



AL-UMMAH

Monthly Journal ■ Volume 1 ■ June 2026 ■ Issue 2

Website: www.al-ummah.org



A World in Crisis

□ **Al-Ummah Foundation Expands Activities
to Boost Muslim Unity**



**Fuat Sezgin: The Man Who Restored
the History of Islamic Science**



AL-UMMAH

Guidelines for Submission

Al-Ummah welcomes well-written articles that demonstrate depth, clarity, and analytical rigor. They must offer a structured analysis and a strong contextual understanding of the subject matter. We welcome contributions on global geopolitics, the Muslim world, political and economic developments, historical perspectives, and broader social, cultural and technological transformations. Please note the following requirements before submission:

- The article should be between 1,000 and 1,300 words and written in clear and polished English.
- It should present well-reasoned arguments supported by credible evidence where appropriate.
- It must be original and unpublished. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of facts, proper sourcing, and maintaining intellectual integrity.
- All submissions will undergo editorial review.
- Al-Ummah reserves the right to edit articles for clarity, style, and length.
- Publication is not guaranteed.
- Please include the author's full name and a brief bio with your submission.
- Submissions should be sent to: info@al-ummah.org.

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CONTINUING THE QUEST FOR INTELLECTUAL RENEWAL

A-Ummah's inaugural issue was warmly received across a wide spectrum of readership — from academics and policymakers to young professionals, community leaders, and thoughtful individuals across the Muslim world and beyond.

This second edition builds upon that foundation, deepening the conversation while expanding into new territories of contemporary relevance.

"A World in Crisis" offers a tour d'hori-
zon of human civilization in decay and the possible reasons behind it. The story of Bangladesh examines the sharp decline in its financial professionals despite overall progress. "Kashmir: Broken Promises" delves into history to trace where and how things went wrong with the beautiful valley shared by Pakistan and India. The Nakba Day story drives home the point that this chapter is still not closed and that Palestinians have the right to return to reclaim their homeland. We have a report on an intensive tour of Bangladesh by the Foundation's chief, Mohammad Zakir Hossain, setting out a wide range of activities that resonated well with the spirit of Al-Ummah Foundation.

Since civilizations are built upon men of excellence, the Fuat Sezgin story presents an inspiring account of the scholar who restored the history of Islamic science, alongside Yunus Emre, the mystical poet who devoted his life to spreading the message of love, brotherhood, and spiritual harmony. Then there is Timothy Winter's moving account of how, after embracing Islam, he undertook the long-overdue task of shaping the discussion of Islamic spirituality and tradition in the West. In "Quest for an Islamic State," the author reflects on his personal journey in search of an ideal Islamic state and concludes that the political space must remain open, shared, and inclusive — one that creates room for a just society for all.

The journal continues to evolve as a multifaceted initiative — combining print excellence with dynamic digital outreach. We remain grateful for the support and engagement that have carried us this far, and we look forward to walking this path together in the issues



Editor-in-Chief



AL-UMMAH

Monthly Journal

Editor-in-Chief
Mohammad Zakir Hossain

Managing Editor
M. Nasir Jawed

Editorial Board
Dr. Mohammad Abdul Aziz
Dr. Abdul Mannan
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Art director
Mohammed Youssef Salem

Al-Ummah, a monthly Journal, is published by the Islamic Center for Research and Documentations, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

It is available in English, Arabic, Bengali and Turkish.

Dear writers, you can submit articles on current affairs, Islamic sciences, intellectual studies, history, and public policy etc.

We welcome original and neatly written articles in English, Arabic, Bangla and Turkish not exceeding 1300 words, to:

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مؤسسة الأمة
AL-UMMAH
FOUNDATION

**Bangladesh Islamic Center for
Research and Documentations
(BICRD), Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Volume 1

June 2026

Issue 2



**Al-Ummah Foundation Expands Activities
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p. 4

Al-Ummah Foundation Expands Activities to Boost Muslim Unity	4
A World in Crisis: Palestine, Polycrisis, and the Collapse of the Moral Order	10
Bangladesh Rising But Finance Talent Is Falling Behind	18
Kashmir: The Graveyard of Broken Promises	22
Nakba Day, the Status of the Zionist State, and the Palestinians' Right of Return	24
Fuat Sezgin: The Man Who Restored the History of Islamic Science	28



**Fuat Sezgin: The Man Who Restored
the History of Islamic Science**

p. 28



A World in Crisis: Palestine, Polycrisis, and the Collapse of the Moral Order

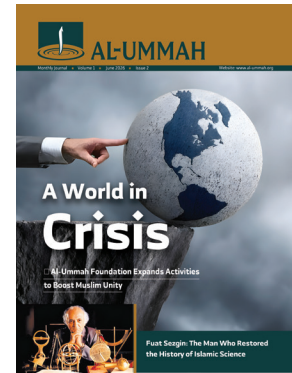
p. 10

Charter for Responsible and Ethical Media	34
Timothy Winter: A Scholar Bridging Islamic Tradition and Modern Britain	38
Hidden Muslim Legacy in the Americas	42
Islamic Education and the Quest for Peace, Security, and Nation-Building in Nigeria	45
Yunus Emre: The Mystical Poet Who Inspired the Turks	50
History of the Kaaba Door	54



Nakba Day, the Status of the Zionist State, and the Palestinians' Right of Return

p. 24



Our Contributors



Ghulam Nabi Fai



Mohammad Nasir Jawed



Busari Kehinde Kamorudeen



Nafissa Douida

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AL-UMMAH FOUNDATION EXPANDS ACTIVITIES TO BOOST MUSLIM UNITY

Foundation chief Mohammad Zakir Hossain expands intellectual and humanitarian engagement through strategic meetings, Palestine advocacy, and international academic collaboration.



Al-Ummah Desk Report



*U*nder the leadership of Mohammad Zakir Hossain, Chairman of Al-Ummah Foundation and Editor-in-Chief of

Al-Ummah Journal, the Foundation has intensified a series of high-profile intellectual, educational, and humanitarian engagements, aimed at strengthening Islamic scholarship, promoting Muslim unity, and amplifying global awareness regarding the Palestinian cause.

Currently visiting Bangladesh, Za-

kir Hossain engaged in activities that demonstrated the expanding role of Al-Ummah Foundation as a platform for:

- Islamic intellectual development
- Educational and research initiatives
- Media and publication work
- International scholarly cooperation
- Advocacy for Palestine and Jerusalem
- Promotion of Muslim unity and strategic awareness

Growing Role of Al-Ummah Foundation

Mr. Hossain held several academic and intellectual platforms across Dhaka, bringing together prominent scholars, journalists, researchers, educators, and social thinkers from Bangladesh, Palestine, and Turkey. The initiatives, according to observers, reflect a growing effort to foster informed dialogue, intellectual cooperation, and moral solidarity within the global Muslim Ummah amid ongoing geopolitical and humanitarian crises.

Through seminars, publications, international partnerships, academic lectures, and public engagement programs, the organization continues to contribute to informed discourse and humanitarian consciousness on issues affecting the global Muslim community.

Observers note that in a rapidly evolving geopolitical environment marked by conflict, polarization, and information warfare, initiatives grounded in scholarship, ethical media engagement, and intercultural dialogue are becoming increasingly important for promoting awareness, unity, and constructive so-



Mohammad Zakir Hossain, Chairman of Al-Ummah Foundation and Chief Editor of the Al-Ummah Journal, presents the first issue of the journal to Honorable Dr. A.F.M. Khalid Hossain, former Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Interim Government of Bangladesh.

cial development within the Muslim world.

Zakir Meets Dr. Khalid Hossain

One of the most notable engagements was a courtesy meeting between Foundation chief Zakir Hossain and Dr. A.F.M. Khalid Hossain, the former Religious Affairs Advisor to Bangladesh's Interim Government.

During the meeting, Zakir presented a copy of the inaugural Bengali edition of Al Ummah - Journal, a newly launched intellectual and research-oriented publication that aims at promoting Islamic scholarship, social awareness, and contemporary discourse among Bengali-speaking Muslims worldwide.

Dr. Khalid Hossain, also a contributor to its first issue, praised the initiative



Mohammad Zakir Hossain, Chairman of Al-Ummah Foundation and Chief Editor of the Al-Ummah Journal, delivers a lecture on “History & Issues of Palestine” at a program jointly organized by the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT) and Al-Ummah Foundation to explore the history, politics, and contemporary issues of Palestine. The program featured Eng. Adnan Alhaj Shaker, Director Al-Rawad Academy, Istanbul, a Palestinian scholar, as the Resource Person.

“Palestine has become a defining test of modern civilization’s commitment to justice, human dignity, and universal ethical principles.”
Mohammad Zakir Hossain, Chairman, Al-Ummah Foundation

and highlighted the importance of responsible Islamic journalism and intellectual engagement in the modern era. Discussions focused on the journal’s editorial vision, long-term objectives, and plans for expanding its digital and international outreach.

Both sides emphasized the urgent necessity of establishing credible and

principled media platforms capable of addressing misinformation, ideological fragmentation, and cultural disorientation affecting contemporary Muslim societies.

Other participants at the meeting hoped the Journal would evolve into a respected platform for knowledge dissemination, critical thought, and constructive dialogue across the Muslim world.

Palestine Event Lauded

As part of its broader educational and humanitarian mission, Al-Ummah Foundation collaborated with the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT), Al-Ruwwad Academy for Jerusalem Studies, and Bangladesh Masjid Mission to organize a major academic lecture series titled: “17 Hours’ Lecture



Participants of the three-day training course pose for a group photograph after receiving their certificates upon successful completion of the program.

on History & Issues of Palestine.”

The three-day educational event was held from 20–22 May 2026 at the BIIT Training Room in Uttara, Dhaka. The sessions were conducted by distinguished Palestinian scholar and academic expert, Engineer Adnan Alhajshaker, Director, Al-Ruwwad Academy for Jerusalem Studies, Istanbul.

The lecture series explored multiple dimensions of the Palestinian issue, including:

- Historical evolution of Palestine and Jerusalem
- Political and legal dimensions of the conflict
- Israeli occupation and humanitarian challenges
- International geopolitics and Middle East dynamics

- Media narratives and global power structures
- Responsibilities of Muslim societies toward Palestine

The event attracted students, academics, researchers, journalists, social activists, and members of civil society seeking a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary realities surrounding Palestine.

Organizers described the initiative as part of an ongoing intellectual effort to cultivate informed discourse, strengthen historical awareness, and encourage moral and humanitarian solidarity with the Palestinian people. Participants received certificates, educational resources, and opportunities for scholarly engagement and discussion throughout the program.



Dr. Mohammad Abdul Aziz, Director General of BIIT, delivering his concluding remarks to participants at the closing session of the three-day training course on Palestine.

Civilizational Crisis

Another significant intellectual event took place at the BIIT Seminar Hall in Uttara under the title: "Palestine and the Crisis of Modern Civilization." Held on 22 May 2026, the seminar featured the renowned journalist, researcher, academic, and social organizer, Mir Lutful Kabir Saadi, who addressed the Palestinian issue not merely as a regional political dispute but as a profound moral and civilizational crisis confronting the contemporary international order.

In his keynote lecture, he discussed themes, including "global justice and human rights," "media representation and political narratives," "international humanitarian responsibility," "ethical

journalism and intellectual resistance," and "the erosion of moral consistency in global politics."

He argued that Palestine has become a defining test of modern civilization's commitment to justice, human dignity, and universal ethical principles.

While participating in the seminar, Al-Ummah Foundation reaffirmed its continued support for educational advocacy, scholarly engagement, and humanitarian awareness regarding Palestine and Gaza.

Geopolitical Challenges

In yet another important engagement in Dhaka, Foundation Chairman Zakir Hossain participated in an exclusive strategic discussion hosted by Mr.

Sabbir Uddin Ahmed, an educationist, writer, and intellectual figure. Engineer Adnan Alhajshaker, a Palestinian scholar and Director of Al-Ruwwad Academy for Jerusalem Studies, also attended the meeting, which involved an extensive discussion on the current condition of the Muslim Ummah, focusing particularly on the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Palestine, particularly Gaza.

