



# AWWAM

ISSUE THREE

DEC 2023





**THIS MAGAZINE IS NOT  
IN REAL LIFE. WE AT Q  
ADVOCATE FOR OUR R  
LAW OR BECOME A  
EVERYTHING DESCRIBE  
FOR HISTORICAL OR A  
OR OTHERWISE MEA  
MINEC**



**NOT A CALL TO ACTIONS  
AWWAM WILL NEVER  
LEADERS TO BREAK THE  
PUBLIC NUISANCE.  
D IN OUR MAGAZINE IS  
ACADEMIC PURPOSES,  
ANT TO BE DONE IN  
CRAFT.**







**A special kind of darkness this winter befalls the Ummah, and we all feel it's harsh sting. A letter from our editor welcoming you to the QAWWAM Winter issue:**



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Needless to say, this past period since the last issue has shocked many of us. From October 7th onward, we have found ourselves in a saga that feels like the immediate undoing of all the work we thought would bear fruit eventually when it came to our presence in non-Muslim, foreign lands - and events that many think vindicates them as predictors of a foolish path and mistakes Muslims have made along the way in this endeavor.

I must say, I'm quite torn myself on the issue. Some say that packing up and leaving is the easy thing to do, while those who expound on the virtues of hijrah insist it's the most difficult thing for those too attached to the material life of the *dunya*. Many say that we must not allow ourselves to be beaten away like cowards from the positions we sought to in these lands, whilst others insist it's a lost cause and there's nothing to be gained. This is *the* one issue I can think of where both sides have compelling arguments. Where I land myself? I don't know. But what I do know is that even if we feel wounded by the demoralization campaigns waged against us, especially in the form of the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Gaza being rubbed it in our faces, now isn't the time to give up. There never really is a time for that - only a time to shift strategies, and now I frankly don't think it's now.

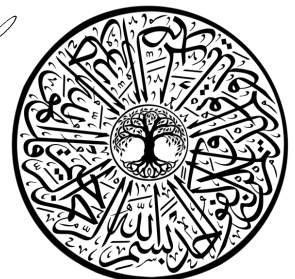
If there's one thing I disagree wholeheartedly with the Hijrah bros about, it's the idea of some that what we've achieved here has been trivial. When I look at the multitudes of brothers of various origins I know as friends who accepted

Islam and wouldn't have had they not been exposed to us and the Message, I genuinely feel the wisdom and purpose of us being here, despite the spiritual onslaught we go through daily.

As our noblest Prophet ﷺ said, even if we were to witness the end of the world starting, we still must kneel and plant the sapling in our hands. So what of us who are yet to plant our saplings in these tumultuous times, who have genuine, Islamically inspired visions for how to spread good in our communities beyond our lifespans? I still believe it's worth fighting for. The risk is great, but whether it's worth taking is up to you, and your own courage and strategy.

This issue's theme is obvious. Just as the last issue's theme was that of the contemplative warrior, now we take a look at the warrior in action, in a variety of facets of this hellish life we're exposed to. Many great posters have written well-researched articles for your pleasure, such as ERRANTE, ECO-EL HOLLANDI, DIMASHQI, IBN MAGHREB, and so much more. I got the chance to have a great interview with Imam TOM FACCHINE, and the result brings up some things you might disagree with. I'm sure you will all yell to me about it. Enjoy!

Abdullah Youssef







# AWWAM

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## **MAMLUK CORNER - BAYBARS 19**

A new series from EL ERRANTE, a brother who will now be regularly sharing with us untranslated anecdotes and stories from the lives of the great Mamluk Sultans, starting with the Sultan Al-Zahir Baybars.

## **BEYOND MODERNITY: PART 1 24**

ECO EL-HOLLANDI, in this first of a three-part essay series, goes over the mystified notion of a battle between “the Islamic East” and the West, providing a different perspective more in line with our lost tradition.

## **THE SHEHU 35**

In this FIRASAH feature, we take a brief look in the life of the first Sokoto Caliph.

## **BOOK REVIEW: BLOOD OF THE LEVANT 40**

WAQAR, an enthusiastic book reader, tells us his thoughts on the Editor’s novel, Blood of the Levant. The Editor would like you to believe that he was going to publish this review whether it came in his favor or not.

## **NOTES ON PROPAGANDA 47**

The always-wise IBN MAGHREB contributes with a controversial proposition regarding the typical Muslim’s attitude towards the abominable Leviathan.

## **DEEP DIVE WITH IMAM TOM FACCHINE 55**

ABDULLAH YOUSEF is joined by IMAM TOM, as the two go over recent events in Palestine, the political consequences for those of us in the West, and some clarification of terms in the haystack of the messy debates that come from it.

## **BLOOD OF THE LEVANT - EXCERPT 67**

Your editor provides you with an excerpt of the aforementioned novel. A Warrior just wants to pray in peace.



## **THE SPIRITUAL DUTY OF PHYSICAL FITNESS 78**

Dovetailing off our first fitness feature, returning contributor FERDAWS ASHRATI goes over the Islamic responsibilities of knowing your way around weights and a good fight.

## **JIHAD AND AL-SHAM 87**

One of our space's most prolific posters on Islamic matters related to the Levant, DIMASHQI tells us, from the sources themselves, the martial virtues of *Ablul-Sham*, who in the past decade have been bearing the brunt of the abuse from tyrants.

## **IHSAN IN ENTERTAINMENT 93**

WESAM AL-DAHER exhorts the typical Muslim to seek excellence - not just in his labor, but in his leisure as well.

## **IN THE HEART OF THE STORM: DAWAH ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES 101**

DAVID WILLIAMSON, a Muslim college student and convert, gives insight into the untapped potential of inviting the seemingly degenerate, lost generation to Islam.



T H E M A D  
**MAMLUKS**  
— — — — —  
P O D C A S T





# QAWWAM OF THE YEAR



## HONORABLE MENTIONS

Abu Obeida

Refaat al-Areer

Wa'el Dahdouh

Mo'taz Azaiza

KHALED NABHAN



**W**hen putting together this issue, as is usually the case, a lot of thought went into the writing about the *qawwamun* of old: the sultans, the caliphs, the generals, emirs, and ulama who stood as unbreakable pillars to ensure our faith and tradition was passed on to their successors no matter the cost. At QAWWAM, we appreciate and admire the men who do nothing halfway, and persist in spite of the pain and suffering that comes with their fight. As Allah says in His Book:

*“We said: “Descend all of you [to earth]! Then when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows it, there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve.” (2:38)*

Yet, we realized we take for granted so often those sultans of the spirit who exist around us now, in the flesh who come out of nowhere, and despite the destruction they suffer rise up to help the believers around them, acting as the caring patriarch and shepherd where few are to be found. Khaled Nabhan, after losing his grandchildren in the war on Gaza, refused to resign himself and is actively seen exemplifying just that.

His story is just one of countless others, and here we believe in the divine wisdom behind his story being given fame from between the rubble - to show us what real spiritual persistence looks like in the face of unimaginable loss.

We pray for Allah’s mercy and safety for Khaled, his family, and all of Gaza. 🕌

# ***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***





# خَمْسَ فِتَوَى

فِي مَرْتَبَةِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ وَفِي التَّشْيِيعِ

## IBN TAYMIYYA ON 'ALĪ & SHI'ISM FIVE SELECT FATWAS

AUTHOR:  
AḤMED IBN 'ABDILḤALĪM  
IBN TAYMIYYA

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY:  
ABDULLAH AL-RABBAT











# Hierarchy & Freedom



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

**Hasan Spiker**



**Abu Maisarah narrated from 'Aishah that they had slaughtered a sheep, so the Prophet (ﷺ) said:**

**"What remains of it?" She said: "Nothing remains of it except its shoulder." He said: "All of it remains except its shoulder."**

**At-Tirmidhi 2470**







**GREEN  
SCARE**





**Salafis  
for Top G**



# MAMLUK CORNER

A New Series by  
[@elerrantenomad](#)





# EL-MELIK AL-ZAHIR

## BAYBARS AL-BUNDUKDARI

Amidst the Eurasian Steppe where the Kipchak Turks roamed, a child was born whose fate would change the course of history – starting off as a captive of the Mongols who slaughtered his family, taken to a foreign land, and eventually ruling it as Sultan. The legendary Sultan Baybars, belonging to the Borçoğlu (Borçalı) tribe of the Kipchak was tall, with a strong voice, blue eyes, and a small mole in one of his eyes. His name meant "Lion Lord," and for this reason, hence the image of the lion on his banners.

Baybars was completely detached from indulgence in leisure, debauchery, and greed for money. He spent his free time engaging in military games like *çevgen*, archery, and hunting. He was particularly fond of *çevgen*, playing it twice a week when in Cairo and once a week in Damascus. By frequently dividing his soldiers into groups for mock battles, Baybars kept them disciplined and well-trained even during peacetime, avoiding laxity and laziness.

Sources note that Baybars often traveled and inspected his country in disguise, but there is no record of him indulging in pleasure or luxury. For instance during his campaign in Anatolia, when the Seljuk dignitaries in Kayseri, trying to entertain him according to their customs brought musicians and dancers, Baybars, greatly angered, dismissed the dancers, saying, "I did not come here for entertainment. This is not a place for amusement. Go entertain someone else." As a devout Muslim, Baybars, despite bringing significant revenue to the state treasury, banned the sale of alcoholic beverages and closed down places of debauchery. He also imprisoned prostitutes unless they found husbands, thereby attempting to curb prostitution.

He was an innovative thinker and excellent statesman, which gets overlooked due to his military victories and bravery which he was far more famous for. During Baybars' reign, one of his significant achievements was the innovations he implemented in the postal system. At the time, the existing transportation network within the Mamluk borders needed an overhaul due to its importance for military logistics. It was essential for the Sultan to receive news as quickly as possible. To establish a permanent postal system, Baybars devoted all his efforts. He first repaired the transportation network across the Mamluk State by setting up postal stations at strategic distances. Thanks to these stations, the travel time between Damascus and Cairo was reduced to four days. These stations, which even had small markets selling various goods, always had horses ready for the postal couriers' use. These horses were only given to couriers on special orders. The couriers wore distinctive yellow silk neckbands that were easily visible. These officials were reserved for the state's special affairs and were ordered to maintain strict confidentiality. Baybars, through this well-funded system, could receive immediate news of events in the farthest reaches of his domain and act accordingly.





Another institution established by Baybars as part of his postal system was an efficiently functioning intelligence network. Specially trained spies were tasked with gathering information about the activities of enemy states as well as conspiracies against the Sultan within his own domain, and they relayed this information directly to Baybars. To prevent any misuse of power and to maintain control, Baybars established a secondary network of spies to oversee the first group. This allowed him to keep everyone, from the highest-ranking officials to the shepherds in the most remote villages, under surveillance.

One of the aspects Baybars valued most in his state administration was secrecy. He always kept his actions and plans confidential, revealing them to no one before the appropriate time. On one occasion, when Baybars decided to perform the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca without informing anyone, he did not hesitate to punish an officer who learned of this plan and offered to accompany him, going so far as to have the officer's tongue cut out for this breach of secrecy.

The value Baybars placed on knowledge and the effort he showed in this regard became apparent in his early years of rule. He ordered the improvement of many Mamluk cities and repaired and fortified castles like Bire and Safed, which would later be used as important bases. In 660 A.H./1262 A.D., he ordered the construction of a madrasa known as *Medresai-Saidiyye*. A year later, he commanded the building of another in his name. With keen interest and attention, he ensured the construction was completed in a year. Baybars also appointed judges and teachers from the Hanbali school to these madrasas, which weren't as prevalent in the region, attempting to prevent potential sectarian conflicts between the *madahib*.

In our upcoming series, we will continue to delve into the fascinating life and legacy of Baybars - much of it untranslated. Stay tuned as we explore further the intriguing world of Baybars, revealing more about his achievements, challenges, and the era he so profoundly influenced. /

#### End Notes:

1. Ibn Shaddad, Siret, page 48.
2. Ibn Shaddad, same reference, page 64.
3. Gaston Wiet, L'Egypte Arabe, page 428.
4. Al-Maqrizi, al-Suluk, Volume I, page 637.
5. Al-Kalkashandi, Subh al-A'sha, Volume XIV, page 156.
6. Al-Maqrizi, same reference, page 578.
7. Ibn Abd al-Zahir, Siret, page 243; Ibn Tanrıberdi, al-Nujum, Volume IX, page 94. Al-Maqrizi, same reference, page 637.
8. Ibn Tanrıberdi, same reference, page 94; J. Deguignes interprets the meaning of the name Baybars as "ruler in the Mongol language," a bit of a stretch. "History of the Huns, Turks, Mongols, and Other Tatar Tribes" (Trc. H. Cehit) Istanbul 1924, Volume V, page 214.
9. Al-Kalkashandi, Subh al-A'sha, Volume XIV, page 155.

El Errante posts on X  
@elerrantenomad



A warrior in a brown hooded cloak and armor, holding a sword, stands in a desert landscape. The background is a warm, orange-toned sky with a large, glowing sun or moon. The warrior is the central figure, looking towards the viewer.

**Did  
you  
know?**

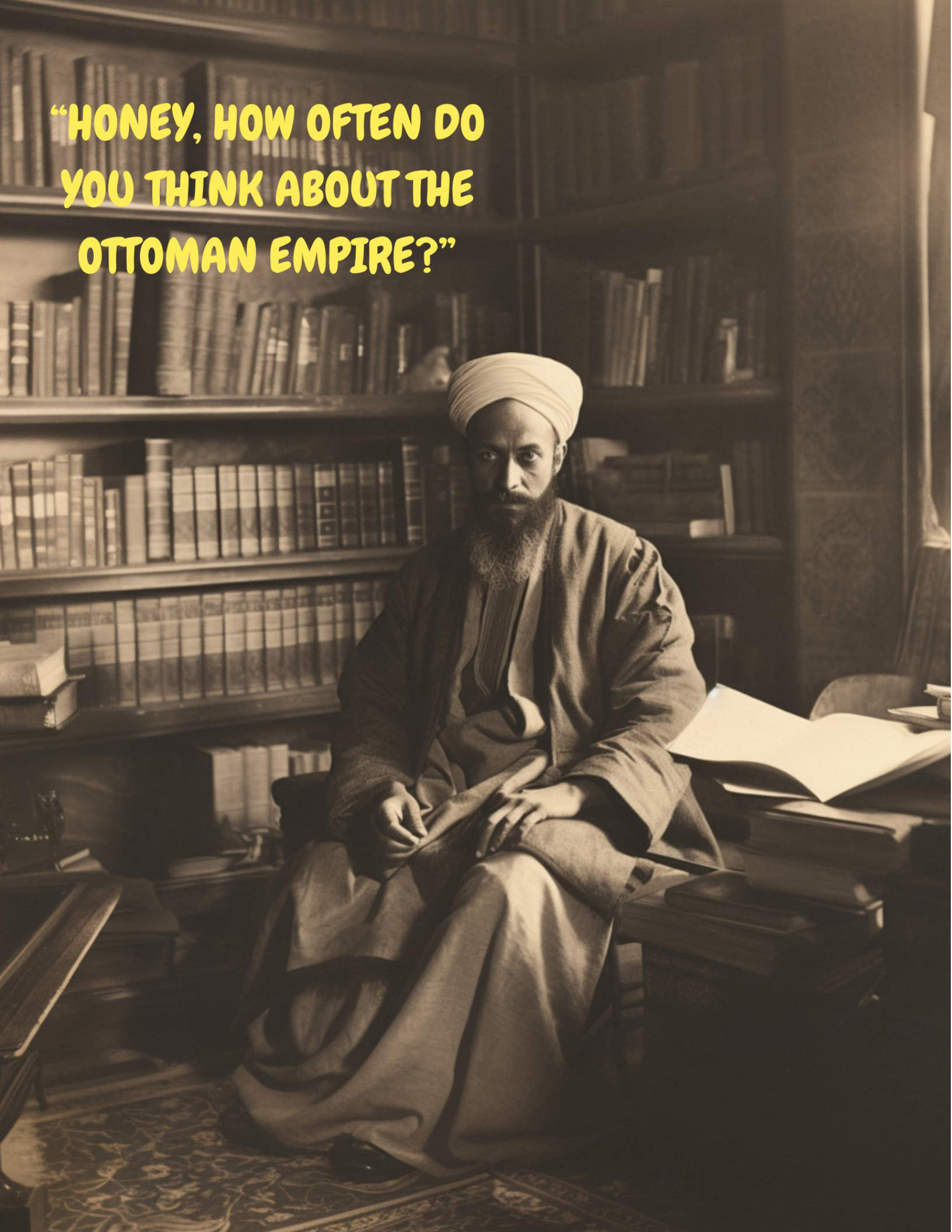
**هل  
تعلم؟**

**Wars fought with  
swords, bows, and spears  
have always had net zero  
carbon emissions.**

**Return to  
tradition. Save  
the environment.**



**“HONEY, HOW OFTEN DO  
YOU THINK ABOUT THE  
OTTOMAN EMPIRE?”**











A NEW ARTICLE SERIES BY  
ECO AL-HOLLANDI

**BEYOND MODERNITY:  
ISLAM BETWEEN EAST  
AND WEST - PART I**





*“WERE WE TO ANALYZE THE FORCES WHICH LED US TO THIS WEAK STATE AND CONTINUE TO DOMINATE US, WE WOULD HAVE TO CONCLUDE THAT THESE FORCES ARE IN FACT NOT INHERENT TO THE WEST. THAT IS TO SAY, THEY ONLY STARTED WITH THE ONSET OF MODERNITY AND WERE THUS ABSENT IN THE PRE-MODERN WEST.”*

**T**he contemporary Muslim is characterized by a longing for a certain Islamic greatness that seems to exist only in the past. This rears its head most clearly in situations such as we have witnessed during the past 2 months, where it becomes painfully clear how weak we have become. Just as this will cause many Muslims to look back at those greater ages and lament our fall from grace, it will cause a perhaps even larger amount of them to look with furious anger at the Western world - seen as the embodiment of a crushing force under whose weight the Muslims are unable to escape, being the direct cause of our loss of greatness.

Hence, for many Muslims, the West becomes somewhat of an eternal other, seen as directly opposed to the Muslim world. We have seen this clearly with the discourse surrounding the situation in Palestine, being hijacked by leftists utilizing post-colonial language that focusses on the criminality of the Western white people. Although seemingly on the opposite end of the spectrum, extremists have also long since targeted the West and the Westerner.

What is interesting about these two groups, being two of the most prominent examples (although this issue has

infiltrated Muslims outside of these two groups as well), is that in all their opposition they are utterly Westernized. For the leftist this is clear: his vision of the world and the values he adheres to are inherently shaped by the West.

Yet similarly, the extremist is not much less Western in his reaction, as his values can be traced to a panic reaction to the dominating forces of the West, resulting in a rigid interpretation of Islam, prescribing a “return to the sources” and foregoing much of Islamic scholarly tradition and traditional diversity. As much as the leftist, he is unable to escape that which he claims to oppose because in his reaction he severs his ties with Traditional Islam. Thus, while retaining a stance of maximum aggression towards the eternal other, the leftist and the extremist both take on the other’s ideas as part of their reaction.

Perhaps part of the problem is our perception of the West as the eternal other. Were we to analyze the forces which led us to this weak state and continue to dominate us, we would have to conclude that these forces are in fact not inherent to the



West. That is to say, they only started with the onset of modernity and were thus absent in the pre-modern West. Simultaneously, modernity seems to be strongly tied to the Western geographical space and its people. As a phenomenon modernity finds its origin in the West and we see that those nations that champion it and push modern values on the rest of the world almost unequivocally are Western nations.

### *MODERNITY AND ITS PROCESS*

To understand the relation between the West and modernity better we should take a deeper look at these modern values, values which are related to several processes that, in my opinion, epitomize what exactly modernity is. When I say processes, I specifically denote several continuous ideas of modernity, ranging from Capitalism to Individualism and Liberalism, and the peculiar effects they have on society.

Most importantly, the effects these ideas have on material reality do not stay contained to the specific locality in which these ideas take root, rather, these ideas are inherently looking for growth, not just in an ideological sense but also in geographical space and number of adherents.

Take for example Capitalism.

Inherently, Capitalist economies favor growth and innovation. While humans can attempt to limit these affects to a geographical space (for example the nation of a border), capital does not care for this space but rather wishes to grow indefinitely, and, as it benefits those with most power, will inevitably break out of this space. Capitalism's preference for continuous and boundless growth and innovation leads to a feedback loop, where the accumulation of capital means the further growth of technology which means faster accumulation of capital etc.

This growth does not only lead to more adherents of Capitalist theory, but through its effects on material reality also leads to further globalization, as the free-market ties differing regions together and encourages the spread of technology, trade and contact between them. Capitalism thus takes shape as a process towards ever further spread and growth.

Modernity's processes are also exclusivist in the strictest sense possible - they do not accept any other ideas to play a role in the material world. If we take Liberalism as an example, we see that after its global dominance, it dictates certain "universal ideas" such as human rights, draws the line for so called acceptable moral paradigms and fiercely attacks

everyone that dares to overstep these boundaries, often leading either to a (proxy) war or to disastrous forms of sanctions and isolation.

These expansionist and exclusivist attitudes might be combined under the term, globalist: denoting a globalization of both ideology and of space. Modernity's processes are furthermore interconnected. One only has to look at the IMF's activity in the Middle East to realize the connection between Capitalism and Liberalism and the ways in which they strengthen the growth of one another (and thus of modernity at large).

