

Middle East Society and Culture

Caroline Jawad 2017



Language



Basic characteristics of the Arabic writing system:

- The Arabic alphabet contains 28 letters.
- Arabic is written from right to left.
- In Arabic short vowels are generally not written.
 - Th bk 'n th tree 's vr 'gl 'nd rtt
- Arabic letters change their shape according to their position in a word.

Click on

- <http://www.arabicgenie.com/letters>



To begin

- When meeting someone for the first time, use the greeting
السلام عليكم [assalamu a'alaikum], peace be upon you.
- When asking for something, you start or end your request with the expression من فضلك [min Fadlak], which is a polite form of saying please.
- When introducing someone, you say السيد [assayed], Mr.,
or السيدة [assayida], Ms., before their name.

Famous phrases !

- [Insha'Allah] إن شاء الله

This very famous term, meaning God willing is the equivalent of the word hopefully in English. e.g. Insha'Allah I will get a promotion. Although the saying has a religious connotation and appears often in the verses of the Qur'an, it's also used by Arabic speakers in non-religious contexts.

Continued

- [Masha'Allah] ما شاء الله

Another form of God willing. This expression is usually said after giving a compliment, in the same way that you say bless or knock on wood in English. It shows that someone is not envious of someone else's fortune, and that God is the reason for that good fortune, e.g. Your eyes are beautiful, Masha'Allah.

More

- If you were to enquire about when an event's taking place, for example, don't be shocked if you're given information about the location of the event rather than its timing: the English word when sounds exactly like the Arabic word وين [wein] which means where.
- If your name is Anna, أنا [ana], this means I in Arabic, so, if you introduce yourself by saying I'm Anna, أنا أنا [ana Anna], this would translate as I am I in Arabic.

More

- If your name is Anna, أنا [ana], this means I in Arabic, so, if you introduce yourself by saying I'm Anna, أنا أنا [ana Anna], this would translate as I am I in Arabic.
- Regarding social etiquette, especially if you're a woman, you may find yourself in a place where the local dress code is very conservative (headscarves and عباءة [abaya] a robe-like dress).

You should also avoid any public display of affection towards your partner, as this is also considered impolite or even illegal in some very conservative countries such as Saudi Arabia.

More

- The pronunciation of some Arabic letters, like the

خ [kh] as خوخ [khawkh], prune,

ع [a'a] as in عنوان [a'anwan], address,

ح [ha'e] as in حائط [ha'et], wall,

ق [qa] as in قانون [qanoun], law, and

غ [gh] as in غيمة [ghayma], cloud, may take

some time to master as they are produced right at the very back of the throat.

More

- In Arabic word order, the verb comes first, so to say "the boy eats the apple" you actually say "eat the boy the apple":

أكل الولد التفاحة [akala al walado attofaha].

Adjectives come after the noun, rather than before as in English:

السيارة الحمراء [assayara alhamra'a], literally the car red.

Who is an Arab?

Not = Middle Eastern

What are the differences between these two maps?
Which is the Middle East, and which is the “Arab World”?





Questions

- How many countries in the Arab League ?
- How many Arabs ?
- How many Muslims in the world ?
- 2015
- 70%
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List of Arab countries by population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Arab_countries_by_population)

