the benefits of polygyny are only truly realized in a traditional Islamic society with: joint family homes and infrastructure, traditional family dynamics and hierarchy, downscaling of the materialism surrounding marriage rites, and freeing up women's time currently occupied by secular academic and career pursuits. I present the following essay to argue one major point and that is that we need polygyny in order to have a healthy Muslim society, and in order to have polygyny we must shift mindsets away from a secular frame of marriage to an Islamic one.

Monogamy as a societal practice is evil and fundamentally shapes society in a manner that is not conducive to the aims and the goals of the Shari'ah and the beneficial growth of a human being. It is now the status quo by which marriage operates and anything other than it is considered an affront to morality itself. You will find Muslim women amongst western diaspora to be vehemently anti polygyny. Statements are commonly heard or read such as "I would rather send my man to a prostitute than to share him with another wife", "I would rather marry a kafir than be in poly." And the all too famous, "I have

no problem with polygyny, I just don't want it for myself." What is so insidious about these statements is not that many Muslim women tainted by secular norms of marriage and feminism have a problem with practicing polygyny in a modern setting, but rather violently recoil at the mere theoretical idea of polygyny often skirting the bounds of kufr and blasphemy to push back against the idea.

Many men reading this essay will shudder at the thought of sharing this piece in public, lest they come under scrutiny for second guessing the gynocentric order of things. But it must be refuted that a monogamous society harms almost all members of a family including the wife, husband, and children. For the husband, it's obvious, you deprive him of the ability to increase his offspring, lineage, and fulfill a physical and emotional need via multiple partners. Men never stopped being polygynous. They simply stopped polygynous marriages. What thrived however were affairs, mistresses, and a copious consumption of porn and masturbation. For the children, you deprive them of additional siblings, a male figure, additional caretakers, and protection from single motherhood. For the wife, you deprive her of her autonomy and a societal frame of living. This woman





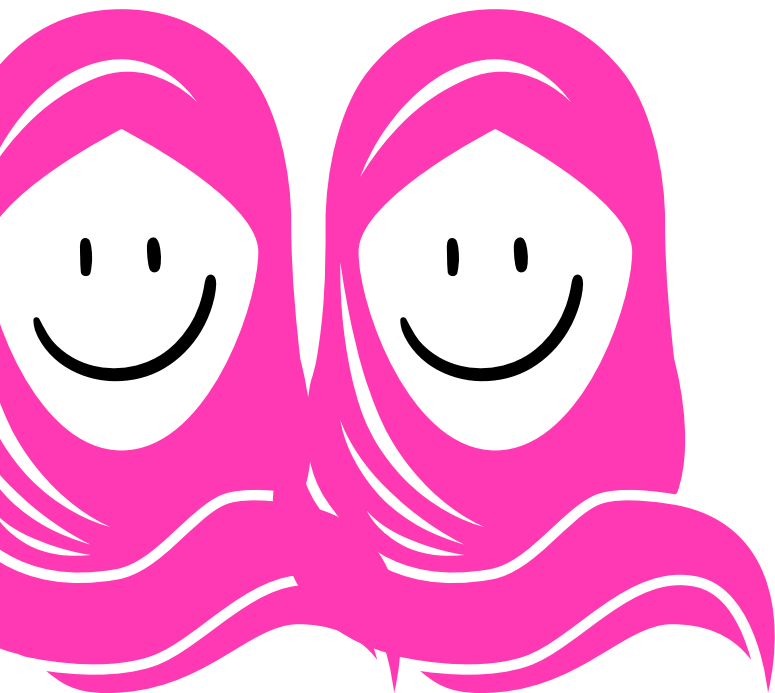
is now responsible entirely, often without help, to take care of the domestic upkeep of an entire house. Three meals a day, laundry, watching the kids, cleaning, emotionally and physically being there for the husband and children. This remains to be the case even if she isn't working a career job and is only taking care of the home and is only amplified when you add in career aspirations and other pursuits women now hold. Someone may argue, "why can't the husband help her out?" This line of thinking seems to suggest that the husband doesn't have his own work but also ignores that even if the husband helps out, and eases the burden, it doesn't change the fact that she is now the sole woman bearing this burden vs. sharing it with other women. There are by default certain roles and duties which land upon the wife, childbirth and rearing are the most obvious. Even if a father is around, the tarbiyyah of a mother is distinctly different.

In addition, now a woman's entire self identity and who she is, is consumed by one man, and this one family. This is symbolically seen via the modern notion of a woman losing her maiden name when she marries. When Jane

Parker marries Joe Brown, she becomes Jane Brown.

Jane Brown effectively is subsumed into the life of Joe Brown, and she cuts off from her previous identity and who she was. Now what happens when Jane Brown gets divorced and marries another man named Jack Smith? She now becomes Jane Smith. She goes from husband to husband, changing names, changing identities, and never becoming a fully realized person that is independent of this family unit. This is the real "loss of independence" that has infamously been taken advantage of by second wave feminists, not the lack of a right to work an email job in an LED-lighted cubicle. In contrast to what Islam advocates, in which you are your own person, with your own responsibilities and your own deeds. Yes, you become a wife and have responsibilities towards your spouse and children of course, but you don't lose the sense of who you are, you don't lose your family, your identity or your lineage by way of your father. Now, the above points ignore the fact that in today's time women have more autonomy as compared to anytime in history, even in modern monogamous relationships and are the least subsumed into a man's life and the last name changing is merely symbolic and nominal. This is true, however, the reason for this isn't monogamy but rather the blurring of gender roles and functions and a plethora of problems surrounding marriage. Even if feminism is removed, the other problems of monogamy remain.

As much as we'd like to deny it, Muslims have bought almost entirely into non-Islamic frameworks of marriage, both religious and secular, going so far as borrowing every celebration tactic, song and pomp, and even trinkets like wedding rings and engagement bands. We have adopted monogamous ideas from foreign cultures like Hinduism where it's better to be sent to the grave than to be divorced and return to your father's home and where the husband is a literal divine figure and representation of god. This topic





becomes tricky due to the allowance of ethno-cultural identity within Islamic life, but what do you do when the cultural identity of marriage which you're adopting from, has monogamy or shirk built in as a fundamental pillar of their culture? What do you do when polygyny is seen as anathema in the culture? Does this have an impact on how you understand marriage all together?

I would like to assert that from my analysis, Muslim women don't have a problem with sharing their husbands with other righteous women if they're being taken care of justly. What they have a problem with is the social status change and judgment that will immediately hit them in a setting where monogamy is the norm. Women like to talk.

*"I wonder why her husband had to get a second, she probably wasn't enough for him."*

*"She clearly wasn't a good enough wife, so he needed another woman"*

*"We are holding a dinner, do we invite both wives?"*

*"I can't invite his other wife, I'm not stabbing his first wife in the back, she's my friend!"*

And various other versions of this. The social pressure of conforming to polygyny in a monogamous society is way too much for modern women and thus the standard line "I don't mind polygyny, I just don't want it for myself." Now ask a normal Muslim woman, if you were on an island and there were two women and no others to judge, would you have a problem with a husband marrying both, and the answer will

usually be no. Modern Muslim diaspora have been on a steady diet of Disney films, high school romance stories, bollywood song and dance, and a complete and utter mirage of love and marriage that's been set up for them. These understandings of love, marriage, intimacy, and family have been embedded so deeply within the modern psyche that asking a woman to accept the idea of polygyny is such a shock to the system because it makes women question the entirety of their worldview on marriage and life.

The below are points broken down into two categories. The first are the points which are a defense of polygyny as a societal practice and the second are points which are often used as rebuttals.

### **Distributive Familial Obligations**

Women experience a reduction in consistent familial responsibilities due to the shared nature of duties amongst co-wives.

This is generally not a problem early on in a marriage and in a honeymoon stage, but cross the threshold where you throw in children and other life tasks, this becomes a tremendous load and a woman almost in a way sacrifices a portion of herself to handle this household. It is a big responsibility to be solely physically responsible for fulfilling the sexual needs of your husband in a time when sexual promiscuity, fahisha, and lewdness are at an all time high.

### **Enhanced Personal Time**

When a husband divides his attention among multiple wives, it affords each wife intervals of autonomy, enabling her to pursue individual

**Muslim women don't sharing their husbands with other righteous women if they're being taken care of justly. What they have a problem with is the social status change and judgment that will immediately hit them in a setting where monogamy is the norm.**



interests. Moreover, with the presence of co-wives, duties such as childcare and education become collaborative efforts, shared with fellow wives and elder family members such as additional in-laws. It's a misconception for Muslims to equate co-wives with mistresses; co-wives are expected to embody piety, reverence for Allah, and uphold virtuous conduct. Even when there is "Ghayrah" (often translated as protective jealousy, which I will cover in detail below), it is limited and controlled. On the whole, co-wives collaboratively manage domestic responsibilities from child-rearing to routine

have a problem with bands with other they're being taken they have a problem status change and mediate hit them in monogamy is the norm.

grocery shopping. This shared duty not only fosters solidarity but also ensures each wife has quality time, if be it for personal pursuits when the husband is preoccupied with another or moments

when it's her designated time with him.

### **Architectural and Societal Reconfiguration**

In a polygynous society, there's a compelling need to restructure both homes and the broader community. The conventional approach of multiple suburban houses or high-priced city living isn't feasible. This system inherently compels communities to design homes with separate kitchens, distinct living areas, individual rooms, and multiple entrances and exits, while also prioritizing larger shared spaces. After all, having multiple wives means having multiple sets of in-laws, which further amplifies the need for

expansive shared living areas. This model counters the trend of investing vast sums in suburban sprawl and inefficiently used spaces.

### **Making Marriage More Efficient and Cost-effective**

When polygyny becomes prevalent, one may experience multiple marriages throughout their life and thus the frequency of ceremonies becomes overwhelming. Attending, or hosting prolonged, two to three day festivities would be impractical. Instead a smaller event would suffice and would be on rotation perhaps after a Maghrib prayer in the Masjid, "X and Y are getting married today, please stay a few moments for the Nikkah and food from their families." No more \$15k rings (since a man isn't going to wear 4 of them), no more \$20k mahrs, and no more \$50k wedding halls.

### **De-stigmatizing divorce and healing trauma**

Divorce is a hated thing by Allah. And it's even worse when you have divorce and people then remain unmarried creating a single society. A polygynous society allows divorced women to be easily married considering how often and quick marriage happens. In addition it allows people to not have to stay in difficult marriages for unreasonable reasons, like abuse, toxicity, or religious reasons. It also stigmatizes divorce as in a polygynous society, the likelihood that a man divorces a wife is lower given the fact that he knows that as soon as he divorces she will likely go marry another man. There are many cases in which women remain in abusive marriages for various reasons including money, children, or societal shame. The allowance of polygyny also allows this abused wife to be free of her husband for the period of time she shares with her co-wife while still maintaining the marriage.



## Facilitating Matrimony

When men don't believe they only have one shot at marriage, they are going to be far more relaxed in the criteria they look for, creating many opportunities for women who otherwise would have a harder time getting married. Also, the obvious, because men are marrying more women obviously more women will be married. I could continue going but I think these points are satisfactory and additional points could be built on top of these.

## Common rebuttals against spiritual gaslighting

### The Prophet ﷺ was initially monogamous so why do men need more wives?

It's very important to note that being monogamous in a polygynous society is not the same as being polygynous in a monogamous society. There are certain benefits and societal changes that come with a polygynous society by default and even if you do not have more than one wife, you will still gain from the benefits of the society being structured in this manner.

We see this already in the marriage of the Prophet ﷺ, in which we know that Sayyidah Khadijah (RA) was married twice prior to the Prophet ﷺ. Another point to be mentioned is that all of the marriages of the Prophet ﷺ were for a reason and a purpose. It is possible that one of the wisdoms of this marriage is to show us that monogamy is permissible otherwise people may have taken his practice of polygyny as necessary. Secondly, we know that the Prophet ﷺ did practice polygyny, so taking simply one part of his life and leaving the rest is not how we

understand the sunnah.

### The Prophet ﷺ did not permit Sayyiduna Ali (RA) to take a second wife

This is a famous story that's shared by many whenever polygyny is brought up. That the Prophet (SAW) prevented Sayyiduna Ali (RA) from taking a second wife when married to Sayyidah Fatima (RA). This story is true. However, what is often left out is that the woman which Sayyiduna Ali (RA) was seeking to marry was the daughter of Abu Jahl. How can it be that the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ share a husband with the daughter of the enemy of Islam? In addition what is also left out is that Sayyidah Fatima (RA) is no ordinary woman. She is the greatest woman to walk the face of this earth. Is it possible to show equality to another wife when one of your wives is the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ? Allahu Alim. This may be one of the hidden wisdoms of why the Prophet ﷺ said no, however it would be an incorrect view to take from this incident and project it onto all of polygyny as we know many of the Sahabah took additional wives, as did Sayyiduna Ali (RA), as did the Prophet ﷺ himself.