What might seem to be a paradox is that modernity's processes, besides leading to globalization, also lead to fragmentation. The explanation for this lies in modernity's exclusivist nature. Because it accepts no countries to step outside the boundaries it has created, wherever its processes spread they will inevitably break down the social institutions that held together pre-modern societies, forcing every space it spreads to adhere to the uptake of these processes, allowing only a semblance of the old, and really only in name, so long as they don't overstep the boundaries set by modernity itself.

This results in fragmentation

because modernity does not prop up any new forms of social order but rather only destroys. It might set up semblances of structures, but these structures are built upon the ideology of modernity, which, as we have seen, only favors its own growth and are thus unable to recreate social order. The dialectic between fragmentation and globalization might be the most striking characteristic of modernity. Through it, it pushes the world towards a fragmented singular, in which nothing higher remains, traditions do not exist, and the world becomes a gray, drab, monotone whole.

### **DETERRITORIALIZATION AND RETERRITORIALIZATION**

Modernity's processes conquering both ideological and geographical space, decimating the pre-existing social order, is what Deleuze & Guattari termed "deterritorialization". Deterritorialization (or: globalizing fragmentation) is in fact all that modernity does if we realize that "what it does" is the result of its processes on societies. What Deleuze-Guattarian philosopher Nick Land says about Capitalism in his essay *Machinic Desire* can, in my opinion, then be seen as true for modernity in general:

*"It is always on the move towards a terminal non-space and generating what is 'not a promised and pre-existing land, but a world created in the process of its tendency, its coming undone, its deterritorialization'".*

D&G argue that deterritorialization that is not yet absolute is accompanied by a "reterritorialization", where new structures, ideas, movements and norms arise to re-implement order. The problem here is that this reterritorialization will occur after tradition has been decimated and as such always must adhere to some form of modernity as it has nothing to build upon. In this sense, reterritorialization mainly becomes the political order's attempt to control the process.

Through this attempt however, it automatically aligns itself with modernity and often becomes the entrenchment of these values in society, simply being the other side of the coin to deterritorialization. As such, similar panic reactions can never be a solution to modernity's problems and in fact will often serve as the enforcement and normalization of destruction.

We see this best in Western society where, after the fall of all that is higher, people began to pick the self apart, after which politics both tried to limit its excesses but also normalized and enforces the acceptance of these ideas. We see in this both the gravity of

deterritorialization, which after breaking down everything higher than the human begins breaking down the self, but also of reterritorialization, as these new norms become normalized and eventually spread around the world.

As we will come to see the Muslims that take either a leftist or an extremist opposition towards the West are in fact engaging in some attempt to reterritorialize what they perceive as a declining Islamic world, taking on a modern worldview in the process. It is exactly this adaptation to modernity that gives them a faulty understanding, both of the "other" and of Islam's ability to oppose this other.

### **MODERNITY AS THE OTHER**

Regardless of modernity's origins in the West, Western countries have not exactly benefited from it. In fact, it has perhaps caused more damage in the geographical West than anywhere else. We have seen a severe loss of culture and identity, not only on a national level, with calls for border removal and increased mass-migration taking its toll, but increasingly on a personal level as well with the rejection of biological distinctions. Although modernity is then in a sense the "ideological West" and thus intermittently linked to the West as a



geographical space and the people thereof, it is not in any sense for those people, rather it works against Westerners and their culture as well.

This becomes apparent to anyone who has studied the modern history of the West, throughout which there were consistent attempts to move beyond modernity and/or to advert its problems. In the early and mid-20th century, Fascism and various strands of Communism attempted to find a way beyond modernity while utilizing its processes to their benefit, seeing modernity as merely a step in the direction towards a promised land. As we now know, these attempts merely were an extreme form of reterritorialization that resulted in totalitarianism, an utterly modern phenomenon.

Post WW2 we see the appearance of so-called post-modernism. While this name might suggest a departure from modernity, the “post-modern period” is in fact nothing more than a further intensification of modernity. It is after all opposition had failed and had led to horrors that the only viable alternative seemed to tear down, deconstruct and/or negate. But of course, if we argue that deterritorialization IS in fact what modernity does, then a further destruction is not a step towards a promised land but merely a further intensification of modernity.

Hence, the West was unable to create an actual post-modernity, nor was it able to defend itself against its ails. Nonetheless, the fact that Westerners have sought a way out shows us that modernity is in fact also the enemy of the geographical West and its people, even if the latter do not realize this. If we were to denote the West as our other, we would automatically position ourselves in the East, thus making Islam merely a religion of “Easterners”.

And although modernity is indeed an enemy of the Easterner, we have seen that it is just as well an enemy of the Westerner as it destroys the order of both in favor of its own growth. Just as Islam is not a religion of Easterners, modernity’s other cannot be merely the “Easterner” precisely because it decimates Western traditions as well.

Those that identify the West as Islam’s other limit themselves to a political scope, identifying the enemies as those nations who most vehemently pushed and drove this decline. Of course, the political dimension is indeed of the utmost importance but one should not conflate the political with the spiritual. While the Western nations have indeed been the defenders of modernity, if we understand the way in which modernity’s processes work and in some ways begin to control humanity

through their constant push for expansion, we should also understand that these Western nations are merely a tool and that the underlying processes punish the West and its people as well.

Were we instead to denote Islam’s other as modernity (or: the ideological West) and distinguish it from the geographical West we would get a different image. Where the geographical West’s is characterized by its people (those of European stock), modernity is not characterized by any particular people but rather by that most striking of features we mentioned before: its simultaneous drive for fragmentation and globalization.

### *ISLAMIC DIVERSITY AS THE WAY TO POST-MODERNITY*

Islam is inherently universal in its character, but it is opposed to the fragmentary, globalizing monotony of modernity - Islam brings a unification of the world with all its diverse cultures, vowing to keep them separate while uniting them under pure monotheism. Islam’s unique ability to do so stems from the theological position that Islam is the fulfillment of all ancient religions.

We read in the Qur’an that every nation was sent a messenger. The famous poem, *Qasidatul Buridah* tells

us these other messengers came with a message which *“was theirs by virtue of the Prophet’s ﷺ light alone, for he is the sun of virtue and they are its planets”*. We see here that the messages of the other Prophets reflected the Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ light.

These previous messages always retained the call towards pure monotheism but were also aimed at specific nations. Because these earlier messages were reflections of the final Prophet’s ﷺ light, Islam did not simply discard these earlier messages but rather came to perfect them. Thus, in the cyclical Prophetic nature, Islam comes as the final manifestation of the primordial religion, and as a call for a final return to monotheism after people had moved away from the message that was sent to them. With the arrival of this last Islamic law, the law becomes universal, with the Islamic tradition being the ultimate and universal expression of pure monotheism.

As Islam is the culmination of all the previous religions, it retains the uniqueness of their expressions while transcending them at the same time. Because of this, it is not only uniquely equipped to deal with the deterritorialization that stems from modernity, but it is the exact opposite of the fragmentation-globalization dialectic that we presented as that most striking of

characteristics of modernity. Where modernity’s fragmentation leads to the destruction of cultures, of tribes, of traditions, all in the name of a destructive telos towards drab monotony, Islam unites different cultures, allowing them their own expression of Islam, based on their culture and on the particular people’s natural sensibilities.

We see this historically, as different expressions have always existed within Islam, showcased by the religion taking on vastly different forms in regions as far as Indonesia and Andalusia based on the local people’s sensibilities. In his writings, the 14th century Andalusian traveler ibn Battuta many a time discusses the anomalies of a people he encountered.

But no matter how exotic and strange he found them, you can always sense some elation when he ended his list of anomalies with the words *“and they are a Muslim people”*. The Indian and Chinese Muslims he encountered clearly hailed from radically different civilizations then his own and he would often be amazed by the way they prayed, or the rituals they ascribed to Islam, but nonetheless they were united under tawhid. Simultaneously, he recognized their differences and was always glad to return to his own land and be amongst his own people with their own distinct way of living. Ibn Battuta’s travels perfectly capture Islam’s unique ability to unite differing

civilizations, while refraining from them being forced to merge into one bland whole, or even worse: destroying these civilizations all together in name of the whole. Although this is a historic example, a call for traditional diverse Islam should not in any sense be seen as a plea for a simple return to the 14th century. Rather, if we understand that Islam retains both the universal and the particular and is the primordial religion, then a return to traditional Islam does not have to be reactionary, as it is a religion for eternity, one that can indeed exist in its traditional form in a post-modern world.

Better yet, in a globalized interconnected world where we do not have the luxury of staying within our own small world and evermore do not even have access to any semblance of tradition, Islam is the only answer to retain our cultures and even to revitalize lost cultures, precisely because it is the culmination of all previous messages that were sent to differing people and thus manages to retain a tie to peoples differing sensibilities. Where in the West Islam is often seen as a threat, if we combine the idea that the European way of life has itself been destroyed by Western modernity with the idea that Islam ultimately retains a link with all the previous laws, then Islam in fact is



the only solution - even for the West if it wants to reclaim its culture.

Thus, we reiterate our point: modernity is indeed the other of Islam as the former fragmentizes and globalizes, where Islam unites all people while retaining their diversity. Because it is for all people it cannot be that Islam is merely “Eastern”. Rather, Islam stands between East and West as mentioned by the Bosnian statesman Alija Izetbegovic in the introduction to his famous work of the same name: *“Islam, which occupies a central position between East and West, has to become conscious of its own mission... it must again today shoulder its role of intermediary nation in a divided world.”*

The Prophet ﷺ came to us with an all-encompassing religion that manages to unite within itself all other nations without defacing their individuality but rather elevating their individuality to a universal, imperial breadth allowing for their diverse expressions under the banner of tawhid. What remains can only be

a dualism between modernity and its alternative - traditional Islam. One aspiring to destroy the beautiful, the great, the worlds traditions, while the other is the (re)-affirmation of them. Only a return to a traditional expression of Islam can provide the world a way to retain that which makes us human.

### THE ROAD AHEAD

While I hope this article has provided the reader with a somewhat deeper understanding of the relationship between the West, modernity and Islam, it is understandable if one thinks that this analysis does not bring any practical solutions to the problem we started with - the weakness of the Muslim world and our inability to return to a position of strength. Of course, the reason why we must anyhow begin with such an analysis is to not fall into the trap of modernity ourselves, by forgetting to have a foundation that is based upon eternal values.

Still, the idea of this writing: “a return to a traditional diverse Islam is the only way past that modernity”, leaves us with two problems. First: As I admitted in this article, while we should not confuse the political and the spiritual, the political is nonetheless of the utmost

importance. Let me be clear that this article is in no way an attempt to downplay the problem of the West as a political entity. The Western political order plays a large part in the enforcement of modernity and even if we understand the importance of a return to traditional Islam, if we cannot break free under the political pressure of the Western order, we will not be able to regain our strength and offer traditional Islam as an alternative.

Second: I have attempted to show that modernity is the other to Islam and that only a return to traditional local forms of Islam can oppose modernity. While it follows that the necessary step is then the re-establishment of local forms of Islam, I have not yet given suggestions how we can possibly go about this process.

These two problems will be tackled in the next two parts. The next article will discuss the question on geopolitics and the third will look at the re-establishment of local forms of Islam. Both articles will build heavily upon the foundation in this one — discussing the steps which Muslims should take to utilize Islam’s unique ability to move us past the modern world. 🛡️

ECO POSTS ON X  
@ECOREACTIONAIR

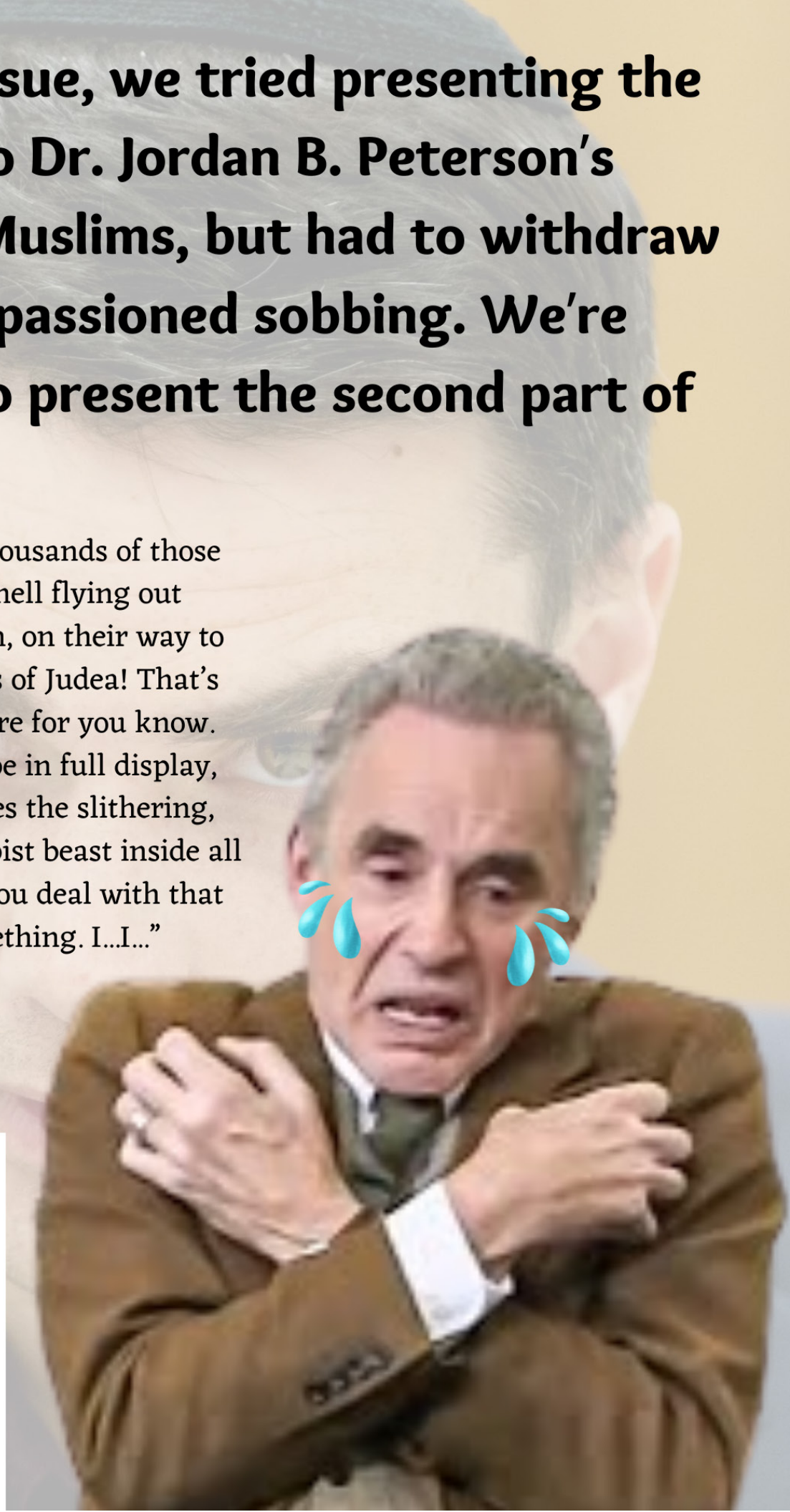


**In our first issue, we tried presenting the full PART 2 to Dr. Jordan B. Peterson's Message to Muslims, but had to withdraw due to his impassioned sobbing. We're now happy to present the second part of his message:**

“Can you imagine it? Thousands of those malevolent beasts from hell flying out from that filthy dungeon, on their way to violate the pure maidens of Judea! That's what the paragliders were for you know. It's the Jungian archetype in full display, the paraglider symbolizes the slithering, viperous dragon, the rapist beast inside all of us! And just how do you deal with that man? That's really something. I..I..”

**Damn it Jordan.**

— THE —  
**DAILY  
WIRES**











**Sh. Abdalqadir as-Sufi**  
**(1930 - 2021)**



**@islam4europeans**  
**islam4europeans.com**

# 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 SHEHU

## UTHMAN DAN FODIO

1754 A.D. – 1817 A.D.

1ST SOKOTO CALIPH



**U**thman Dan Fodio, also known as “The Shehu”, is almost unknown outside of Africa, despite being a central figure in bolstering the spread of Islam in West Africa in his time.

Fodio was born in 1754 A.D. in Gobir, to a Fulani family. He busied himself with the study of Islam from an early age and soon became a Da’ee throughout what is today Nigeria and Cameroon. He described himself as Fulani in lineage, Maliki in madhab, and Ash’ari in creed. He was a dedicated Sufi of the Qadiri tariqa, and inspired by Ibn Arabi. Though Islam had spread considerably by his time already in the region, there were plenty who still embraced the old ways of paganism. Many who were embracing Islam were syncretists who wouldn’t let go of their animism, still visiting witch doctors and worshipping old gods.

The Shehu made it his goal to educate the masses in proper Islam. He emphasized the basics and went against the grain, especially considering many of his contemporaries weren’t educating the laity. He reached his people through poetry they were familiar with, as well as public lectures where he didn’t care to separate the men and the women until they understood the basics of Islam first - once they did, such things became seamless. The problem was, though the people he was educating were improving in their understanding of the deen, the syncretic ruler and his party had

not, and grew in hostility to Fodio and his students.

One day, the ruler Nafata of Gobir placed official sanctions forbidding conversion to Islam, for converts to return to paganism, restricting teaching and forbidding women from covering with proper hijab and men from wearing turbans.

Following in the Prophetic path and refusing to succumb to the circumstances after an assassination attempt, Fodio and his followers made hijrah to Gudu, and began to gather and prepare weapons.

Fodio sought help from the Fulani nomads, who accepted him and along with his followers elected him as Commander of the Faithful. He initiated the Jihad with his Hausa warriors against Yunfa, the now leader of those that had ousted him, and faced his army head on in the following years.

The Shehu was able to unite the various Hausa kingdoms who heard the call of jihad - some through military submission, others willingly - all under the banner of Islam as the new Sokoto Caliphate, and was its first Caliph. Shaykh Dan Tafa says in his *Rawdat al-Afkaar*:

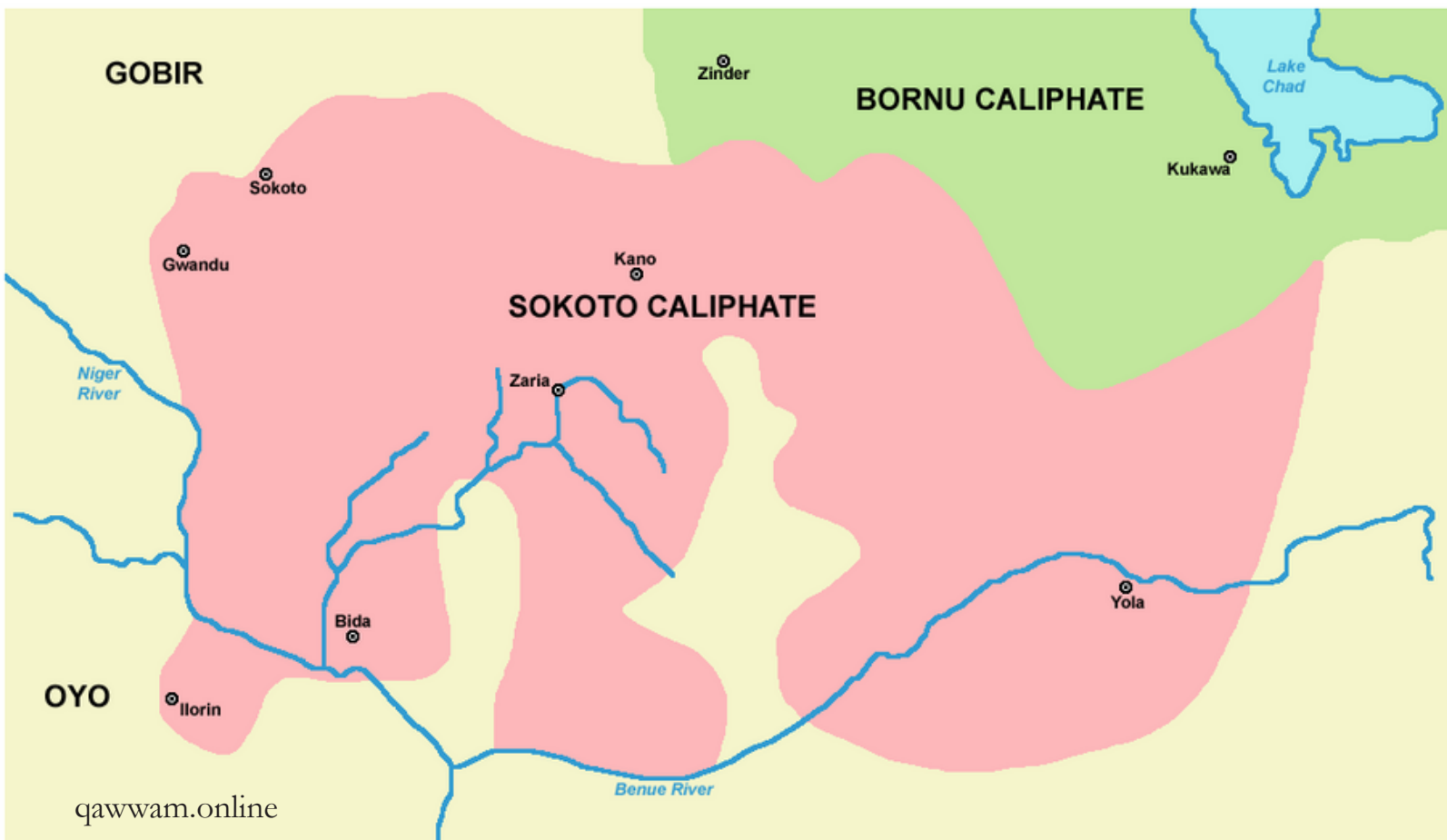
*“Allah helped the Muslims to victory, triumph and established them over all the authority of the disbelievers of the land of the Hausa. Allah caused many of their rulers to repent and others became his fervent supporters. The Shehu established Islam in the lands and brought tranquility and peace to all its regions. To Allah belongs the praise and thanks in this.”*



The following years until the Shehu's death were filled with growing prosperity and the spread of Islam in his new domain. Arabic, Hausa, and Fulfulde languages all saw a revival of poetry, and Islamic law had become widespread replacing a vast array of pagan, tribal customs

The story of Uthman Dan Fodio not only destroys the myth of the "pacifist" and "hippie" Sufi but also shows the wonders of one who follows the Prophetic model. Fodio began as a teacher instilling the foundations of Islam in the laity, was persecuted, fled, then returned to conquer after a time and established a dynasty that would last for a century. In his life lie many unexplored gems that show the immense blessings given to those who dedicate themselves to the path fully.