Links

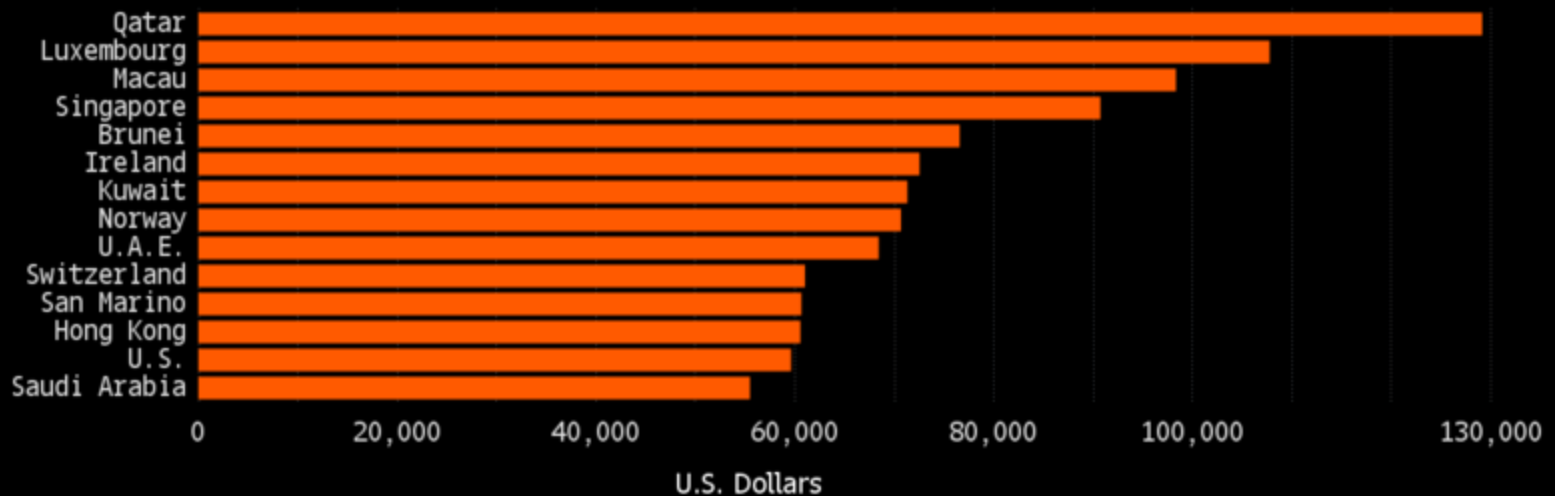
- <https://www.gulftalent.com/salaries/category/customer-service>



Incomes

Richest of the Rich

Qatar's average income exceeds those in the U.S. and Saudi Arabia combined



Source: International Monetary Fund; 2017 forecasts are based on purchasing power parity per-capita GDP composites from the OECD, World Bank and Penn World Tables

Bloomberg 

What is Arabic?

- A Semitic language
- Can you name two other Semitic languages?

Hebrew

Aramaic

The most common greeting in all three languages is “Peace upon you.” In Arabic, one says salaam alaykum, in Hebrew shalom aleichem, in Aramaic, shlaam aalookh. Below, the word **peace** in the three Semitic languages. Can you tell which is which?

The image shows the Arabic word for peace, 'salaam', written in black Arabic script on a white background.The image shows the Hebrew word for peace, 'shalom', written in black Hebrew script on a white background.The image shows the Aramaic word for peace, 'shlaam', written in blue Aramaic script on a white background.

Who uses Arabic?

Native Arabic speakers, of course--but the spoken and written languages are very different, and the spoken language varies from country to country.

Muslims use Arabic for prayer and recitation of the Quran, even though only 15-20% of Muslims speak Arabic as their native tongue.