Topics discussed included:

- * The suffering and displacement of Palestinians
- * The geopolitical complexities of the Middle East
- * The influence of Western powers on regional instability
- * The need for strategic Muslim cooperation and solidarity
- * Educational, technological, and intellectual collaboration among Muslim-majority countries

The meeting stressed unity to overcome sectarian divisions, including Sunni-Shia polarization, to establish stronger unity and cohesion within the Muslim world. Participants noted that countries such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia possess the strategic and institutional capacity to play a constructive role in fostering collaborative initiatives in defense, technology, research, education, and humanitarian support for Muslim societies.

The meeting concluded in a cordial atmosphere characterized by intellectual openness, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to strengthening coopera-

tion across the Muslim world.

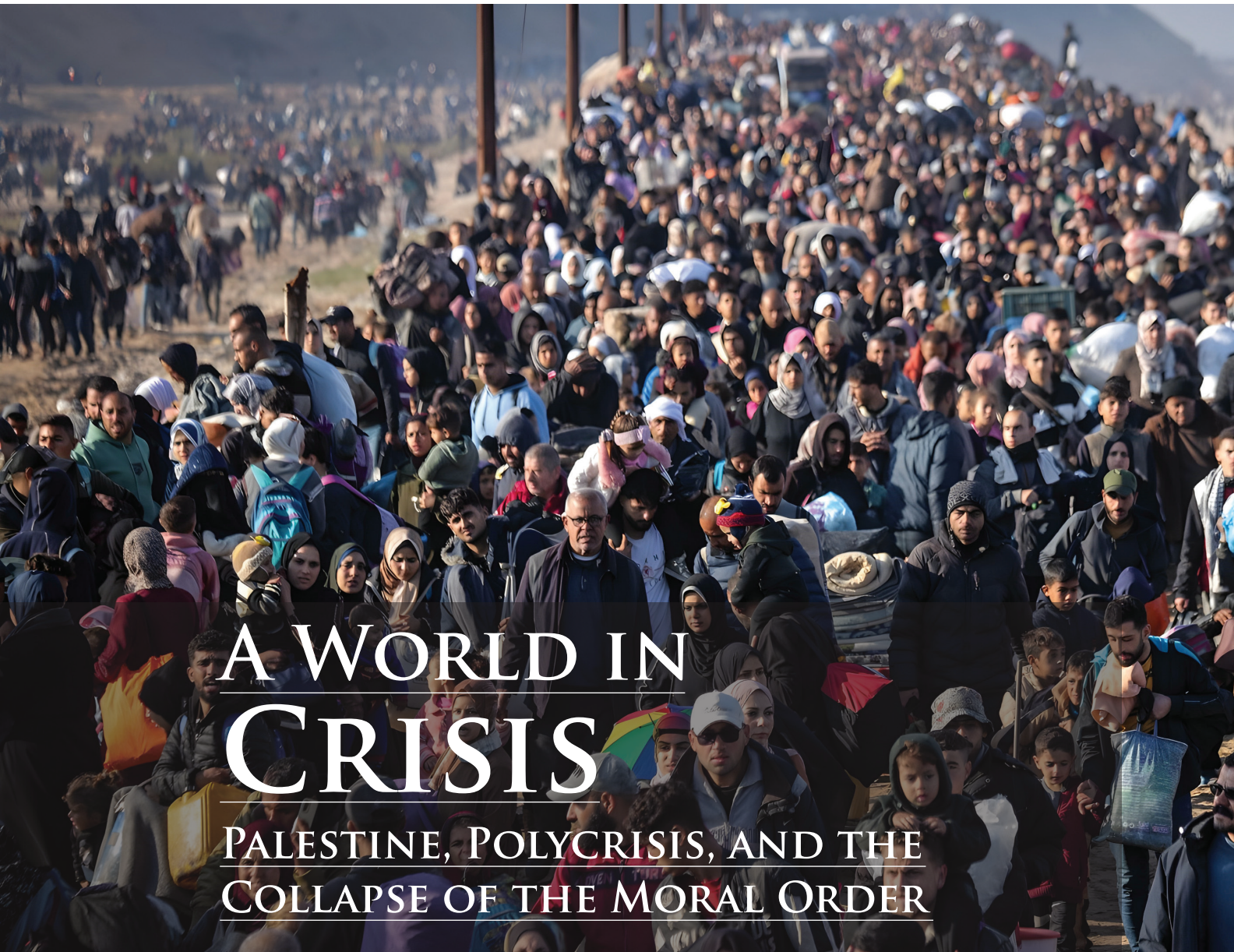
Zakir Hossain also took the occasion to present copies of his recently published Al-Ummah magazine to Engineer Adnan Alhajshaker. Sabbir Uddin Ahmed also presented several of his authored books that covered themes on “Palestine and resistance literature,” “Turkish politics and leadership,” “The contributions of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan,” and “Islamic civilisation and contemporary Muslim thought.”

Special Course on Jerusalem Studies

In cooperation with Al-Ruwwad Academy for Jerusalem Studies in Istanbul, Tanzeem Al-Ummah School in Dhaka organised a specialised academic course on Jerusalem Studies from May 13–15, 2026, at the Tanzeem headquarters in Dhaka.

Jointly presented by Al-Ruwwad Academy Director Adnan Alhajshaker and Al-Ummah Foundation chief Zakir Hossain, the program focused on the historical, religious, geopolitical, and cultural significance of Jerusalem and aimed to provide participants with a deeper academic understanding of the city’s role within Islamic civilization and contemporary global politics.

Organizers described the initiative as an important step toward strengthening academic cooperation between Bangladeshi and Turkish institutions while promoting scholarly awareness regarding Jerusalem and Palestine among younger generations.



A WORLD IN CRISIS

PALESTINE, POLYCRISIS, AND THE
COLLAPSE OF THE MORAL ORDER



By M. Nasir Jawed

Senior Journalist; Former Editor, Yearbook of
the Muslim World, New Delhi

10
Al-Ummah |

We have just witnessed a live genocide in Palestine — arguably the first and most documented genocide of the 21st century. This slaughter did not merely question the credibility of international

institutions. It exposed the moral depravity of world leaders, stunned global conscience, and dragged humanity back to the most fundamental question we have failed to answer for generations: how should the world actually be run?

What is still unfolding in Palestine is not an anomaly. It is the brutal unmasking of the cruelty the world is already enduring. It has ripped away the thin veneer to reveal a cascade of crises



A world in distress. Photo Courtesy: Norwegian Refugee Council.

now stalking our planet: endless wars, violent geopolitical shifts, accelerating climate collapse, economic decay, collapsing governance, forced migrations, and relentless technological disruption — all feeding into a deepening global permacrisis. As International Rescue Committee President David Miliband has warned, we have entered “a new world disorder” — one that has laid bare the terrifying inability of today’s leaders to govern even their own people, let

alone lead humanity.

Just one example says it all: no less than 240 million people globally require assistance as the humanitarian crisis takes its toll. But first Gaza, as this continues slipping into an abyss of dark silence that exposes wider global cruelty—a revelation of how increasingly disposable human suffering has become in contemporary geopolitics.”

The Palestinian Tragedy

What is happening in Palestine is a defining metaphor for a world sliding into systemic disorder. The tragedy here stands as perhaps the most visible indictment of the paralysis and moral fragmentation of the contemporary international order.

This is not just that the world has simply failed to stop the war. It is the exposure of a deeper civilizational malady: the weakening of universal principles in favor of selective morality, geopolitical expediency, and transactional power politics. The destruction in Gaza has revealed the extent to which the post-1945 liberal order, once built upon promises of human rights, international law, and collective security, is losing legitimacy in the eyes of much of humanity.

The ongoing civilizational dysfunction has sharpened perceptions of a glaring double standard at the heart

“The genocide in Gaza mirrors an ugly world that affronts the sensibilities of a common man”

of Western foreign policy. The malaise runs deeper: Institutions like the United Nations remain powerless, Europe largely looks the other way, and those who claim to want a solution maintain an unashamed, eerie silence.

This ongoing civilizational dysfunction has sharpened perceptions of a glaring double standard at the heart of Western foreign policy. The malaise runs deeper still: the United Nations remains powerless, Europe largely looks the other way, and those who claim to want a solution maintain an unashamed, eerie silence. The world is indeed entering an age of dangerous disorder.

What began as isolated geopolitical crises has now converged into something much larger: a planetary condition of instability, fragmentation, and moral exhaustion. From the devastation of Gaza and the widening confrontation involving Iran to the grinding war in Ukraine, humanity is witnessing not simply regional conflicts, but the unrav-

eling of the post-1945 international order itself.

Selective Morality

The old assumptions no longer hold. International law appears selective. Global institutions seem paralyzed. Diplomacy has weakened. Moral language has become transactional. Power increasingly overrides principle.

Scholars now describe this historical moment as an era of polycrisis—a convergence of multiple crises that reinforce and intensify one another: wars, climate breakdown, economic inequality, democratic erosion, forced migration, technological disruption, food insecurity, and the rise of militant nationalism. What distinguishes a polycrisis from ordinary instability is that no crisis remains isolated; each feeds the other, producing systemic fragility on a global scale.

The catastrophe in Palestine has become the defining symbol of this disorder.

Gaza is no longer merely a territorial conflict. It has evolved into a moral reckoning for the entire international system. The images of annihilated neighborhoods, starving civilians, mass displacement, destroyed hospitals, and traumatized children have shaken global consciousness in a manner few events in recent decades have

managed to do.

Whether one legally defines the destruction as genocide or not, the scale of devastation has fundamentally altered perceptions of the contemporary world order. For millions across the Global South, Gaza represents the collapse of the credibility of the liberal international system—a system that promised universal human rights, collective security, and equal application of international law. Instead, what much of the world sees is selective morality.

The contradiction has become impossible to ignore: international law is invoked vigorously in some conflicts while seemingly suspended in others. This inconsistency is eroding trust not only in Western foreign policy but also in the very normative architecture upon which postwar global stability was built.

When Credibility Crumbles

Washington's unwavering diplomatic and military support for Israel has intensified this perception. The United States, long projecting itself as a defender of democracy and human rights, now faces mounting criticism for appearing unwilling to restrain policies widely condemned by humanitarian agencies, rights organizations, and large segments of global public opinion. The consequences extend far beyond the Middle East.

Across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, disillusionment with Western-led institutions is accelerating. Many increasingly view the current global order less as a rules-based system than as a hierarchy of selective accountability—where power determines legality, and alliances determine morality. This perception is geopolitically transformative.

It strengthens revisionist powers, deepens global polarization, weakens diplomatic consensus, and fuels the emergence of competing geopolitical blocs. The world is fragmenting into rival spheres of grievance, resentment, and strategic distrust.

At the same time, the widening confrontation involving Iran threatens to ignite an already volatile region. The Middle East today resembles a geopolitical tinderbox where miscalculation could trigger catastrophic escalation involving multiple regional and global actors. The danger lies not only in war itself, but in the normalization of permanent instability.

Permacrisis

Similarly, the war in Ukraine has revived Cold War-style antagonisms and militarized global politics once again. Europe has rearmed at a pace unseen in decades. Military budgets are soaring worldwide. Strategic rivalry between major powers increasingly defines international relations. The language of

“The contemporary world suffers not merely from conflict, but from a dangerous deficit of statesmanship”

deterrence has replaced the language of diplomacy. Humanity is gradually entering a world governed less by cooperation than by securitized competition.

The tragedy is that these crises do not occur in isolation. They overlap with worsening climate emergencies, rising authoritarianism, refugee displacement, food insecurity, water scarcity, and technological disruption caused by artificial intelligence and digital manipulation. The result is what many analysts now call a state of permacrisis—a condition in which societies no longer move from crisis to recovery, but from one destabilization directly into another.

Former British Foreign Secretary David Miliband described this as “a new world disorder,” an era defined not by rules for nations and rights for individuals, but increasingly by the absence of both.

Indeed, nearly 240 million people worldwide today require humanitarian assistance. Millions remain displaced

by war, persecution, economic collapse, and environmental disasters. Entire societies are living under conditions of exhaustion and uncertainty.