*Huge thanks to X user @KerrDepression, whose thread on Fodio inspired this brief segment.*



○ - Sokoto Caliphate in the 19th century





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SHAYKH DR.  
ABDALQADIR  
AS-SUFI

RETURN  
OF THE  
CALIPHATE

INTRODUCED & ANNOTATED BY ASRAR RASHID



RIGEL  
PUBLISHING



# BOOK REVIEW

# BLOOD OF THE LEVANT

**WORDS: WAQAR**

**A**bdullah Yousef's "Blood of the Levant" is a shining gem in the realm of Islamicate fiction, destined to be a cherished masterpiece. The first instalment of a captivating tetralogy, this novel lays the groundwork for a complex narrative set in a tumultuous world where the empires of Europe and the Russian Tsardom wage a bitter war, eerily reminiscent of contemporary geopolitical conflicts where the Levant serves as a battleground for proxy wars between greater powers. The narrative takes a thrilling turn when a new material, Ichor, is discovered years after the long war's onset, much like the game-changing impact of gunpowder in the 9th century.

At the heart of "Blood of the Levant" lies the poignant journey of Omar, a gifted but conflicted young boy hailing from the Syrian village of Deir Ezzor. Despite the harrowing backdrop of conflict, the narrative captures the



innocence of childhood, as Omar and his friends engage in playful activities like speculating about dragons and participating in snowball fights.

Yousef imbues the story with profound moral lessons, exploring themes of divine will and the response of believers to the so-called 'problem of evil' in a visceral and deeply resonant manner.

Omar, like countless young boys growing up in the midst of a warzone, harbours dreams of a liberatory nature. His heart's desire is to become a Knight, a dream that was ignited by his mother's loving bedtime stories. As she read to him from the Quran, she also shared tales from a book titled 'Knights of Europa.' These stories of noble knights and chivalrous valour have intertwined with the values instilled in him through his faith, creating a powerful aspiration within him to bring honour and justice to his turbulent world.

However, his dream extends beyond the battlefield, as Omar longs to explore the world, including sights he has only heard of, like the vast expanse of the ocean. He envisions himself as a modern-day hero, not just for his war-torn homeland but also as an adventurer eager to see the world's beauty.

Omar discovers that he possesses supernatural abilities, a revelation that comes shortly before a series of disastrous events. These unexpected powers, unlike anything he had imagined, led him down a path that is a semi-inversion of his cherished dreams. Instead of growing older and fulfilling his childhood, he found himself thrust into a world where his extraordinary abilities became a tool for vengeance. The world he had longed to explore, with its oceans and distant lands, took a backseat to the single-minded pursuit of those who had wronged him. Now, his

dreams were reshaped by a burning desire for retribution, as he sought to settle the score amid the unfolding calamities that drove him forward.

Omar joined the Royal Legion, an elite infantry force in Europa, at a tender age, a decision that led him to detach from the traditions of his upbringing. Yet, these traditions remained latent within him, their presence occasionally surfacing in subtle ways. Alongside the story of Omar's childhood, we get a parallel narrative of his life post-youth. Everything changes for Omar during one fateful battle when he stumbles upon a young girl who seemed so familiar to himself, lost and vulnerable amidst the chaos of war.

In the midst of chaos and violence, the girl's innocence and her need for protection serve as a catalyst, reigniting a dormant sense of purpose within Omar that he thought lost due to his past. This rekindled purpose unveils the possibility of a more beautiful and meaningful existence amid the harsh backdrop of war. She emerges as a symbol of hope, a guiding light that inspires Omar to rediscover his faith and core values.

However, Omar's path toward is far from straightforward. He recognises that in this war-torn world, violence remains a necessity. To protect the girl and ensure her survival, he is compelled to raise her to be combat-ready, instilling the skills and strength needed to navigate the perilous environment they find themselves in. It is a difficult choice born out of the harsh realities of their situation, where survival often depends on the ability to defend oneself. This multi-faceted approach to his character and the evolving dynamics between him and the girl adds depth to the narrative, highlighting the realities of a world defined by conflict. The narrative becomes a



compelling exploration of the choice's individuals must make to navigate the complexities of their circumstances.

Abdullah Yousef's storytelling is a testament to remarkable talent for crafting a vivid and intricate world, deeply immersed in the themes of war, honour, religion, brotherhood, and politics. His narrative forms a literary tapestry interwoven with diverse literary references, enriching the story with depth and complexity. Within this tapestry, Yousef explores the profound complexities of the human experience during times of conflict and uncertainty, inviting readers to reflect on the enduring themes that resonate in our own turbulent world. "Blood of the Levant" is a must-read that resonates deeply with the human spirit, offering both entertainment and profound insight into the human condition.

**Waqar posts his thoughts on X @Yozora\_Glory**

**Editor's Note: Self indulgent that I accepted this, I know - but I had to start this feature somehow.**

**But, you know what this means: would you like to review a great book you read that'll interest your fellow brothers? Let us know about it - ayousef@qawwam.online**





A STEVEN SPIELBERG PICTURE

# THE 40



**NETFLIX**

“DARING, EMOTIONAL.” - VANITY FAIR







# 40 HADITH on MASCULINITY

*How To Be A Good Man*

by Nabeel Azeez







**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’re interested, QAWWAM readers get a 10% off discount code (QAWWAM1223) at this link:

<https://www.muslimman.com/c/qawwam>



**QAWWAM**  
**REFLECTIONS**

**Notes on**  
**Propaganda**

WORDS: IBN MAGHREB





## **“PROPAGANDA DOES NOT AIM TO ELEVATE MAN, BUT TO MAKE HIM SERVE.” - JACQUES ELLUL**

**B**efore I begin, I feel it's necessary to outline a very basic fact that all who wish for Islamicate Sovereignty one day should be cognisant of. The American Empire is a power and a reality for decades to come - decline is a cruelly slow mistress and I believe those who are optimistic about its imminent end are mistaken. It is with this realisation that Muslim must build because it focuses the mind on the horizon of a distant future when our descendants must be well prepared and placed for its eventual dimming. Moreover, the world we inhabit is fundamentally a technological one as a consequence of the enduring power of American Empire.

In admitting the above foundations, one is left with no option but to entertain propaganda as a necessary dark art to be adopted. In this respect, historical and scholastic definitions of propaganda are often far too narrow and tied to particular instances of European fascism in the 20th century. Broadly speaking, propaganda is simply the means by which psychological and social forces are marshalled towards achieving aims and objectives. In this respect, all players on the board are engaged in it whether they choose to admit it or not. Here, I offer some preliminary thoughts about propaganda.

Part of the necessity and need for propaganda is technology. The technological society with digital media and content has made it absolutely necessary for the arts of propaganda to be perfected - the volume, complexity and sheer speed by which information is produced has

created significant obstacles to the time, calm and space required for measured curation and reflection necessary over months and years that allows information to be harnessed into knowledge. It is still possible, but it cannot be seen as the primary mechanism of discourse in communities striving to establish notions of Sovereignty and civilizational consciousness. Propaganda in all its complex facets thus is now a matter of necessity and to deny propaganda its place in the modern world is to condemn oneself to the existence of the Amish or similar neo-Luddite collectives.

The Technological Society has not produced a utopia of human communication – we do not find, to our dismay great sophistication or space for nuanced disagreement. Ideas are not debated rigorously on their premise and merits. What man yearns for amidst the endless streams of digital information is a higher calling, a purpose, a sentiment, and deep spirit to move him towards some great good in the distance. Some great good where dignity and honour beckons. Propaganda in this respect is not something distinct but the force by which men's hearts are moved to action.

This current period during the latest chapter of Zionist genocide against the Palestinian people has unmasked much of the hostility towards Islam that was present in the Western bloc during the so-called "War on Terror". During that period, for those of us who are old enough to remember there was unprecedented psychological warfare against Muslims all over the world - a constant, concerted effort to destroy and delegitimise every authentic expression of the Islamic creed, to absorb Muslims into the larger

complex of unthinking NPCs that stood by and did nothing as the American Empire extended its territorial reach far and wide at the cost of Muslim blood. Aided and abetted of course by its Praetorian proxies — post-Caliphal Muslim armies that have no notion of civilizational consciousness and serve their imperial masters in Washington for personal financial gain.

During that time of immense pressure, in many respects, Muslim minorities failed to stand up to the challenge of psychological warfare. Our discourses were on the whole apologetic, on the defensive, constantly seeking to appease, to accommodate, and under the guidance of patrician scholars sought to reach a common understanding. Our community leaders took great pride in walking out and meeting with governments, NGOs, and other such alphabet agencies to show that Muslims still had a "seat on the table". I do not necessarily begrudge that - at the time the choices available were few and all of them were inevitably terrible, but I think we would be damned if we sought to repeat the mistakes of the last twenty years all over again. Fundamentally there was a huge mistake in assuming that respectability and public displays of civility – arm in arm with the State was our best defence. It is important that we do not make the mistake of focusing on different parts of the so-called “political spectrum” – the State which is the centerpiece of American Empire sees Islam as a rival and threat.

The Right may try the “shock and awe” approach of endless neo-con bombardment but the Left too has its ways of undermining Islamic feeling through more insidious and pervasive means. Of note and suspicion must be the “Islamophobia” campaigns that Biden has

announced and which in time no doubt will be adopted by American vassal states. These so-called “Islamophobia” campaigns are a Trojan horse of getting Muslim consent for allowing the State to arbitrate what are acceptable and authentic expressions of Islamic creed. In exchange, the State will afford “protection” of said sentiments. The State under the Biden regime much like the State under the Bush regime is identical in so far as the ambition is to build and fashion a form of Islamic practice that is palpable and able to integrate itself into the reality of American Empire that at present and for some time before this latest catastrophe in Gaza, has warranted the killing of Muslim children and infants as “necessary”.

There are different streams of propaganda to consider, and it would be foolish hubris to expect that one can effectively organize, channel, and direct the propaganda efforts of a religious and spiritual community spanning the globe. Particularly in the glaring absence of an anchor-Muslim state that is responsive to the aspirations and sentiments of the global faithful. Yet, all must be cognisant of its different streams – some will seek to convert, some to integrate, others to deconstruct, to mock, to parody, to identify and find friend, to identify and find foe. There is also the manner by which propaganda emerges – sometimes it may emerge





from the shadows of the chronically online world – diffuse, decentralised, spontaneous, and erratic. Other times it will come from a single source, a central authority that commands the respect of the faithful. The point in illustrating this is simple – all forms and streams of propaganda have a place, a virtue, a niche, and a need. Unlike the last twenty years where the preferred mode of engagement was through bureaucratic entities and aimed mainly towards reassuring State authority, this time all avenues must be given permission to flourish.

One stream that requires urgent attention is that of mockery and satire. We must acknowledge that our foes have left the bounds of reason and rationality when they assume the moral high ground lecturing us about the virtues of using modern weaponry to bomb hospitals, mosques, churches going after women and children deliberately so as to make a place like Gaza “unfit for human habitation”. Mockery, satire, sarcasm and even character assassination and psychological war against public figures who take up the station of defending Israel must be exercised. Such people are not deserving or warrant “rational dialogue” – in this respect such people have declared war against Islam, a war that was not of our asking or choosing but now that we are condemned to

participate in.

One must strive towards emotion, spirit even - appealing to that cosmic sense of larger belonging – the Ummah as a focus of this stream of propaganda. No longer must one assume undue responsibilities to condemn, to explain, to rationalise or to act as defendant in the court of American Empire. This “court”, carefully calibrated media machines, organizations, NGOs, alphabet agencies, astroturf initiatives and the like must simply be undermined. They can no longer be afforded respectability, the need for “engagement” and must be starved of all sensibility and legitimacy. Such an understanding of propaganda must be calibrated and located within a larger understanding of the Islamic Secular. There can and should be “Islamic” or “Islamicate” forms of intellectual activity beyond the confines of scholastic conduct and enterprise. The ulema are but one part of a larger tapestry of Islamic energies and movements. In doing so, this all reincorporates those Muslims who feel “unmosqued” to view their services as outside of the religion. In the coming decades of conflict on the horizon all Muslims, regardless of their religiosity and personal practice must feel they are part of a whole, a much larger enterprise in defending Islamicate Sovereignty, in defending the worth and value of Muslim blood against rabid foes who make absolutely no distinction what school of Fiqh you follow or what school of creed you adopt.

I believe there is and will be a price to pay for participating in the art of propaganda – the inevitable child of the technological society, one should not be naive that indulging in propaganda is without complication or cost but clearly the cost of abdicating it completely is far higher. However, that price will have to be negotiated at a later date.

**You can find Ibn Maghreb on X @IbnMaghrebi. He also writes on Listed @TheIqraFiles.**




# PROPAGANDA

THE FORMATION OF MEN'S ATTITUDES

JACQUES ELLUL

AUTHOR OF *THE TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY*



A large pyramid and the Sphinx in Egypt. The pyramid is the central focus, with the Sphinx in the foreground. The sky is blue with some clouds. There are people visible at the base of the pyramid.

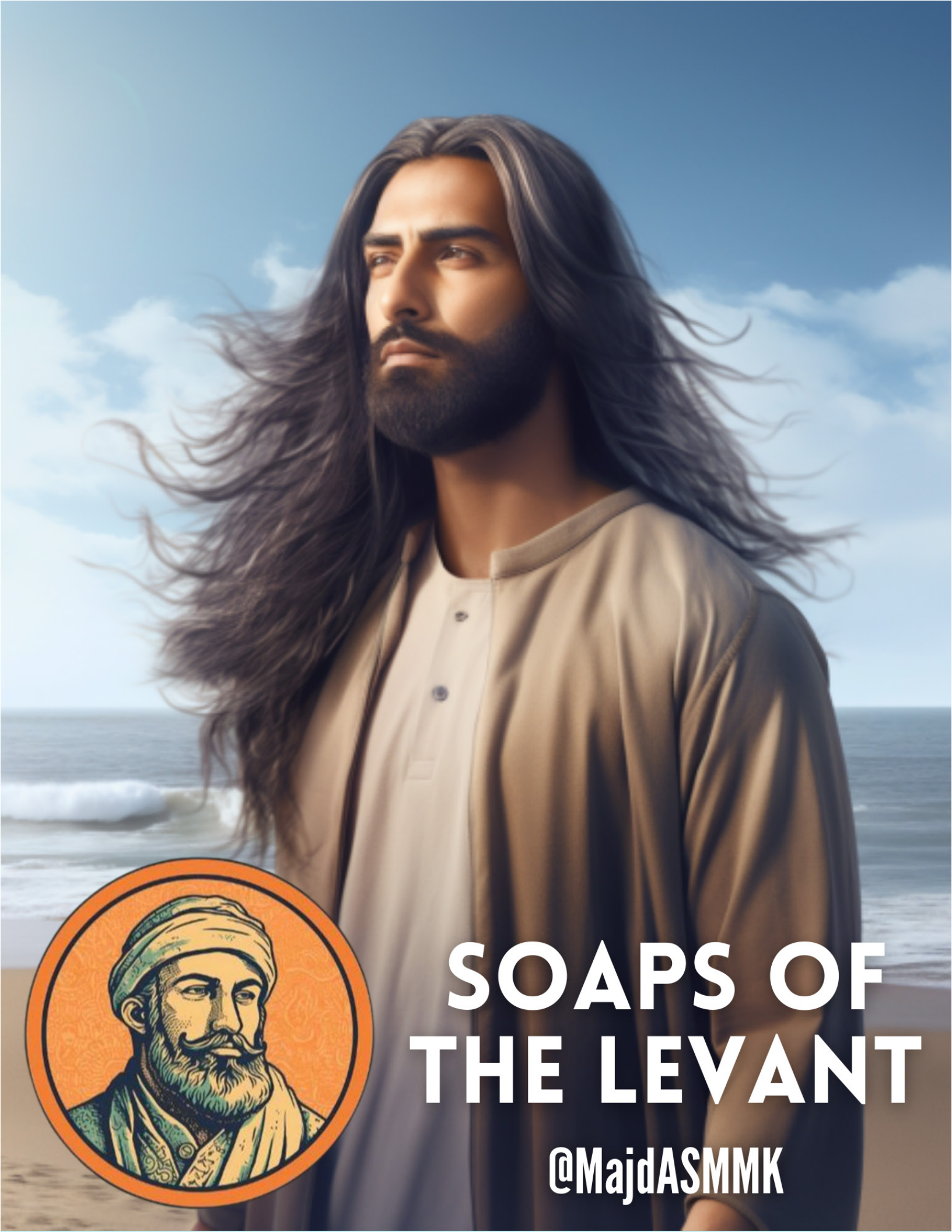
**Did  
you  
know?**

**هل تعلم؟**

**Early Muslim scholars did, in fact, research and interpret ancient Egyptian antiquities almost 1,000 years before the Rosetta Stone.**

**See “The Missing Millennium” by Okasha El Daly**





# SOAPS OF THE LEVANT

@MajdASMMK

# STICKS AND STONES

*may break my bones*

**but they'll have a**

**lot to say when**

**your time is up!**







# **QAWWAM INTERVIEWS TOM FACCHINE**





## The Importance of Palestine to the Ummah, the discourse of “Whiteness” in the conflict, the two wings fighting for the soul of the Palestinian cause, and more with Imam Tom Facchine:

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**AY:** *Assalamu Alaikum wa*

*Rahmatullah* Imam Tom, thank you for speaking with me. As the war and bombardment in Gaza kicked off, like most of us, most Muslims who don't have a day-to-day investment in the Palestinian cause raced back and made it their primary concern once again, bringing a level of unity to the discourse that I haven't seen to this level before. This unity we've built however is being faced with the largest Zionist propaganda campaign ever unleashed; in the midst of this war, both online and offline, there arises the once again big question by the uninvested as to why the issue of Palestine and al-Aqsa is so crucial to most practicing Muslims, whether they're Palestinian or not. How would you explain this phenomenon to a layperson who is puzzled by the spiritual vigor Palestine inspires in the Ummah?

**TF:** *Walaykum salaam wa*

*rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh!*

Muslims are facing oppression and barbarity in multiple places the world over, from East Turkistan to Yemen, from



Syria to Kashmir. A true Muslim feels for all his/her brothers and sisters and prays for their victory, rectifies his/herself to have those prayers answered, and pursues any legitimate available means at his/her disposal to accomplish that victory. What makes Palestine unique in its ability to galvanize Muslim solidarity are at least two factors. The first are the well-known spiritual merits of Palestine, from the sanctity of Al-Quds and Masjid al-Aqsa to it being the first direction toward which Muslims prayed, to it being the location of the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Night Journey and Ascension, to it being—as per the hadith—the location of the ta'ifah mansurah, that select group of believers

who will continue to be upon right guidance no matter who betrays them.

However the second factor that makes Palestine unique is a bit less-discussed, and that is its historical and symbolic value. When Omar ibn al-Khattab conquered Palestine and placed the Christians under his protection it demonstrated not a mere tribalistic victory but rather the supremacy of the Shariah as a Divine system of just, humane governance. This point is easily lost on non-Muslims who assume that Muslims are only interested in owning or controlling land. A properly calibrated Muslim is not content to merely have land ruled by Muslims, it must be ruled by the Shariah as well. Shariah rule in Palestine was only seriously challenged by the savagery of the Crusades, in which parts of Palestine were lost due to the weakness and corruption of the Muslim leadership. But even that challenge was met with courage and honor as Muslims rose up to



**“Palestine thus symbolizes the Western colonial imposition of its order and the displacement of a Shariah-based society experienced the world over. Hence, any properly constituted Muslim across the globe connects emotionally to the occupation of Palestine and takes it personally.”**

restore Shariah rule in Palestine. Palestine was not lost again until the dissolution of the Caliphate of the Ottomans after WWII, which created a power vacuum in which the Zionists could execute their plans. The fact that the Zionists relied upon the British colonial apparatus, then the UN and the US-led international order post-WWII sums up the farce of the international liberal order’s pretensions to freedom and democratic will, an order that has had devastating effects on Muslims. Since Euro-American colonialism has displaced Shariah rule from Muslim lands in general and in Palestine specifically, the historical experience of the people of those lands has been general misery and bloodshed. Palestine thus symbolizes the Western colonial imposition of its order and the displacement of a Shariah-based society experienced the world over. Hence, any properly constituted Muslim across the globe connects emotionally to the occupation of Palestine and takes it personally.