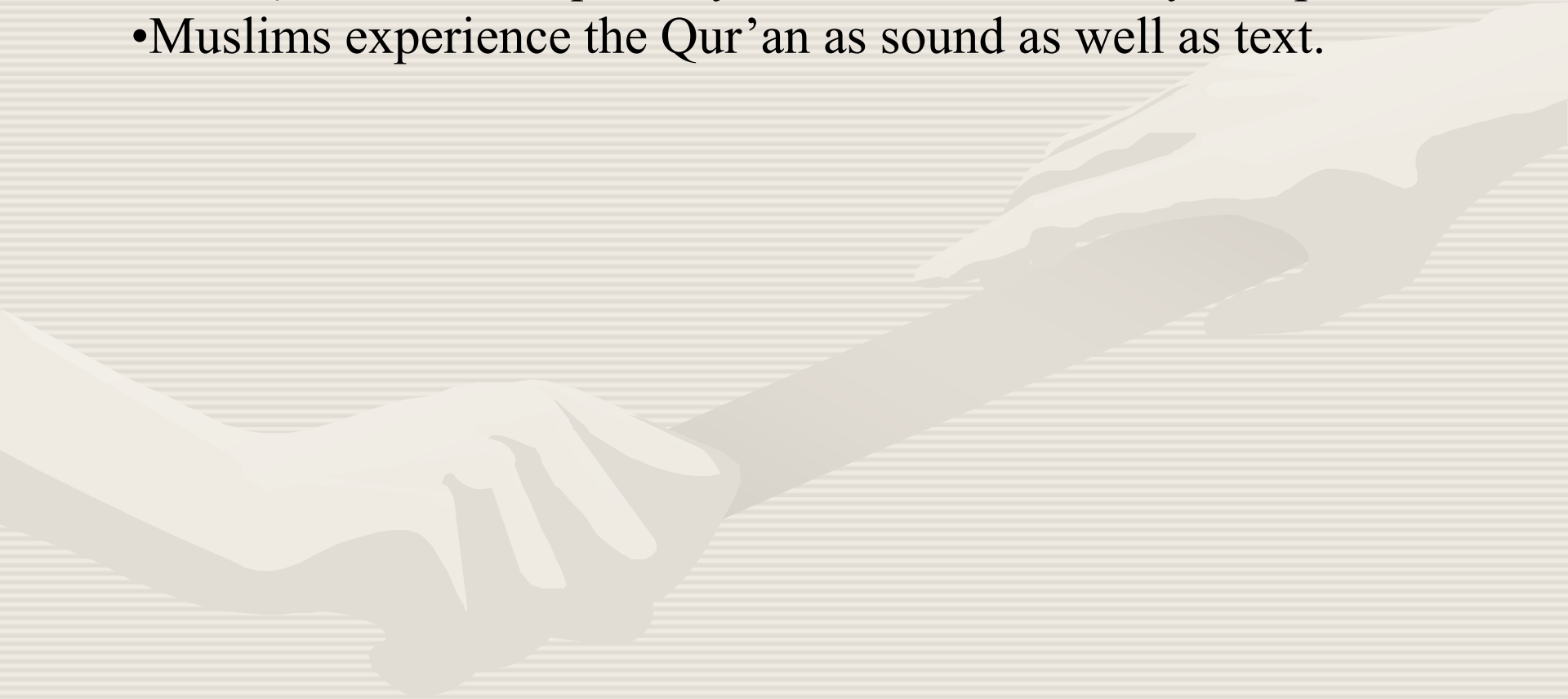
The Arabic script is used for many languages besides Arabic, just as “Latin” script is used for many languages besides Latin, like English! Can you name other languages that use Arabic script?

Map of the “Muslim World”



The Qur'an and Arabic

- Muslims see the Qur'an as a “direct quote” from God.
- The Qur'an is in exquisitely beautiful Arabic--rhymed prose.
- Muslims experience the Qur'an as sound as well as text.



Arabic Calligraphy

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

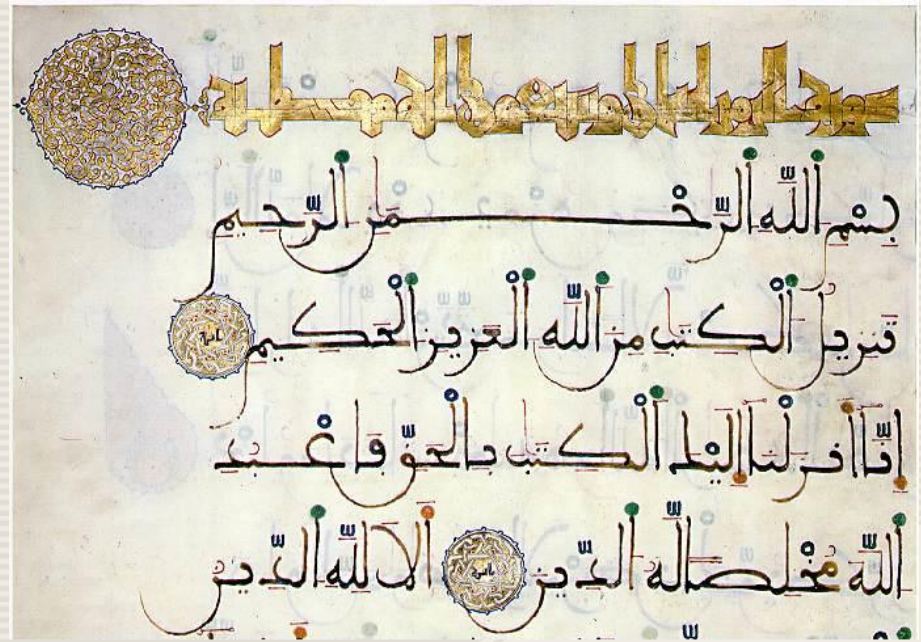
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