Yet beneath these crises lies an even deeper problem: the growing failure of political leadership itself. The contemporary world suffers not merely from conflict, but from a dangerous deficit of statesmanship.

Many leaders today appear trapped within cycles of populism, ideological absolutism, hyper-nationalism, and performative politics. Governance increasingly prioritizes emotional polarization over long-term vision. Political rhetoric rewards division rather than wisdom. Leaders often speak to electoral tribes instead of humanity.

Far-Right Politics

Figures such as Benjamin Netanyahu, Donald Trump, Narendra Modi, and several far-right populist leaders across Europe reflect different expressions of a broader global shift toward majoritarian nationalism, identity politics, and ideological polarization.

This phenomenon is not confined to one country or civilization. It is global.

Far-right politics thrives during periods of economic anxiety, cultural insecurity, demographic change, and social fragmentation. It promises certainty,

strength, and national revival, yet often deepens fear, intolerance, and democratic erosion.

Minorities become scapegoats. Migrants become threats. Dissent becomes disloyalty.

The rise of digital ecosystems has accelerated this deterioration. Social media platforms amplify outrage, misinformation, conspiracy theories, and ideological tribalism. Public discourse increasingly rewards spectacle over substance. Truth itself has become contested terrain.

In many societies, empathy is shrinking while anger becomes political currency.

Simultaneously, humanity faces a planetary ecological emergency. Climate change is no longer a future threat; it is a present catastrophe. Heatwaves, droughts, floods, wildfires, and rising sea levels are devastating communities across continents. Water scarcity threatens entire regions in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Food systems are becoming increasingly vulnerable to conflict and environmental disruption. Yet even as scientists warn of irreversible ecological damage, global climate action remains fragmented, inadequate, and subordinated to short-term political calculations.

The moral contradiction is stagger-

ing: humanity possesses unprecedented technological sophistication, yet remains incapable of organizing itself around collective survival.

Economic Decay

Economic inequality compounds the crisis further. A tiny concentration of wealth now coexists alongside mass precarity. Billions struggle with poverty, unemployment, collapsing healthcare systems, and limited educational opportunity, while elites accumulate extraordinary economic and technological power.

This imbalance weakens social cohesion and fuels resentment against democratic institutions perceived as serving oligarchic interests rather than public welfare.

The refugee crisis illustrates perhaps the clearest failure of global compassion.

Millions fleeing war and environmental collapse increasingly encounter walls instead of protection, suspicion instead of solidarity. Wealthy nations frequently invoke human rights rhetorically while avoiding equitable responsibility-sharing in practice. A civilization begins to lose its moral compass when displaced human beings are viewed primarily as burdens rather than fellow members of humanity.



The deeper danger facing the world today is therefore civilizational. Humanity is entering an age where institutions appear weaker than crises, politics smaller than problems, and leadership increasingly incapable of moral imagination. The United Nations itself, despite its immense humanitarian contributions, appears trapped between lofty ideals and geopolitical vetoes. Institutions designed to prevent catastrophe now often merely manage catastrophe after it unfolds.

This paralysis sends a devastating message to the world: that civilian suffering can become normalized when

strategic interests outweigh ethical responsibility. Palestine has exposed this crisis more visibly than any event in recent memory. It is the mirror in which the world sees its contradictions.

Yet history also teaches that periods of profound disorder can produce intellectual and political renewal. Moments of collapse sometimes force civilizations to rethink their assumptions and reconstruct their moral foundations. The present age urgently requires such a recalibration.

The world does not merely need ceasefires, humanitarian aid, or tempo-



rary diplomatic arrangements—essential though they are. It requires a new global ethic grounded in equal human dignity, principled diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, and the consistent application of international law.

Global governance institutions require serious reform to become more representative, credible, and effective. Diplomacy must recover primacy over militarism. Climate action must become a civilizational priority rather than a peripheral policy debate. Economic systems must become more humane and inclusive. Most importantly, political leadership itself must

be reimagined.

Finally

The twenty-first century cannot survive indefinitely under leadership models driven by spectacle, vengeance, hyper-nationalism, and permanent confrontation. Humanity requires leaders capable not merely of winning elections or wars, but of preserving civilization itself. The stakes are existential.

One path leads toward deeper fragmentation, environmental collapse, permanent warfare, technological authoritarianism, and normalized humanitarian catastrophe.

The other leads toward cooperation, justice, sustainability, and shared human security. The choice is not merely political. It is civilizational.

If Gaza becomes remembered only as another conflict, the world will have learned nothing. But if it forces humanity to confront the bankruptcy of selective morality, the dangers of unrestrained power politics, and the urgent necessity of rebuilding global ethics, then perhaps some meaning can yet emerge from the tragedy. Otherwise, future historians may look upon this era as the moment humanity possessed every resource necessary to prevent catastrophe—yet lacked the wisdom, courage, and moral leadership to do so.



BANGLADESH RISING

BUT FINANCE TALENT IS

FALLING BEHIND

— • —

The country stands at a critical point in its economic journey, where the old ways of training financial professionals no longer align with modern realities.

— • —



*B*angladesh stands at a pivotal crossroads—racing toward a trillion-dollar economy amid explosive growth in banking, insurance, fintech, e-commerce, and corporate sectors. Yet this transformation exposes a critical weakness: the severe shortage of versatile finance professionals equipped to thrive in today's complex, tech-driven landscape.

Traditional training pathways are falling short, producing graduates strong in theory but weak in practical, multi-disciplinary skills. The result? Employers spend 1–2 years bridging the gap, while the nation risks stalling its ambitious growth trajectory. The solution lies in cultivating integrated finance professionals—experts who seamlessly blend deep financial expertise with digital fluency, regulatory mastery, sharp communication, and strategic vision—to drive sustainable, globally competitive progress.

At present, Bangladesh develops finance professionals mainly through university education and specialized professional institutes. Yet both pathways are insufficient in producing graduates who can immediately respond to the practical, multi-dimensional needs of employers. University graduates often possess theoretical knowledge but lack hands-on competence in financial analysis, digital tools, regulatory compliance, real-world problem-solving, and business communication. Many

“ The country stands at a critical point in its economic journey, where the old ways of training financial professionals no longer align with modern realities ”

students complete their degrees without ever working with complex financial models, ERP software, AI-driven analytical tools, or even mastering basic corporate reporting frameworks. As a result, employers often find themselves investing valuable time and resources to train graduates for one to two years before they become fully capable.

The challenges are not limited to academic institutions. Professional certifications, while globally respected, often focus on narrow domains. Accounting programs focus primarily on auditing and reporting, investment certifications emphasize portfolio management, and IT-audit programs emphasize technological controls. In Bangladesh's job environment—especially within SMEs and rapidly expanding corporate houses—employers expect a single finance professional to manage diverse responsibilities from tax to treasury, compliance to budgeting, digital reporting to strategic planning. This mismatch between what the job market needs and what institutions produce intensifies

the urgency of reform.

A major contributor to this crisis is the lack of meaningful collaboration between universities, industries, and professional bodies. Universities often design courses without consulting industry leaders, and employers frequently claim that academic programs do not reflect practical realities. Professional institutions generally operate independently rather than forming integrated learning pathways with universities. This disconnection creates a triangular gap where each party assumes the other is responsible for skill development. Meanwhile, students become victims of a fragmented system that does not prepare them adequately for the multi-dimensional demands of the profession.

In such circumstances, the concept of an integrated finance professional becomes crucial. This professional is not limited to a single specialization but rather embodies a blend of financial knowledge, technological competence, regulatory understanding, communication skill, and strategic insight. An integrated finance professional must be comfortable in advanced accounting and reporting, financial planning, tax and VAT, budgeting, treasury management, and both internal and external audit principles. At the same time, he or she must be digitally fluent, capable of using ERP platforms, advanced Excel, data visualization tools, digital audit technologies, and cloud-based systems.

Communication, both written and spoken, becomes essential as financial professionals must present complex information to non-financial stakeholders in understandable language and lead teams effectively. Strong regulatory awareness of corporate law, banking legislation, labor laws, and governance requirements is equally essential. Beyond all this, the integrated finance professional must possess strategic insight—the ability to interpret market signals, forecast the future, analyze risks, and contribute intelligently to organizational decision-making.

Such a professional is indispensable in a country like Bangladesh, where the economy is rapidly diversifying. Export industries, SMEs, tech startups, NGOs, development projects, and multinational companies all require finance experts who can navigate complex regulatory frameworks, digital ecosystems, and financial uncertainties. As the country aspires to become a trillion-dollar economy, strong financial governance, transparency, and accountability become non-negotiable. Integrated professionals provide organizations with the intellectual strength to maintain compliance, prevent risks, and ensure credible performance. Digital transformation in finance—manifested through online banking, fintech services, mobile financial platforms, and data-driven corporate operations—means financial professionals must now be as tech-savvy as IT professionals. Meanwhile, glob-

al mobility demands that Bangladeshi professionals develop multi-dimensional competencies to compete successfully in Middle Eastern, European, and Asian markets where employers expect diverse skill sets.

Bangladesh must therefore rethink skill development through a holistic, integrated framework. Academic institutions must redesign curricula in close collaboration with industry partners and professional bodies. Real-world case studies, simulations, industry internships, project-based learning, financial modelling workshops, and digital finance labs should be incorporated into formal education. Universities should establish finance innovation labs equipped with ERP software, analytics tools, and digital reporting systems so that students can practice before entering the job market. Instead of working in isolation, professional bodies should partner with universities to create integrated certification pathways that combine academic knowledge with practical skills. Government agencies must also play an active role by supporting national financial literacy programs, providing capacity-building initiatives, and convening industry-academia roundtables to ensure continuous communication between stakeholders.

Developing integrated finance professionals would significantly benefit the national economy. Organizations would enjoy stronger financial gov-

ernance, improved transparency, and better risk management. Large development projects, which often face delays and cost overruns due to financial mismanagement, would proceed more efficiently. Foreign investors would gain greater confidence in Bangladesh's corporate ecosystem, leading to higher investment inflows. The workforce would become more globally competitive, opening doors for international career opportunities. Ultimately, both public and private sectors would experience higher productivity, stronger accountability, and more sustainable growth.

Bangladesh stands at a critical point in its economic journey, where the old ways of training financial professionals no longer align with modern realities. The need for integrated finance professionals is pressing and immediate. Creating this new category of professionals requires a redesigned approach that unifies education, training, technology, and industry needs into a coherent system. If universities, professional bodies, industry leaders, and policymakers come together with a shared vision, Bangladesh can build a workforce capable of supporting innovation, strengthening governance, and accelerating sustainable development. Integrated finance professionals can become one of Bangladesh's most valuable national resources—guiding the country toward a more prosperous, accountable, and globally competitive future.

KASHMIR:

THE GRAVEYARD OF BROKEN PROMISES



Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai
Chairman
World Forum for Peace & Justice, USA

The roots of this tragedy trace back to the Treaty of Amritsar, when the British Empire sold Kashmir and its people to Maharaja Gulab Singh as though they were mere commodities. This act of imperial convenience established a pattern in which the will of the Kashmiri people would repeatedly be subordinated to political expediency.

Under princely rule, Kashmir became a land of stark contrasts—rich in culture and spiritual pluralism, yet burdened by repression. The Muslim-majority population faced systemic discrimination, heavy taxation, and political exclusion. Peaceful protests were often met with brutality, most notably in 1931, when 22 demonstrators were gunned down. These early injustices were met with indifference by the colonial power that had claimed a “civilizing mission,” marking the first of many broken promises.

The end of British rule in 1947 did not bring resolution; instead, it deepened the betrayal.

As princely states were given the choice to accede to India or Pakistan—or remain independent—the guiding principle, articulated by leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, was that the will of the people must prevail in disputed cases. Kashmir, with its Muslim majority and Hindu ruler, represented the quintessential test case. Yet when the decisive moment arrived, that promise evaporated.

India’s military intervention in October 1947, followed by its appeal to the United Nations, led to UN Security Council Resolution 47 (April 21, 1948), which called for a plebiscite to determine Kashmir’s future. This commitment was publicly reiterated by Nehru and endorsed internationally. However, as political realities shifted, India’s position changed. What had been pledged as a democratic exercise became an indefinitely postponed obligation.