### Sayyidah Aisha (RA) was "jealous" and so our extreme jealousy is warranted

This is an often used line and a complete misunderstanding of the feelings that Sayyidah Aisha (RA) exhibited towards the Prophet ﷺ. There are two different types of emotions that are expressed in the Arabic language which translate to "jealousy" in the English language.

The first is الغيرة - Al Ghayrah

The second is الحسد - Al Hasad

Ghayrah is sometimes translated as jealous or



protective jealousy, for which there is a better term I read from Ustadh Mostafa Azzam, that can be used, and that is territoriality. The word is primarily associated with the feeling of zeal in the sense of protecting one's honor, rights, or possessions. There's nothing wrong with this emotion, it's narrated in a Hadith that Allah has Ghayrah over his creation.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ أَحَدٌ أَغْيَرَ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْ يَزِيَّ عَبْدُهُ أَوْ أُمَّتُهُ

*"Indeed, there is no one with more Ghayrah than Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, when His male servant or female slave commits zina."*

For this reason I don't personally like using the word jealousy for Ghayrah because jealousy by its nature in English denotes a form of weakness and it is kufr to attribute this weakness to Allah. The second word used is Hasad, which is often translated as envy or jealousy which is what most people think about when they think about the word jealousy.

If you go through the Hadiths which refer to Sayyidah Aisha (RA) and her feelings towards the Prophet ﷺ and his other wives, the word Hasad is not used. The word used is Ghayrah, yet most of the translations often translate the word to jealousy.

*Anas said that when the Prophet was with one of his wives one of the mothers of the faithful sent a bowl containing food and the one in whose house he was struck the servant's hand with the result that the bowl fell and was broken in pieces. The Prophet collected the pieces of the bowl, then began to collect in it the food it had contained, saying, "Your mother is jealous." He then*

*detained the servant till a bowl was produced by the one in whose house he was, gave the sound bowl to the one whose bowl had been broken and kept the broken one in the house of the one who broke it.*

Unfortunately this has led a lot of people who have not understood the Arabic or the concept of Ghayrah to start assuming that Sayyidah Aisha (RA) was just like them and unable to control their emotional outbursts upon learning about another wife. Having territorial protection over your husband, your children, and your house is normal. There's nothing wrong with a woman feeling this, however when we think of jealousy we often confuse it with the one that Iago planted in the mind of Othello, pushing him to kill Desdemona.

*"O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;*

*It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock*

*The meat it feeds on." (Iago - Othello)*

Many take this understanding and apply it in situations of polygyny. It's okay if a wife treats her co wife differently because she has Ghayrah for her husband, this is normal, but instead now she's thought of as a mistress with an extreme sense of envy as Othello did for Desdemona.

The reasons provided could be further elucidated and broken down with statistics and greater analysis; however, the intended goal was to demonstrate that many of the common arguments against polygyny are fairly hollow and mostly emotionally driven with a bias of how marriage is understood based on secular framing. This is not an argument that is meant to convince women. I don't think that's possible since the argument from a women's perspective isn't based on a future forecasted model regarding the theoreticals of what society could be

or how it was, and how polygyny is beneficial and necessary. For most women the argument is, how will it impact me today and how will it change my family and relationship causing a sense of unease and confusion when the argument has not been properly handled and laid out.

Once understood, polygyny is a healthy, normal, and critical part of the Islamic understanding of marriage. To fix the large marriage crisis we now face in our community, I believe it is necessary to reframe our understanding of marriage back to an Islamic one. This reframing requires polygyny and it's for this reason that we must understand what underpins many of the current knee jerk reactions against it. We must start with removing the secular understanding of marriage first from our mindset and once that happens, we can then take steps to practically start to shift societal norms, including polygyny, back into an Islamic frame.

And Allah and His Messenger ﷺ know best. ﴿

**"Wife wants to spend more time with her friend? You know solution brother!"**





**Did  
you  
know?**

**هل  
تعلم؟**

**A “Mutawatir”  
hadith,**

It is when a hadith is so successively transmitted through various chains that it becomes inconceivable that the narrators all colluded to narrate something untrue.





# 40 HADITH ON MASCULINITY



# HOW TO BE A GOOD MAN

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MuslimMan™ & Wordsmiths





**MAM**  
MUSLIM MAN

## **This Book Will Make a Man Out of You, Says MuslimMan:**

**W**hat does it take to write “the book” on masculinity? To start, it takes about 160 hours to find the best hadith to include. Then we have to translate it, which takes 4 hours per 1000 words for a first draft. After that we write the commentary. Next comes the editing. Then the entire manuscript goes through a final quality review. The digital first edition of 40 Hadith on Masculinity: How to be a Good Man contains a little over 91,500 words. This means, at minimum, the book took 526 man hours to produce. Though, in all likelihood, that number is closer to 650 or 700 hours.

All this to publish the definitive work on being a man by going back to the Source: the Quran and Sunnah. Free of post-modern anachronisms and political, social and cultural baggage, these 213 pages and 990 references ought to be enough to end any and all debate. Well, one can hope, at least. Oh, and in case you’re wondering, this is “the book” on masculinity for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Because Islam’s message is for all times and all peoples. If you’d like to know more, we’ve published the introduction to the book, in full, on page 78. Enjoy!

# *This Barbie*



shares her Ken  
with other Barbies!





# FIRASAH

INTUITION OF DIVINE LIGHT

**Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Beware of the intuition of the believer. Verily, he sees with the light of Allah." Then, the Prophet recited the verse, "Verily, in that are signs for those of discernment."**

**Sunan al-Tirmidhi 3127**



# THE LION OF EGYPT

## AL-ZAHIR BAYBARS

July 1223 – July 1277

4TH MAMLUK SULTAN



**B**aybars was a Kipchak Turk, from a family of unnotable lineage, born in the steppe region north of the black sea in what constitutes modern-day Ukraine. His tribe, the Barli, pre-emptively fled the invading armies of the Mongols towards Bulgaria, but their efforts ended up for naught, as the Mongols reached it in 1242 shortly after they'd settled. Baybars witnessed the massacre of his family when he was just a boy, and was subsequently captured and sold into slavery. He eventually ended up in the markets of Hama, Syria, where he was purchased by an Egyptian nobleman.

Baybars would grow into a physical specimen to be reckoned with. He was described as tall, broad, with fair hair, light eyes, and a powerful voice. He was tough, never backed down from a fight, and loved the Quran. Due to his physical prowess, innate courage, and charisma, he naturally was placed as his owner's personal guard.

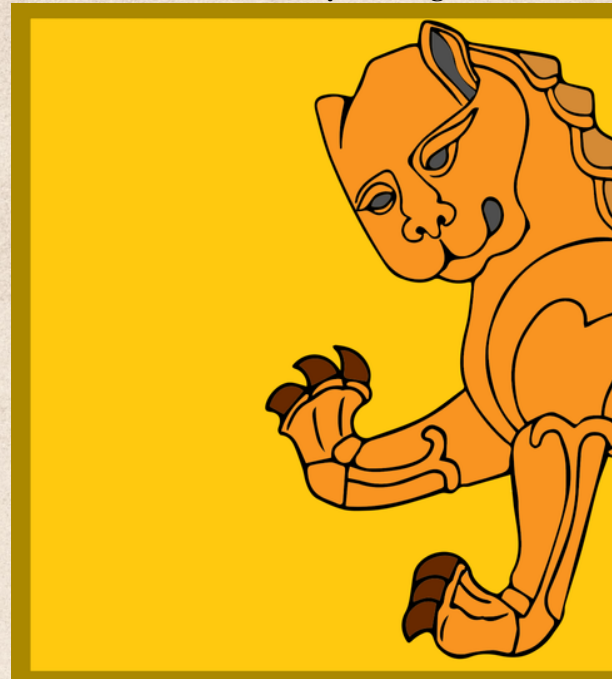
One day however, his owner was arrested and jailed after angering the Sultan As-Salih Ayyub (grand-nephew of Saladin), and his riches and slaves were confiscated. Overnight, Baybars became the slave of the Ayyubid Sultan.

Baybars, recognized for his talent and strength, was enrolled in the Bahri Mamluks, rising through the ranks in just a couple of years to become a commander at the level of a contemporary he'd meet again later - Saif ad-Din Qutuz, a fellow

Turk from Persia.

In 1250, the Seventh Crusade commenced, and King Louis IX of France took his forces to the city of Mansurah in Egypt to ease their attempt to conquer Jerusalem again. His first chance to allow his military genius to shine, Baybars had the idea of letting the Crusader knights into the town and trap them. The result was the extermination of all but five Templars in total. The second battle at Fariskur led to the capture of King Louis, granting a poor, whimpering end to the Seventh Crusade. Shortly after, Baybars would assist in a coup in Egypt against as-Salih Ayyub's young son Turan Shah, replacing him with the concubine-turned-wife of his father, Shajar al-Durr. Shajar would marry Aybak and pass the throne to him, who then killed Faris ad-Din Aktai, commander of the Mamluks. Baybars, who was under his direct command, took a

Photo: the standard of Baybars, a golden lion





company of his men and fled to Syria where they stayed under the protection of the last Ayyubid prince, al-Nasir Yusuf.

Eventually, the old acquaintance of Baybars, Saif ad-Din Qutuz, would take over from the Ayyubids in Egypt as Sultan in 1259 after the sack of Baghdad to deal with the Mongol threat - and thus welcomed Baybars and his company back and reinstated them in the army. Just a few months after Baybars was reinstated, now the right-hand man of Qutuz, the Mongols advanced further into the Levant, culminating in the momentous Battle of Ain Jalut, where Baybars won his most famous victory.

Due to spending years in the Levant as a fugitive and being familiar with how the Mongols employed their vicious strategies firsthand, he laid out a plan to use their own tactics against them. With his cavalry, he performed multiple hit-and-run attacks on segments of the Mongol army until they'd grown so frustrated they were lured deep into the valley of Goliath's Spring. Suddenly they found themselves surrounded on all ends, and that's when Baybars sent out the full extent of his forces to decimate them. Sultan Qutuz was so moved by the sight, he tossed his helmet away

and rode down the fields to his men, shouting "*Wa Islamah! Ya Allah, ansur abdak Qutuz!* (Oh my Islam! Oh Allah, grant victory to your servant Qutuz!). The Mongols were defeated shortly after, their first real defeat.

Unfortunately, after this great victory, tensions boiled over between Qutuz and his commanders, leading to his assassination. Baybars was the popular successor, and the following decades were filled with one victory after the other against the remaining Crusaders in the Levant, the Mongols in Persia, their allied Armenian Christians, and even the Ismaili Assassins. As well as leading all these campaigns directly as Sultan, he made many internal reforms that benefitted both Islam and the general well-being of his people. He overhauled the infrastructure of his cities and harbors and was the first ruler in Egypt to make sure that they always had chief justices of all four Islamic Schools of Law present in the government. This reform would spread across the Islamic world and soon became customary in all Urban Muslim centers.

From the life of a tormented slave, bought and sold like cattle, Baybars rose through the ranks through his will & faith in Allah and inherited the spiritual legacy of the greats like Saladin whom he admired, remaining one of Islam's greatest heroes to this day. /

**Photo: painting of the Battle of Ain Jalut**





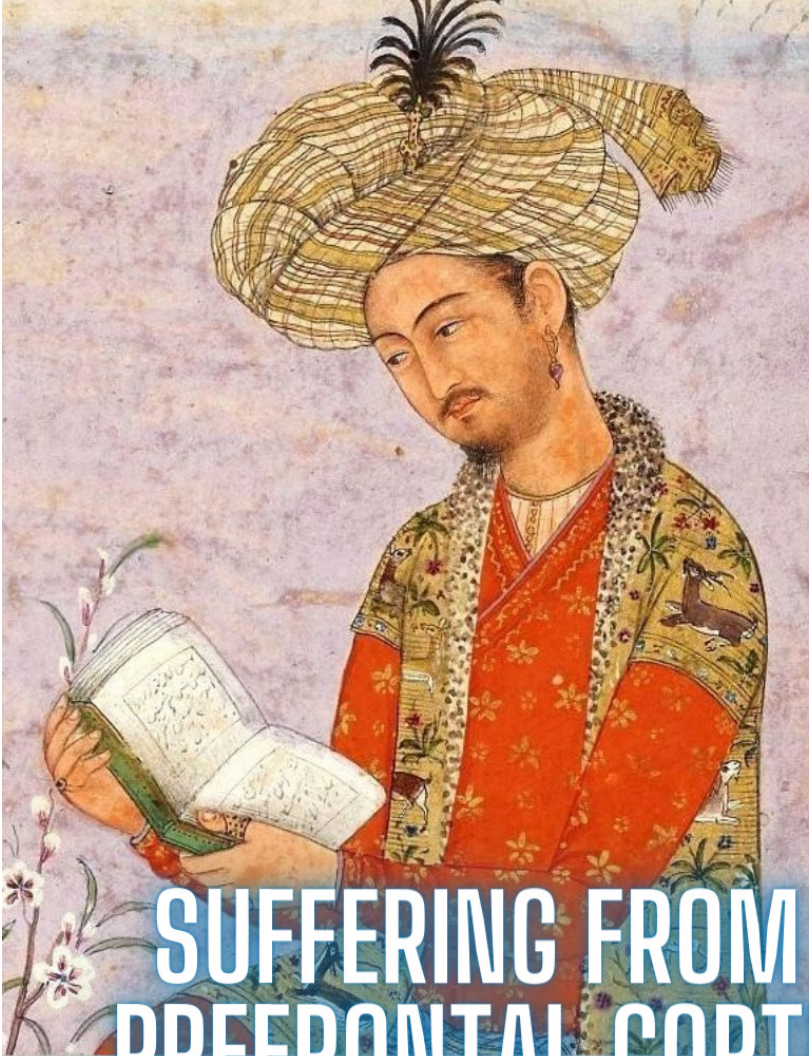
# Hierarchy & Freedom



*An examination of some  
classical metaphysical and post-Enlightenment  
accounts of human autonomy*

**Hasan Spiker**





SUFFERING FROM AN UNDEVELOPED PREFRONTAL CORTEX? DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE NOT ALONE!