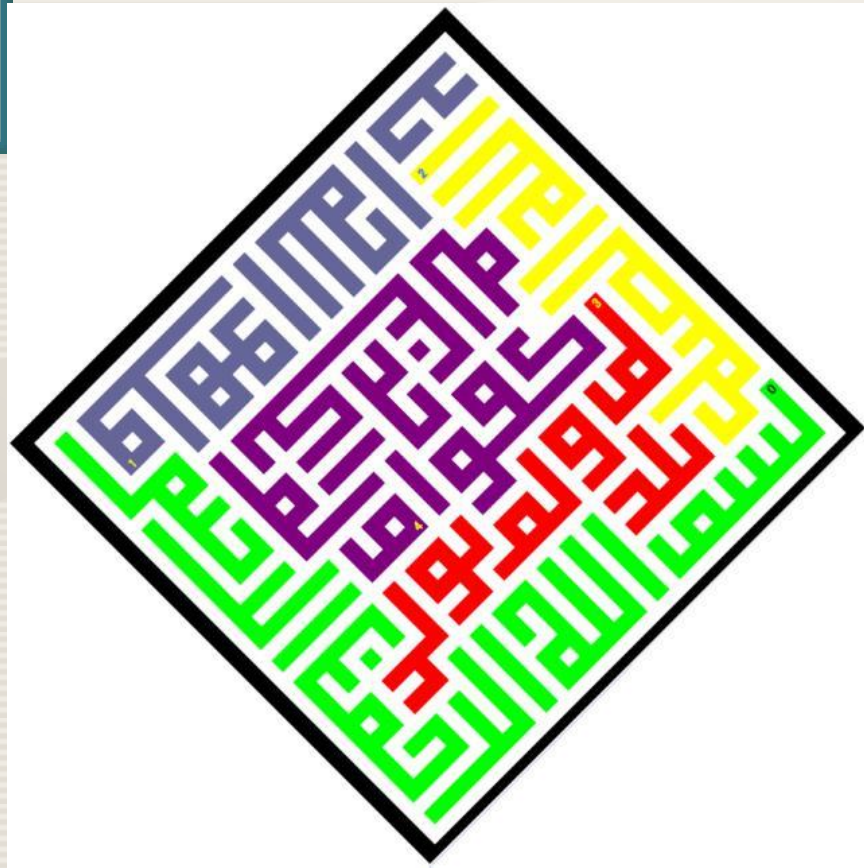
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