This pattern of making and abandoning commitments continued. From the Tashkent Agreement of 1966 to the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999, each diplomatic initiative carried the promise of meaningful dialogue on Kashmir—only to end in stalemate, with the core issue deferred or sidelined.

The erosion of autonomy marked another critical turning point. The revocation of Articles 370 and 35A in 2019 was widely perceived not merely as a constitutional change, but as the final dismantling of even symbolic self-governance. The sweeping administrative, demographic, and political changes that followed further alienated the local population and heightened international concern.

Today, the human cost of these accumulated betrayals is stark. Kashmir remains one of the most militarized regions in the world. Allegations of human rights violations—including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and arbitrary detentions—have been documented by organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The prolonged detention of political leaders like Mohammad Yasin Malik, Shabir Ahmed Shah, and Masarat Alam Bhat, human rights activists such as Khurram Parvez, Aasia Andrabi, Sofi Fehmeeda, and Nahida Nasreen, and journalists like Irfan Mehraj under stringent laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) continues to raise serious questions about space for dissent and democratic expression.

Equally troubling is the silence—or selective engagement—of the international community. While global attention shifts rapidly between crises, Kashmir persists as an unresolved conflict with nuclear implications. Even occasional acknowledgments by world leaders, including former President Donald

Trump's remarks on May 10, 2025, that Kashmir remains a flashpoint between India and Pakistan, have not translated into sustained diplomatic action.

History shows that conflicts rooted in denied rights rarely disappear; they endure until properly addressed. Lessons from other struggles—from South Africa to Northern Ireland—make clear that durable peace cannot be built on suppression or denial. It must rest on genuine dialogue, inclusion, and respect for the will of the people.

There are faint but growing signs that the global conversation may be shifting. Renewed calls for dialogue, regional diplomacy, and international mediation—however tentative—suggest that the status quo is neither stable nor sustainable. Any viable path forward must include all stakeholders: India, Pakistan, and, most importantly, genuine representatives of the Kashmiri people. For too long, Kashmir has been spoken about, rather than spoken with.

The tragedy of Kashmir lies not only in the fact that promises were broken, but that they were broken repeatedly, knowingly, and without consequence. Restoring trust will require more than rhetoric—it will demand courage, honesty, and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths.

Until then, Kashmir will remain what it has long been: a painful reminder that justice delayed is not merely justice denied—it is a wound that deepens



NAKBA DAY,

THE STATUS OF THE ZIONIST STATE, AND THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT OF RETURN

24

Al-Ummah |



Dr. Sabir Abu Maryam

Secretary General, Palestine
Foundation Pakistan, Karachi



Every May, the anniversary of the Nakba (Day of Catastrophe) reopens an old wound for justice-loving people worldwide. On 15 May 1948, an illegitimate Zionist state was established on Palestinian land. Hundreds of villages were destroyed, millions of Palestinians were driven from their homes, farms, and cities, and an entire people were cast into



exile and statelessness. For Palestinians, the Nakba is not a closed historical chapter but a continuing injustice.

Historical accounts describe how, in the course of the 1948 war, Zionist forces killed thousands of Palestinians, with reports of poison introduced into water supplies and widespread destruction that spared neither people nor livestock. Around 750,000–1.5 million Palestinians (figures vary by source) were expelled from their homeland in what became known as the Nakba.

The creation of Israel was not merely

a local conflict but an integral part of a Western imperial project. It began with British sponsorship via the Balfour Declaration, advanced through UN Partition Resolution 181, and was completed by force of arms. From its inception, the new state enjoyed extraordinary Western backing, which explains its unique position in the Western political order.

This exceptional status leads Western governments to shield Israel from accountability. Researchers note that Western powers deliberately avoided establishing such a state in Europe, anticipating it would destabilize their own societies. Instead, they facilitated its creation in Palestine, disrupting peace in the region while granting Israel privileges denied to others.

Israel remains the only state widely viewed as both usurping and illegitimate, for which international law, UN resolutions, and human rights principles are routinely set aside. While UN General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding, Western powers readily invoked the Balfour Declaration and Resolution 181 to legitimize Israel's establishment. Occupations, settlement expansion, racial discrimination, and collective punishment persisting for decades would normally trigger severe sanctions—yet Israel faces a different standard.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Isra-



el's relationship with the United States. Israel is far more than an ally; it occupies a privileged place in American policymaking. Pro-Israel measures pass Congress with ease, billions in military aid flow without interruption, and presidents of both parties affirm Israel's security as a U.S. national interest.

U.S. law mandates preservation of Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME). Israel receives fixed, long-term, unconditional military assistance unavailable to any other nation. It was the first non-NATO country to gain access to sensitive joint defense projects, includ-

ing advanced elements of F-35 technology. In cyber and intelligence domains, the U.S. treats Israel as a near-equal partner. Israeli integration into U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), prepositioned American weapons stockpiles on Israeli soil (WRSA-I), and the inclusion of Israel's security in core U.S. strategy documents (NSS, NDS) underscore a relationship without parallel.

In Congress, no other country commands comparable bipartisan support, diplomatic protection, or repeated UN Security Council vetoes. Israel functions not merely as a state but as a military



and political outpost of Western power in West Asia.

The price of this exceptional status is paid by the Palestinian people: the besieged children of Gaza, the fragmented cities of the West Bank, the contested sanctuaries of Jerusalem, generations raised in refugee camps, and millions scattered in exile. Their lands were seized, their homes destroyed, and their identity targeted—yet their attachment to their homeland remains unbroken.

At the core of the Palestinian struggle stands the Right of Return. UN Res-

olution 194 affirms that Palestinian refugees have the right to return to their homes and receive compensation. Israel's refusal to honor this right reveals the foundational challenge: mass return would undermine the demographic and narrative basis of the occupation.

Today, Palestinians mark 15 May as both Nakba Day and the Day of Return. The Palestine issue is not a mere border dispute but the collective demand of a dispossessed nation to reclaim its homeland. Despite decades of occupation, siege, repression, and what many describe as genocide, Palestinians have not relinquished their rights or historical memory.

The world is shifting. Younger generations increasingly challenge the dominant Western narrative. The conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon have exposed the gap between Israel's projected image and the realities of occupation and violence, while highlighting Western double standards on human rights.

Nakba Day is therefore not only one of mourning but of unwavering commitment: commitment to the Right of Return, to the liberation of Jerusalem, and to the conviction that no oppression lasts forever.

The rallying cry grows clearer with each passing year: The return is near, and Palestine will be free.



FUAT SEZGIN:

THE MAN WHO RESTORED THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC SCIENCE



By Saad Hasan and Murat Sofuoglu

Both journalists at TRT World, Turkiye



*F*or more than 60 years, Fuat Sezgin searched libraries around the world, creating a comprehensive bibliography of almost every known text on Muslim-Arabic sciences, much of which has been borrowed yet overlooked by the West.

One of the most prolific historians of Islamic science of our time, he visited li-

braries around the world to study nearly every aspect of Arabic literature and, in the process, collected thousands of books, some of them rare manuscripts.

Diophantus, the famous Greek mathematician, has long been a mystery to researchers. Little is known about his life, and there is still debate over whether he lived in 150 B.C. or A.D. 364. What is known for sure is that he wrote the magnum opus *Arithmetica*, a book that for centuries was essential reading for anyone interested in number theory and algebra. However, seven of the book's 13 chapters were thought



to have been lost in the upheavals of the Middle Ages, when Muslims and Christians fought bloody battles. In 1968, Sezgin made an interesting discovery while studying old manuscripts in the Astan Quds Library in Mashhad, Iran.

Tucked among bundles of decaying papers was an Arabic translation of Diophantus' book written by Qusta ibn Luqqa, a Christian polymath who flourished in ninth-century Baghdad, then the center of the Islamic empire. It was a monumental find that provided valuable insight into the work of Diophantus.

"The part (Sezgin found) shows us that the work of Diophantus was indeed a book from which ancient students could learn algebraic methods of solv-

ing problems," Jacques Sesiano, who wrote a thesis on the discovered chapters in 1975, told TRT World. "And this may explain why no work of Diophantus' predecessors has survived."

Sezgin explored libraries in Türkiye, Iran, Egypt, India and many other countries, immersing himself in papers written by little-known authors. In the process, he compiled what is today regarded as the most comprehensive bibliography of Arabic literature, covering subjects ranging from Qur'anic sciences, religious doctrine, zoology and alchemy to astronomy and astrology. His achievements in the history of science are numerous, ranging from his research on the cartographer Piri Reis to supervising the construction of astrolabes based on 10th-century designs.

Many of his contemporaries were not even aware of the discovery of the Diofantus manuscripts.

“If you hear of any writer, book or ancient work written in Arabic, and you want to find out anything about it, the first thing you do is go to Fuat Sezgin’s book,” says Peter Starr, a professor of Islamic history at the Fuat Sezgin Institute in Istanbul.

For Sezgin, his lifelong endeavor to piece together the history of Islamic science began with a chance meeting.

The expulsion

In 1943, Hellmut Ritter, a German professor of Arabic literature, was delivering a lecture at Istanbul University’s Institute of Oriental Studies. Among the audience was 19-year-old Sezgin, who had come to the city from his hometown of Bitlis in eastern Türkiye with hopes of becoming a mathematician. After attending Ritter’s lecture, Sezgin changed his mind.

Sezgin was born in 1924, a year after the Ottomans were driven out of Istanbul and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had declared Türkiye a republic.

“Meeting Ritter was a life-changing experience for him,” says Musa Serdar Çelebi, who had known Sezgin since the 1980s. “Ritter was very demanding. He made Sezgin study the works of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari and

al-Ghazali. He made his young disciple study more than 15 hours a day.”

Ritter had lived in Istanbul for many years. The city’s ancient libraries contained a treasure trove of manuscripts that had not been properly studied. He was among the few European scholars who subscribed to the view that Muslim scientists had not been given their due place in history. That thinking had a profound impact on Sezgin, who would eventually become a lifelong admirer of the German Orientalist tradition, which encouraged deep scholarly research.

“It was like a big, big puzzle for him. You know, like an archaeologist who’s onto something and then he gets really excited about it and wants to find it all,” Hilal Sezgin, his daughter, a journalist and well-known author in her own right, told TRT World.

Sezgin’s career was almost cut short on May 27, 1960, when the Turkish military overthrew the government of the Democratic Party. Civil servants, doctors and teachers were fired overnight for even slight connections to political parties. Sezgin also lost his job because of his brother’s ties to a political party. The experience left him disillusioned with his country.

Later, he would often remark that one of the most fortunate things to happen to him was “my expulsion.” He followed his mentor Ritter to Germany and joined

Frankfurt University.

By the 1970s, Sezgin was regarded as an authority in his field, with his findings and research regularly featured in leading academic journals.

Gerald J. Toomer, a professor of history at Brown University, wrote in the 1980s: "The great increase during the last 20 years in our information about the manuscript materials in all areas of Arabic studies is due principally to the work of Fuat Sezgin."

What Renaissance?

Sezgin did not take long to realize that many European and American scholars had ignored the contributions of Islamic science to world civilization. For them, the world had plunged into intellectual darkness for more than a thousand years following the decline of the Roman Empire in the fifth century.

With the spread of Islam in the seventh century, centers of learning, laboratories and schools emerged in Baghdad, Tehran and elsewhere. Muslim scholars continuously studied, experimented and developed new tools and ideas that contributed to humanity's progress.

"What he said often was that there's no such thing as the Renaissance," says Starr. "The word Renaissance means rebirth, which implies that Europeans were trying to bring back the science of

the classical Greeks. But science never died. Arabs inherited the finest achievements of Greek science, built upon them and passed them on."

A replica of a 10th-century astrolabe that Sezgin helped design is among dozens of instruments on display at the Istanbul Museum of the History of Science and Technology in Islam.