**GOT CATFISHED ON  
MUZZMATCH? ISLAMICALLY,  
YOU'RE OWED RESTITUTION  
EQUAL TO A YEAR LONG GYM  
MEMBERSHIP.**

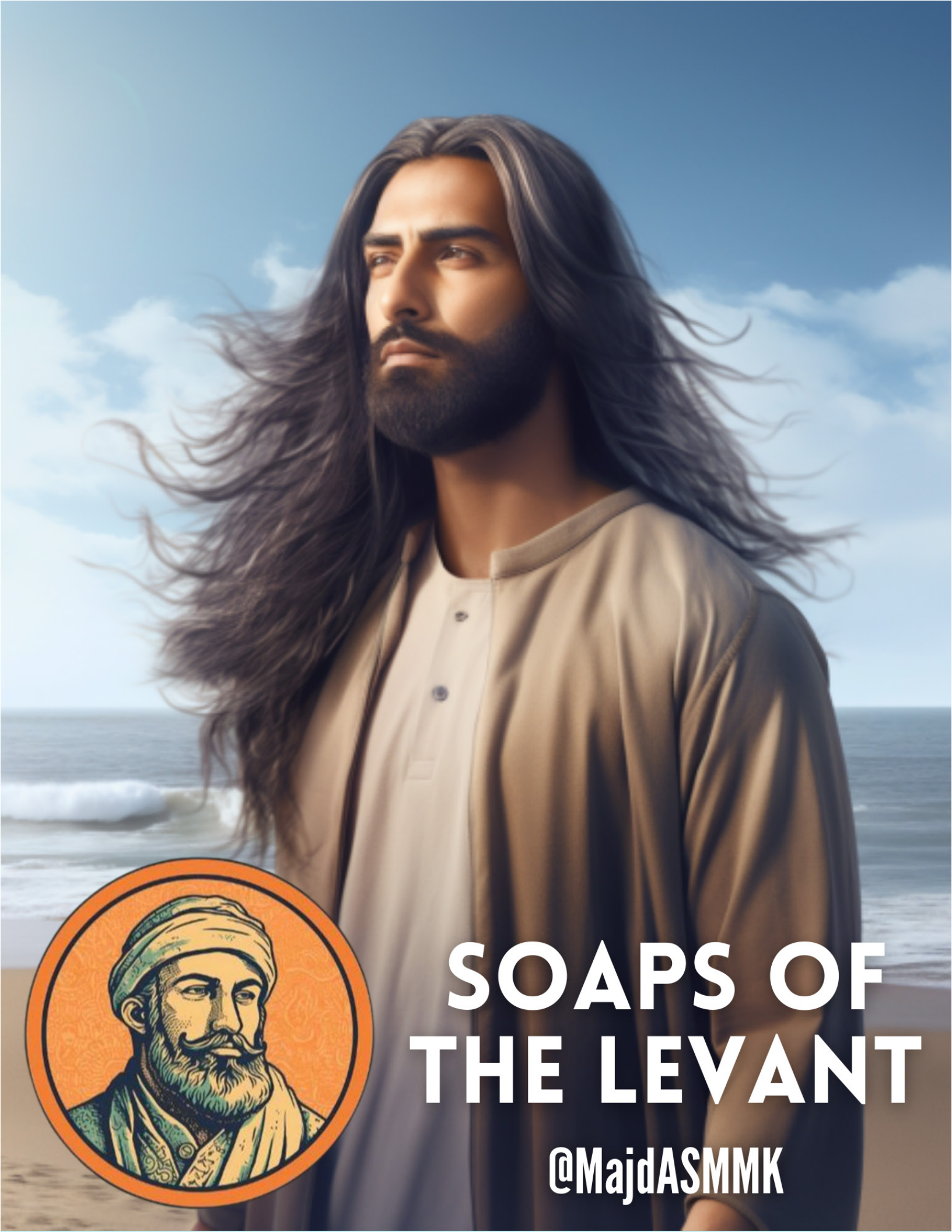


**OUR FATWA  
SAYS SO.**



**XFIQH**





# SOAPS OF THE LEVANT

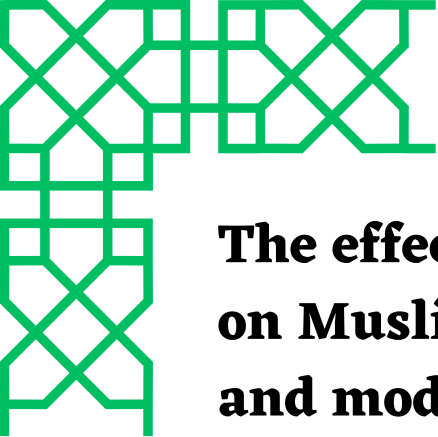
@MajdASMMK



**QAWWAM**  
**INTERVIEWS**  
**HASAN SPIKER**







## The effects of the Hellenic philosophical legacy on Muslim Civilization, Platonic Hierarchy, and modern man's spiritual rebellion against modernity — all in discussion with the philosopher & scholar Hasan Spiker:

**AY:** In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and most Merciful, and the most abundant praise and blessings on His beloved Messenger, our Master Mohammed ﷺ. I really appreciate you speaking with me for QAWWAM.

One of the things that impressed me a lot when listening to you or reading some of your work, is that you don't shy away from the Hellenic philosophical legacy that has made up a big part of Islamic academic study since the Middle Ages. Sadly, when it comes to the study of practical Islam and jurisprudence in the modern day we see, predominantly, the camp in Islamic education that denies and attempts to banish any philosophical connection Muslims may have to the Greeks (or going as far as casting claims of heresy on thirteen centuries of Islamic science & civilization) — how would you sum up this legacy to the lay Muslim whose been too skeptical to appreciate it?

**HS:** In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate, and blessings and peace be upon our Holy Prophet Muhammad, master of the first and the last. I have responded to this in my little book *The Metacritique of Kant and the Possibility of Metaphysics*, where I say:

It is a matter of the greatest urgency that we divest ourselves of the modernist, and enormously spiritually immature genetic fallacy which alone guides our all too ubiquitous aversion to 'Platonic', 'Neoplatonic' (or any of the many other 'foreign') sources of wisdom, that do not accord with our empiricist biases; for we know that 'wisdom is the lost property of the believer', and we possess, in revelation, the supreme statement of the unification of the superinstantial and the instantial, of being and knowing, and of the hierarchy of manifestation, in *"And there is no thing, but that We possess its treasures, and We do not cause it to descend except in a measure that is known"* (Qur'an 15:21). The Qur'an itself is showing us, and it shows us in many other of its sacred verses, that metaphysics is not merely possible. It is actual. *"We will show them Our signs on the horizons and within their own selves, until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth"* (Qur'an 41:53).





It is a strange irony that five hundred years ago, we were far more open-minded in this regard than we are today. This comes at the worst possible time, in that we presently languish in an age in which closed-mindedness only puts us in an incredibly weak and subservient position. Of course, I do not mean ‘open-mindedness’ as a vague, sentimental secular ‘value’. Rather, when you look at the work of the likes of Molla Jāmī, Taşköprüzade, Shāh Waliullah, Bahr al-‘Ulūm Farangī Mahallī, Abū Thanā’ al-Ālūsī, Emir Abdelkader — I could provide any number of alternative lists of sages of the same or even greater stature — you see a complete lack of exclusionary dogmatism; they were solely interested in the question of whether a doctrine corresponded to reality, or not, and whether it contributed to the overall nuance of our philosophical account of reality. It was not really of interest to them to become fixated on the particular historical moment that a philosophical position arose. This is why they freely quote ‘non-Islamic’ sources. This is precisely because of how self-confident they were in affirming that the Islamic revelation provides the ultimate criterion for judging the truth of any statement, the only criterion we will ever need! They had real ‘ayn al-yaqīn. And ironically, this is precisely the opposite of how the paranoid and weak-faithed moderns amongst us interpret the phenomenon of the use of ‘foreign’ sources by these sages! I have always found this very strange. I am fortunate to have been brought up in a family environment and community of certainty, spiritually and intellectually, concerning the absolute primacy and truth of Islam. As a child, I lived for some time in Jordan and Morocco, as well as in the

Dār al-Islām community in New Mexico, and as a fourteen-year-old, I studied traditionally in Damascus and Halab, Syria. However, I was raised primarily in Cambridge in the UK, and was relentlessly exposed there to the whole gamut of secular and atheistic philosophies. Nonetheless, I am blessed to have never known anything other than that deep certainty. Shaykh Abdalqadir’s original Darqawi group of converts to Islam, arising from the teachings of Shaykh Muhammad Ibn al-Habib, was exemplary in the way that it embodied this understanding of Islam as utterly transformative, radically liberating, and as preserving the sole complete and pristine, experiential truth. Any philosophy that I encounter is always subject to that criterion and pales in comparison to that Muhammadan light! So, I have never felt threatened by philosophy in the baffling way that one now sees in so many amongst us. To the contrary, I have only ever been amazed to see how often traditional philosophies concord with the truth revealed by the Qur’an and Hadith. This should in fact be no real surprise; the Source of all truth is One. It is startling to me how those who commit the genetic fallacy so often betray thereby their uncertainty and weakness of faith!

Allah willed for the first extensive rational systematizations of the nature of existence to unfold in the Greek world. He alone knows the hidden wisdom in that. For my part, I am almost completely uninterested in the ‘Greekness’ of it all. I am however, interested in the commensurability of different accounts of the nature of the world and existence. I don’t ‘believe in’ Soul, Nature, and Intellect, for example, in the Platonic account, but I am interested in the commensurability of these accounts to the Akbarian account rooted in the

Islamic revelation. This notion of commensurability is very important. This passage from an as-of-yet-unpublished article of mine explains what I mean by the word:

*'Of course, on the view that all philosophical systems are entirely discreet, fundamentally isolated perspectival phenomena, only coherent according to the stipulations of their self-definitional structures, philosophical notions are not commensurate, and beneficial exegesis must therefore exclude comparative philosophical analysis except in verifiable cases of direct linear influence, for no sufficiently neutral interpretive criteria exist that could justify such comparative activity. I hold, however (as, presumably, must anyone who considers the comparative endeavor a philosophically fruitful one), that despite possibly disparate modes of expression, and regardless of great disparities in historical epoch and taxonomical exigencies pertaining to the various philosophical schools of thought, philosophical notions are fundamentally commensurate, and philosophical views may validly be subsumed under the same, objective broad categories. Although linear historical influence is often the vehicle of the commensurability or even identity of philosophical concepts, via direct transmission from one thinker to another, fundamentally commensurate philosophical concepts may also be independently discovered by philosophers irrespective of linear historical influence.'*

It is a simple fact (although not widely known) that the transmission of 'Greek' philosophy to the Muslim world was extremely incomplete and un-pristine. Much of what we took for Aristotle was actually Plotinus or Proclus, and their works reached us in a very confused, heavily truncated form in which much key terminology had been changed because of

the influence of the very last period of Neoplatonism, fully crystallising only after the 6th century closure of the Academy by Justinian, with its obsession with a very over-enthusiastic and unrealistic form of 'harmonisation' of Plato and Aristotle that even John Philoponus thought had gone way too far, and that did not reflect the approach of the previous Platonic tradition, which was highly anti-Aristotelian in most ways. Of course, this lost heritage, only uncovered fully at the Renaissance, does not in any way give us knowledge of reality beyond the fullness of the Islamic revelation. On the other hand, some of its highly developed rational apparatuses, rooted in an exemplarist metaphysics, can help us provide a rational account of that truth which certainly supplements and in most ways improves upon our often Avicenna-dominated, heavily Peripateticised philosophical heritage. Few traditional theologians from the Ottoman, Mughal, or other Islamic epochs would have had any problem with this move! Were they to have had these new texts available to them, they would get straight to work determining which parts could be of use, and of course, identifying those that were not. That is all that I am trying to do. Of course, there is no doubt at all that the Athenian civilization that Socrates encountered had many morally and theologically dissolute elements. But surely the fact that Socrates was put to death for 'denying the gods' cannot be devoid of significance? And we can say for certain that the knee-jerk reaction against 'Greek' philosophy we see from so many Muslims today, jars terribly with the picture of Socrates and Plato as sagacious monotheists that was painted by the majority of the 'ulamā' of our tradition prior to modernity.