AY: A big accusation I see by right-leaning figures, even those who claim to be neutral or uncaring regarding the Zionist question, is that the mass support for Palestine they’re seeing is just a reflection of “anti-White hatred” by third-world immigrants in Western countries since, in their view, those who are pro-Palestine view the state of Israel as a colonial white creation. When speaking to some of these folk, they seem to derive this from the already apparent hatred of white people that permeates most leftist circles today. How would you respond to this?

TF: This is a really crucial point that demonstrates the sensitivity of the language and frameworks we use to pursue justice, as well as the difference between how things are intended when spoken versus how they are heard in context. Axiomatically speaking, Islam and Allah’s Shariah stress accountability for things within our power, such as our decisions and the principles we choose to guide

our lives, rather than things we have no control over such as our ancestry, physical features, etc. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said “Surely Allah does not look to your faces and your wealth but He looks to your heart and to your deeds,” collected by Muslim. Hence, to hold contempt for someone because they have white skin is foreign to Islam and actually an affront to Allah who created people in all their forms and colors. Allah says in Surah Al-Rum [30:18], “And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors: verily in that are Signs for those who know.” That being said, there is an important distinction between Whiteness, as theorized by the left, and simply having a fair complexion. Whiteness is the normativity of being white, the idealization of white skin, aesthetics, ways of knowing, values, and by extension the dehumanization, erasure, and annihilation of Otherness (in this

case, non-Whiteness). Whiteness, leftists correctly point out, is an invented colonial construct designed to legitimize and structure the domination of people at home and abroad. Fair and Lovely, refusal to marry a few shades darker, and the clear double standard at play between Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees are all examples of Whiteness in action. Where things get messy is when Whiteness as a constructed ideal is mapped onto actual individuals in an attempt to deduce their complicity or culpability in this structure of oppression. In leftist circles, fair skinned Euro-Americans could variably be considered complicit in the violence done by Whiteness not just be explicitly championing White-supremacy, but also actively self-identifying with Whiteness, placing their sense of self-worth in it, materially benefit from it, or failing to dismantle it. If you look at that list, you see that there is a spectrum of complicity, however the differences between those levels are often blurred or collapsed entirely.

There are at least three issues here. One is that Whiteness is not as simple as it is often made to seem when it is deployed.

Although white skin is idealized, clearly not everyone with a fair complexion is an exemplar of Whiteness as a structure, as our Bosnian and Kosovar brothers and sisters well know. When it comes to aesthetics, ways of knowing, and values, things get even murkier. European and North American history is made up of multiple, sometimes conflicting strands of each. Even the Enlightenment is made up of multiple, sometimes conflicting strands. What we really mean to say is that some of those subtraditions are hegemonic and displace, even subjugate, other traditions within that space and then in foreign lands outside that space. At this point one is entitled to question if Whiteness is the best term to describe this dynamic, since it conceals and thus neutralizes the rival knowledge and value traditions within European and American history.

Things only get more complicated from there. Dr. Sherman Jackson distinguishes between Plymouth Rock whites and Ellis Island whites. Ellis Island whites never owned slaves, and some Ellis Island whites like the Italians or Irish

were initially racialized as non-White upon arrival. How complicit or culpable is a person who is racialized as White, benefited from segregation, then redlining and other discriminatory housing practices versus someone whose ancestors ran a plantation and owned slaves? How does that complicity or culpability change when a person actively takes pride in their whiteness versus someone who abhors and disavows the white-supremecism of their ancestors? Virginia Theological Seminary and Georgetown University, for example, have explored reparations to the descendents of slaves who worked on their campuses. [Sh. Joe Bradford has an important preliminary reflection on the Islamic case for reparations.](#) There's actually a really rich conversation to be had here about complicity and responsibility for inherited wrongs, but the way that "white" and "Whiteness" is casually thrown around might obstruct rather than facilitate this worthwhile exploration.

The second issue is that the ascription of privilege to whites due to Whiteness is materialistic. That doesn't mean it's false, it just means that it is only partially true. No one can deny, I think, the



monetary reparations due to the descendents of enslaved people in the Americas. But there are other ways in which materially benefitting from Whiteness might actually be a liability in spiritual terms. My undergrad advisor, Professor Himadeep Mupiddi, was very adamant about proving how much of what we call privilege is actually deficiency, or what he would call “lack.” But he is a minority voice in a sea of people who ignore the spiritual maladies of the oppressor class and their descendents. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told us that a poor person will enter paradise 500 years before a rich person (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, sahih), and that the prayers of an oppressed person face no obstacles (Sunan al-Tirmidhi, sahih). These are undeniable advantages for those attuned to the spiritual dimension of reality. Far from a romanticization of the poor and oppressed, this avoids the politics of despair that materialist analysis lends itself to.

The third issue is that Leftists themselves blur the line between critiquing Whiteness and merely critiquing people racialized as white with unfortunate frequency, which is alienating and unhelpful. We might feel good in the

moment of these declarations... it’s cathartic to unload on white people. But beyond potentially hurting our cause, it might be symptomatic of our own internalization of the racialized and tribalistic thinking of the system we’re trying to replace. We don’t want to replace white-supremacism with another supremacism. As Muslims we have to hold onto our Shariah-supremacism and our Shariah-based concepts of thinking through and experiencing the world, even if we have been oppressed according to the constructed categories of others.

With all that groundwork now laid out, I can actually address your question, which is related to how our activism for Palestine fits into the Euro-American Culture Wars. If Whiteness is to blame and we simultaneously slip between blaming Whiteness and “whites,” there is no redemptive dimension to this struggle that people racialized as white can grab onto. We risk the struggle becoming one of rival identities or clashing civilizations rather than a battle between Truth and Falsehood. Islam was powerfully appealing in 7th

century Arabia partly because it wasn’t an identitarian struggle, in fact it cut across previously established identitarian categories and invited all people of conscience to respond to its call. We need to offer this redemptive dimension to the world. Even if we retain our critique of white-supremacy—as we should—the messaging needs to be “hey, this isn’t working out for you either, come demonstrate your virtue, come distinguish yourself based on your courageous choices, not on an ethnic, racial, or civilizational identity.” Then people can imagine a role for themselves in the struggle and hopefully reckon with themselves enough to join it.

If we fail to do this, our activism for Palestine will simply be shoe-horned into the Culture War, which makes us easily dismissed from the right and undermines the universality of our cause.

AY: The two main competing ideologies for the soul of the Palestinian cause have always been: the secular, nationalist side that rides on Marxist-leninist origins; and the Islamic side that’s much reviled by many, including Palestinians who have accepted the former as the only path towards liberation. This has

always been a struggle for us because these alliances with the left-leaning, secular types were made before most of us were even born — yet now, many of us realize how dumb and useless this angle of the struggle has been. Should Muslims care about gradually trying to shift the message to one led by piety and Islamic unity so as to not upset this shaky alliance with the left “for Palestine only,” or is it not worth maintaining at all as we thrust into the more religious direction?

**TF:** Muslims should absolutely care about shifting the message to one led by piety and Islamic unity, but the pertinent questions as you properly highlighted are how, how quickly, and what are the obstacles to achieving this? To answer these questions you need to grapple with the reality of internal colonization. When I say that, I’m not singling out the secular activists, there is actually plenty of internal colonization to go around on both sides. In fact, since I conceptualize it as a shared problem of internalized colonization I personally think we need sympathy for those who are seduced by the secular anti-imperialist left. They despise colonialism and thus have a type of useful foundation for coming around, but two things need to

to happen for that to occur. One is that they need to understand how secular leftist politics is a reformist tendency within the colonial project and not true fundamental resistance to it. Two is that they need to see courageous Islamic voices and Islamic political action that gets results, and that brings me to the internal colonization on the Islamic side.

Islamic political activism has been hampered by quietist, defeatist, and nationalistic attitudes of Muslim scholars and rulers. The last six weeks have exposed many. Some are saying that the Palestinians are to blame for their own oppression or that if they had proper aqeedah this wouldn’t be happening. Some are saying leave it to the ruler and don’t dare speak out against him and that you must wait for his permission to even call for a boycott. Some are saying that protests and voting are haram, a perennial low-level conversation. Others are saying we just need tazkiyya and tahajjud and all our problems will evaporate. These are all either shallow takes and/or false dilemmas. And that’s not to throw out all the good work

of the figures who have espoused these views or question their motives, but political action is a discrete area that should be left to its experts just like fiqh and aqeedah are discrete areas that should be left to its experts. Now, we also have to be careful to not fall into sectarianism because if we are being fair-minded and not simply looking to score points for our own favored group we would admit that such positions are not limited to one group. There are quietist Sufis, quietist Salafis, etc. just as there have been courageous, principled voices from all camps as well. But what this draws attention to is the understandable skepticism of secular activists towards a more Islamic framework. If I’m a secular Palestinian activist on the left and these are the voices that are sermonizing towards me, I would be very likely to dismiss it.





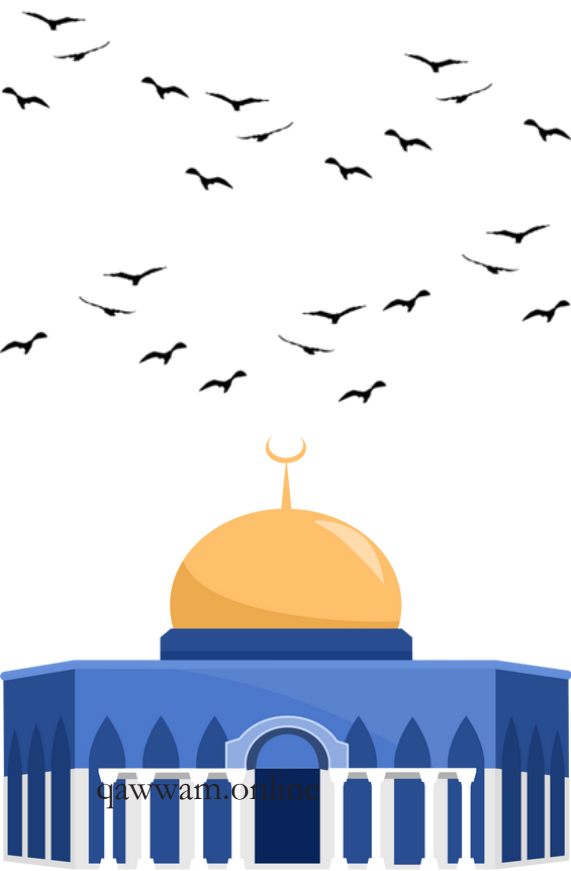
This is compounded by my impression that the groups doing most of the legwork politically on the ground are the secular groups, not the Islamic ones. Look at the national march on Washington DC, the groups who organized it are more secular in nature (granted there isn't always a binary). Even if you scroll down the dozens and dozens of endorsements, you see MAS, credit to them, but where is ISNA? Where is ICNA? I have met the leadership of some of these organizations so I'm not trying to belittle the good they do, but I do want to offer a sincere and public challenge to do better and step up. It's not a good look when a march for Palestine has more endorsements from Queer

organizations than Islamic centers, what type of politics do you think will result from that coalition and that base? And what is a young, passionate person to think when secular activism is getting a lot more done and many of the religious voices leave much to be desired?

I went to the national march in DC a week after I went to a demonstration in Albany organized mostly by regional Islamic centers. The difference couldn't have been more dramatic, and I'm not just talking size. In DC I almost got a contact high from standing behind a ganja-smoking group toting rainbow flags (I relocated). The messaging was occasionally shrill and laced with profanity. I would not have brought my kids. In Albany, the messaging was tight and Islamic. There was no vandalism, it was a family-friendly environment. I'm not trying to take away credit from the more secular groups, obviously they did a remarkable job mobilizing so many people on short notice for a worthy cause, but I'd like to see Islamic activism get to that scale and draw those numbers because I

think we could have an even bigger impact. So to answer your question definitively I think we should be building our own Islamic framework and networks and interfacing regularly with the more secular groups, sometimes joining forces, sometimes doing our own thing, and providing the opportunity to show people a new type of political activism.

AY: On your podcast a couple of weeks ago with Mohammed Hijab, you mentioned that you weren't a fan of the "march through the institutions" and "institutional capture" style of advocacy and change because it's filled with manipulation, nasty politics, and creates resentment. I want to push back on that a little. I do find the way many people describe institutional capture to be naive and unprincipled, but it's not something without precedent. When Sultan Salahuddin worked as a vizier for the Fatimids — a corrupt non-Muslim institution — it ended up being for the eventual goal of overturning and reigning them into the fold with little blood to be shed. This is, though medieval, a nevertheless clear example of such a thing being done, without much care for what the masses thought. I'm interested in what you think of that. Do you believe Muslims who don't buy into this democratic casuistry we



see constantly today still have to pretend to “play ball” with it to get anywhere?

**TF:** Granted, though I think the Fatimids were probably a better example of institutional capture than Salahuddin, who was much more in line with popular sentiment. The fact that the Fatimids fell so easily is testament to that. The underlying point is the role of popular opinion and perception. If you embark upon a ‘long march through the institutions’ but don’t build popular support, the obvious risk is that you plant the seeds for your own demise. It will breed alienation and resentment, people will pray for your downfall and cheer on your enemies. I think if we look at the Prophetic example, power was built more organically and ground-up than that. We’re not talking halal/haram, we’re talking about risk. It’s a high risk game to play, thinking that you can capture these institutions and not lose your soul to careerism and assimilation in the process. In fact, if there’s one thing we’ve seen from the genocide currently going on in Palestine, it’s how fruitless the “change it from the inside” strategy has been for Western Muslims. We confuse access with power. We confuse

**proximity to power with the ability to influence. We confuse bussing the table with having a seat at the table. For all of the Muslim staffers in the White House and Congress, all the journalists, politicians, etc. that played this game for the last 20 years, it has done nothing to stop the slaughter of over 10,000 Palestinians over the course of a single month. The only thing changing the conversation and putting the word “ceasefire” on the table is mass movement and popular action.**

**AY:** Before October 7th, for the past year or so we’ve seen many Muslim Imams, influencers, writers, etc. start to entertain the idea of allying with figures on the conservative right for the sake of social issues (such as fighting against LGBT madness), and disavowing/cutting ties with our leftist allies who rode that rainbow and tried to drag us along with them. It seemed like progress on that front was being made, but literally the day the conflict started we saw all that go right into the shredder. The vast majority of these conservative pundits and figures with whom we’ve tried to build bridges instantly reverted to 20-year-old rhetoric about the “evils” of Islam and Muslims,

when just months prior were indicating regret at the hysteria induced by the War on Terror. The thing now is: as the people in Gaza and Palestine suffer for Allah knows how long, we in the West are still facing these issues in our mosques and schools; is it still worth it to work with the “anti-woke” crowd on these issues despite them showing that their psychotic ghil for us never really went away? Should we only look for a bloc in this crowd that is anti-Zionist as well?

**TF:** I personally experienced this. I had done a phone interview with a conservative Jewish columnist on gender ideology in schools before October 7th. One of the themes we kept returning to was the political homelessness of Muslims (and many Jews) and the necessity of building new political alliances going forward. After October 7th the article was tabled and she acknowledged that we would be in very different places on Palestine. It remains to be seen if we can still get this article published once things cool off. It will be an interesting test of political maturity to see if we can work in a principled way with allies on one focused issue while acknowledging our deep differences on other issues.

**The elephant in the room for**



Muslims is that our political capacity is incredibly small considering our potential. People unfortunately think of voting as the supreme political act, but why aren't we starting PACs and pushing our own candidates? So we do need to organize a core bloc of political actors (voters, donors, lawyers, propagandists, candidates, etc.) who both value the traditional family and are anti-Zionist. Once that bloc is established we can collaborate across the aisle on specific issues and initiatives as needed while maintaining our platform, discourse, and values. To give a concrete example, Mark Pocan is someone we wouldn't necessarily want to vote for due to his politics on the family, but someone who, if in power, is a potential ally on Palestine specifically. We shouldn't have to compromise our politics on the traditional family to work with the Pocans of the world to get something done for Palestine. And that means we should be ready to walk away from the table if someone who is an ally on one issue demands a compromise or concession on a different issue. It also means having high aspirations and not settling for the lesser of two evils. Our problem is that we only think

short term, so in a given election it will likely be Pocan, who is pro-LGBT and anti-Zionist, against another candidate who might be the opposite on both issues. The short term calculus centers around just that election and who is less bad, but that's not enough, that's not a winning long-term political vision. We should never vote for a "lesser of two evils" candidate without simultaneously pursuing the means to recruit, fund, and run a better candidate to replace him or her in the following election. So if you're in Wisconsin and you bite the bullet and vote for Pocan because of his stance on Palestine, the very next day after the election you should be figuring out how to replace Pocan with someone who is pro-Palestine and pro-traditional family by the time the next election rolls around.

I also think that we can never allow our thinking to get so categorical that we miss opportunities for wedging existing political blocs and forming new ones. Candace Owens and Tucker Carlson have been examples of people on the right who are willing to



think more critically about US support for Israel, so there's something to work with there. More than ever, average people can see that both parties are completely beholden to foreign interests like AIPAC and the Israeli lobby. People like Sam Parker and Mark Pocan were not possible 20 years ago, so even though we have setbacks and the "Islamophobia" machine revs up and does its thing, there does seem to be incremental change in a positive direction. If I ran a PAC right now, I would be blasting the airwaves showing the average American that US politicians are being held hostage by foreign interests.

AY: You were one of the signatories for the controversial Navigating Differences statement for the Islamic stance on LGBT issues back in May of this year, which is how I first found out about you. When remembering that something occurred to me: the main people involved in the creation of the statement clarified that one of the uses of the document was as an official defense to be used by school or public officials, lawyers, etc. where Muslims' civil rights were being infringed upon in daily life due to their uncompromising stance on opposing the overwhelming mass of LGBT propaganda. Now, we're witnessing the same exact level of repression where many Muslims in the West are having their rights infringed upon for their support of Palestine. In light of this, as well as the sudden appearance of "Islamic" scholars who are actually in favor of Israeli normalization; do you think a similar statement should be put together now? Would much benefit come from it? Personally, I believe Navigating Differences Part 2 is in order.

TF: This is a very interesting proposal and one I frankly hadn't considered, likely due to the fact that the Palestinian cause aligns with leftist politics in ways that advocating for the traditional

family doesn't, so many Muslim advocacy groups that are at least perceived as being left-leaning are already doing the heavy lifting in supporting students and employees facing repression regarding Palestine. The stance that Navigating Differences took on LGBT issues obviously aligns more with right-wing political positions, so for that reason there were far fewer voices and organizations willing to take a stand on it and hence the importance of taking a stand in the first place. That being said, the normalization angle is compelling. I'll give it some thought!

**Imam Tom Facchine (fuh-KEEN-ee) has a BA in Political Science from Vassar College, a BA in Islamic Law from the Islamic University of Madinah, and is currently the Research Director of Islam and Society at Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research.**

**You can find him on X @ImamTomFacchine**

AY: Thank you for speaking with me Imam. We wish you the best, *Jazak Allahu Khairan*.

TF: May Allah guide us to what He loves, ameen wa iyyakum!







# TRAVERSING TRADITION

THE PREMIER PLATFORM FOR MUSLIM DIALOGUE

• ISSUE 01 •



# The New York Times

**REPORT**

## The Terrifying Literature Found in Gaza's Homes

Oct. 12, 2023



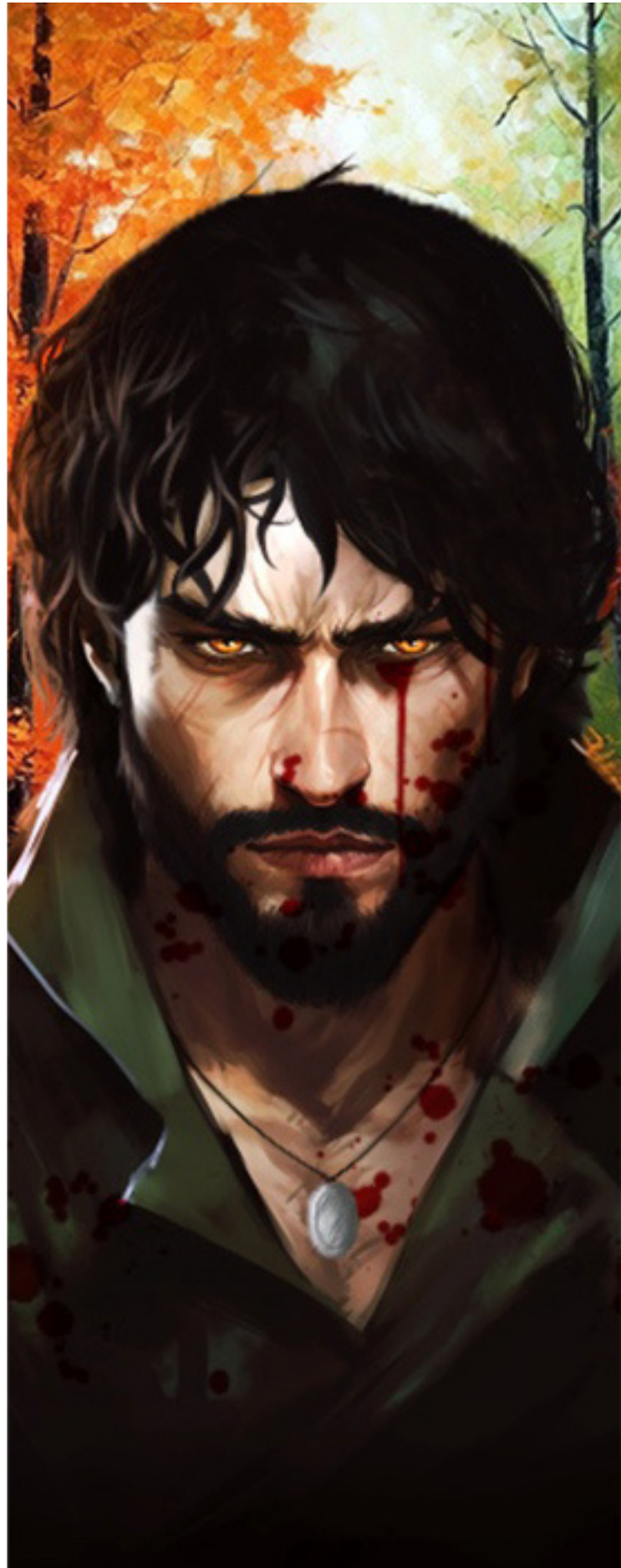


# BLOOD OF THE LEVANT

*An excerpt*

*By Abdullah Yousef*

**T**he field outstretched before him looked familiar, reminiscent of past battles in cities and villages that also had their living reduced to a hovel. As soon as Omar stepped foot within firing range, he was met with a volley of it from all but where he came from. He'd had but a second when encountering this many enemies to reach just one of them, and still must shrug off several that hit his body. He heard Walter's voice in the back of his head, a sarcastic "Wonderful" usually succeeded by horrific retaliation by the enemy. The closest group of three was a few hundred yards away, so he pounced forth for them. He jabbed his sword into one, impaling the man through the middle of his chest. Omar felt that if he shifted this new sword too much he'd tear him in half, steadying his grip as he used the gun in his other hand to shoot the next closest to him. Intestines flew into the air as he stepped forward and hit the third in less than a second with the back of the gun, firing at him once he fell. The blood of the impaled soldier stained him. His last breath reeked onto Omar's face; blood poured from his lips down to his killers' chest. Omar was twisting him to block incoming fire. He took his sword out the way it came and shoved his left arm into the open wound holding the corpse up from his innards, there was a solid





grip in his ribcage.