A great deal of Sezgin's work focused on one of the most flourishing periods in Muslim history. In the ninth century, al-Ma'mun of the Abbasid dynasty ruled the Islamic world from Baghdad. Under his leadership, the city became a center of learning where Muslims, Christians and Jews studied various disciplines. It also ushered in a major translation movement, during which the works of Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Euclid and other Greek thinkers were translated into Arabic.

Muslim scholars gradually expanded upon the knowledge inherited from ancient civilizations, leaving a lasting impact on future generations. Jabir ibn Hayyan, the pioneering alchemist, introduced the term "alkali" into scientific vocabulary. Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi wrote the influential work *Kitab al-Jabr*, ensuring that the word "algebra" would forever be associated with his name.

That era also saw Muslim explorers venturing across seas, measuring dis-

tances, discovering routes to Africa and Asia, and producing increasingly sophisticated maps. Yet European figures are often credited with much of this cartographic work, while the contributions of their Muslim predecessors are frequently overlooked.

Sezgin spent considerable effort piecing together the map commissioned by Caliph al-Ma'mun.

In the early 1980s, Sezgin found a copy of a map that al-Ma'mun had commissioned geographers to draw. Besides providing a more accurate representation of the Earth, the map corrected a mistake made centuries earlier by Ptolemy: it showed that the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean were not merely inland seas.

"Sezgin's important contribution was that it demonstrated the role of Muslims in geography and cartography. He basically overcame the Renaissance model, which marginalized 800 years of Muslim contributions," says Dr. Detlev Quintern, a history professor at the Fuat Sezgin Foundation.

Another subject that occupied Sezgin for many years was the reconstruction of models of Muslim inventions. At Frankfurt University, he spent years overseeing the design and construction of astrolabes, water-pumping systems and laboratory instruments once used by Muslim engineers and surgeons.

These instruments remain on display in a museum at the university.

Much of this work was supervised by Ayman Naffai, an Egyptian civil engineer who began building instruments for Sezgin in 1991.

"He was very demanding and thorough in what he wanted. We made machines using everything—wood, silver, gold and copper. And we succeeded in producing exact replicas."

It was al-Ma'mun's map, recreated in the form of a globe, that proved to be the most challenging project.

"That's the globe at the entrance of the museum in Istanbul. It's all copper, handmade. It took us six months to build the structure and even longer to get the 3D map right," says Naffai.

What concerns him today is the lack of interest in Muslim scientific inventions.

"With Sezgin, this yearning to preserve our history might end forever. There's no one after him to continue this kind of work."

According to many of his colleagues and friends, Sezgin worked 15 hours a day for most of his adult life. For many years, and to some extent even today, he was known primarily within academic circles. This was largely because most of his books and papers were published

only in German, and very little of his work was translated into English.

One exception is the five-volume catalogue of instruments displayed in the Frankfurt and Istanbul museums dedicated to the history of Arabic-Islamic science. In 2008, Professor Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma, a historian of science specializing in ancient Indian languages, and his wife, Dr. Renate Sarma, published a translated version of Sezgin's catalogue.

"His books are not very well known because he published only a limited number of copies, perhaps in the hundreds. Also, most of his works are in German. But people who work in the field all know him," Sreeramula once told TRT World.

The two became friends in 1996, when Sreeramula first encountered the replicas of the scientific instruments Sezgin had commissioned.

Back in Türkiye

The Sezgin family visited Türkiye almost every year. His wife, Ursula, was also a historian. Although he spent most of his professional career in Germany, Sezgin's reputation gradually grew in his home country as his books and articles began to be translated into Turkish.

In the mid-2000s, Turkish officials approached him about establishing a

research institute in Istanbul.

The reception Sezgin received in Türkiye was unprecedented for an academic. The government allocated space for a museum and a university within the grounds of Istanbul's historic Gülhane Park.

Over the years, Sezgin had built a personal library containing thousands of books, including rare manuscripts that he had discovered himself. When he attempted to transfer this collection to Istanbul, Frankfurt University filed a legal case against him. Authorities even prevented him from accessing his office.

The bitter experience, however, did not diminish Sezgin's admiration for German and European scholarship, something reflected in the Istanbul Museum of the History of Science and Technology in Islam. Visitors entering the museum first encounter a mural of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, followed by figures such as Ernest Renan and Eduard Sachau.

Sezgin died in June 2018 at the age of 92. He was buried on the grounds of Topkapı Palace, an honor granted by the Turkish government. Senior officials, including President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, attended his funeral.



CHARTER FOR RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL MEDIA

Renewing the Vision of the 2011 Makkah-Jakarta Islamic Media Declaration for the Digital Age

AI-Ummah Desk Report

Introduction: Why This Charter Still Matters Today

In an age dominated by AI, digital polarization, misinformation, hate speech, algorithm-driven manipulation, and the erosion of public trust in media, the call for responsible and ethical communication has become more urgent than ever.

More than a decade ago, Muslim scholars, media professionals, and intellectuals gathered under the auspices of the Muslim World League and the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in Jakarta to formulate a principled framework for ethical media practice rooted in human dignity, truthfulness, moderation, and social responsibility.

Although the original declaration was issued in 2011, its central concerns remain strikingly relevant today:

- the spread of extremism and hate speech,
- the misuse of religion and identity

politics,

- the manipulation of public opinion,
- attacks on cultural and moral values,
- growing social fragmentation, and
- the urgent need for ethical journalism and responsible digital communication.

At the same time, some of the language and formulations reflected the political and media discourse of their time. The present revised edition seeks to preserve the spirit and foundational principles of the declaration while presenting them in a contemporary, balanced, inclusive, and globally relevant language suitable for today's interconnected world.

This renewed charter emphasizes professionalism, human dignity, freedom with responsibility, interfaith understanding, social cohesion, factual integrity, and constructive engagement with humanity's shared challenges.

Charter for Responsible and Ethical Media

(Adopted at the Second International Conference on Islamic Media, Jakarta, Indonesia – December 2011)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, his family, and companions.

Inspired by the ethical teachings of Islam, which call for justice, wis-

dom, truthfulness, compassion, and respectful dialogue, and recognizing the profound influence of media in shaping societies, cultures, and public consciousness, this Charter sets forth guiding principles for responsible media institutions and practitioners.

The Charter affirms that media is not merely a tool of information, but also a trust and a public responsibility that can contribute either to peace and understanding or to division and conflict.

Accordingly, media professionals and institutions commit themselves to the following principles and responsibilities:

I. CORE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

1. Human Dignity and Ethical Responsibility: Media should uphold human dignity, moral responsibility, compassion, and justice, reflecting the universal values of mercy, respect, and truth.

2. Protection of Cultural and Religious Identity: Media institutions should contribute to preserving cultural authenticity, ethical values, and religious identity while remaining open to constructive global engagement and intercultural dialogue.

3. Promotion of Moderation and Wisdom: Media discourse should encourage balance, wisdom, tolerance, and respectful engagement with others, avoiding extremism, hatred, and polarization.

4. Commitment to Truth and Accuracy: Media professionals should present information honestly, accurately, and transparently, adhering to professional ethics and verified facts.

5. Responsible Freedom of Expression: Freedom of expression is a fundamental right that should be exercised responsibly, with due regard for public interest, ethical standards, human dignity, and social harmony.

II. RIGHTS AND PROFESSIONAL GUARANTEES

1. Freedom of Responsible Expression: Media professionals have the right to express views and opinions responsibly and ethically without intimidation or unlawful restriction.

2. Right to Access Information: Societies have the right to reliable information, transparency, and responsible journalism that serves the public good.

3. Protection and Safety of Journalists: Media workers should be provided with safe and fair working environments, particularly during conflicts, crises, and humanitarian emergencies, in accordance with international standards.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEDIA INSTITUTIONS

1. Promoting Understanding and Dialogue: Media should encourage mutual understanding among peoples, cultures, and civilizations and contribute to

peaceful coexistence.

2. Preserving Cultural Heritage: Media institutions should value cultural, intellectual, and linguistic heritage, including the Arabic language as a language of the Qur'an and Islamic civilization.

3. Supporting Social Cohesion: Media should strengthen social unity and reject racism, sectarianism, tribalism, ethnic hatred, and all forms of discrimination.

4. Countering Extremism and Hate Speech: Media should actively reject violence, terrorism, incitement, religious hatred, and ideological extremism in all forms.

5. Encouraging Development and Knowledge: Media should contribute to education, innovation, human development, and constructive public awareness.

IV. ETHICAL DUTIES OF MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

1. Respect for Faiths and Sacred Values: Media professionals should avoid content that deliberately insults religions, sacred symbols, or revered personalities while maintaining professional standards of fair and constructive criticism.

2. Rejecting Violence and Incitement: Media should never promote violence, hatred, terrorism, or social unrest, nor allow religion or identity to be exploited for political manipulation or division.

3. Accuracy and Verification: Journalists and media practitioners must verify information carefully, avoid misinformation and rumors, and distinguish clearly between fact, opinion, and propaganda.

4. Ethical Methods of Information Gathering: Information should be obtained through lawful and ethical means without coercion, blackmail, intimidation, or violation of privacy.

5. Integrity and Professionalism: Media professionals should avoid sensationalism, fabricated narratives, misleading headlines, and manipulation designed solely to attract attention or provoke fear.

6. Respectful Public Discourse: Language used in media should uphold civility, respect, and professionalism, avoiding defamation, personal attacks, obscenity, humiliation, or the spread of malicious rumors.

7. Protection of Children and Families: Media should safeguard children and young people from harmful content that threatens their moral, psychological, or physical well-being.

8. Ethical Advertising: Advertisements should not promote harmful, exploitative, deceptive, or socially destructive products or behaviors, and editorial independence must remain protected.

9. Respect for Vulnerable Groups: Media should respect persons with disabilities and vulnerable communities and avoid ridicule, stereotyping, or dis-

criminatory portrayals.

10. Responsible Digital Communication: Media professionals should engage responsibly in digital and social media spaces, ensuring fairness, accountability, and respect for the rights of others.

11. Respect for Judicial Integrity: Media coverage of legal proceedings should avoid prejudicing investigations or influencing judicial processes unfairly.

12. Innovation and Technological Advancement: Media institutions should responsibly embrace emerging technologies, digital communication tools, and multimedia innovation in ways that benefit humanity and promote ethical communication.

Conclusion

This Charter represents a renewed call for ethical media rooted in truth, responsibility, moderation, professionalism, and human dignity.

At a time when the world faces unprecedented communication challenges, ethical media must become a force for peace rather than division, for knowledge rather than manipulation, and for human understanding rather than hatred.

The enduring message of this Charter is that responsible media can help build societies founded on justice, coexistence, compassion, and shared human values.



TIMOTHY WINTER: A SCHOLAR BRIDGING ISLAMIC TRADITION AND MODERN BRITAIN



M. Minhaj Niloy

Lecturer, Department of Software Engineering,
Daffodil International University, Bangladesh

Shaykh Abdal Hakim Murad, formerly Timothy John Winter, is a respected Muslim intellectual in Britain. His impact is seen in advancing Muslim scholarship through education, fostering interfaith dialogue, and shaping discussions of Islamic spirituality and tradition in the West. He inspires students as a professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge. He serves as a fellow at Wolfson College and founded Cambridge Muslim College.

Early life and education

Winter was born in London in 1960. He studied at Westminster School and later entered Pembroke College, Cambridge. There, he graduated with a double first in Arabic. His early academic training created a strong foundation in language, literature, and religious studies, but his intellectual curiosity soon led him beyond the university classroom, exploring perspectives that would shape his ongoing journey.

After Cambridge, Winter immersed himself in Islamic studies across the Muslim world. His journey took him from Al-Azhar in Cairo to Saudi Arabia and Yemen, forging bonds with traditional scholars. Later, he pursued Turkish and Persian at the University of London and deepened his research on Islamic history and theology. This fusion of Western academic rigor and classical scholarship gave him a unique voice.

He speaks several languages and works with classical Arabic texts. He bridges academic language and traditional scholarship for English-speaking Muslims.

Academic and professional work

Winter is Shaykh Zayed Lecturer in Islamic Studies at Cambridge. He is Director of Studies at Wolfson College. Cambridge Muslim College lists him as founder and Chair of Trustees. These roles show his service as an academic and educator.