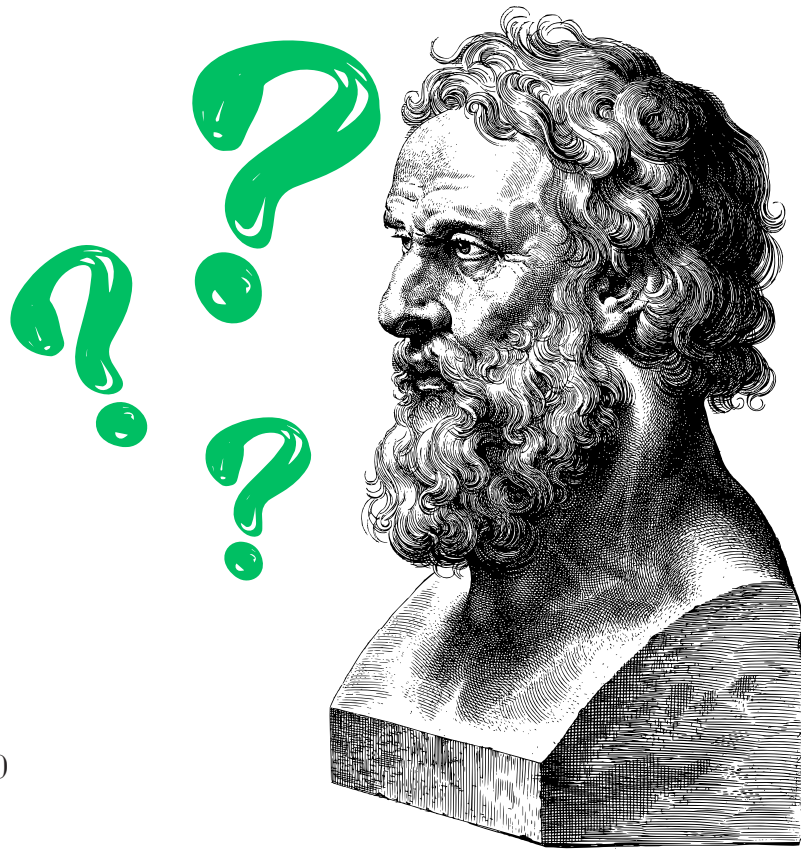


**AY:** To add onto that, I recently finished your great, short work *Hierarchy and Freedom* — One of the arguments, for example, against peering into anything philosophical is that it's a path to Mutazilite-style heresy and “modernizing” of Islam, i.e. being severed from the spiritual aspects of Islam and seeing everything from a hyper-rationalist point of view. Yet, something amazing you showed was that this wasn't necessarily true, in fact as you've investigated in the book the Platonic view of hierarchy and human independence can fit quite snugly in an Islamic paradigm and goes diametrically against the real culprit of hyper-rationality and killing of the spiritual, which is liberal post-enlightenment thought. Was this a direct aim of yours in the book as well, or did it come about naturally as a consequence of the subject at hand?

**HS:** Absolutely. I use ‘Platonic’ in a very broad sense. It refers to the philosophical methodology that synthesizes the spiritual awareness and intuition resultant (as a largely necessary, but certainly not sufficient condition) from spiritual purification on the one hand, with rational deduction and sense experience on the other, as opposed to the broad Peripatetic methodology, which almost entirely excludes the contribution of experiential knowledge and purification. In this sense, and not in the sense of linear historical influence, Imām al-Ghazālī, for example, is a ‘Platonist’, in his account of freedom in terms of the Platonic tripartite soul and spiritual purification (see for example, *Mizān al-‘Amal*), as well as in his account of the existence of multiple superordinate and

subordinate degrees pertaining to essences instantiated in this world (say, the Sun), which represent as it were ‘shadows’ of exemplary beings (in the case of the Sun, an Archangel — see his *Mishkāt al-Anwār*). Look, we are very paranoid and reactionary nowadays and we don't read carefully. We don't understand our own tradition and we don't understand the ‘foreign’ traditions we are rejecting either. It's sad.

**AY:** *Hierarchy and Freedom* also reminded me of another work by Ernst Junger, someone I mentioned to you before we conducted this interview, who wrote an essay in 1951 called *The Forest Passage*. Junger was a committed Nietzschean who was radicalized by the carnage of the First World War and took a rightist approach against the National Socialists of his time, making him quite the obscure figure by today's standards. However, in this work of his, I found a practical approach to much of the philosophical underpinnings that are present in yours, in the face of the tyrannical regimes of his time where the individual man is



forced to rebel against modernity by ascending spiritually through their fear of death and subjugation. Allow me to quote a passage from it:

*“Theologians of today must be prepared to deal with people as they are today— above all with people who do not live in sheltered reserves or other low-pressure zones. A man stands before them who has emptied his chalice of suffering and doubt, a man formed far more by nihilism than by the church— ignoring for the moment how much nihilism is concealed in the church itself. Typically, this person will be little developed ethically or spiritually, however eloquent he may be in convincing platitudes. He will be alert, intelligent, active, skeptical, inartistic, a natural-born debaser of higher types and ideas, an insurance fanatic, someone set on his own advantage, and easily manipulated by the catchphrases of propaganda whose often abrupt turnabouts he will hardly perceive; **he will gush with humanitarian theory, yet be equally inclined to awful violence beyond all legal limits or international law whenever a neighbor or fellow human being does not fit into his system.** At the same time, he will feel haunted by*

*malevolent forces, which penetrate even into his dreams, have a low capacity to enjoy himself, and have forgotten the meaning of a real festival... [Man] is suffering a loss, and this loss explains the manifest grayness and hopelessness of his existence, which in some cities and even whole lands so overshadows life that the last smiles have been extinguished and people seem trapped in Kafkaesque underworlds.”*

So my question is, a big part of Junger’s analysis of his time post WW2 was that man in pre-modernity went from being someone who was “known” within his community at every level, back when real metaphysical hierarchies weren’t questioned, to becoming an unknown cipher where he doesn’t know or is known by anyone outside of his household, where he’s split into being the Worker or the Unknown Soldier that leaves him in a grey, depressed state of total isolation. What is your take regarding how the dissolution of traditional hierarchy affects men at this community level?

**HS:** Junger is an interesting thinker; Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi, through whom my parents’ generation came to Islam, knew him personally and thought very highly of many of his writings. You refer to Junger’s opposition to Nazism; it is interesting to note that in the Germany of the time, Junger was so highly revered including by Hitler himself, that despite Junger’s open criticism of the regime, Hitler decreed that Junger was not to face sanctions or be harmed in any way.

To turn to your question, there are so many dimensions to the alienated, atomised quality of post-Industrial life. One of the roots of the anonymous, purposeless feeling of contemporary public life in the secular West is that people assume all common causes — any, that is, that involve more than physical survival — are driven by





fundamentally arbitrary social contagion, and this gives rise to the widespread fear that any profound commitment will end up impairing individual autonomy. Of course, the effect of industrialisation had seismic repercussions, not merely in the personal and family lives of those forced to leave their skilled trades to operate its machines, but also in drastically impairing the staggering cultural richness of pre-industrial modes of human community life, self-sufficient communities with their vibrant cottage industries and their integral agricultural traditions, in which generations of families had lived and known one another, inter-married and worked together. These were relationships of an intimacy, familiarity, and stability difficult for us to conceive of today. Industrialisation withdrew the ability of rural settlements, historically associated with their own unique crafts, to thrive and indeed survive without vassalage to the emerging industrial towns which had dispossessed them of their markets, by offering more inexpensive but in most ways grossly inferior goods. At the same time, it destroyed the cultural and religious practices that those communities had naturally begotten, as the expressions most befitting to their holistic modes of life. But assimilation into the industrialised city necessitated assimilation into a monoculture, that had cut the true diversity of culture at its source.

The cultural plenitude of rural, village, and traditional city culture has now been severed from its roots in the living earth, and in a shared, experiential metaphysics (and by extension, in recognition of intrinsic hierarchy) to wither instead in the self-congratulatory museums of 'cultural heritage' that only really celebrate the

total victory of modern industrial society. And yet the loss we are speaking of is not the luxurious nostalgia, as is often alleged, of those who have only been made comfortable enough to purport to care about 'traditional' and 'folk' culture by the very modern industrialism that has made such 'comfort and abundance' widely available. These were, in any case, never mere 'traditions', but a whole nexus of virtuous, distinctive, collective responses to natural and supernatural human exigencies of every kind, the loss of which precipitated the more general loss of any sense of objective personal and communal responsibility to fellow man, and subsequently to the isolation and atomisation of the individual within the prison of his own subjectivity. So, the defrocking of religion in public space, the waning of craft and rise of machine-made architectural and artefactual uniformity, and the destruction of rural cultures by city monoculture, represent three of the main strippers of meaning from lived environment and public social relationships in the contemporary world. The blandness of the modern city lived environment also possesses a reciprocal relationship to the blandness of modern city public life, and both cannot help but tend to reinforce the monotony and cold indifference of the other. Civil life and social interactions today thereby tend towards an ever-greater focus on the navigation and negotiation of individual subjectivities which operate on an at least tacit assumption of self-enclosedness; each individual is fundamentally unintelligible, 'a mystery'. Again, this is crucial exactly in order to safeguard autonomy. Human friendship today often loses its former basis, in the simple fact of mutual participation in human nature, and inclines instead towards a kind of fortress solidarity, founded on the sharedness of assumptions which are acknowledged

to be subjective, in which the friends hold out together, not without a certain degree of hostility, against those who do not share their assumptions — of course, this dystopic new tribalism cannot be ignored today, because it completely dominates internet discourse. One of the further consequences of this lack of recognition of traditional shared assumptions, rooted as they were in shared recognition of objective truth and hierarchy, is that public interaction with ‘strangers’ takes on an increasing awkwardness, a silence which is the expression of the ‘right’ to be ‘left alone’, with substantive topics carefully closed off, and especially anything which purports to transcend mere perspectival perception to attempt to grasp a ‘nature of things’.

All one can really say is, alhamdulillah ‘alā ni‘mat al-Islām wa kafā bihā ni‘ma! As Ahmed Paul Keeler beautifully puts it: In such times as these, Islam is certainly the last Witness, and humanity’s final Refuge against the storm.



**AY:** Beautifully put indeed. *Jazak Allahu Khair*, and thank you for your time, Mawlana Hasan.



**Hasan Spiker is a philosopher, author, and comparative scholar of Islamic, Greek, and Modern thought from Cambridge University. His latest book, *Hierarchy and Freedom*, is available now in kindle, paperback, and hardback.**

**You can find him on X/Twitter @RealHasanSpiker.**



إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

Indeed, the help of Allah is near  
(Quran 2:214)