Omar still had to endure four...no, eight bullets that pierced him, some broke into shards and scathed him but others were placed in his back and shoulder debilitating his movement. Yet he endured, biting into the dead Russian's shirt collar. He felt the blow of each shot despite the adrenaline, running with his meat shield. He threw his sword as far as he could in the direction of the enemy like a spear, and targeted each group over the corpse's shoulder firing across the square. Each shot caused an explosion decimating several on various levels. Omar saw that when the explosive bullets from his old pistol landed in open space, the results were much more devastating than he remembered. The shield he held up withered, hundreds of bullets turned a fresh corpse into a ragged scarecrow of a corpse, flopping about with enough holes Omar could see through it.

He abandoned the fellow by throwing him at a set of soldiers still reloading, since his weight had decreased dramatically. He grabbed his sword from the floor, charging again. Omar hadn't healed, but he had nowhere to take cover. One swing of his sword in the shape of a crescent sawed into the middle of the rifle closest to him, causing it to blow up in the enemy's face. Omar tackled and held him up running in the direction of where he heard more gunfire until he hit another soldier causing both to tip over and fall. He could get two in one if he slashed them both, crawling on the ground helpless, one with a burned face groaning in pain.

He raised his sword, his hands eventually giving in and unable to push through the agony. The metal struck the ground, it was about as loud as Omar's cursing realizing he missed one of the soldiers, now shooting at him with a fearful scream. His whole upper body was repeatedly punctured, one bullet burst through the side of his neck. His veins almost



burst, each glowing with a beaming light that flowed in cycles. The glowing reached his neck and scattered like tree roots across his face, merging with his eyes.

The soldier's magazine was empty. The Russian clicked his trigger wide eyed, too mortified to grasp why the Arab didn't die. The Russian saw the massive body rise, the bullets falling from his wounds like drops of water. The enemy tried to reload but had nothing left. His sweat drenched the rifle in his hands, his jaw shivering. This can't be a mortal man; he must have thought. That had to be enough to kill him, yet here he was marching forth, bloodlust plenty in his crystal eyes. His wounds now closed faster than before, letting out a repressed howl from the burning sensation. Power of that kind didn't come without a painful cost.

The Russian brandished a knife in a last fit of courage, dropping his rifle to the floor. He stood there, grasping it with both hands charging at the demon a few feet away. All the Captain had to do was grab his left arm, snapping it like a stick that was the plaything of a child. The knife dropped from the Russian's hand and landed in Omar's, who impaled it in the soldier's abdomen.

They both fell to the ground. Omar looked up with a still-injured neck to see more weapons, laying on the ground where he was yet to kill anyone. He scoffed as he stood back up.

Once back up the blood was dry, his vest shredded. He walked over to pick up his sword, then his gun towards the middle of the square. In the catharsis of surviving yet again he observed his beloved tools of destruction, his pistol and sword he'd named Sköll and Hati. After years of sitting in a locked chest he'd entrusted to a friend, the smoothness with which they operated told that they were cleaned and oiled regularly.

that they were cleaned and oiled regularly.

He looked at the sky, then behind him where he could spot the top of the minaret. It was exactly midday. He walked forward and his breathing got heavier, letting out just a bit more hope that someone would be brave enough for what needed to be done.

Then, the resounding call to prayer came. Omar smiled and looked down, imagining the face attached to the brave voice that dared to give the call to prayer at such a time. The fountain still had water in it, but it was fetid. Unsuitable for ablution. Luckily, his faith allowed for the use of dry dirt or sand in its place. He performed the ritual cleansing, scrubbing with patches of sand the blood that still stained his arms and chest. He knew where north was, so he turned accordingly and commenced the prayer.



Omar's ears were still blown out, but now that proved to his benefit. He could pray in peace and remember all those he loved that he prayed for each time he prostrated before God. While his head touched the ground he prayed for his beloved wife, for her comfort and relief after what they'd just been through. He prayed for Walter and Arno, for Cyrus, and all his brothers he'd lost. Above all, he whispered pleading that he will get to see his daughter in paradise.

As he stood up for the final fourth of his prayer, a blade blew through his stomach. The blood began to gush, a second passed before he threw his elbow back into the face of the perpetrator. It was one of the men who ran. He tore out the bayonet and jumped the stunned Russian, stabbing him repeatedly in his neck as he turned red with rage. When the life exited this one, Omar looked around to see he was alone. He stood back up, turned to where he was just before he was stabbed, and restarted his prayer over again, as the steam rose from his guts that sowed itself back together.

This time, he finished without interruption.

When his hearing returned, Omar realized that the sounds of explosions and gunfire were much less frequent than when he first arrived. Another sound was coming closer, he recognized it. He set Hati deep in the dirt and sat in the middle of the square with Sköll in hand to heal further. A few minutes passed, the ground shook with stones bouncing with some landing in Omar's lap. There was a large stone wall where Omar gutted the last Russian. He heard running, something akin to a stampede.

He continued looking at it until it fell, exploding from one end. The perpetrator was

kneeling, regaining his footing after bursting through it. His blonde hair was now grey with ash, his white shirt soaked in blood and intestines like he bathed in it. Bruford walked barehanded to Omar once he saw him. The German's eyes were branching with the same-colored veins as him.

"How many?" Bruford said with a hoarse tone.

"I don't count."

"Haha! What happened to the Wulver I once knew? I see eight just here."

"There were more, but they ran in your direction. You took care of them?"

"Maybe. Some had no weapons, so catching them was a hassle. Where's your Nubian friend?"

Omar looked up to the mountains to where Cyrus' first flare shot had come from, then east until he met a twinkle from his scope.

"He's looking at us now. Could have helped when I was trying to pray in peace just now," he said ever so coldly in his tone knowing Cyrus could hear him, with Bruford squinting where he'd pointed for him and made a child-like wave with his giant palm. A bullet was shot by their feet, which they took as an answer equivalent to "I was busy." Omar stood back up, mostly recovered. He tore off the ruined army vest, taking from it what was left. Twelve more rounds for Sköll, his cigar box, and the last flare gun still intact. The metal cigarette box was broken at the hinge. He tilted it and saw everything inside gone.

"Shit."

"What a shame."

"Let's keep moving, we still have the other side of the river to get to."

They turned to where they hadn't crossed yet and ran. They heard another flare shot and watched the sky looking for the color. Yellow smoke. That



means half of them are gone, either killed by Omar and Bruford within the village or shot from afar by Cyrus' rifle whilst fleeing.

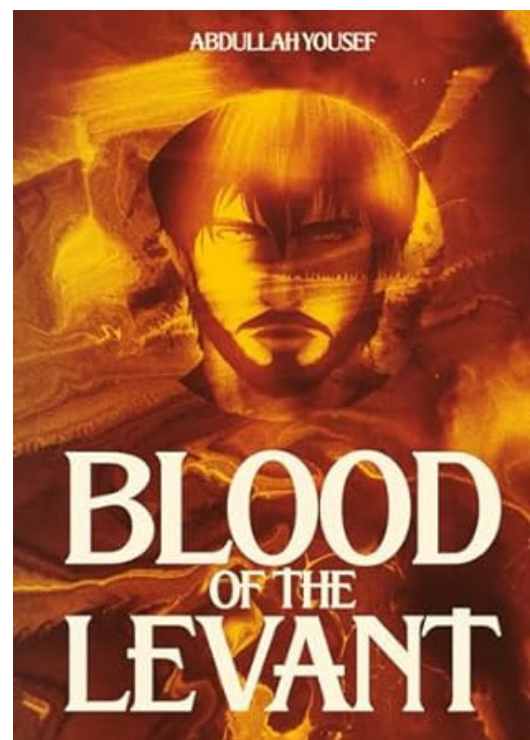
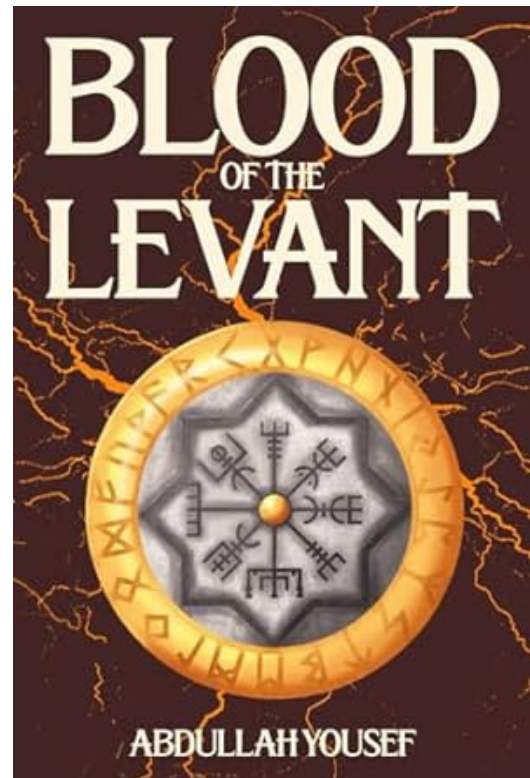
"About a hundred and fifty left, give or take. I don't see anymore," Omar said in a low voice, talking to himself.

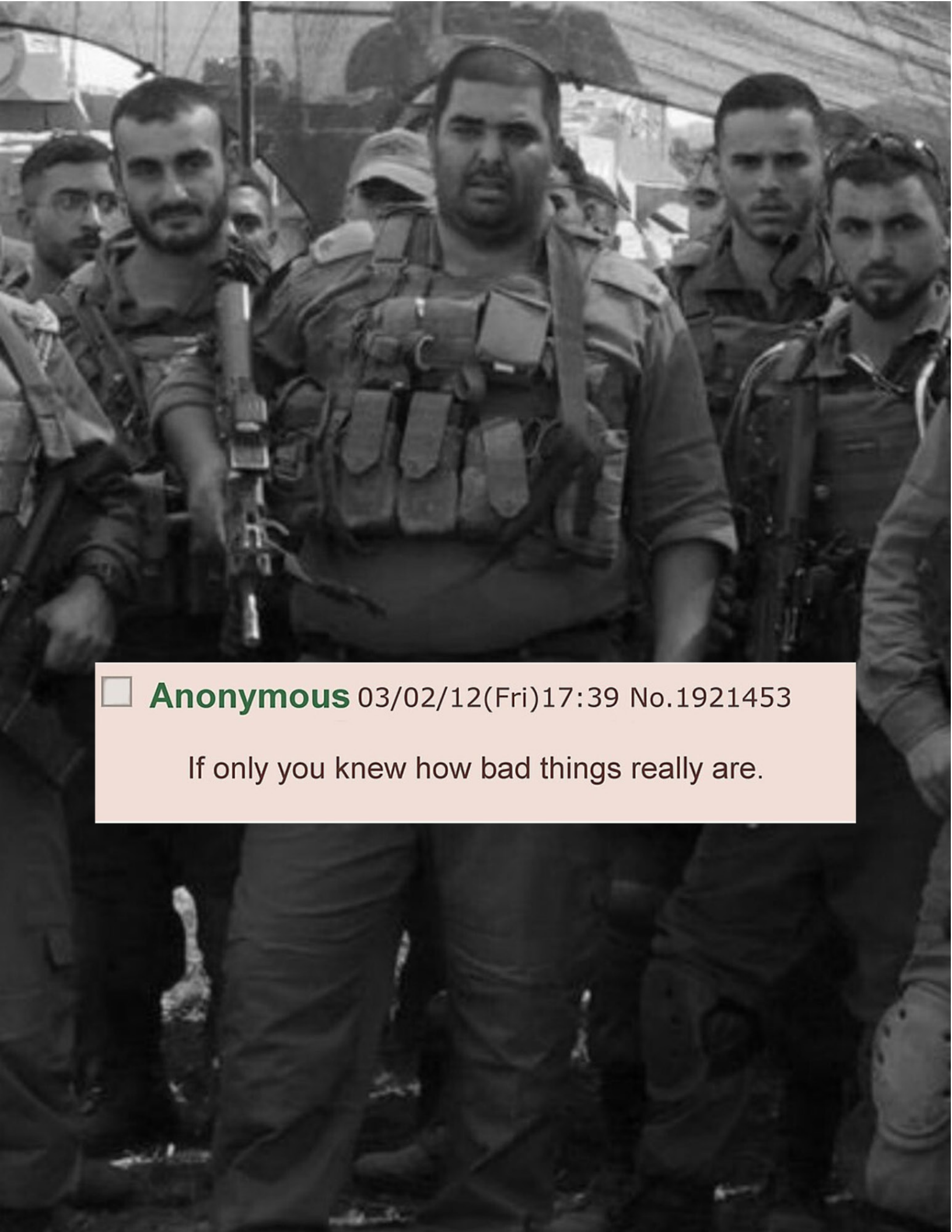
As they ran west to cross the bridge, they began seeing civilians exiting their homes. None were young men. Women, children, and elders began to come out thinking the battle was over, when Omar knew the rest of the Russian soldiery collected at the west end hiding, not risking open battle anymore. He looked around trying to conjure whatever words of Turkish he learned in passing. He had nothing but gibberish, so he resorted to Arabic.

"STAY IN YOUR HOMES, IT ISN'T OVER! STAY IN HIDING IF YOU WANT TO LIVE!" he yelled, as loud as he could to make sure as many as possible heard. His voice was a lively roar in a place where even the air itself flowed like it was near the end of its term. He couldn't stick around to check if they listened or understood what he was saying, for they could only interpret what they saw: him, the infamous Levantine running shirtless with a sword and pistol in hand, and a European giant drenched in blood tailing him.

Bruford laughed as they ran. "It's great to have you back, Herr Braun!" ✂

**Blood of the Levant is available on Amazon in Kindle, Paperback, and Hardcover. [amazon](https://www.amazon.com)**





**Anonymous** 03/02/12(Fri)17:39 No.1921453

If only you knew how bad things really are.





هٰنَاكَ اُبْتَلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

“Then and there the believers were put to the test, and were violently shaken,

And ‘remember’ when the hypocrites and those with sickness in their hearts said, ‘Allah and His Messenger have promised us nothing but delusion!’” (33:11-12)



ABDULLAH YOUSEF



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



# SIEGE OF ANTIOCH

MAY 1268



**Sultan Baybars**



**Simon Mansel**

**15,000- Mamluks**

**7,500 Crusaders**

The Sultan had grown irritated with the prolonged presence of Crusaders in Muslim lands, and sought to deal blows so painful that al-Sham wouldn't be invaded for centuries to come. Coming off a near-complete destruction of the Armenian capital, Baybars laid siege to the city and captured it on the 18th of May.

For three days Antioch was sacked, in which 17,000 inhabitants were killed and 100,000+ taken prisoner.



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# QAWWAM FITNESS



## FERDAWS ASHRATI THE SPIRITUAL DUTY OF PHYSICAL FITNESS



Islam encourages believers to maintain a balanced and moderate lifestyle, emphasizing the significance of caring for one's body as both a blessing and responsibility from Allah. Fitness not only contributes to the upkeep of physical strength and endurance, but also aligns with the Islamic principles of discipline and self-control. Men who participate in combat sports or have military expertise are often fit and well-respected by their peers. They live a physically fit life,

despise being out of shape and spend an allotted amount of time daily pursuing a healthier and more active lifestyle. By cultivating a strong and healthy physique, Muslim men are better equipped to fulfill their religious obligations such as daily prayers, fasting and playing with their young children. These types of men are able to engage in acts of worship with vigor and navigate the challenges of daily life with resilience. On the same note, Muslim men can also be extremely influential in changing



the world. Since these men prioritize their health and well-being, they are more capable of serving Allah and the Ummah. History shows us that such acts of service will inevitably inspire a change in the world. A sound state of physical fitness serves as a means to enhance mental clarity and emotional well-being thus fostering a deeper connection to one's faith and an increased capacity to serve both oneself and the community.

Understanding the intricate relationship between politics and violence is crucial for Muslim men to help bring the Ummah together and push back on the impending demise of the global Muslim community. The reality of violence shapes and reshapes the course of nations and communities. Politics in essence encompasses power struggles, ideological conflicts and the distribution of resources, predominantly determined through violence. Political ideologies and power imbalances lead to disputes that escalate into conflicts, ranging from localized tensions to full-scale wars. Violence is utilized as a tool for liberating the oppressed, political control or as a means to suppress dissent. Unfortunately, the implications and reality of violence are lost on most modern Muslim men who serve their weak will and epicurean desires. Man's disregard of their duty towards the Ummah, themselves and to Allah has resulted in a world of men who have no grit or tenacity to free themselves and their loved ones from the gluttonous shackles of the modern world. A proper man commands respect and carries the tools and mettle necessary to change the world. The resilience and unwavering commitment demonstrated by the trailblazers of the Islamic tradition serve as an inspiring guide

for the succeeding generations to emulate. For a man to be able to counter the degenerative state of manhood, he must first start with himself.

When Islam expanded in the 7th century, the men who rode horseback through the desert were men of both extreme spiritual and physical stature. These men ate little, fought hard and prayed often. They conquered and crushed the superpowers of their time. Young men today know little to nothing about these men. They do not know about Khalid ibn al-Walid, a shrewd military strategist and a lightning bolt on the battlefield, a man who never saw defeat in battle. They do not know about Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, known for his bravery, and eventually rising through the ranks to become the commander in chief of the Rashidun army. As children, Muslims learn everything about the beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and rightly so, yet they do not learn enough about the men who surrounded him. Children do not know that sports like wrestling, archery and horseback riding are part of the prophetic tradition. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ praised these activities and there is a reason why this is included in the vast array of hadith literature. The consistent promotion of spiritual and physical strength are part of the Islamic culture and an integral part of the Sunnah. The inability to conceive the deep connection between physicality and spirituality actually speaks to a much larger and more significant fact that contemporary Muslims overlook: the martial nature of man combined with the innate spiritual condition instilled in every man go hand in hand.

Throughout history, adept Muslim men, familiar with utilizing controlled and strategic violence, played a pivotal role in reshaping the world whether through sport or political liberation. Men like the legendary Omar Mukhtar, known as "The Lion of

the Desert,” encapsulate what it means to be a Muslim man. Mukhtar was a teacher of the Quran who became a feared guerilla leader during the Italian occupation of Libya that lasted from 1911-1943. Mukhtar started his resistance at the age of 53, an age where most men are grandfathers, past their physical primes and tend to live quiet lives. Mukhtar grew up in the harsh desert. As a young man he learned about his local environment and guerilla tactics vital for survival if oppressors ever entered their homeland. This is the reason we fondly look back on Mukhtar today: he became an emblem for resistance and resilience. Another famous military general, one of the most notable in both Islamic and Western history, is Salahuddin al-Ayyubi – the genius who liberated Jerusalem in 1187. Salahuddin acquired a deep knowledge of the Quran and the religious sciences, as well as arithmetic, law and history. Salahuddin embodied the idea of a true Muslim warrior, winning battles intellectually and physically, while expressing that “to fight against one’s desires is the greatest of all fights.” Salahuddin understood what was needed for a man to achieve his potential, which is why he is remembered as one of the most famous military generals in history. Men like Salahuddin and Omar Mukhtar are not results of haphazard effort. Rather, they are a product of intentional work and purpose from youth up until and through manhood. These men carried sway and the tools to change the world. Finding a purpose worth fighting for and working tirelessly to achieve the outcomes sought are the type of experiences necessary to change the world, including the current political and social

situations throughout the Muslim world.