His publications and translations introduce readers to Islamic thought. He has edited and contributed to academic books on theology and translated Imam al-Ghazali's *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*. He often writes about Islamic orthodoxy, spirituality, Muslim-Christian relations, modernity, and the challenges Muslims face in Europe.

Winter has also worked with the Sunna Project at Cambridge, supporting Arabic editions of key Sunni hadith collections. He has contributed to public debates on religion, ethics, and society, including appearances on BBC Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* and lectures abroad.

Conversion and spiritual outlook

Winter converted to Islam in 1979, adopting the name Abdal Hakim Murad. In interviews, he described his journey as a quest for deeper meaning beyond materialism, rather than a sudden break from his roots. As a young man, he felt captivated by religious questions, beauty, discipline, and the transformative power of worship.

His later scholarship reflects that search. Instead of limiting Islam to political or cultural identity, Winter inspires with his focus on worship, character, beauty, intellectual humility, and deep connection to tradition. This has helped him become influential among Muslims, aiming to embrace classical teachings while living confidently in modern Western societies.



Cambridge Muslim College

In 2009, Winter founded Cambridge Muslim College. The college was created to support a new generation of Muslim scholars, teachers, and community leaders who could understand both the Islamic tradition and the social realities of contemporary Britain. Its programs have sought to combine traditional Islamic learning with academic, pastoral, and civic training.

The college is a leading Islamic learning and research institution in the UK.

Winter, founder and trustee, keeps education central to his mission. He shapes discussions on imam training, British Muslim identity, and the place of Islamic scholarship in modern society.

The Cambridge Central Mosque

One of Winter's most visible public achievements is his role in the Cambridge Central Mosque. The mosque opened in 2019 and is widely described as Europe's first eco-mosque. It can accommodate about 1,000 worshippers. It was designed as a British mosque for the twenty-first century, combining Islamic geometry and spirituality with English materials, gardens, and environmental responsibility.

The mosque's sustainable features include natural lighting, low-energy LED lighting, photovoltaic cells, strong insulation, natural ventilation, heat-pump technology, rainwater and greywater harvesting, bicycle facilities, and extensive green space. Its near-zero-carbon design has made it a landmark not only for the Muslim community in Cambridge but also for wider conversations about faith and environmental stewardship.

Winter, who chairs the Cambridge Mosque Trust, has presented the mosque as more than a prayer space. It is also a public symbol of how religious architecture can serve worshippers, neighbors, and the natural world simultaneously. Its gardens, cafe, lectures, and community activities have helped make it a meeting point for Muslims

and non-Muslims alike.

Recognition and continuing influence

Murad is known for scholarship and public service, and is the recipient of the Pilkington Teaching Prize from the University of Cambridge. Listed in The Muslim 500, the annual publication that surveys influential Muslims worldwide. In the 2026 edition, The Muslim 500 lists Dr. Murad among the leading scholarly figures and records his recent ranks as 34 in 2025, 36 in 2024, and 35 in 2023, which demonstrates his influence. He shapes religious and academic life through his roles as academic specialist, translator, founder, lecturer, interfaith contributor, and guide to English-speaking Muslims. His work addresses urgent questions: preserving religious depth, educating future Muslim leaders, institutional integrity, and making faith a source of mercy, beauty, and responsibility.

Timothy Winter's life traces the arc of a British scholar's embrace of Islam, followed by a commitment to learning, teaching, and institution-building. His contributions span Cambridge classrooms, traditional scholarship, translation of classical texts, and creation of an eco-conscious mosque. Both intellectual and practical, his work stands out.

Dr. Murad connects worlds that are often divided: East and West, tradition and modernity, scholarship and spirituality, worship and public service. He remains an important Muslim thinker in Britain.





HIDDEN MUSLIM LEGACY IN THE AMERICAS

An International Symposium was held on the “History and Legacy of Muslims in the Caribbean” organized by IRCICA, OIC, in Guyana, on 4 September 2023.

42

Al-Ummah



Dr. Sultana Afroz

Ex-Professor of History, University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica



*W*hen eight centuries of Muslim rule in Al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) came to an end in 1492, Islam found new expression in the West Indies through Andalusian Muslim mariners who guided Columbus’s voyages across the Atlantic.

Trained for centuries in Atlantic navigation, these mariners were not merely pilots; many sought religious freedom



and peace as they left behind a devastated Al-Andalus. On Columbus's second voyage in 1494, they set foot on the island of Jamaica — a land of wooded mountains, waterfalls, sandy beaches, and crystal-blue seas. Although unknown to Columbus and his Christian companions, these Arabic-speaking Muslim mariners were already familiar with the region, its islands, and its people.

The name "Carib" — the root of "Caribbean" — is a Qur'anic Arabic word. In Arabic, it is spelled Qareeb (قريب), meaning "near," "nearby," "close," "neighbor," or "relative." The plural/adjectival form Qareebun (قريبون) corresponds to "Caribbean" or "Cariban." These terms have been part of the Arabic language for nearly three thousand years and appear

frequently in the Holy Qur'an, often as an attribute of Allah — Al-Qareeb, The Near.

This etymology predates Columbus by centuries. The earliest recorded European use of "Carib" and "Caribbean" only appears in the mid-1500s, often linked to the derogatory association with cannibalism. In contrast, in Arabic, Qareeb and Qareebun have long conveyed positive meanings of closeness, neighborliness, and human connection.

Well-versed in Arabic and experienced in Atlantic voyaging, the Andalusian Muslim mariners are believed to have named the western part of the North Atlantic — bounded by Central America, northern South America, and the nearby islands — the Qareebun (Ca-

ibbean) region, and its inhabitants the Qareeb (Caribs), long before Columbus's arrival. Historical accounts, such as that of the 10th-century historian Ali Al-Masudi in *The Meadows of Gold*, record that Muslim mariners from Al-Andalus, led by Khashkhash Ibn Said Ibn Aswad, sailed into the Atlantic in 889 CE and returned with treasures. Similar pre-Columbian transoceanic voyages are attributed to other navigators, including China's Admiral Zheng He.

The Islamic presence in the region continued through the arrival of enslaved West African Muslims, who were brought to work on Jamaican plantations. Many resisted slavery through flight — a form of hijra — and established independent Maroon communities (ummah). Though isolation and suppression later weakened open Islamic practice, these communities preserved elements of their faith and heritage.

This linguistic and historical evidence calls for a serious re-examination of the historiography of the Americas, recognizing the significant but often overlooked contribution of Muslim mariners and African Muslims to the region's early story.

Notes / References

[1] The terms "Carib" and "Caribbean" correspond to the Arabic Qareeb and Qareebun.

[2] See accounts in Ali Al-Masudi's *The Meadows of Gold* (947 CE). [3] Sul-tana Afroz, *Invisible Yet Invincible: The*

Islamic Heritage of the Maroons and the Enslaved Africans in Jamaica (London: Austin & Macauley, 2012), pp. 68–72. [4] Richard Price (ed.), *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

Abridged from "The Muslim Maroons in the Carib Neighbourhood of Jamaica," in *History and Legacy of the Muslims in the Caribbean*, IRCICA, Istanbul, 2025, pp. 79–112.

The Spanish/English terms Carib and Caribbean in Arabic are spelt as Qareeb and Qareebun. The Holy Qur'an reads: "Wa iza sa-alaka 'ibaadee 'annee fa-innee qareebun ujeebu da 'wataddaa 'l izza da'aani falyastajeeboo lee walyu 'minoo bee la 'allahum yarshudoon, meaning "When My servants ask you (meaning the Prophet) concerning Me, I am indeed close/qareebun to them: I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me: let them also with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way" (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186) and also Surah Baqarah verse 2:214 refers to Qareeb as near. The Holy Qur'an is laced with the word Carib and Caribbean. In Surah Saba, the word carib/qareeb denotes near as the verse states: "wa inih-ta-daytu fabimaa yoo-bee ilaayya Rabbee; innahoo Samee'un Qareeb", (...but if I receive guidance, it is because of the inspiration of my Lord to me: it is He Who hears all things, and is ever near, Surah Saba, 34:50). Also see Surah Nisa, 4:77; Surah Hud, 11:61 & 11:81; Surah Saba, 34:51; Surah Ash-Shura, 42:17; Surah Hashr, 59:15.



ISLAMIC EDUCATION

AND THE QUEST FOR PEACE, SECURITY, AND NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA

Abstract

*I*slamic education has undergone various stages of development in Nigeria and has played a significant role in spreading Arabic education beyond the Arabian Peninsula. For nearly three centuries (17th to 19th), Arabic sources served as the primary authentic reference for European writers on the central and western Sudan. In Nigeria, Arabic functioned as both a language of instruction and a medium of communication across

Dr. Busari Kehinde Kamorudeen

Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Literature, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria



different historical periods.

Despite this rich legacy, Nigeria's educational policies have often hindered the realization of Arabic and Islamic education's full potential.

Challenges—including government language policies, pedagogical issues, and social factors—continue to limit its impact in tertiary institutions and beyond. This paper argues that Arabic/Islamic education possesses transformative potential to foster an ideal society by instilling a value system that discourages excessive materialism, corruption, and unlawful means of livelihood—issues exacerbated by the prevailing secular education system in Nigeria.

Introduction

Islamic education was introduced to Nigeria through trade and cultural exchanges with North African states such as parts of Sudan, Morocco, Egypt, and Tunisia. Commercial activities between these regions and the southern Sahara, particularly from the late 10th and 11th centuries, facilitated its spread to areas like Kanem-Borno and the Hausa states in present-day Nigeria. While the precise beginning of these interactions remains difficult to pinpoint, historical evidence confirms their occurrence (Galadanci, 1971).

Islamic Education in Nigeria: A Brief Historical Survey

Several scholars and migrations played pivotal roles in establishing Islamic education in Nigeria. During the reign of Yaqub in Kano (1452–1463), Fulani scholars arrived with texts on jurisprudence and Islamic theology. Around the same period, Muslim schol-

ars from Timbuktu visited Kano to teach and preach Islam. Later, the renowned scholar Al-Maghili migrated to Katsina, which became a prominent center of Arabic and Islamic learning in the 15th century and produced many influential scholars (Kareem, 2012).

As Islam expanded, so did Islamic education, which enjoyed royal patronage and supported processes of Arabization and Islamization. Prior to colonialism, Islamic education was largely informal. There were no fixed curricula or regular class schedules; students gathered in teachers' homes or mosques from morning until evening. Some attached themselves permanently to a single teacher, while others moved itinerantly between instructors. Graduation was not determined by a fixed timeline but by the student's mastery of the Arabic language and acquisition of Islamic knowledge (Alfa, 2014).

In response to colonial influences and the fear of Christian conversion through Western education, Islamic societies began establishing integrated schools that combined Islamic and Western curricula. Scholars also founded private Arabic schools, importing teachers from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Egypt, along with relevant textbooks. Over time, Nigerian scholars began producing localized Arabic textbooks suited to the local context (Ibraheem, 2009). Graduates of these institutions have gone on to serve as Imams, preachers (du'āt), Arabic scholars, au-



thors, philosophers, philanthropists, spiritual consultants, and community leaders, continuing to shape successive generations (Ibraheem, 2012).

Significance of Islamic Education

Islamic education equips learners with a deep awareness of their Creator and teaches them how to commune with Him in both times of adversity and prosperity. This knowledge serves as a safeguard against exploitation, en-

abling educated individuals to identify and discourage fraudulent “miracle vendors” who prey on vulnerable people. The COVID-19 pandemic, with its lockdowns, underscored the importance of private, personal devotion to God.

More importantly, Islamic education instills moral probity rooted in God-consciousness (taqwā). This inner purification acts as a powerful deterrent against evil. While government measures—such as enhanced law en-

forcement and stricter punishments—have failed to curb rising crime rates, Islamic education cultivates thoughtful decision-making aligned with divine injunctions (Abdul-Hamid, 2007).

Crime in Nigeria has reached alarming levels, sometimes involving law enforcement agents themselves. For instance, in 2018, four operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Lagos were dismissed and charged with armed robbery, kidnapping, unlawful detention, intimidation, and threats of violence. Similarly, disturbing cases, such as reports of police misconduct at checkpoints, highlight systemic failures. Arabic/Islamic education fosters a strong consciousness of personal and communal safety, encouraging ethical conduct even among those in positions of authority.