**Mom, I'm g**

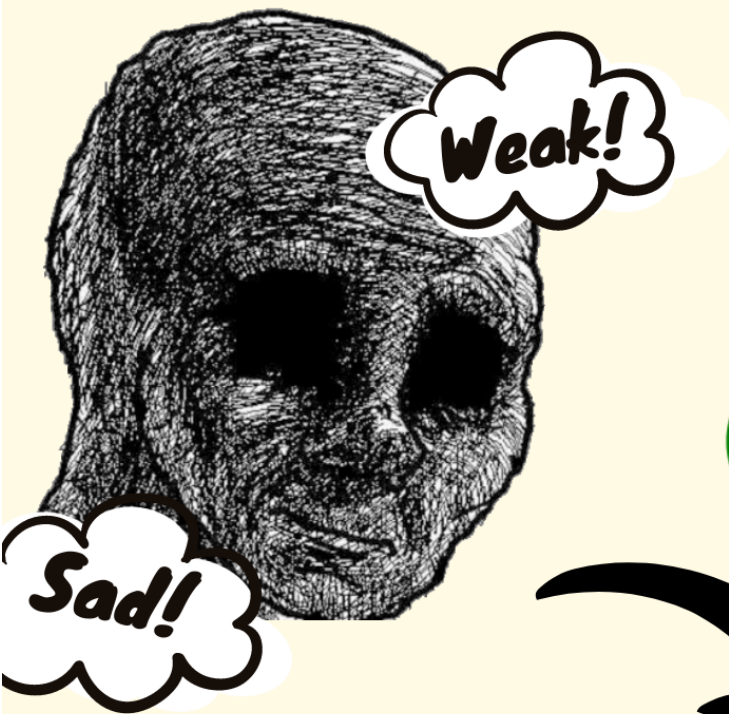




# GOING TO BE THE MAHDI'S TOP GUY

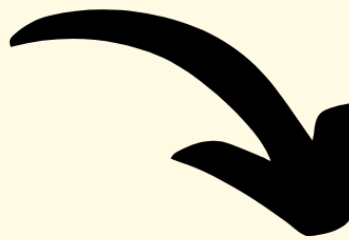


# The **PILL** that made a man out of Mahmoud!

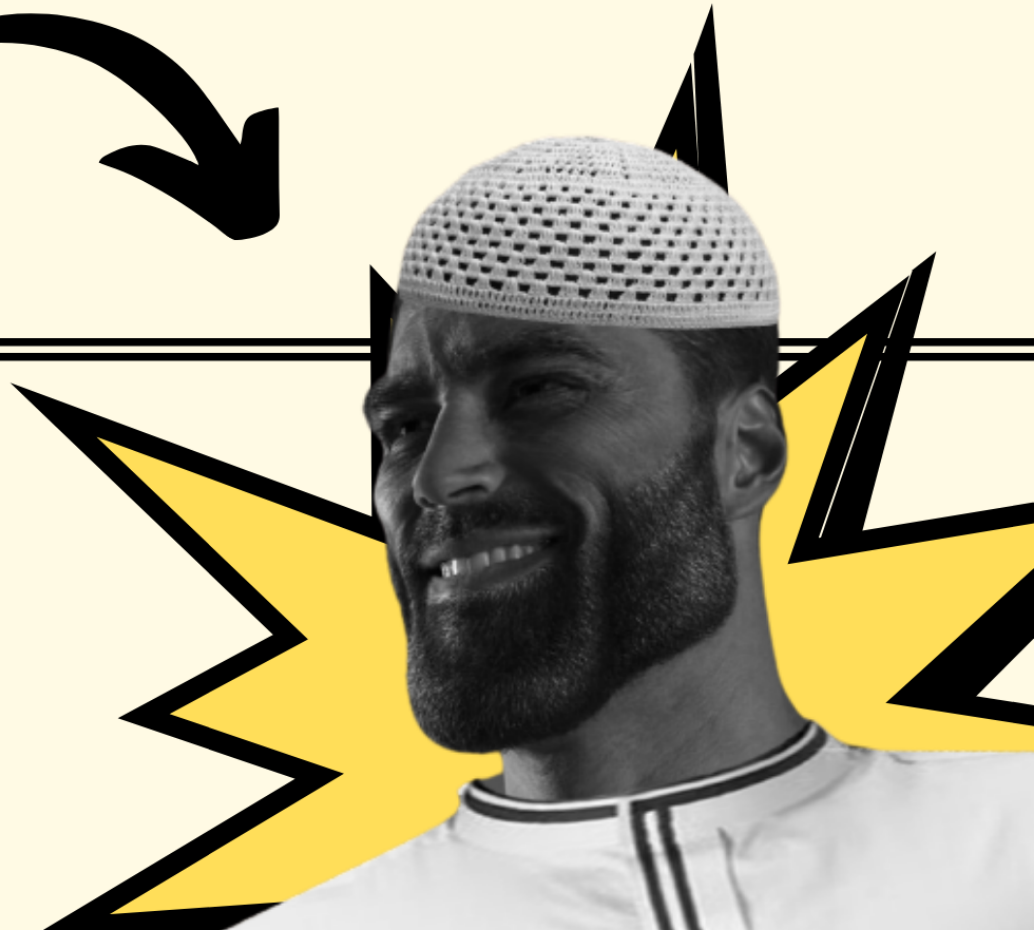


@MajestyandBeauty

MAJESTY  
AND  
BEAUTY



## What was it?





# 40 HADITH ON MASCULINITY

## An Introduction

MuslimMan™ & Wordsmiths



### What People Are Saying:

“It’s a really well-written book that hits home, that’s what I’d say, for any man who’s got any self-consciousness about himself as a man.” – Malek H.

“I completed reading the 40 hadith on masculinity book today, and ma shaa Allah, it is the best book on the topic I have found in English.” – Ismail Kamdar, founder of [islamicselfhelp.com](http://islamicselfhelp.com)

It is the subject of our age. What is a man and how should he behave? The question itself seems preposterous. Why even ask it? For men have existed as long as humankind has. Indeed, the first of us – the Prophet Adam, peace be upon him – was himself a man.

For all the many thousand years that mankind has lived and walked on this Earth, the term has never needed defining, nor did man’s mode of proper comportment ever come into question. Men were expected to be upright, self-sufficient, interpersonal, and organised. In previous epochs and ages, it was the men who were the scholars, breadwinners, leaders, and warriors in their respective societies. They were confident in themselves and in their role in civilisation, and did not need to be told who and what they were, nor what was expected of them.

For the Western world this all changed in the

Twentieth Century, as this was the period of ‘liberation’. It brought about ‘liberation’ from all so-called ‘social constructs’, the breaking of which became the core value of Western society. In light of these changes epistemic misperceptions emerged, as the lines between men and women began to blur. In the twenty-first century, this has now become a global pandemic.

### Masculinity in Crisis

Is manliness still a word of value and meaning? In the modern age, it seems to have lost its luster. Men themselves are disappearing from the words of our language. We are no longer mankind, but rather humankind; no longer firemen, policemen, or clergymen, but simply ‘persons’.

Make no mistake, masculinity in the West is in a state of crisis. For the modern Western man, there is no exclusive domain or space left to call his own.

There is no bastion or refuge left in the place of work, on the field of sport, or even in the theatre of war. No longer the sole bread-winner, no longer the leader of his household, no longer even sure of what manhood means.

His mere presence is now considered ‘toxic’. The very idea of ‘him’ is relegated to the aforementioned status of a mere ‘social construct’. And consequently, he searches for meaning. He searches for a way to establish a sense of self, for a way to signify or help define who he is, and for a model or standard by which to know the truth of what it means to be a Man. Of course, the Muslim man has long since had such a model and standard available to him: the noble life and sublime character of the Perfect Man ﷺ. Allah tells us in the Qur’an: *“There is indeed a good model for you in the Messenger of Allah”* (33:21).

And yet, as the Prophet ﷺ told us, ‘A man is upon the religion of his close companion, so let each of you carefully consider whom you take as a friend.’ Thus, living in an age of confusion amongst the confused, the modern Western Muslim has lost his way and found himself in a state of equal bewilderment, forgetting his heritage and falling prey to all the same traps and patterns as others around him. He finds himself also asking what it means to be a man.

## A Man Defined

To surmount the confusion and find some ground to make a decisive stand, it is best that we first define our terms to better understand what it means to be a man.

Evidently, being a man is about more than just having the correct anatomy. In the renowned classical lexicon, Lisān al-‘Arab, the word ‘rajul’

(man) is defined in three ways: firstly, in opposition to femaleness, followed by opposition to adolescence, and then simply as someone born with a male physiognomy. A complete man must then be the triangulation of all three components: outward appearance, inner qualities, and physical nature. Thus, we can say that a man is an adult male who avoids effeminate behaviours and manifestations and sheds all childlike modes of self-centredness and dependency. Now, the question to ask ourselves is when we look at ourselves in the mirror, is there such a man staring back at us?

The man that modern media outlets and the dominant cultural discourse has created is unfortunately the opposite of the above mentioned qualities. He is highly feminised, infantilised, and ultimately neutered, thereby being nothing more than a timid adolescent in an adult body. He is Peter Pan: a man-child obsessed with puerile pursuits and hobbies, being concerned with games, gadgets, and sports.

He is preoccupied with self-gratification through play and entertainment, all the while ever-seeking the affirmation and endorsement of wider society. Tragically, the few men whose minds and souls see this for what it is and reject the role that society wants them to play still find themselves ensnared in yet another trap: the ploy of superficial masculinity. Such men become obsessed with the mere aesthetics of manhood. They project a faux machismo and perpetuate another form of self-centred childishness. Rather than actually embodying the principles and qualities of true manhood, they place more importance on merely being perceived as manly. Confused Western Muslims are often drawn into this latter category, adopting the subculture, mannerisms, and jargon of the so-called ‘Manosphere’. They talk of ‘taking the Red Pill’,



blissfully oblivious to the fact that this is just another flavour of ‘the Kool-Aid’, and merely another form of selfish play and self-adoration. As it stands, a reset is required. Men need to be reminded that there is another and far enhanced course of action. Muslim masculinity is in urgent need of revival, and providentially the elixir that shall revive it has long been within reach. We must simply return to the roots of our religion, to remind ourselves once more of all the knowledge and wisdom possessed therein, and learn again to be men of the Qur’an and Sunnah. The benefits of this shall extend far beyond the pursuit of returning to true masculinity. The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Whoever revives my Sunnah then he has loved me, and whoever loves me shall be with me in Paradise.’

## The Prophet ﷺ : A Standard of Perfect Virtue

To be men of the Qur’an and Sunnah, we must render the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as our paradigm and standard in all that we do. We must look to his character and virtues, his mannerisms and advice, and then exert sincere efforts to internalise them. The path to true masculinity has always been in plain view and documented in meticulous detail within the *sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet ﷺ; and yet we have looked to others to define it for us, seeking to take inspiration from the lowest of people, namely the movie stars, singers, and so-called influencers. Weak men with weak minds and weak hearts can teach nothing save weakness. This is not the way that a Muslim should follow, for our way is clear. Allah addresses His Prophet ﷺ in the Qur’an, declaring: *“And assuredly you are upon an excellent standard of character”* (68:4)

In his explanation of this verse, Imam Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī states that man can only be virtuous in two capacities: in his ideals and in his actions. Islam is the perfection of moral ideals and principles, while the exactness of actions is found in good moral character and conduct. The Prophet ﷺ was the perfect epitome of both, and thus the ultimate role model for human existence. As Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah would say, ‘The Messenger of Allah is the greatest measure. His character, life, and guidance are that by which all things are gauged. Whatever matches them is the Truth, and whatever goes against them is Falsehood.’

As for the Prophet ﷺ himself, he declared that: *“I was sent to perfect virtuous character”* (Al-Adab al-Mufrad, 273).

It should be noted that the Prophet’s ﷺ statement that he was sent to ‘perfect virtuous character’ implies that the internal and external virtues were always known by the wise individuals amongst the ancients, and such values simply needed perfecting. A brief glance at mankind’s past history emphatically affirms this.

## Manliness Across the Ages

In cultures across the globe and throughout the history of our species, from Ancient Greece to feudal Japan, from pre-Islamic Arabia to pre-Colonial America, men have always fulfilled the same role, following codes of conduct and championing the same values of duty and honour. ‘Manliness’ then is not a nebulous notion, or even one that is hard to pin down and define. Rather, the qualities and characteristics of manliness have been known and understood by individuals across all times, borders, and cultures. It is a universal concept rather than a fungible concept that is shaped by one’s temporal and spatial context. It is a set of

ideals and virtues that have been a code and way for men in all geographical settings and intervals. Though some cultures have emphasised certain virtues above others, the broad range of them are found everywhere, as we shall soon come to realise.

For the ancient Greeks, the ideal man was one who lived a life of eudaimonia, namely an existence in which one flourished by doing and living well. This was achieved through the practice of aretê, which translates to ‘excellence in virtue’. These cardinal virtues were four: manly courage (andreia), prudence or wisdom (phronesis), temperance (sophrosyne), and justice (dikaiosyne). Among these, andreia was the most important, for it was needed to counter faint-heartedness, laziness, and over-attachment to pleasure. It allowed a man to realise the full potential of his body, mind, and soul, that is, to fulfil his life’s purpose and create a legacy. For the Romans, the word for manliness was virtus, which is the root of the English word virtue; the latter can be traced back to the Latin word vir, which literally means ‘man’. Virtus at first primarily pertained to valour and martial courage, but later grew to encompass the other cardinal virtues.

In the ancient East, the Samurai lived by a similar code, which was later defined as bushido, the embodiment of refined manhood. At its heart were eight virtues: courage (yū), temperance (jisei), justice (gi), integrity (makoto), honour (meiyo), compassion (jin), loyalty (chu), and respect (rei). For the Samurai, the ultimate aim of all virtues was to live a life of constant preparation for death, such that one would be able to die with honour.

For the ancient Arabs, the epitome of properly manly behaviour lay in the compound virtue of al-murū’ah. The word itself literally means ‘manliness’ and ‘manly perfection’, but in the figurative sense it represented all qualities and virtues which the Arabs adored and sought within their menfolk. In the world of pre-Islamic Arabia, where war was a socioeconomic necessity and knighthood was not given but earned, it was al-murū’ah that was valued above everything else. This was displayed in the form of martial skill on the battlefield, poetic skill in the joust of wits between tribal versifiers, displays of unbound munificence when hosting, and staunch loyalty to familial and ancestral networks. Whoever excelled in these virtues of al-murū’ah would earn his place in the knightly ranks.