History is one of the best predictors of the future. It has shown repeatedly what happens when a population allows the proliferation of weak men: those cultures are doomed. Every culture throughout the world and human history has a form of combat sport or martial culture that was an integral part of their classical tradition. Islam is no different; the Sahaba participated in wrestling tournaments from a young age. There is a plethora of examples of the physical culture in the Islamic world. For years, the esteemed Dagestani wrestling culture gained recognition in the wrestling world, but it entered the mainstream spotlight primarily through Khabib Nurmagomedov's remarkable rise as the undefeated UFC lightweight champion, retiring with a flawless 29-0 record. The Olympic silver medalist in freestyle wrestling and former UFC fighter Yoel Romero once stated in an interview: “I don’t know if you know but the best for you, for everybody, for the world, the best city in the world for wrestling is Makhachkala, Dagestan.” There are about 50,000 competitive wrestlers in Makhachkala. This number does not consider the surrounding countries, which also have a rich history of wrestling. The Muslim communities who reside in the Caucasus regions are renowned for their bravery, combat skills and military valor. Chechen guerilla fighters hold a reputation of being accomplished on the battlefield. The Chechens were able to hold their own against the Russian Empire, something that many armies today fail to do. When conflict erupts in the Middle East, speculations arise regarding the potential involvement of the Chechens. Just the mere notion of their entry into the war evokes a profound sense of dread and despair in their enemies. Both in the military aspect

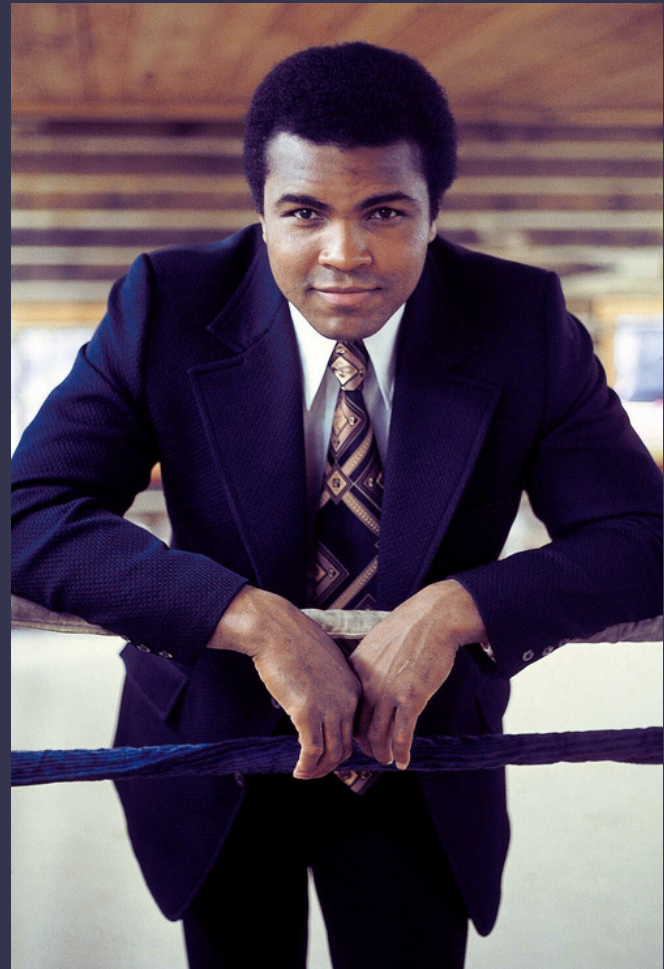


and the sports world, the men from these regions are admired and viewed as an indomitable force to be reckoned with.

Muslim men have long dominated combat sports due to their discipline, work ethic and their ability to ignore the lavish lifestyles that consumed their peers once they reached monetary success and worldwide notoriety. Boxing gave us the likes of Muhammad Ali who is considered one of the greatest boxers in the history of the sport. Many people do not know the impact Muhammad Ali had on the political sphere and the amount of respect he drew from the average person to notorious world leaders. During the 1960s, Ali, then known as Cassius Clay, refused to be drafted into the U.S. military during the Vietnam War due to his religious beliefs and opposition to the war. His objection resulted in legal battles, the revocation of his boxing titles and a temporary ban from the sport. Later in his life, while Ali was plagued with Parkinson's disease, he continued to make a global impact. Before the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein held 15 Americans hostage in an effort to stop the impending bombing campaign that was expected from the United States. Upon hearing this, Muhammad Ali planned a trip to Iraq to help secure the hostages. U.S. officials warned Ali of this and told him that it would not be a good idea. However, a man as devout as Ali only feared Allah. Once in Iraq, he was swarmed with fans, visited schools and prayed in local mosques. Eventually, Ali secured a meeting with Saddam Hussein. After their meeting, Saddam said, "I'm not going to let Muhammad Ali return to the U.S. without having a number of the American citizens accompanying him." In the end, Muhammad Ali secured the release of all 15

Americans. This success reveals the power and influence of Muhammad Ali. His relentless commitment to his principles, along with his fast hands, iron chin and unbreakable grit in the boxing ring, turned him into a role model and symbol of resistance against the prevailing political sentiments. His example underscores the potential for an individual's commitment to physical and moral strength to influence the broader political narrative.

Strength is not only a virtue, but is also a necessity in the modern world. The exponential growth of the technological age has allowed men to become fat, lazy and virtually useless. The reality is there has never been a time— nor will there ever be a time— that makes it acceptable for a man to be out of shape. Islam understands this, which is why martial arts and physical strength are prominent



features in many cultures in the Islamic world. The martial arts world is full of Muslim champions and fighters who are known for their extreme discipline, integrity, and code of honor. They hold a high position in the martial arts subculture. Speak to any of these fighters and they will associate these traits not with intense training regimens or outstanding fighting careers, but with the Islamic tradition and their upbringing. Islam has a rich history of masculinity, combat, and physical prowess. Muslim men were born to be warriors and raised to be defenders of their homeland, families, and their religion. Being unapologetic about Islam, while holding an impressive physique that instills fear, has been lost in contemporary culture—especially for Muslims who reside in the Western world. The social, political, and mental impact of this loss has become increasingly significant and will have dire consequences for the generations to come because disciplined men are highly spiritual men. The non-physical lessons from combat sports and experience in violent and volatile situations extend into every area and process of life. Men who train in combat sports are humble but fierce, kind but strong, and capable of extreme violence yet they maintain their composure. This dynamic is not some inference that has no backing; this is an integral lesson that every fighter learns after years of combat. The fighter who has experienced combat understands the reality that violence *does work* and will always work as long as the enemy persists. To be an expert in combat one must be physically, mentally, and emotionally capable. A clear mind is a necessity during combat because a rash decision is not only futile, but a death

sentence. There is a common misconception that men cannot be both formidable intellectuals and possess immense physical prowess. This assumption is not only wrong but is against the Islamic way. All of the heroes of Islam are men of valor and men of intelligence. The reality of violence is lost on the Muslim youth in the West - this is not how their predecessors were though. Muslim men of the past were notorious for being both warriors and scholars.

Men of robust and unwavering nature are necessary to change the current structure and politics of the Ummah. The Sahaba and those who came after them changed the world. Without their sacrifice and ability, many Muslim countries today would not be Muslim. Such tenacity and ability have been passed down in many cultures around the Muslim world and still exist today, but the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are not united. They lack the resolve that the noble Sahaba had. The Chechens and other small bands of Muslim resistance fighters all fought wars against superpowers and proved that their reputation was not a myth. Muslim individuals also made impacts that were on par with groups who fought for their liberation. Muhammad Ali and Khabib are known and held in high regard by both Muslim and non-Muslim men. These two men gave dawah not only through their words but also with their accomplishments inside the ring and their character outside the ring. The world will not be changed by men who sit idly by while their brothers and sisters are oppressed. It will be the men who impose their will and who understand the significance of physicality and competence in changing the trajectory of humanity, those are the men who gave us Islam. Those are the men honored by God.

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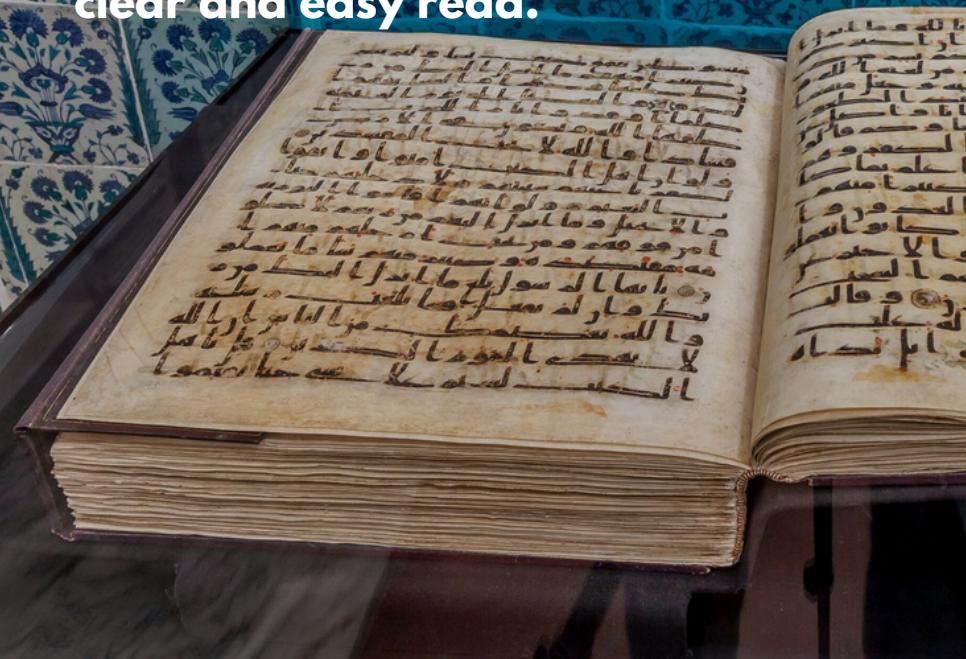
- **AL-SHIFA'** by Qadi Iyad

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# The History Of The QUR'ĀNIC TEXT

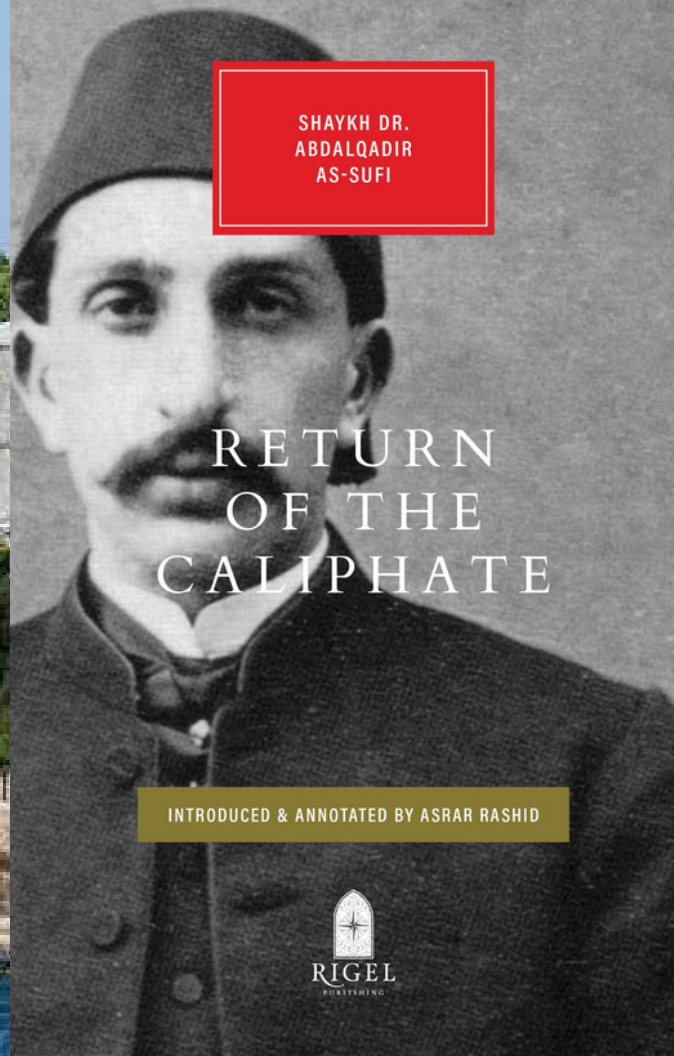
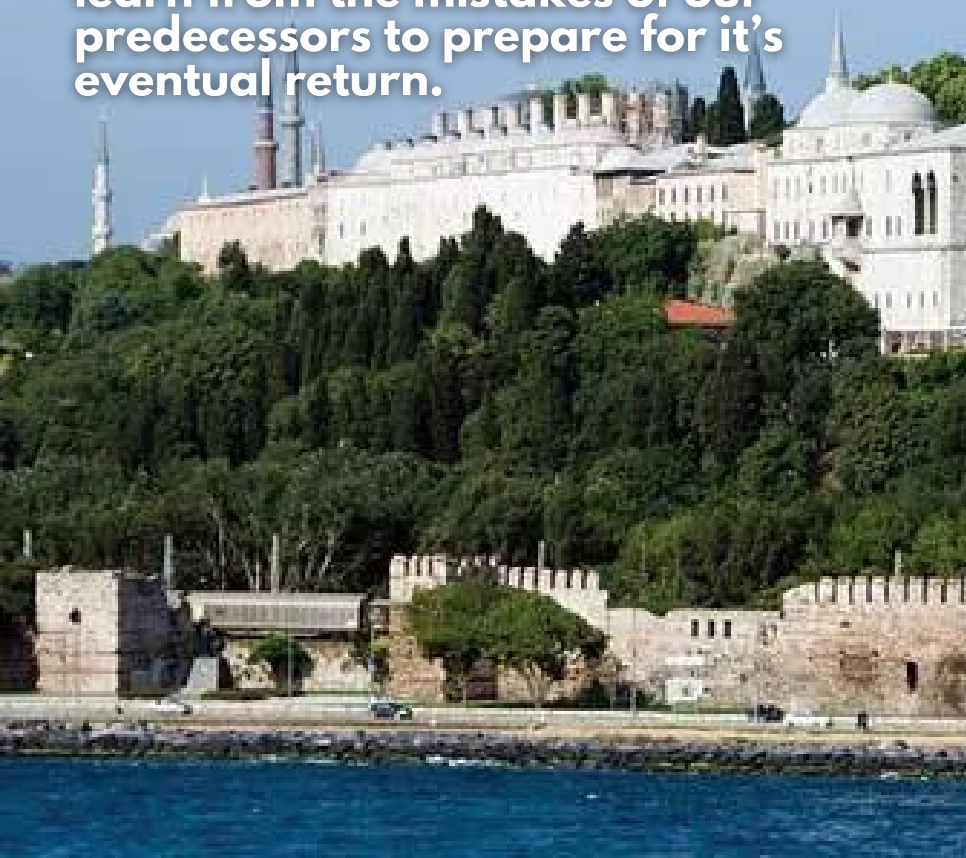
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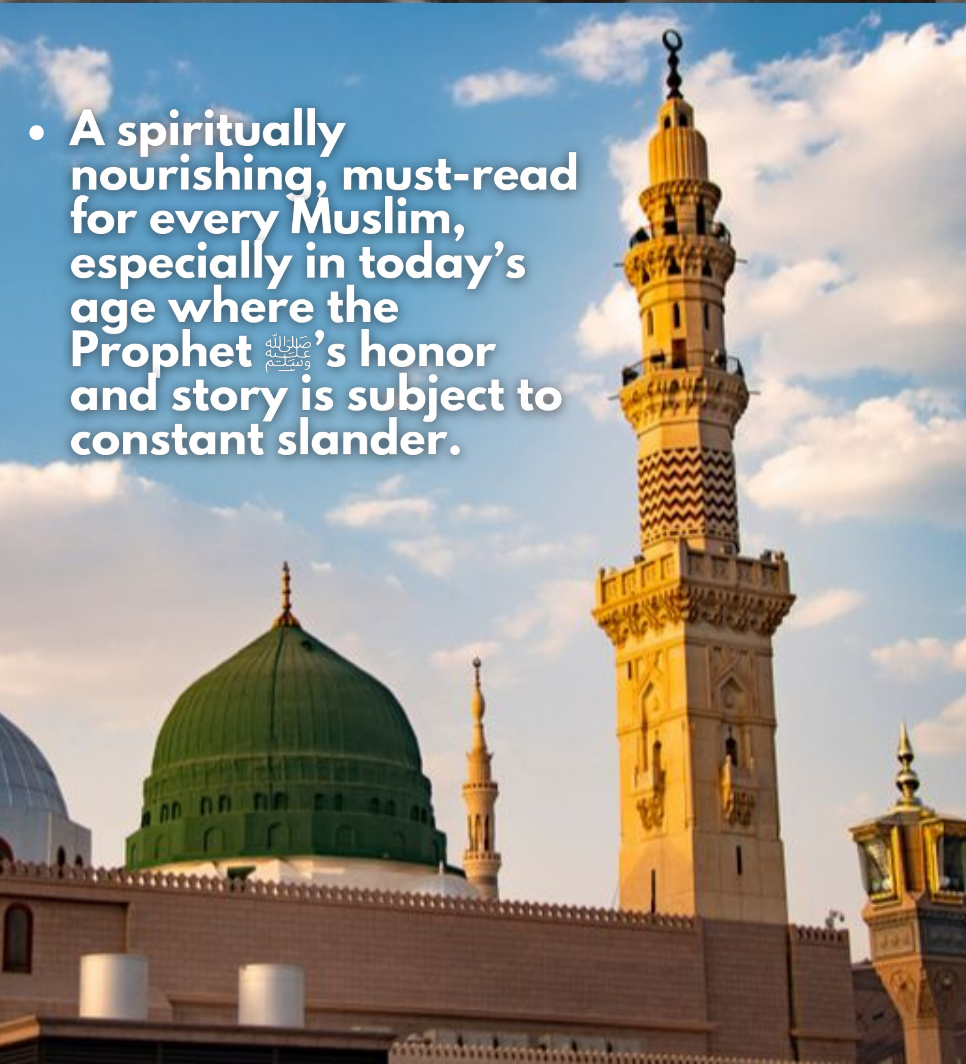
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MUHAMMAD  
MESSENGER OF ALLAH  
ASH-SHIFA OF QADI 'IYAD



QADI 'IYAD IBN MUSA AL-YAHSUBI

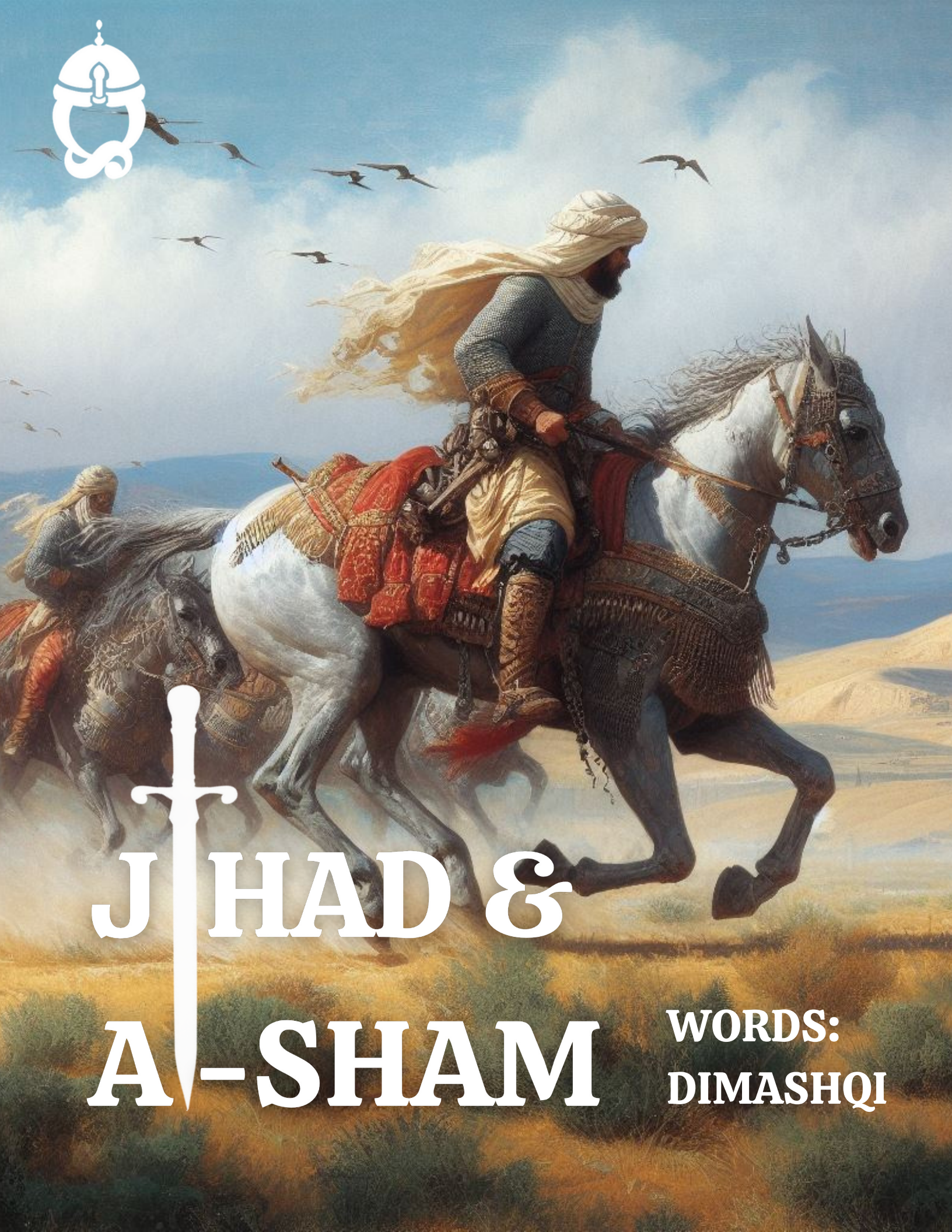
TRANSLATED BY  
AISHA ABDARRAHMAN BEWLEY





**> Sensitive Young Man**





# J HAD & A-SHAM

WORDS:  
DIMASHQI





# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**I**n a narration attributed to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, he says: “If the people of al-Shām (1) become corrupt, then there is no good left in you” (2). al-Shām is a blessed region that the Prophet ﷺ prayed for and praised, and from its virtues is that it is a land of Jihād.