Furthermore, Islamic education promotes a value system that rejects excessive desire for wealth, corruption, materialism, and unlawful livelihoods—vices often encouraged by Nigeria’s current education system. The root of much criminality lies in unchecked lust for money. By contrast, Islamic education emphasizes the purpose of human creation: *‘ibādah* (worship and God-consciousness). It discourages egotism and materialism, redirecting focus toward ethical living. Integrating these principles into Nigeria’s national philosophy of education could significantly reduce crime rates (Bidmos, 2008).

Potentials of Islamic Education for Nation-Building

Arabic/Islamic education holds immense potential to transform Nigeria into a more ideal society. Its key strengths include the following:

- **Source of Authentic Knowledge:** Islamic education places divine revelation at the center of the curriculum, ensuring that learners understand their Creator, purpose in life, and accountability in the hereafter. This contrasts with secular approaches that may promote materialistic or evolution-based worldviews disconnected from spiritual truth. Authentic knowledge about humanity’s divine origin is essential for meaningful education; without it, efforts to address social, economic, and educational problems remain incomplete (Bidmos, 2008; Wickramasinghe, 1984).
- **Harmonization of Knowledge:** Islamic education recognizes Allah as the Creator and ultimate source of all knowledge. Unlike secular curricula that compartmentalize religious matters, it integrates spiritual and empirical knowledge, producing individuals who are righteous, courteous, transparent, and God-fearing. Human reason and empirical methods alone cannot fully cultivate moral uprightness or establish a proper relationship between humanity and the Divine.
- **Accountability and Responsibility:** Islamic teachings stress personal ac-

countability on the Day of Judgment, where every action will be recorded and judged without bias or immunity (Qur'an, Al-Isra: 13). Education systems should emphasize this reality across all subjects, encouraging God-consciousness in daily life.

- Purification of the Soul (Tazkiyyat al-Nafs): Islamic education addresses the human heart (qalb)—the seat of intentions and actions—as described in the Qur'an:

- The “Commander of Evil” (al-Am-mārah bi Al-Sū', Qur'an 12:53)
- The “Self-Reproaching” soul (al-Law-wāmah, Qur'an 75:2)
- The “Restful, Blissful” soul (al-Muṭ-ma'innah, Qur'an 89:27)

Through spiritual purification (tazkiyyah), learners develop an internal mechanism to evaluate actions and choose the path of godliness (Qur'an 91:7–10; 91:9). Curriculum designers should prioritize this cleansing process to foster positive character.

Conclusion

Nigeria's current education system has struggled to address pressing national challenges, including kidnapping, armed robbery, corruption, terrorism, religious disharmony, and various forms of fraud. Islamic education offers a viable alternative and panacea. It promotes decency, righteousness, and honest living while strongly condemning fraud, corruption, murder, kidnapping, and

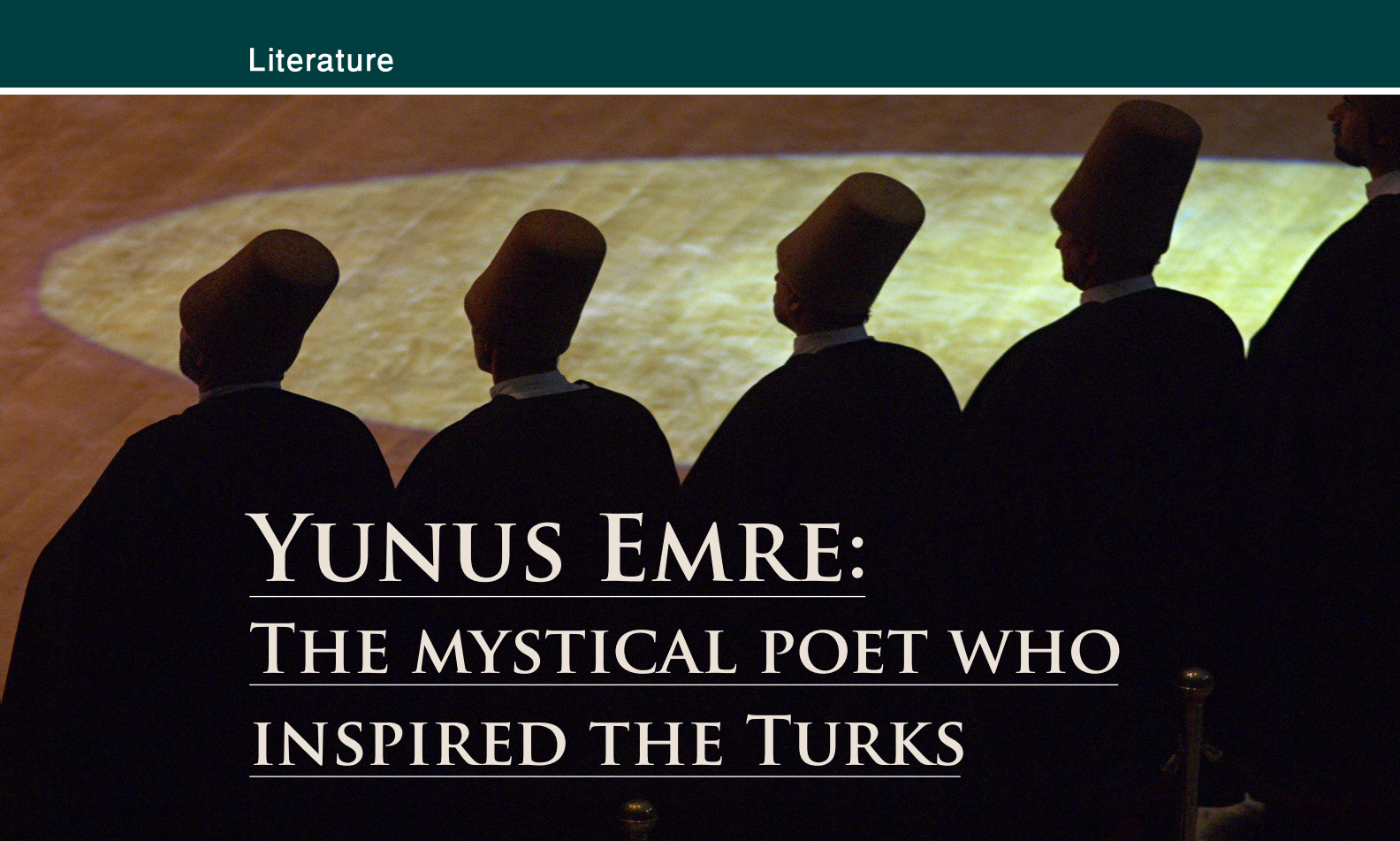
other social vices.

By integrating Islamic principles, Nigeria can raise responsible, cautious, and God-fearing citizens who balance spiritual and worldly affairs. This approach equips individuals with self-evaluation skills and maintains purity of heart—the source of thoughts and actions. Qur'anic teachings, explained in local languages, can effectively discourage anti-social behavior and encourage service to humanity through fear of Allah, ultimately advancing peace, security, and nation-building.

Recommendations

Curriculum developers and education stakeholders should overhaul Nigeria's education system to eliminate materialistic biases that encourage wealth acquisition by any means. Greater emphasis should be placed on linking national loyalty with ethical conduct and righteousness.

The proven potentials of Islamic education—particularly its integration of revealed truth—should be adopted. These moral principles are not exclusive to Islam; similar values appear in the Bible and other traditions. Stakeholders must shift focus from unchecked materialism to holistic character development, while recognizing that Islam supports lawful wealth creation as a legitimate enterprise. The ultimate goal is to nurture pure minds capable of driving both economic progress and genuine nation-building.



YUNUS EMRE: THE MYSTICAL POET WHO INSPIRED THE TURKS

Yunus Emre (1240-1321) was a mystical poet who devoted his life to spreading the message of love, brotherhood and spiritual harmony. His poetry profoundly influenced Turkish literature and spiritual thought, and he remains one of the earliest and most celebrated voices in Turkish poetic history.



By Prof. Nafissa Douida

Professor of History at the Higher School
for Teachers (ENS), Bouzaréah, Algiers

reliable information survives about his personal life. Historians know only fragments: he is believed to have been born around 1240 in Sarıköy in the Anatolian region of present-day Sakarya province and to have died in 1321.

Although numerous historical and literary works praise Yunus Emre as one of the greatest poets of his age, they provide few details about his origins or early years. Most studies instead focus on his poetry and its enduring significance in Turkish folk literature and Sufi

Often regarded as one of Türkiye's national poets, Yunus Emre emerged as a leading representative of early Turkish mysticism and a pioneer of devotional poetry rooted in spiritual reflection. Despite his immense fame, however, little



thought. Through his verses, however, one can glimpse the depth of his spirituality, his intellectual development and his close connection with the struggles and aspirations of ordinary people.

In recognition of his universal humanistic message, UNESCO commemorated the 750th anniversary of his birth in 1991 by declaring it “the International Yunus Emre Year.”

His life

Determining the precise influences that shaped Yunus Emre's character and worldview remains difficult because of the scarcity of historical documentation. Nevertheless, his poems reveal much about his spiritual journey and inner world.

Yunus Emre lived in Anatolia during the turbulent 13th and early 14th centuries, a period marked by Mongol invasions, the weakening of Seljuk authority and the early rise of the Ottoman state. Political instability, population displacement and social hardship deeply affected everyday life. Amid this uncertainty, people longed for peace, security and spiritual solace.

Amid these difficult circumstances, Yunus Emre emerged as a voice of hope. Through simple yet profound language, he spoke directly to ordinary people in their own tongue, encouraging faith, compassion and moral refinement. His poetry sought to awaken the soul and guide humanity away from hatred, corruption and despair.

Like Jalal al-Din Rumi (Mevlana), Yunus Emre believed that true spirituality lay in transcending worldly divisions and drawing closer to God through love.

His fame gradually spread far beyond his native region, reaching the Balkans and the Caucasus, and he became one of the most beloved representatives of moderate Islamic mysticism in Anatolia. Much of his poetry revolved around divine love and humanity's relationship with God.

One of his celebrated verses says:

My name is Yunus Emre,
And each passing day fans the flames
within my soul.
In this world and the next, I seek but one
desire:
It is You alone whom I truly need.

Yunus Emre the poet

Yunus Emre was a poet of the people. Although deeply influenced by Sufism, he remained closely connected to folk traditions and spoke in a language accessible to all. Unlike many scholars and poets of his time who preferred Arabic or Persian, Yunus chose to write in simple Turkish, strengthening his bond with ordinary people and helping lay the foundations of Turkish literary expression.

His language was graceful and emotionally rich, filled with vivid imagery, spiritual longing and reflections on life, death and human destiny. His poetry combined simplicity with profound

philosophical insight, making complex spiritual ideas accessible to a broad audience.

The people of Anatolia embraced him as a spiritual guide and national symbol. Legends about his travels spread across the region, and over time numerous shrines and tombs were attributed to him as expressions of popular reverence and affection.

In European literary history, he has often been compared to figures such as Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca, and Desiderius Erasmus for his cultural and spiritual influence.

A Man of peace and love

Yunus Emre called humanity toward peace, love, tolerance and spiritual unity. He regarded hatred as humanity's greatest enemy and sought to strengthen the relationship between human beings, nature and God.

At a time marked by sectarian fanaticism, extremism and social fear, Yunus Emre became like a white dove carrying messages of faith, freedom and inner peace.

Among his beautiful verses are:

"To reach that pure and faithful Friend,
Let me become a blossoming rose,
A nightingale singing in delight,
And let my dwelling be the garden of
the Beloved."

He also wrote:

Within the furnace of love I burn,

And the more intensely I blaze,
The sweeter grows my fragrance.
Never shall I wither,
For my drink flows from the spring of
the spirit.

Yunus Emre's spirituality reflected both the anxieties and aspirations of his age. Influenced by Rumi yet retaining a distinct voice of his own, he transformed mystical philosophy into poetry of remarkable warmth, sincerity and humanity.