It was this latter concept of al-murū’ah which was prevalent during the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. It would later form the chivalric code of futuwah, which was perfected by his person and can be summarised by the ethical injunctions of the Qur’an and Sunnah. Indeed, the greatest of his Companions were those who excelled above others in this quality:

*It was asked, ‘O Allah’s Messenger, who is most worthy of respect amongst the people?’ He replied, ‘The most God-conscious amongst you.’ The Companions said, ‘It is not this that we ask about.’ Whereupon the Prophet ﷺ then said, ‘Then it is Yūsuf, the Apostle of Allah and the son of Allah’s Apostle, who was also the son of Allah’s Apostle, who was the son of Allah’s friend.’ They again said, ‘This is not what we are asking you about.’ He said, ‘Are you then asking me about the tribes of Arabia? Those who were the best of them in pre-Islamic days are the best of them in Islam, that is, when they gain an understanding of it.’ (Sahih Muslim 2378).*

Imam al-Nawawī explains this to mean that the



best of men are those who exemplified al-murū'ah and virtuous character in the Days of Ignorance and then embraced Islam and gained an understanding of it.

## Futuwwah

*“They were young men who believed in their Lord and We gave them more guidance.”* (Quran 18:13)

Futuwwah is taken from the route fatā, which literally means ‘young man’. The Persian Javānmardī code has the same meaning and was likely mutually influential in its codification of masculine virtue, with the title meaning ‘young manliness’. The fatā is the youth who is chivalrous, brave, inwardly and outwardly handsome, and the one who gives without care for himself – to the point that he would give his life if required. Its association with youthfulness hints toward the promise of the young man’s potential. Men are composed of mind, body, and soul, and futuwwah espouses the improvement of each of these elements, with a particular focus on inner character. The code emphasises complete reliance on Allah exclusively and the appreciation that all events happen through His Divine Will, holding oneself personally accountable, and fulfilling the rights of others.

*“Then, he turned all of them into pieces, except the largest of them, so that they may come back to it. They said, ‘Who has done this to our gods? He is one of the wrongdoers indeed.’ Some of them said, ‘We have heard a youth talking about them. He is called Ibrāhīm.”*

(Quran 21:58-60)

Imam Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī writes in al-Risālah that the fatā – namely the ideal Muslim man – is the one who breaks idols, as the Prophet Ibrāhīm did. He further adds that the idol within each man is his ego, which must be

broken. Thus, the man who goes against his desires is the chivalrous youth in truth. Hārith al-Muhāsibī says that futuwwah also entails the following precept: ‘To be just even when you have been treated unjustly.’

Futuwwah is an umbrella term for a chivalric code comprising several masculine virtues and traits. In this regard, one can mention the values of chivalry, honour, courage, temperance, generosity, altruism, service, hospitality, wisdom, and justice. Sahl ibn ‘Abdullāh perfectly defined futuwwah when he said, ‘Futuwwah is to follow the Sunnah.’

## Codifying Modern Masculine Virtues

Having firmly established the universal basis for the characteristics of masculinity and defined what it is, it should now be clear that masculinity is from the fiṭrah (primordial nature) of mankind, that is to say it is natural, intuitive, and intrinsic to being human. In light of these preceding facts, a question naturally arises, however: if the claim that the Prophet ﷺ is the Perfect Man is true, and the universal virtues of manliness and masculinity are from the fiṭrah, can this be proven through the Qur’an and Sunnah? The answer is a resounding yes.

This book has been compiled primarily to codify masculine virtues – as established in the blessed life of the noble Prophet ﷺ – for the modern Muslim man. This will be done by following the arbaʿīn structure found in the Hadith sciences, whereby a collection of forty Hadiths are carefully selected for highlighting a specific religious objective. The goal of this collection is to teach the men of today how to embody manly virtues by emulating the character, actions, and qualities of the most virtuous of men.

The book itself is divided into four sections, every one of them encompassing ten core Hadiths.

Each section is defined with its own subject matter based on the established *fiṭrah* mentioned in the preceding pages through the lens of *al-murū'ah* and *futuwwah*. In each section, related Quranic verses as well as further narrations will be brought under the heading of the main Hadith to shed further light on the topic discussed.

The first section will focus on internal virtues such as faith, education, good character, and morality. These are our spiritual and mental virtues. Internal betterment is essential, and true success in this life and the next can only be achieved through the perfection of these intangible qualities. What good is a house without strong foundations, or a tree without strong roots? What good is a man without strong values or faith? If a man is to stand at all, his base must first be made firm.

With a strong spiritual and mental foundation established, the second section will unpack the realm of personal virtues. These are qualities which address our physical selves and our place in the world, such as self-sufficiency, independence, and discipline. A man is to be relied upon and should not be reliant on others – for he places his trust on Allah alone. He is to be resilient, adaptable, and resilient, such that he can subsist without luxury, external aid, or approval.

Section three will build upon its predecessors and expand further outward, looking into interpersonal virtues that teach us how to optimally undertake interactions with other men, as well as with women and children, in our communities. Qualities such as leadership, brotherhood, sexuality, and communication are discussed here. Every person amongst us is, or will soon be, a leader in their own household, and

thus every man must know how to lead proactively. The nature of the world is such that not all men can be leaders beyond the walls of their homes, and thus every man must equally know how and when to follow orders. By extension, each of us must also know how to communicate in our speech, writing, and behaviour.

The final section will go beyond the interpersonal realm and enumerate the virtues that stress exercising awareness for matters from outside the safety of our communities and relationships. Here, we will look into the qualities most often associated with ‘manliness’, such as fitness, martial prowess, and courage. A man plans, tempers his body, and patiently anticipates challenging situations. A man does not shy away or hide, nor does he act rashly or without control. A man is prepared for anything, and ultimately, must be prepared for death and all that it entails.

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**40 HADITH ON MASCULINITY**



**HOW TO BE A GOOD MAN**

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**OPINION**  
**MICHELLE COTTLE**

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# Is the Cure to Male Loneliness Retaking Al-Andalus?

July 19, 2023





﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِآتٍ  
لَهُمْ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ  
وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ  
أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا ببيعكم الذي بايعتم به  
وذلك هو الفوز العظيم ﴾





**Indeed, Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allāh, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'ān. And who is truer to his covenant than Allāh? So rejoice in your transaction which you have made. And it is that which is the great attainment. (Quran 9:111)**



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DIDN'T FIGHT AND DIE  
SO YOU COULD BE  
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**>Darkest Syrian Man**

# Green Eggs



and  
Ham

and



Qadianis are  
Kuffar

By Dr. Seuss



# قائمة قراءة توصيات

## FALL EDITION

Some reading to keep you company as you begin to cozymaxx.

- **THE DWARF** by Par Lagerkvist

- **THE END OF THE BRONZE AGE** by Robert Drews

- **TRAVELING HOME** by Abdal Hakim Murad

- **THE MASTER & MARGARITA** by Mikhail Bulgakov

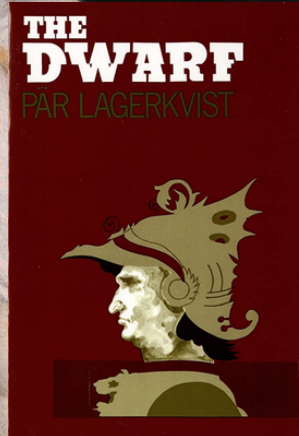






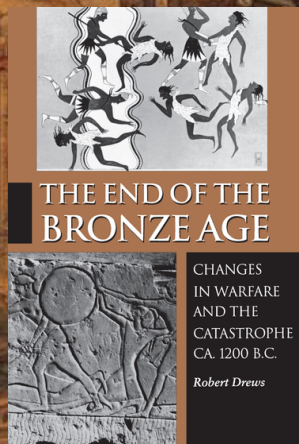
## **THE DWARF** by Par Lagerkvist

is the most philosophical novel by Lagerkvist. It tells the story of Piccolino, the court dwarf of an Italian prince in the Renaissance era. The ultimate case study on nihilism, self-loathing, misanthropy; but moreover an almost perfect, objective look at human hypocrisy.

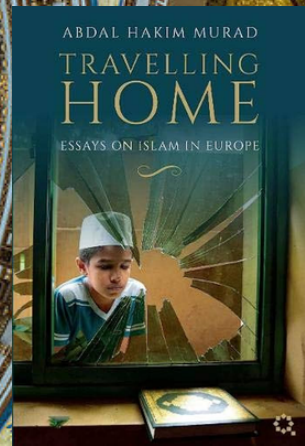


## **THE END OF THE BRONZE AGE** by Robert Drews

might be one of the best detailed explanations for the real causes for one of the greatest changes to warfare and societal organization in human history. The Bronze Age Collapse was, to most in the Mediterranean at the time, the closest thing to the end of the world - and Drews shows us how it was made possible by a sudden change in will from small groups of men.







**TRAVELLING HOME** by Abdal Hakim Murad is a collection of polemic essays by one of Europe's most prolific Muslim minds today. Murad manages to explore the contemporary topics that have plagued Muslims in the West for the past century. Topics ranging from Islamophobia, Modern Dawah, and European identity in reaction to the growth of Islam are discussed in detail.



**THE MASTER & MARGARITA** by Mikhail Bulgakov One day, a black magic practitioner named Woland arrives in the atheistic, Stalin-era Soviet Union looking to have some fun with the citizens of Moscow. Juxtaposed with this is the Christian rendition of the story of Jesus (AS) and Pontius Pilate. One of the most insightful, comical satires of communism and atheism from the 20th Century.





# PORTRAIT OF THE MODERN MUJAHID

WORDS: IBADISM

@IBADISMO



**The Messenger of Allah said: The most merciful of my Ummah towards my Ummah is Abu Bakr; the one who adheres most sternly to the religion of Allah is 'Umar; the most sincere of them in shyness and modesty is 'Uthman; the best judge is 'Ali bin Abu Talib; the best in reciting the Book of Allah is Ubayy bin Ka'b; the most knowledgeable of what is lawful and unlawful is Mu'adh bin Jabal; and the most knowledgeable of the rules of inheritance (Fara'id) is Zaid bin Thabit. And every nation has a trustworthy guardian, and the trustworthy guardian of this Ummah is Abu 'Ubaidah bin Jarrah."**  
**Sunan Ibn Majah 154**



**S**truggle is an intrinsic part of the human experience. Mankind's history is replete with tales of struggle by men against forces much greater than themselves. The man struggles against nature, society, and even other fellow men, overcoming near-impossible obstacles in his struggle to build civilization and worship the Higher, leaving a legacy of bravery and fortitude for future generations to remember him by and learn from. The question arises, what inspires man to struggle this way? What keeps him going in the face of death? The greatest and most exemplary of such men struggled in the name of their Lord. They fight not for personal gain, nor worldly renown, but for His approval and His alone.

*"We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from our Lord." But Allah will deliver them from the evil of that Day and will shed over them a Light of Beauty and (blissful) Joy. - Al-Insan 76:9-11*

Jihad, simply put, is 'struggle' in the name of Allah, and for Allah's pleasure. I am not writing

to give basic definitions and tell you what you already know such as the obvious importance of Jihad for the Muslim spirit. I'd like to go over the aspects of Jihad in today's typical man that have been lost to modernity and liberalism.

A *Mujahid* is a Man in the proper sense, with all the qualities of manliness and chivalry that people look up to and exhort. A *Mujahid* is an oppressor of the oppressors, a tyrant to the tyrants, a supporter and protector of the weak, a leader of people, taking responsibility for those under his command and care. For easy understanding, we can sum up the true *Mujahid* as embodying four of the twelve Jungian archetypes; the Warrior, the King, the Sage, and the Caregiver. Traditional Jihad in warfare was the method by which these admirable qualities arose and were expressed, perfected in many of our righteous predecessors, the *salaf*. They lived as embodiments of the constant struggle for self-improvement, discipline, and war against evil.

As the Warrior, a *Mujahid* is the embodiment of courage and competence. He does not shy away from evil but rushes to confront it. He is the hand by which evil is stopped, strict on those who advocate for kufr. He aims for mastery of his

domain, so that no one with ill will may overcome him or his flock. He is chivalrous and knows when and whom to fight, and why he fights, to liberate the innocent and the weak from oppression. A *Mujahid* in the role of the warrior is a self-actualized man, he does not need to present a fake persona of toughness, because he does not fight for fame or recognition. He does not succumb to the shadow in his psyche, lest he become a savage brute, but is magnanimous in victory. He guards and upholds the law of Allah. The Companions during the many *Ghazawat* against the Byzantines and Sassanids are prime examples of this.