Abū al-Dardāʾ, may Allāh be pleased with him, was a judge in al-Shām, when he wrote to Salmān al-Fārisī, may Allāh be pleased with him: “Come to the blessed land, the land of Jihād!” (3).

There is a famous narration in which the Prophet ﷺ said: “A group of my Ummah will remain triumphant on the truth, dominant over their enemies. They will not be harmed by those

who oppose them, except what they will experience of discomfort in living, until Allāh’s Command arrives (i.e. the Day of Judgement), and they will remain as such.” (4) They said: “O Messenger of Allāh, where are they?” He said: “In Bayt al-Maqdis, and around Bayt al-Maqdis” (5).

The group mentioned in the above narration is sometimes mentioned ambiguously, but it is clear from a holistic reading of the primary sources that this refers to a group in al-Shām. In a variant of the narration, they were explicitly described. He ﷺ said: “They are the people of al-Shām”, and he pointed with his finger toward al-Shām (6).

The great companion Muʿādh Ibn Jabal, may



Allāh be pleased with him, said about the group: “They are the people of al-Shām” (7).

Qatādah (d. 118) said: “I do not think they are anyone other than the people of al-Shām” (8).

Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852) said regarding this narration: “These people will be in Bayt al-Maqdis, which is part of al-Shām, and they will have strength in Jihād against their enemy, as well as sharpness and diligence” (9).

In a similar narration, he ﷺ said: “A group of my Ummah will remain fighting upon the truth, triumphant on those who oppose them, until the last of them fight al-Dajjāl” (10).

Mutarraf (d. 95) said regarding this: “I examined this group and found them to be the people of al-Shām” (11).

Some scholars interpreted these narrations to be referring to the people of Hadīth, to which Ibn Rajab (d. 795) says: “As for those who said that this refers to the people of Hadīth, that does not contradict what we have mentioned; because Islām will settle in al-Shām in the end times, so the Prophetic heritage will definitely be there. The people with knowledge of the Prophetic Sunnah in al-Shām are of this group, the upholders of the truth, who are not harmed by those who oppose them” (12).

And because of their plentiful Jihād, they became extremely knowledgeable of the rulings related to it. As such, many scholars used to say: “If you wanted to learn the Fiqh of Jihād then accompany the people of al-Shām”, as was said by al-Shāfi‘ī (13) (d. 204) and Ibn ‘Uyaynah (14) (d. 198). In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said: “The most virtuous Jihād is *Ribāt* (15), and the most virtuous *Ribāt* is in ‘Asqalān” (16).

It was for this reason that scholars would go to ‘Asqalān for Jihād, like Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161)

who stayed in ‘Asqalān for 40 days doing *Ribāt* (17). Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728) said: “The righteous from among the Muslims used to inhabit ‘Asqalān for the purpose of *Ribāt*” (18). Ibn al-Nahhās (d. 814) said: “There were many from the Sahāba, Tābi‘īn, and their Tābi‘īn, whom no one knows except Allāh, that left Makkah and Madīna for al-Shām to uphold *Ribāt* until they died and were honored with martyrdom”. (19)

The Prophetic insight on Jihād in ‘Asqalān remains to our very day. Ghazza has been under siege by the Zionists for years on end, and the Muslims’ Jihād against them is ongoing, especially since the blessed attack on the 7th of October. Their Jihād falls under his saying ﷺ: “The most virtuous *Ribāt* is in ‘Asqalān”.

Now you may ask: The narration of the Prophet ﷺ mentions ‘Asqalān and not Ghazza? Ghazza was historically part of ‘Asqalān after the Islāmic inquisition into al-Shām, and it would be called: “Ghazzat ‘Asqalān” (20).

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ also said: “May Allāh have mercy on the people of the graveyard”. ‘A’isha, may Allāh be pleased with her asked: “The people of al-Baqī’?” He said: “May Allāh have mercy on the people of the graveyard”. ‘Ā’isha asked: “The people of al-Baqī’?” until he repeated it thrice, then he ﷺ said: “The graveyard of ‘Asqalān” (21).

This is expanded upon in another disputed narration, where he ﷺ is narrated to have said: “There is no graveyard in the east nor the west that is more favored by Allāh except the one I have seen (i.e. al-Baqī’), other than the graveyard of ‘Asqalān”. ‘A’isha asked: “And what is the graveyard of ‘Asqalān?” He ﷺ said: “*Ribāt* of the Muslims, by which Allāh chooses 70,000 martyrs” (22).

In light of the past narrations on the virtues of Jihād in al-Shām, as well as specifically Bayt al-

Maqdis and 'Asqalān, I find it fitting to mention a brief timeline of the many efforts to conquer, defend, and liberate Jerusalem:

The Muslims first set sight on Jerusalem in the 15th year after the Hijrah (636 AD) when the Siege of Jerusalem began, led by Abū 'Ubaydah Ibn al-Jarrāh, may Allāh be pleased with him. After 6 months of siege, Sophronius of Jerusalem agreed to surrender on the condition that he is to do so directly to 'Umar Ibn al-Khattāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, the Caliph at the time. Thus 'Umar travelled to Jerusalem, and received the keys to the city.

In the year 493 (1100 AD), the Fātimids, who had gained control over the region, lost the First Crusade, losing Jerusalem in the process. The Christians began spreading their wings, and formed the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which would go on to last about 90 years. During those 90 years, the neighboring Zengids, spearheaded by al-Sultān Nūr al-Dīn Zengī, did not give the Christians much room to breathe, launching many attacks, counterattacks, and foiling much of their plans like the Second Crusade. This eventually paved the path for al-Sultān Salāh al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī to crush the Crusaders in the Battle of Hittīn, returning Jerusalem to the Muslims.

Jerusalem remained under Muslim rule until the year 1335 (1917 AD), when the Ottomans lost against the British Empire. And with the introduction of the Balfour Declaration, came the beginning of the Zionist state of Israel. In 1348 (1930 AD), the Palestinian scene saw the introduction of the Syrian scholar, 'Izz al-Dīn al-Qassām. Al-Qassām is considered to be the first to have put up armed resistance against the Zionists, leading to his martyrdom at their

hands. His actions inspired and led to the Great Palestinian Revolt. Fast-forward to the 21st century AD, after both Nakbas in 1948 and 1967, Ghazza and portions of what is known as the West Bank have become the last regions not under Zionist occupation (on paper). As many have said: People began to lose hope and the Palestinian cause started fading into history. In comes the Palestinian resistance on the 7th of October 2023 to deal Israel a blow unlike we have ever seen, in the shape of the "al-Aqsā Flood".

We ask Allāh to facilitate their efforts, to make them victorious over their enemies, and to raise the ranks of their martyrs.

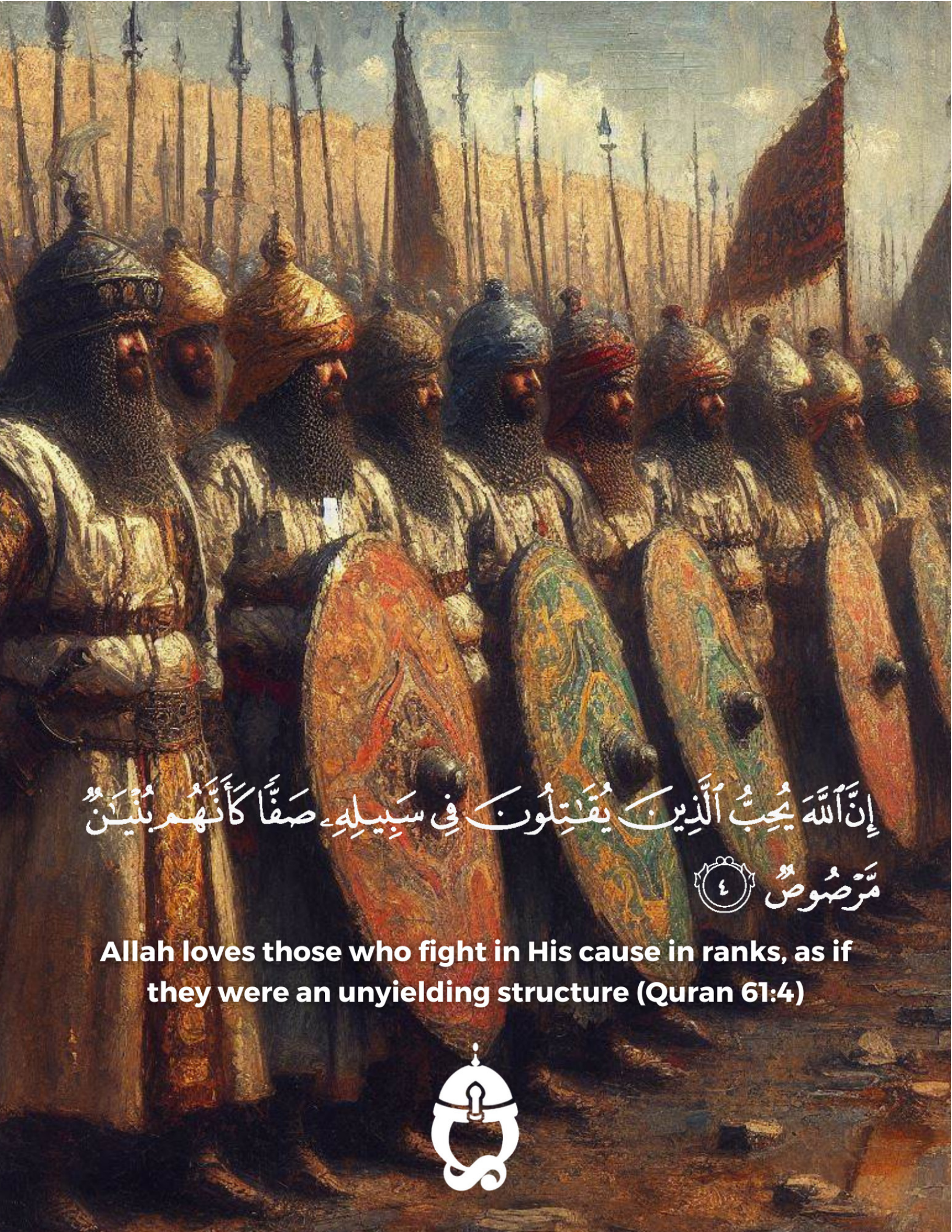
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

## Dimashqi posts @D1mashqi

### End Notes:

1. The region of al-Shām mostly covers what is now known as Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon.
2. Narrated by al-Tirmidhī (2192) and Ahmad (15596).
3. Muwatta' Mālik (1459).
4. Narrated by al-Bukhārī (3462) and Muslim (1037).
5. Addition was narrated by Ahmad (22320) and Tabarānī (7643).
6. Narrated by al-Fasawī (12/296).
7. Narrated by al-Bukhārī (3461).
8. Tārīkh Dimashq (1/125).
9. al-Ajwibah al-Mardiyyah (3/1027).
10. Narrated by Abū Dāwūd (2484) and Ahmad (19895).
11. Mustakhraj Abū 'Awānah (4/509).
12. Fadā'il al-Shām (Pg. 67-68)
13. Tārīkh Dimashq (1/330).
14. Tārīkh Dimashq (1/329).
15. Ribāt: Jihād in places under siege or threat by the enemy.
16. Narrated by al-Tabarānī (11138).
17. Hilyat al-Awliyā' (7/25), Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā' (7/260).
18. Majmū' al-Fatāwā (27/141).
19. Mashārī' al-Ashwāq (Pg. 385)
20. See: Ahsan al-Taqāsīm fī Ma'rīfat al-Aqālīm (Pg. 54, 174).
21. Musannaf 'Abd al-Razzāq (9635).
22. See: Tanzīh al-Sharī'ah al-Marfū'ah (2/48).





إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ  
مَّرْصُومٌ ﴿٤﴾

**Allah loves those who fight in His cause in ranks, as if they were an unyielding structure (Quran 61:4)**



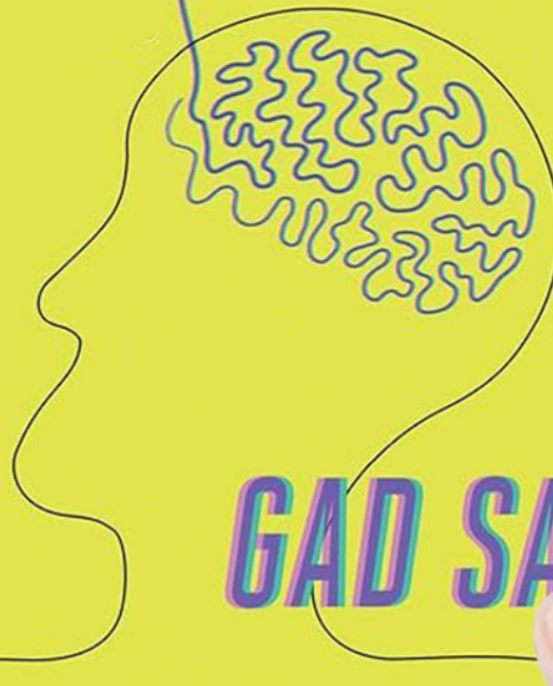


"Read this book, strengthen your resolve, and help us all return to reason."  
—JORDAN PETERSON



# **THE GADSIDIC MIND**

***How Rabid Ethnic Narcissism is Killing  
Common Sense***



**GAD SAAD**



# IHSAN IN ENTERTAINMENT

WORDS: WES AZZAIANI



## ON WHY YOU NEED TO STOP SPENDING YOUR LEISURE TIME GETTING POISONED BY THE POWERS THAT BE, SAYS WES:

**H**orst Schulze, former president of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, wrote a book called *Excellence Wins: A No-Nonsense Guide to Becoming the Best in a World of Compromise*. During a promotional tour of the book, someone cornered the eighty-year-old executive and asked him about his idea of “excellence.”

“It’s not harder,” Mr. Schulze replied before he was pulled away by his PR people. What did Mr. Schulze mean by “It’s not harder”?

He meant that it’s not harder to be excellent than it is to be mediocre. Either way, you burn through the same number of hours per day. When you make the conscious choice to be excellent, it gives you the momentum to perform at that level on a regular basis. When you become comfortable with mediocrity, your momentum stalls and it becomes difficult to accomplish anything.

As long as you’re awake, you’re choosing to do something, even when it comes to your “leisure time.” Do you choose with excellence in mind? Or do you choose mediocrity or, worse, Dajjalic content? Do you choose to watch Western

entertainment on Netflix and what is essentially softcore pornography, play video games with cringe-worthy social messaging, or waste time interacting with trolls online who probably don’t even exist in real life? All those things consume raw effort — and in return you get nothing back. Instead, why not calibrate your leisure time by choosing entertainment that is meaningful to you, where you benefit even when you’re not technically “working”?

People often misunderstand this idea of “doing better things” in our free time. You don’t need to get into the intellectual grind of studying multi-volume works on the fiqh and pretend to be a scholar when that’s not even your area of interest or specialty. You’ll find instead that the people who cultivate excellence are not working themselves to death to achieve it; they’ve just got the right orientation, motivation, and atmosphere for excellence to manifest itself on a regular basis. Even when they’re having fun, you can tell they’re getting something beneficial out of it.

You might be a movie connoisseur or manga collector. You might be a man who secretly enjoys romantic comedies. You might be among those who

enjoy anime. Your tastes vary along with your preferred frequency. There comes a question many of us don't ask: how does our Islam come into these things? Can it at all? How are Islam and Muslims portrayed in the entertainment industry in the first place, and does it match up with our idea of "excellence"?

The standard media depiction of "the Muslims" in most settings are as Taliban goat herders—but in the Saharan desert. There's always a desert, Indian or Arabic music, and a long shot of a camel striding along in the dunes. Notice the hairy man who is slightly angry and harsh as he's taking water out of a well. If you're unlucky, this hairy, angry, harsh person is usually presented as a terrorist.

"But Wes," you might say, "hasn't Hollywood moved away from that to a more nuanced depiction?"

Well, if by "nuanced" you mean "more woke and liberal," you would be correct. Let's look at one modern example of so-called "nuance."

Secrets & Sisterhood: The Sozahdahs is a new reality TV series on Hulu that follows the lives of 10 Afghani sisters living in Los Angeles. The series luridly shows these "Muslim" women living a materialistic California lifestyle while clashing with the traditional norms of their homeland. The show's producers may say, "This is a Muslim series," but it looks more like an Afghan version of The Kardashians. The girls' clothing choices, discussions about illicit sex, and lack of family values demonstrate clearly that Islam plays no role in their lives. The mainstream entertainment industry is too Dajjalic to portray Islam or its followers in a modest and dignified way, let alone in a manner that portrays excelling in one's religion to be the ultimate goal. Why do

they ignore and skip over the mainstream members of the Muslim community who do not engage in illicit sex or blow things up?

We need Muslim entertainers who choose roles that maintain their values and show Muslims in an honorable light, and Muslim media advisers who hold fast to *ibsan* and honor instead.

We have spent decades watching Muslims depicted as crazed or conflicted terrorists or, as recently shown, secretly degenerate and "just like the rest of us." As the entertainment industry has begun to try to reflect spiritual diversity, they've also created "token Muslim" roles and "Muslim extras" in background scenes. But their meager attempts to highlight Muslim characters who aren't terrorists often end up displaying the opposite extreme: worldly and secular Muslims who have nothing to do with Islamic traditions, like in Secrets & Sisterhood. It seems that Hollywood has gone from depicting Muslims as religious extremists to depicting Muslims as secretly unreligious. It now feels like Shaytan is giving dawah on our behalf.

It's a bit too much. Those of us who consume entertainment deserve a more realistic variety of Muslim personas. It's time for Western Muslims to get more involved in creating, writing, and producing Islamic entertainment; to combine our resources to support new creatives in these areas; and to choose to consume truly Islamic content.

Some types of entertainment may seem consistent enough with your values and beliefs as a Muslim, yet if Muslims do not create the entertainment, it is not likely to be aligned with Islamic principles. For example, there are plenty of Japanese manga and anime series like Naruto and Vinland Saga that have storylines depicting the hero's journey with the character growing in strength and defeating evildoers – often with a



moral basis – but when critical, one finds it too shallow to leave an effect on them if not grounded in the divine.

If you're a Muslim who cares about the Deen, it is critical for you to find excellent entertainment options that are as closely aligned with your values as possible. The days when we are satisfied with entertainment featuring westernized brown people with vaguely Muslim names are over. This isn't to say that Muslim-produced entertainment must solely consist of religious lectures. Rather, you deserve to enjoy a new and interesting Muslim adventure that throws you off a bit. There is and will be more content for Muslims by Muslims, as long as you keep an eye out for it. "It's not harder" to choose excellence, even in our entertainment.