His verses consistently emphasized divine unity, compassion and humanity's enduring search for meaning and happiness.

Among his most famous calls for universal brotherhood is the following:
Come, let us all be friends,
If only for a single moment.
Let us make life gentle upon ourselves.
Let us live as lovers and companions,
For this earth belongs to no one forever.

The eternal legacy of Yunus Emre

Today, Yunus Emre's legacy continues to flourish despite the rapid materialism of modern life. His poetry remains a source of spiritual inspiration, moral reflection, and cultural pride.

One of the most prominent institutions bearing his name is the Yunus Emre Institute (YEE), a leading Turkish cultural organization dedicated to promoting Turkish language and culture around the world. Through its centers across numerous countries, the institute serves as a bridge between Türkiye

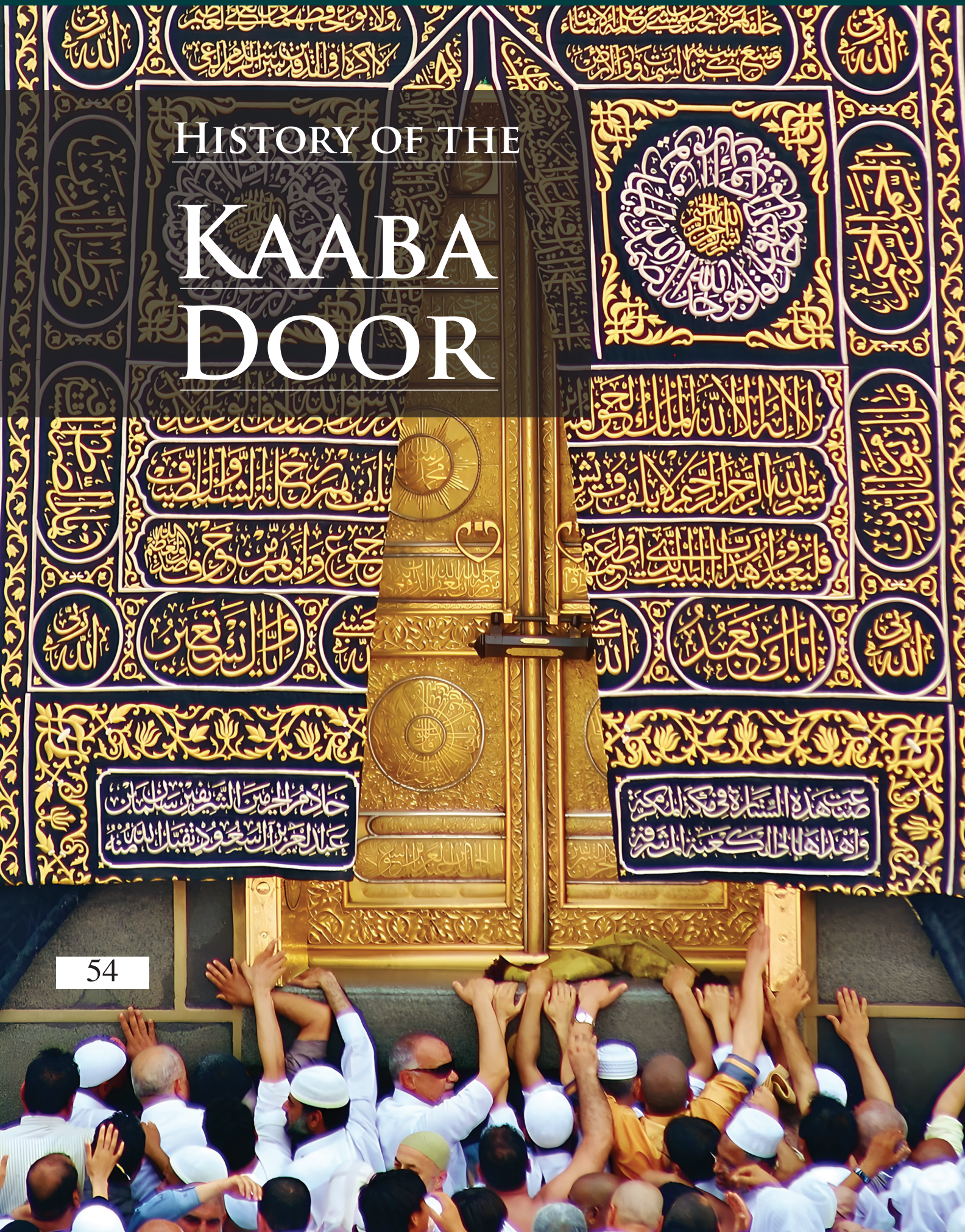


and other cultures.

The growing popularity of these centers reflects the increasing global interest in Turkish culture, tourism, literature and television dramas, particularly across the Middle East, the Balkans and neighboring regions. They also represent broader efforts to encourage cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue.

Centuries after his death, Yunus Emre remains a timeless symbol of love, humility, spirituality, and human unity—a poet whose message still speaks powerfully to the modern world.

HISTORY OF THE KAABA DOOR





Dr. Fatima Taneem Ruknuddin,

India



*T*he Kaaba is the most sacred and revered site in Islam. For the world's 1.8 billion Muslims, it serves as the focal point of their faith, worship, and pilgrimage. All Muslims face toward it—the Qiblah—during their daily prayers, and they circumambulate it in the ritual of Tawaf, a practice rooted in antiquity.

Located at the center of Masjid al-Haram in Makkah, the Kaaba is mentioned in the Noble Quran by several names, including Bait-ul-Ateeq (the Ancient House), Bait-ul-Haram (the Sacred House), and Bait-ul-Allah (the House of Allah). It is regarded as the first place of worship established on Earth, originally built by Prophet Adam (peace be upon him). Approximately 5,000 years ago, Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and his son Prophet Ismail (peace be upon him) rebuilt it on the same foundations, resulting in the structure that stands today.

The Quran highlights its significance in several verses, including:

- "Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah), full of blessing and a guidance for the Alameen (mankind and jinn)." (Surah Al-Imran, Verse 96)
- "And (remember) when We showed Ibrahim the site of the Sacred House (the Kaaba at Makkah)." (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 26)

- "And circumambulate the Ancient House (Kaaba at Makkah)." (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 29; note: often referenced in connection with Al-Imran as well)

These verses affirm the Kaaba's ancient sanctity. Even before the advent of Islam, the people of the Arabian Peninsula revered it as an exceptionally holy site.

In Islam, the Kaaba is considered one of the greatest *Sha'a'ir Allah* (Symbols of Allah). Honoring these symbols is an act of piety, as the Quran states: "And whosoever honours the Symbols of Allah, then it is truly from the piety of the hearts." (Surah Al-Imran, Verse 32)

Throughout history, natural disasters (such as floods) and human events have necessitated multiple renovations and rebuilds of the Kaaba, bringing it to its present form. Kings and rulers across eras have taken great care in maintaining it—providing the *Kiswa* (its covering), rebuilding parts or all of it, and crafting its elements, from the golden waterspout to the ornate door on its eastern wall.

Caring for the Kaaba's door has always been an immense honor. Rulers ensured that only the finest craftsmen, designers, and calligraphers worked on it. In the modern Saudi era, for example, the previous and

current doors were crafted by the renowned Makkah goldsmith family: Sheikh Ibrahim Badr and, later, his son Sheikh Ahmad bin Ibrahim Badr along with relatives. The current door was designed by the acclaimed Syrian engineer Muneer Sarri Al-Jundi, who passed away in December 2020.

While the oldest surviving and precisely datable Kaaba door dates to the Ottoman era of Sultan Murad IV, historical texts indicate that at least three earlier doors existed before it.

Early Doors and Traditions

Islamic tradition holds that Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) built the Kaaba as a simple rectangular structure without a door or roof, featuring an entry portal on the eastern wall and an exit on the western wall. The Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad) was embedded in one corner. Over centuries, ruling tribes in Makkah rebuilt it multiple times.

According to historian Ibn Hisham (d. 833 CE) and Al-Azraqi (d. 837 CE) in his *Kitab Akhbar Makkah*, the first known door was installed by King Tubba of Yemen (d. ca. 430 CE), a convert to Judaism who visited Makkah before the birth of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Tubba reportedly covered the Kaaba, instructed the Jurhum tribe to maintain its cleanliness, and ordered a door with a key. This wooden door remained in use through the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods.

In 608 CE, the Quraysh tribe rebuilt the Kaaba after flood damage. Due to limited funds, they shortened it slightly, adding the

low semicircular wall (Hateem) and raising the eastern door high above ground level while sealing the western exit—transforming it from oblong to more cubical.

In 683 CE (64 AH), Caliph Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him) restored the original Ibrahimic dimensions, lowering the door to ground level and reopening the western exit. After the Umayyad reconquest in 692 CE (73 AH), it was rebuilt to the Quraysh dimensions, with the door raised again and the western portal sealed. Remnants of this “hidden door” are believed to be preserved in some museums.

Ottoman Era Door (Sultan Murad IV)

The oldest known datable door was installed during Ottoman Sultan Murad IV’s reign. After heavy rains in 1630 CE damaged the Kaaba (collapsing its eastern and western walls), Egyptian craftsmen began work in 1629 CE (1039 AH) and completed it in 1630 CE (1040 AH), with installation around 1634 CE (1045 AH).

Divided into two panels, it featured geometric designs plated with 166 pounds of silver, coated in gold leaf and durable metal sheets. This was the first door to combine silver and gold prominently. It endured over 300 years until 1947.

This historic door is now part of exhibitions, including the Roads to Arabia display (loaned by Riyadh’s National Museum) at the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

King Abdulaziz Al Saud’s Reign

In 1944, King Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rah-

man Al Saud, founder of modern Saudi Arabia, ordered a new door after learning the old one was deteriorating. Crafted at his expense, it featured an aluminum frame reinforced with iron bars, covered in gold-plated silver plates, and inscribed with Allah's attributes. It included a metal base with two wooden shutters of Javanese teak and retained a lock from 1891.

Renowned Makkah goldsmith Sheikh Ibrahim Badr led the work, which took three years. Installed on October 31, 1947, it served for about 30 years and is now displayed at the Exhibition of the Two Holy Mosques Architecture in Makkah.

The Current Kaaba Door

The present door was installed on October 13, 1979, during the reign of King Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In 1976–1977, while praying inside the Kaaba, King Khalid noticed scratches and wear on the existing door. He commissioned a new one made of pure gold and also ordered a rooftop access door (Bab al-Tawbah) on the northern side.

The Badr family—led by Sheikh Ahmad bin Ibrahim Badr, with relatives Mahmoud and Ibrahim Badr—crafted it in a dedicated workshop. Engineer Muneer Sarri Al-Jundi designed it.

Measuring 3 meters high, 2 meters wide, and 0.5 meters deep, the door uses 2.5 cm-thick aluminum coated with gold-dipped silver plates. Its base is made of rare Maca Moong wood from Thailand. It incorporates over 280 kg of pure gold—one of the largest single uses of gold in the world—and is adorned with 15 of Allah's 99 Names

in Thuluth calligraphy, plus circular panels with Quranic verses, Islamic phrases, and historical notes.

Key Quranic inscriptions include:

- "In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful."
- "Enter therein in peace and security." (Surah Al-Hijr, Verse 46)
- "Allah has made the Kaaba, the Sacred House, an asylum of security and benefits for mankind..." (Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 97)
- "And say: 'My Lord! Let my entry be good and my exit be good. And grant me from You an authority to help me.'" (Surah Al-Isra, Verse 80)
- "...Your Lord has written (prescribed) Mercy for Himself..." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 54)
- "And your Lord said: 'Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation)..." (Surah Ghafir, Verse 60)
- "Say: 'O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah; verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!'" (Surah Al-Zumar, Verse 53)

In Islam, the Kaaba's door holds no independent religious significance beyond its role as part of the sacred structure. Its magnificence reflects the glory and sanctity of the House of Allah, the Kaaba itself. Each door in its history carries a rich legacy of devotion and craftsmanship.



Email: info@al-ummah.org
Website: www.al-ummah.org