*Ali reported: When the danger intensified and the people met each other in battle, we would seek protection by the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. None of us would be closer to the enemy than him. - Musnad Imam Ahmad 1347*

As King, the *Mujahid* is the embodiment of leadership, responsibility, and justice. He is the servant of the people and leads them to greatness and cultivation, he takes responsibility for their care and wellbeing. He is a shepherd, guiding his people and ruling according to the Shariah, implementing and enforcing it as best he is able. He is the Khalifah of Allah on Earth, here to establish the Hukm of Allah and ensure that Islam reigns supreme in every aspect of his community. He is the judge, dispensing justice for those wronged, and punishing those who wrong others and spread fitnah in the land. The four Righteous Caliphs are the most apt examples of these qualities, each fulfilling the greatest aspects of the King in their times, though each

was faced with different political challenges.

*Abdullah ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible for it. No doubt, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock."*

*Sahih al-Bukhari 7138, Sahih Muslim 1829*

As Sage, the *Mujahid* is the embodiment of wisdom and intelligence. He is an enemy to *Jahiliyah*, ignorance, wiping both it and lowly superstition where it slows and distracts the minds of the many. He seeks to attain knowledge and truth and spread it to those who are not knowledgeable. He is the mentor people look up to for advice and respect and raises the next generation through his students.

*Yahya ibn 'Abbad reported: Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "Verily, the jurist is truly one of understanding, who never lets people despair of the mercy of Allah, who never grants them a concession to disobey Allah, who never lets them feel secure from the punishment of Allah, and who never abandons the Quran seeking anything else. Verily, there is no good in worship without knowledge, nor in knowledge without understanding, nor in recitation without reflection."*

*Sunan al-Darimi 305*

As a Caregiver, the *Mujahid* embodies compassion, generosity, and chivalry. He is a *Qanwam*, he protects others, helps them, supports them, and



cares for them. To help others in his flock achieve greatness along with him is his goal, and to achieve the satisfaction and pleasure of Allah is his motivation. He is chivalrous and magnanimous, kind and soft-hearted with the believers.

*Abdullah ibn Mughaffal reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, Allah is gentle and He loves gentleness. He gives for it what is not given for harshness."*

*Sunan Abi Dawūd*

None of these qualities are mutually exclusive. The Holy Prophet PBUH is proof that a man can be many things at once; a warrior, ruler, scholar, statesman, diplomat, judge, father, husband, and mentor, without compromising on any one aspect of life. Every man should know the Seerah by heart to better understand how he can also emulate the best of all Creation PBUH.

Now, to engage in this jihad, we must account for our abilities and circumstances, especially since our enemies are so much greater in strength than us. How do we reverse the situation, at a collective and individual level? There has always been opposition to the efforts of establishing a collective Islamic identity and presence. At an individual level, though not everyone has the means or freedom to engage in *jihad bil saif*, every man must recognize the qualities within himself that can aid him in his struggle. He must figure out how to implement those qualities within his life to make a positive change within himself and later on his brotherhood of like-minded men.

Hence, I propose two other alternatives that

are more immediately actionable. *Jihad bil lisaan* and *Jihad bil maal*. Utilizing the freedom of speech afforded to us by Allah through different outlets, as ridiculous as that so-called "right" is in modernity, and urging to speak out against evil and ridicule it. For most, there's nothing stopping us from being vocal about our beliefs and refuting kuffar and heretics, dispelling propaganda, and contributing to Da'wah. This goes further than just arguing in the QTs or comments. In the information age, media control and propaganda rank far higher in the long term than the raw power of physical force by regimes. Why can there not be alternative media that does this for us, and advocates the Islamic perspective in persuasive ways? All that is required is enough effort and creativity to counter globohomo's effort to subvert Islam and/or Hindu bot farms that try to peddle nonsensical fake information about our religion and culture.

*Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Let not fear of the people stop one of you from speaking the truth, if he knows it."*

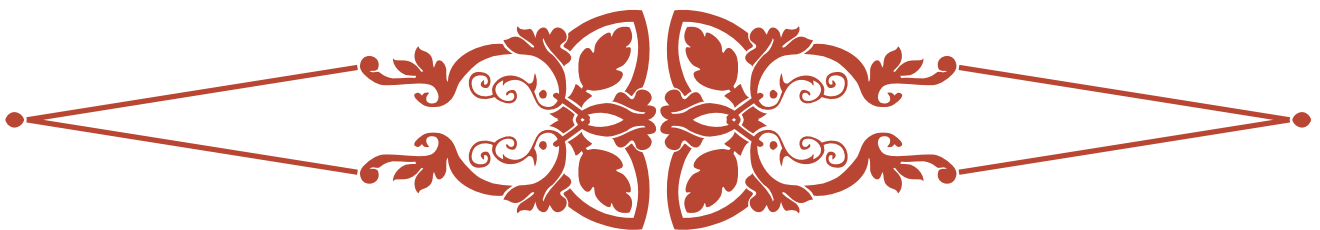
*Source: Musnad Imam Ahmad 11869*

We live in a world where economic might is often more important than military might, and entire wars are waged economically everyday. This is where *jihad bil maal* comes in. It can be your Jihad simply by choosing more carefully where you spend and earn your money. There are many wealthy Muslims in the world, if there were more possibilities and incentives to get them to support common goals that defend and protect Muslims at a cultural and legal level, what could stop them? In this regard, there is a lot we could learn from the Jews for example. To their own kind, they are

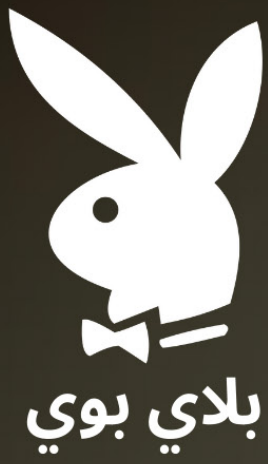
supportive and spare no expense helping each other. Imagine if the Rothschilds were Muslim and spent their wealth in the service of Islam and Muslims, instead of in the service of Satan. There are numerous Muslims who need to have the mindset to fulfill that role and attain Paradise through their wealth like Uthman RA, one of the wealthiest companions who knew how best to spend it.

It is essential that the proactive nature of Jihad is revitalized to nurture a sense of communal identity and give direction, meaning, and purpose to collective Muslim efforts. The qualities that Jihad produces can once again be revived and inculcated in the men of today.

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# THE CREED OF THE MOUNTAINS

An excerpt from the Muslim war novel by  
FERDAWS ASHRATI

I roll over and grab my Kalashnikov. It is the only true material belonging I have other than the clothing on my back. We make our way through the other men rushing down the mountainside. I keep an eye out for Samir, whose skinny frame makes shooting a gun difficult and young age leaves him inexperienced and undisciplined in battle.

Husayn Jaan and I get closer to the firefight in the valley. I notice the violence escalating. The valley floor looks bright as day. I can see the eyes of my enemies firing at me due to the sheer amount of gunfire. Years of fighting in these mountains taught me how to stay alive. We move closer to the valley floor. I angle off to the right and crouch behind a boulder next to a tree. Husayn Jaan is one step behind me. Moving any closer is certain death. Our position is a safe

distance away and allows us to mount a counter offensive without risking our lives. I can hear Husayn Jaan saying his prayers behind me in between shrieks and gunfire. Other men of our Mujahedeen ranks attempt to push forward on the Soviets holding the valley floor. I fire my Kalashnikov to give cover fire. I yell for them to stop advancing and hold their positions. They either don't hear me, or they aren't listening. A Soviet machine gun tears right through, dropping them in rhythm like dominoes. Death is nothing new to us. They don't call us the ghosts of the mountain for nothing.

We hold our position and provide cover fire for another hour or so. When the chaos subsides and the coast seems clear, we gather the dead bodies. These brave young men are martyrs. The oldest looks no older than twenty-two or twenty-three



"We carry their bodies back to camp where we bury them as they died: in their bloody uniform. This is custom within Islam; a symbol showing the honor and sacrifice of the martyrs in the next life for the greater good. Their sacrifice earns them glory and rank amongst the most virtuous people."



years of age. They are promised Heaven, but all I can think of are their mothers who still remain on this Earth. We carry their bodies back to camp where we bury them as they died: in their bloody uniform. This is custom within Islam; a symbol showing the honor and sacrifice of the martyrs in the next life for the greater good. Their sacrifice earns them glory and rank amongst the most virtuous people.

I am only twenty-seven, but I feel generations older than most of these men. I have been fighting with the Mujahedeen against the communist Soviets for a few years now. War was not my choice though. Before this I had a regular job working at a bank in a town in Ghazni. My uncle is a prominent man in our town with a lot of political sway. Where we come from, men like my uncle are the leaders of the family. They make decisions for the rest of us and we follow

accordingly. He approached me one day and told me I have a duty to my country and my people. He told me I have to pick up arms and fight the oppressors. So I did. I have two brothers and four sisters. My youngest brother has been sickly since he was a child, so he is unable to fight in the war. My older brother doesn't have to fight. He studied in Kuwait and is a well-respected individual in the community. He was sent to Pakistan while I was sent into the mountains.

The next morning, we rise early for the morning prayers. Umar and Samir approach us. I can tell by Umar's distant demeanor that he is irritated with Samir's childlike nature. Umar is a stoic man. Little is known about his background because he doesn't speak about himself. We do know he comes from a village in Ghazni and is not even thirty years old. Umar and Samir just picked fruit off some trees nearby, but most of the fruit is gone by the time they




reach us. Samir frantically apologizes for not saving me any fruit to eat. I tell him I'm not hungry and leave to get some work done before heading out to my post.

The mountainside feels like a frying pan today. The scorching sun abuses all at this mountain pass, as if we are lying directly underneath its relentless rays. Husayn Jaan once said that if the mountains feel like this for us—the people of the land—then it must be absolute torture for the Soviets who are not from here. This thought brought me comfort...even our motherland joined in on the warfront. Husayn Jaan is useful in this way. He uses his intellect to cheer us up or see something good in a bad situation. He can speak more languages than I can name, including Russian. Some of the men say he can speak Russian better than the Russians themselves. Husayn Jaan and I usually man the RPG post together. He has a good eye and easily understands strategy. His knowledge of different tongues is useful on the radio, while I understand weapons and war.

The strategy is consistent. Soviet tanks and cargo need to move through a windy pass to get their supplies into Kabul so they can continue their atrocities on our women and our people. Our job is to slaughter the Soviets at that pass. Tanks typically hold the front and rear of Soviet caravans. Our first goal is to hit the leading tank with an RPG to prohibit its movement. Next we attack the tank at the rear with another RPG, effectively trapping the Soviets in place and preventing them from retreating. With the enemy disoriented and cornered, Afghan men emerge from every crack and crevice of the mountains, swiftly descending upon the Soviets from above the pass. Umar leads these men. He

is a crafty fighter when it comes to guerilla warfare.

Some days are filled with exhausting battles. Other days are filled with chit chat and Samir running us down chai from camp. We are not a big guerilla unit like those in the North or in the South at the border of Pakistan. It is harder for us to get supplies and we often fight with inferior weaponry. These challenges are nothing new to any of us. The men I work with have had rough lives and experienced hardships far before entering these mountains. These men come from poor homes and most of us are unwed with no children. We have a duty to our women and our God though. We all understand this clearly. 