**WESAM AL-DAHER IS THE FOUNDER AND HEAD WRITER OF TALES OF KHAYR, AN ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY FOR MUSLIMS, BY MUSLIMS. HE CREATED THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF, A GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES THAT WALKS THE BALANCE BY PROVIDING HIGH-**

**QUALITY ADVENTURE STORIES THAT 21ST-CENTURY READERS EXPECT WHILE ENSURING THAT THE DRAMATIC ARGUMENTS AND THEMES OF ALL THE STORYLINES ARE IMMERSSED IN THE VALUES OF TRADITIONAL ISLAM. CHECK IT OUT HERE: [HTTPS://TALESOFKHAYR.COM](https://talesofkhayr.com)**







Entrance to the Temple Mount - Gustave Bauernfeind

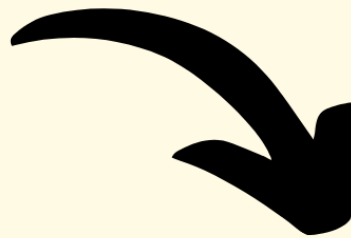


# The **PILL** that made a man out of Mahmoud!

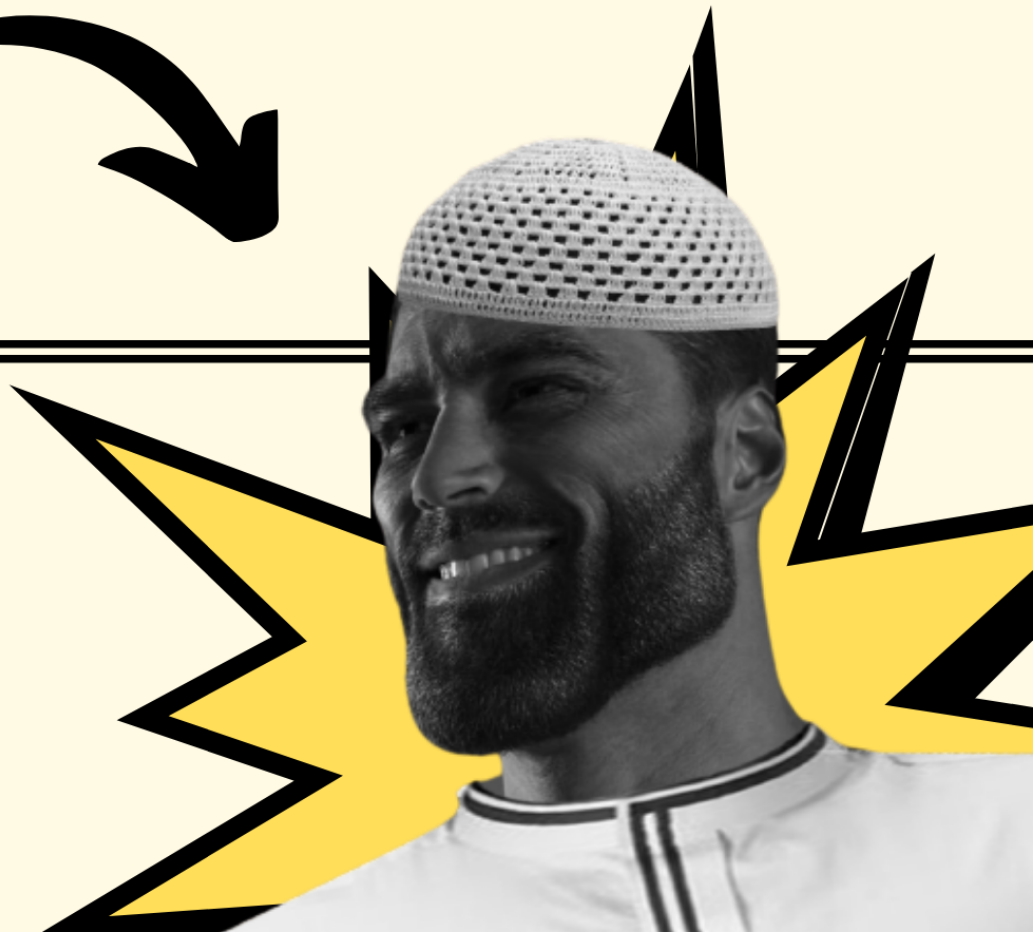


@MajestyandBeauty

MAJESTY  
AND  
BEAUTY



## What was it?





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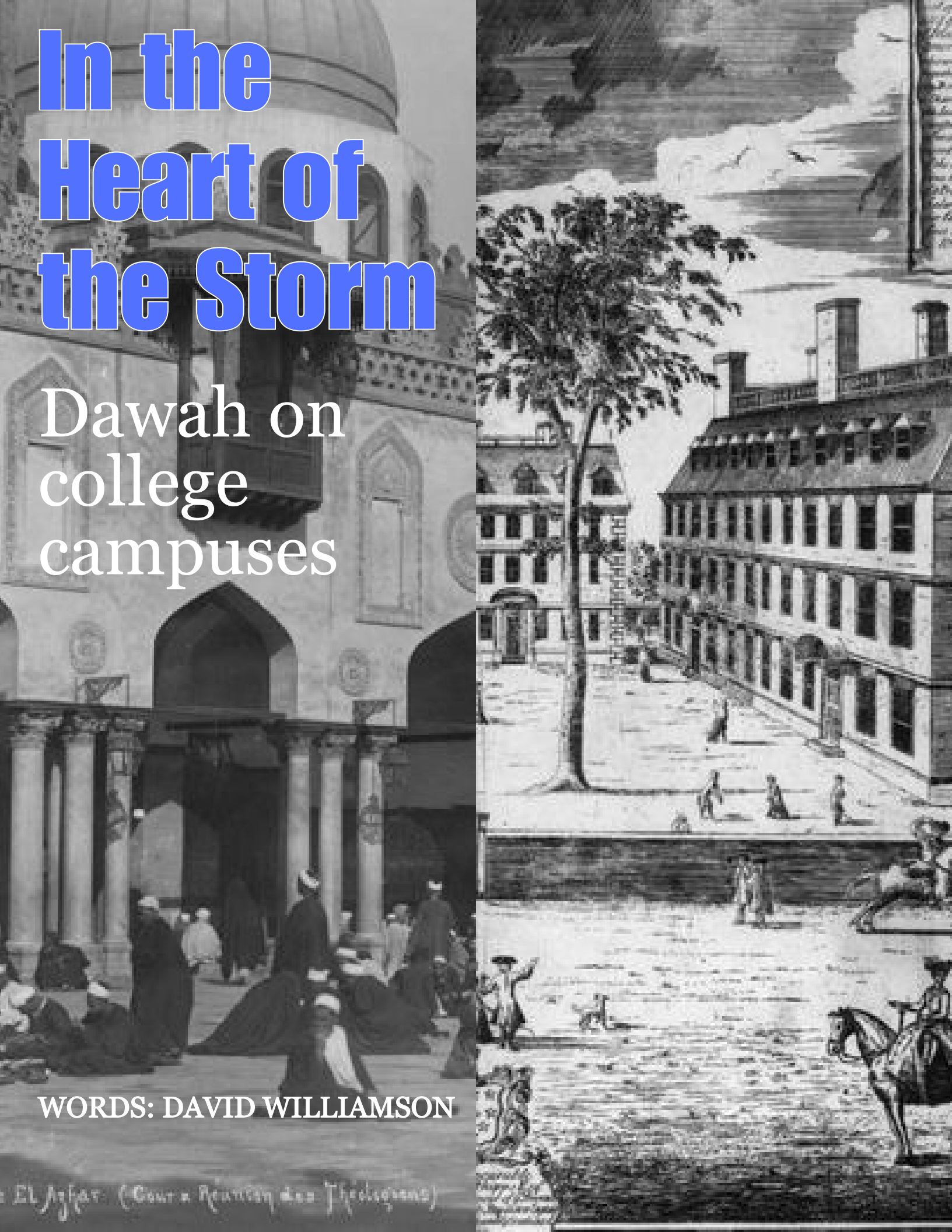


# In the Heart of the Storm

Dawah on college campuses

WORDS: DAVID WILLIAMSON

EL Aghar: (Cont. a Reunion des Theologiens)







“Well, I’m actually an angel sent by God, and I’ll meet you on Judgement Day.”

That’s from someone who came to the Dawah table my friend Mouctar and I set up on campus. This was our last dawah day of the school year, and it was by far the most memorable. This was a Christian man on a bike who retorted with that after we dealt with most of his arguments, who needed to make a getaway right after. I overheard him after I was done talking to a former Navy Lieutenant Commander-turned-lizard people truther who revealed to me that the Nazis built lizard statues in Norway that reveal the truth about the world. College campuses are amazing.

I set up our dawah early in my freshman year. I joined a vacant spot on our MSA Board and got quick to work on establishing a Dawah presence on campus. I still remember the first day I went out there. I had a folding table, a box of Qur’ans that my Imam from back home gave me, and a few pamphlets lying around my house from the previous year’s ICNA convention. There was no tablecloth, no signs. Just me, a cheap table, and some literature. It was a great first trial run. I think I talked to maybe seven people in the hour I was there, and I tried to stick to the famous “GORAP” method taught by iERA.

I wanted to start the dawah on our campus because college campuses are an untapped goldmine for reaching out to non-Muslims. Most college kids know little to nothing about Islam, and many are at an age where they are searching for who they are and what they want to do with their lives. It was this same state of youthful flux that led me to explore Islam myself. I grew up in a non-practicing Christian household and when I was around 14 years old and began searching for

meaning in life and moral clarity. It was during this time that I read The Autobiography of Malcolm X and was blown away by his story of coming back from the lowest of the low, transforming his life through Islam and the lives of so many others even today. But it was one of the final chapters, “Mecca”, that stood out to me most. Malcolm describes the Muslims he saw during hajj:

*During the past seven days of this holy pilgrimage, while undergoing the rituals of the hajj [pilgrimage], I have eaten from the same plate, drank from the same glass, slept on the same bed or rug, while praying to the same God—not only with some of this earth's most powerful kings, cabinet members, potentates and other forms of political and religious rulers—but also with fellow-Muslims whose skin was the whitest of white, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, and whose hair was the blondest of blond—yet it was the first time in my life that I didn't see them as 'white' men. I could look in their faces and see that they didn't regard themselves as 'white.'*

*Their belief in the Oneness of God (Allah) had removed the 'white' from their minds, which automatically changed their attitude and behavior toward people of other colors. Their belief in the Oneness of God has made them so different from American whites, their outer physical characteristics played no part at all in my mind during all my close associations with them.”*

Reading this description moved me. Not only because it represented a massive moment of moral maturity and the separation of Malcolm from his old Nation of Islam views, but because it illuminated to me something that I wasn’t even sure could exist: a white Muslim. Malcolm’s description of the Muslims he saw matched mine so well, that it almost felt like he was describing me. I had always thought of Islam

as this far-off, alien, oriental religion for Arabs and brown people, but reading Malcolm's description opened a possibility that I would have never considered: I could be Muslim.

When I did become Muslim, the impact it made on my life was immense. I felt true gratitude for what I had, and I finally had a coherent moral framework that I had been looking for. But most importantly, Islam gave me a sense of grounding because now my life has an ultimate goal: to please the one who created me.

I mention my story because, while everybody is unique, much of what I sought from Islam are concerns that many young people share, especially on college campuses. The post-9/11 era is ending, and the negative sentiments that "Muslims are crazy terrorists," are not as common in my generation. Additionally, the loss of general religiosity, disenchantment with the world, and the rise of a sense of meaninglessness are increasing exponentially. Yusuf Ponders from Sapience Institute recently wrote an excellent book on this subject titled "Islam & Nihilism: My Poison & My Cure". In it, he explores (in a more academic, philosophical sense) the rise of nihilism in the West and how we got to this point, while later elaborating on Islam's role in curbing it.


It is against this backdrop that I feel that increasing our dawah efforts to non-Muslim college students and young people more generally is both needed and has the potential for great success. People are looking for a higher purpose in this life and a way to make sense of the chaos of the world, especially recently, and Islam provides that closure and grounding that we so desperately need. Recognizing this challenge, I've started catering much more of my dawah towards the pragmatic truth of Islam. We are more often

asked the question "How does faith impact your *life*?" in its various forms then asked anything about terrorism, violence, or the age of Aisha. I believe that a part of this is because people, psychologically, look for reasons to want to do something, and then come up with rationalizations for why it's true. It's for this reason that when I center my arguments around easy-to-grasp points about Islam making a person better, they often come away much more interested in learning more compared to people to whom I have just given some abstract argument about a controversial issue. My friends who are the most interested in Islam are attracted to its strict adherence to traditional values, its strong grounding, and its ability to aid people in a way that other faiths don't seem to do. While the philosophical arguments commonly used in dawah are useful for people who want to engage in higher-level discussions about the existence of God, morality, etc. (and I've certainly had some awesome conversations in this regard), the average young person who just wants to learn about Islam from scratch probably won't benefit much from that. This is also where answering the question of the purpose of life holistically is extremely important. I always emphasize that while the purpose of life is, as Muslims, to worship God, worship is a holistic concept that can incorporate any action so long as the intention is to please the Creator and that this can even include mundane things such as studying or eating. It's in this way that dawah almost becomes like sales — I explain why Islam makes sense, but more importantly in the eyes of others, what that does for the person. After all, many things are true, but why does it matter that I believe and follow *these* ideas?

Campus Dawah is extremely simple to set up. I have been doing it with a table at the same location



for over a year now, and while we've upgraded from my original setup to a custom tablecloth, brochure holders, and a whiteboard, there's still not much to it. One of the unique opportunities for it is that when people do end up taking shahada, which, in our case, has been 2, one student, one outsider, they already have a community to become a part of on campus. This is in stark contrast to many others who embrace Islam on their own, where it can be extremely difficult to find other Muslims around you when it's not a part of your everyday life. This was a problem I dealt with when I first accepted Islam. There were no practicing Muslims in my high school, so I had to find my own community to be a part of, which, after a year of being Muslim, I finally did.

All in all, college campuses are a largely untapped gold mine for dawah, and if you are a college student reading this, I urge you to start the initiative, even if it's just a few Qur'ans and an old table. If you do take it up, I urge you to find a friend to do it with you. You'll earn the reward together and will motivate each other on days when you don't feel like going out there. My dawah partner and I have become extremely close friends, and our energy feeds off each other to make our dawah much more effective (seriously, I can't emphasize this point enough, get a friend). It'll take time to grow, but if you're consistent in your efforts, it will be incredibly beneficial and full of barakah. 

David Williamson is a sophomore in University. He is also the Founder and lead Narrator at AudioIlm, an Islamic audiobook production company. Check out his website [audioilm.com](http://audioilm.com). If you have any questions about setting up dawah at your school, or about anything else, email him at [david@audioilm.com](mailto:david@audioilm.com)

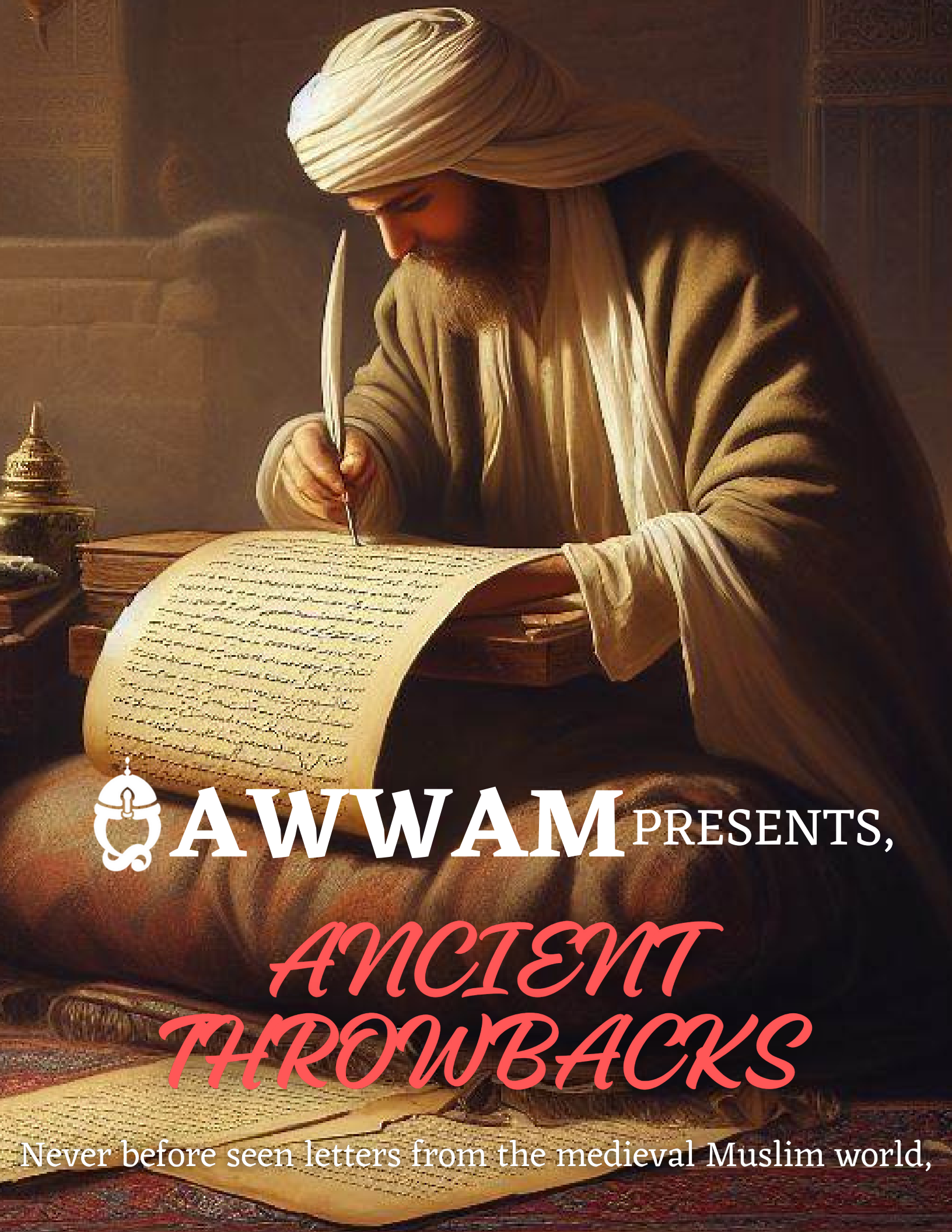


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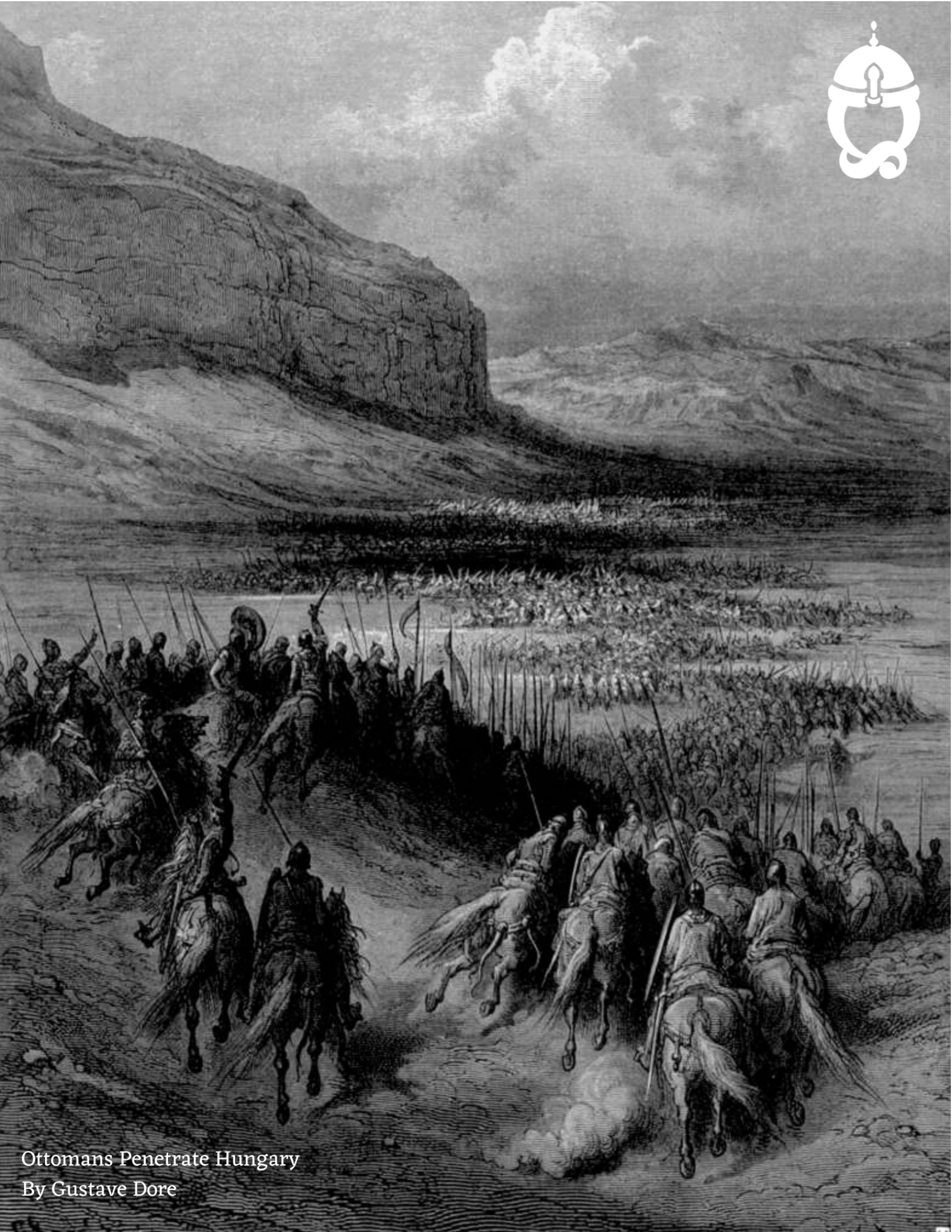
*ANCIENT  
THROWBACKS*

Never before seen letters from the medieval Muslim world,

Behold, an 11th Century fierce letter from a Fatimid governor to the neighboring Crusaders:

*“What the did you just say about me, you little b\*\*\*\*? I'll have you know I graduated top of my class in the madrasa, and I've been involved in numerous secret raids on the Knights Hospitaller, and I have over 300 confirmed kills. I am trained in gorilla warfare and I'm the top archer in the entire Fatimid caliphate forces. You are nothing to me but just another target. I will wipe you out with precision the likes of which has never been seen before on this Earth, mark my words. You think you can get away with saying that to me in letters? Think again, f\*\*\*\*er. As we speak I am contacting my secret network of spies across the Levant and your trade route is being traced right now so you better prepare for the storm, maggot. The storm that wipes out the pathetic little thing you call your life. You're dead, kid. I can be anywhere, anytime, and I can kill you in over seven hundred ways, and that's just with my bare hands. Not only am I extensively trained in unarmed combat, but I have access to the entire arsenal of the Hashasheen Order and I will use it to its full extent to wipe your miserable ass off the face of the continent. If only you could have known what unholy retribution your little "clever" comment was about to bring down upon you, maybe you would have held your tongue. But you couldn't, you didn't, and now you're paying the price, you goddamn idiot. I will sh\*t fury all over you and you will drown in it. You're dead, kiddo.”*





Ottomans Penetrate Hungary  
By Gustave Dore