**Ferdaws Ashrati is an author and martial artist. If you're interested in *The Creed of the Mountains*, it's available now on Amazon.**

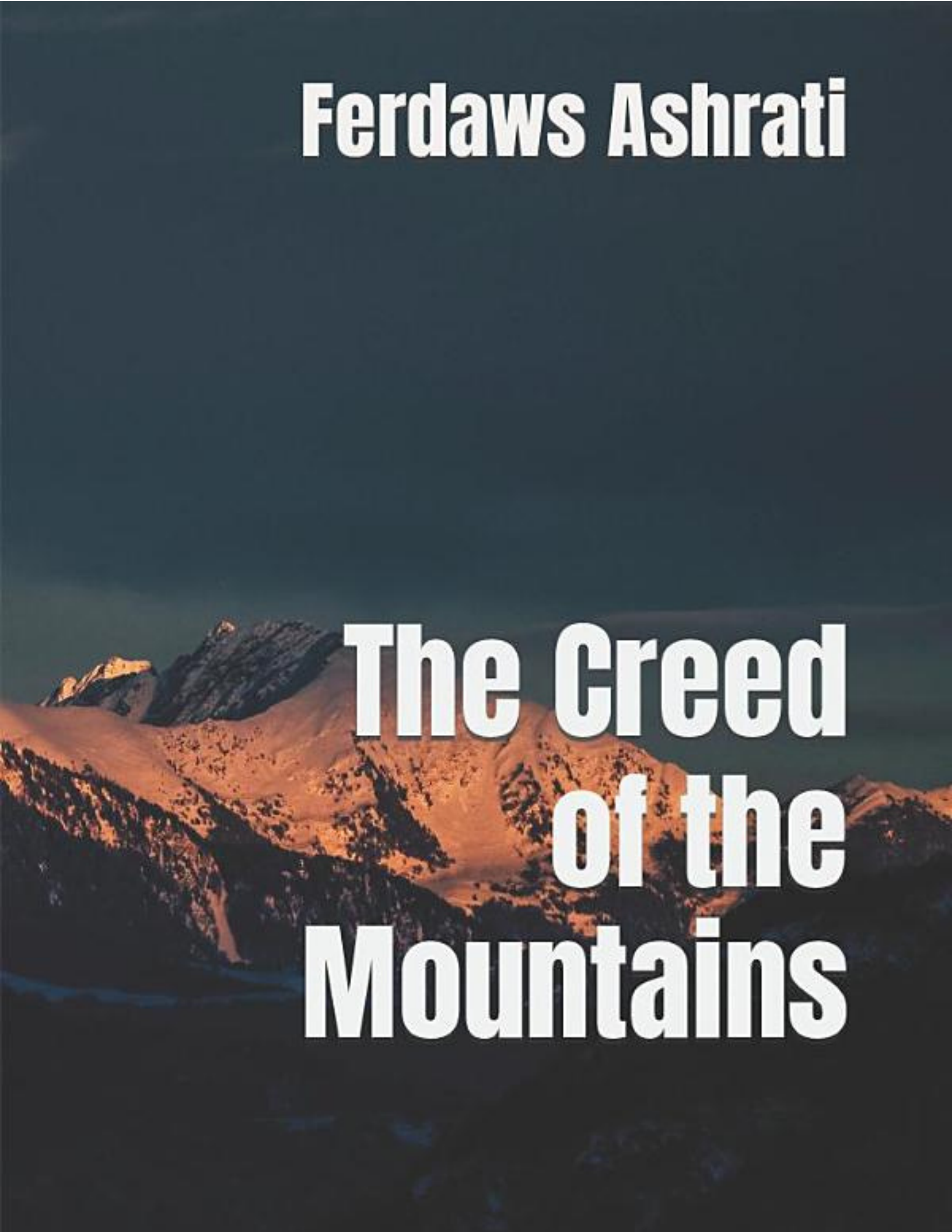
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**Abu Malik al-Ash'ari reported: The  
Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:  
"Cleanliness is half of faith"  
(Muslim, 432)**







# SILENT MINBARS

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**O**ur current Muslim diaspora has monumental challenges barring the development of communal success, from community leaders making odd statements of neutrality towards obvious haram, to imams being disempowered from preventing tangible harms in their communities. As Muslims in the West, we are not effectively stopping these negative trends and are not establishing practical, effective solutions to reverse them in our local masjid. Masjid administrators, with a wide range of qualifications and responsibilities, take to our minbars to guide and teach the community through khutbahs and classes, yet there are certain matters that escape the minbar. What are those matters and what challenges are faced by those who bear this responsibility? What can be done to alleviate them?

According to a 2020 ISPU report, we can estimate there are about 3000 masjids in North America, with 4+ million Muslims from another Pew report. Rounding up to an average of 1400 people per masjid, not accounting for actual masjid sizes, we get a ballpark scope of responsibility for every community leader. Assuming each masjid has a head imam leading prayers and tasked with general guidance for community members ranging from marriage to funeral services, not accounting for non-orthodox sub-groups that conflate these numbers to some degree, which nets us a rough figure of 3000 Imams covering North America. That's each with an average scope of responsibility of over 1400 Muslims across North America who are primarily navigating communal issues. The ISPU report also found congregants identify the Imam to be the

“leader” of the masjid (fulfilling the bulk of responsibilities) only about a third of the time, while non-imam administration(s) are seen as the leader(s) of the masjid 70% of the time.

Local Imams and/or administrators are tasked with, and many times overwhelmed by, dealing with community needs on the ground, for individuals, from family to family, for matters relating to marital discord, business dilemmas, youth challenges, along with teaching and general responsibilities — all while on lower middle-class salaries. Local-level imams rarely deal with intra-communal issues or macroscale matters that affect their province/state, let alone any regional or national responsibilities.

### **Disorientation**

Macro-level issues, while affecting communities on a micro-scale, without a central authority to affect how to navigate problems, imams will usually be out of sync on how to handle various matters. For this reason, “councils” of jurists have been formed across the West, that function to pass fatwas on matters of family and finances, etc. Individually, each imam being on the front line of fitna in each of their respective communities, they do not necessarily have the training to deal with the underlying problems and flaws of thought that drive it. Scholars trained in classical Islamic jurisprudence often lack the academic training to navigate issues pertaining to liberalism, feminism, secularism, and many other isms plaguing the Muslim zeitgeist. These ideas spreading among young Muslims are further exacerbated by the





internet, while an Imam, despite being the most equipped to make guiding moral decisions, may not be adept in realizing the full depth of a question a troubled youth may have.

### **Echo Chambers**

In non-Muslim regions, where customs and laws challenge the Muslim lifestyle, Muslim communities with wide arrays of scholarly differences of opinion find themselves surrounded by the mires of factionalism. To whatever degree factionalism persists in communities, there is a distortion of the full spectrum of debate which drowns out valid views—increasingly making normative, orthodox, and correct opinions seem contrarian or taboo. Such factionalism persists while surrounded by a liberal atmosphere of political correctness. The West persistently dictates normative orthodox Sunni positions to be criminal, criticized as “Islamist,” some level of offensive, or at the very least against the grain.

Liberalizing Muslim interests leverages these circumstances to put blinders on community leaders and propel unislamic narratives and standards. An example is academic congregants, often not very committed to Islamic mandates and lifestyles themselves, pressure Masjids to accept the unislamic liberal narratives regarding gender/sexuality, preventing orthodox Muslim positions against “LGBT”

interests. This dynamic effectively makes for environments in masjid to become like silos with warped perspectives where only the liberal voices are politically correct and normative orthodox opinions are ostracized as not fitting the apparent political needs of a community. A masjid loses its sanctuary, where the curious and disheartened among those interested in Islam would come to find answers for how to fix it, but instead by trialed with liberal misguidance.

### **Financial risk**

The work aspects of community leadership as an imam are time intensive and occupy them around the clock. Typical salaries average well under 100k for almost all Imams, the position in and of itself is replaceable in general skills and duties, and it’s typically the singular source of income for them. This creates a massive risk for maintaining orthodox positions in a fast-liberalizing social masjid environment. There are many public incidents of imams that have been fired from their positions, much to the dismay of their families, for upholding Islamic standards.

Take for instance the Imam who speaks against the prohibition of selling alcohol or dealing in usury during the Friday sermon, which then upsets congregants who are big donors to the masjid and are effectively paying the Imam’s salary—a clear conflict of interest. As some wealthy community members conflict against these pertinent sermons, this often leads to the termination of an upright imam, who may not otherwise have any different area of expertise to rebound towards financially. As masjid admins and board members have this conflict of interest between their wealthy donors and community guidance, it’s often considered “bad for business,” in order to keep their masjid well-funded.



This conflict is further seen in the phenomenon of ‘fatwa-shopping,’ or seeking rulings that would permit one to engage in activities normatively impermissible or doubtful. Fatwa shopping is so pervasive that it creates a conflict of interest with imams who are entirely financially dependent on congregations—meaning the larger the congregation, the better off an imam is. This leads to further enabling fatawa and community policies that are liberally bent to appeal to the desires of the Muslims surrounded by social decadence. Another financial conflict is in banks refusing service to masjids inexplicably. There are reports of many masjids losing access to necessary services at banks for unexplained reasons. Many masjids will receive “notices” from local law enforcement authorities to not platform one speaker or other, all without any legal public explanation, that speculatively coincide with these banking issues.

**Censorship, Quietism & Over-precaution**

Masjid administrators will seek to censor certain pertinent topics from the minbar that pose a conflict of interest with administrators and are abandoned as ‘unimportant’ or ‘dangerous’ without explanation. Topics relating to interest, alcohol, proper dress, fornication, or others can at times be prevented from being spoken about varying from mosque to mosque. One example is the silence on proper dress, the lack of which can be observed in the trend of Muslim women publicly wearing increasingly attractive (tights, etc.) clothing under the guise of pseudo-modesty. Fear of discussing these matters by Imams leads to omittance of doctrinal information, or opting out from crucial questions entirely. Risking future generations, this can (and often does) lead youths to end up adopting

narratives from biased or nefarious sources and result in having a poor understanding of matters with possible influences from liberalism, feminism, or Kharijism.

Lack of discussion leaves a vacuum of information that fills with conflicting or deviant misguidance. Though a masjid may enable political speech concerning Palestine or rarely even against American foreign policy (even though Citizens have that right), Muslims overall experience far fewer discussions relating to a correct understanding of conflicts happening in Muslim countries — often leaving Kharijite narratives to surreptitiously float around. Another muted topic is speaking out against the “LGBT” political projects in the past decade. This vacuum has enabled open calls for non-action (even by scholars) in opportunities to vote against the movement for the legalization of “same-sex marriage.” Proponents of that now reversed community trend, previously cited protecting the institution of marriage as a whole for Muslims, where there was never any real verifiable bill, article, or political rhetoric attacking the normative institution of marriage in the first place.

### **Cultural Cohesion**

Muslim leadership often prioritizes social and ethnic cultural cohesion over establishing orthodox standards for the community that remain over time, with a willingness to lose appeal in favor of retaining those standards. The inter and intra-communal culture dictates the tone, word choice, plans, and projects that the community undertakes. While the inter-communal cultural differences are glaring, the intra-communal mores are where this bias for cohesion affects community administration and youths alike. A congregation’s youth have little other



culture to adopt except that of their family, friends, and Western culture—the least pervasive being family. Youths often are easy prey to liberal surroundings which leads youths to question Islamic ordinances related to Hijab, Marriage, and so forth. Some go so far as to leave Islam altogether in favor of their surrounding liberté. Ultimately, in the efforts for cohesion, an erosion of Islamic values is adversely promoted for many Muslim communities in North America, furthering the demand on Imams.

### **Ostracism**

Speaking out against negative trends within communities has led to boycotting of other Muslims. As the most pronounced liberalizing voices curb Muslim speech within the limits of Western political correctness, the ones who do speak out are ostracized, boycotted, uninvited from community events and activities, and not allowed to voice their opinions (even if those “opinions” or grounded in orthodoxy and orthopraxy). The silo effect that overtakes these masjids stops just short of prohibiting masjid attendance, but still effectively boycotts those who call for adherence to orthodox teachings that counter liberal narratives. Matters relating to free-mixing, music, hijab, gender roles, and many others — are all challenged by orthodox Ahlul-Sunnah teachings. Liberal practices can be set and even enforced as the norm in a masjid environment to purvey “enablement” for youths to attend masjids. It becomes paradoxical that if one were to forbid evils and vocalize against certain haram matters, they may ostracize those hesitant congregants who would otherwise benefit from the masjid. Oftentimes, such concerned callers to sunnah are labeled in heavy

terms with unfounded accusations of some form of extremism.

### **INSIGHTS & RESPONSES**

Considering that about 75% of North American masjid leadership is considered to be in the hands of boards of directors and executive committees, the rift between imams and admins on following normative Islamic guidelines is necessary to examine further. The bulk of masjid decision makers are not Islamically specialized—as masjid administrators and coalitions set shura structures to navigate issues, the ultimate regulation is not necessarily subject to a prioritizing Islamic standard assessed by a qualified and unbiased imam, but 3 quarters of the time it is to the non-Islamically specialized admins. Imams cede control of the administration due to financial, political, and social risks. A solution may be to organize congregant groups that work to engage community admins to correct social and family problems a community is facing, through weekly town-hall-like shuras. However, the greater challenge of masjid coalitions has been forming over the past decade, where coalition head administrators over a region oversee and enforce apparent liberalizing standards. Further study is required to examine these coalitions.

The erosive elements in the rise of counter-Islamic values in Muslim communities have risen dramatically over the past two decades. Given all these trends of openly accepting counter-Islamic values, it is important for a central orthodox/orthopraxic policy to be instituted throughout North American masjids to be positioned as a standard. Congregants should work to encourage adherence to Sunnah in their communities. It is of the utmost importance to

prevent and reclaim communities from being controlled by individuals who do not maintain the standard.

“People pleasing” is a potent poison in a society when having Sunnah-oriented attitudes is considered against the grain. One might assume there is no way devout Muslims would forget the original priority to please Allah in the first place. The feeling of disempowerment is something Muslims commonly feel in an era of diaspora, and it pervasively affects much of our community's decision-making, socio-political foresight, and pedagogical standards. However, to affect these notions of defeatism, we must remember, with actual *yaqeen*, that we have Allah! These seemingly insurmountable challenges are not what they seem, and by the will of Allah, we can find solutions with great ease. The same pure sincerity of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) that brought Islam far and wide across the world, can surely overcome the *fitan* that we face today. It's crucial for us to see the big picture, and never lose our confidence in resolution from Allah.

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