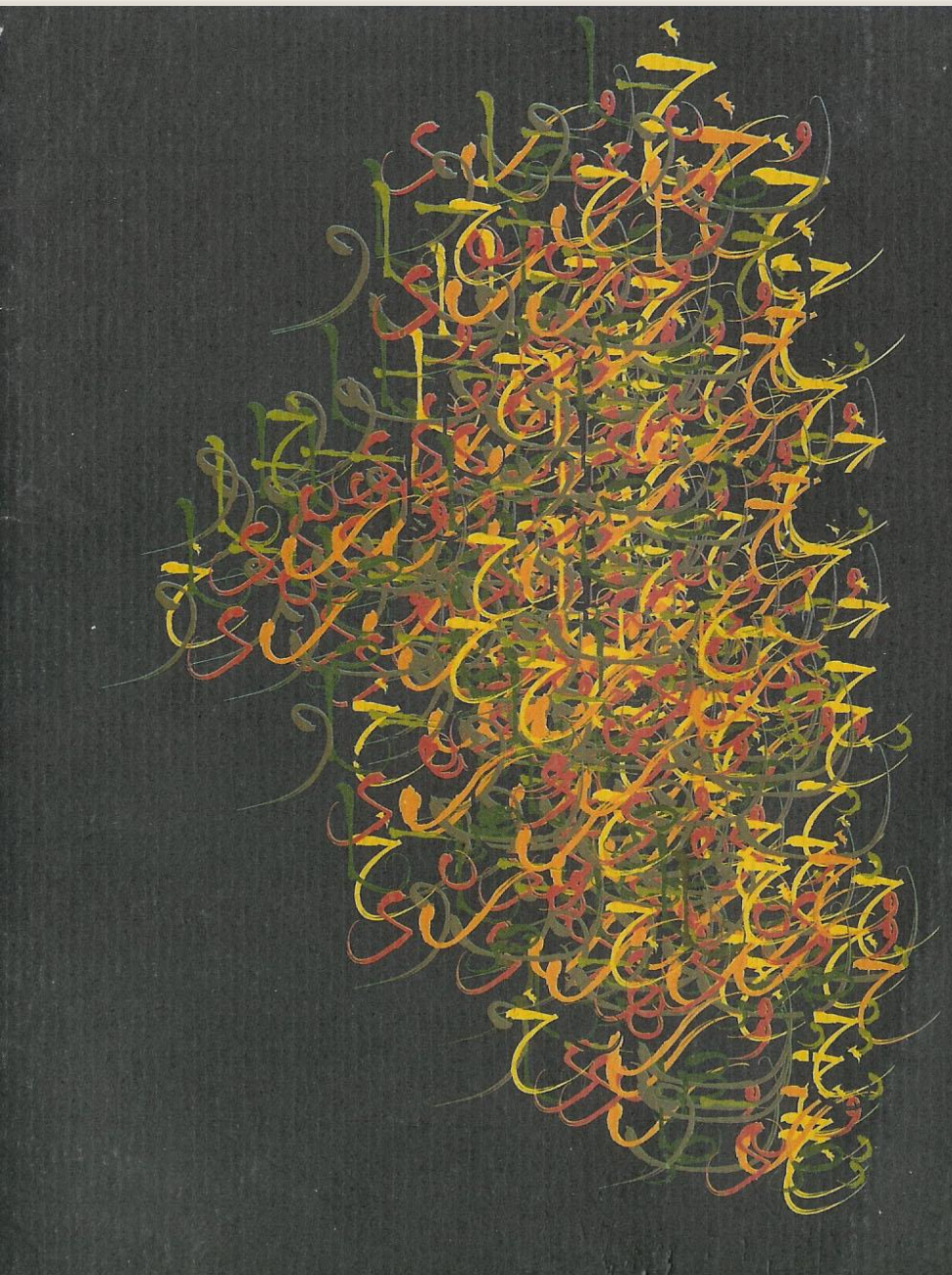
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



The Diwani script is a cursive style of Arabic calligraphy developed during the reign of the early Ottoman Turks (16th-early 17th century).







The Structure of Arabic

Very regular language

Written from right to left

Alphabetical: 28 letters--first two are alaf and baa

Cursive script: no capital letters, letters mostly join together

خ Xaa'	ح H'aa'	ج Jiim	ث Th'aa'	ت Taa'	ب Baa'	أ 'Alif
ص Saad	ش Shiin	س Siin	ز Zaay	ر Raa'	ذ Thaal	د Daal
ق Qaaf	ف Faa'	غ Ghayn	ع 'Ayn	ظ Th:aa'	ط Taa'	ض Daad
ي Yaa'	و Waaw	ه Haa'	ن Nuun	م Miim	ل Laam	ك Kaaf

3-letter roots

k-t-b = writing

kita**ab** book

kaa**tib** writer

ma**ktuub** letter

ma**ktab** office

ma**ktaba** library

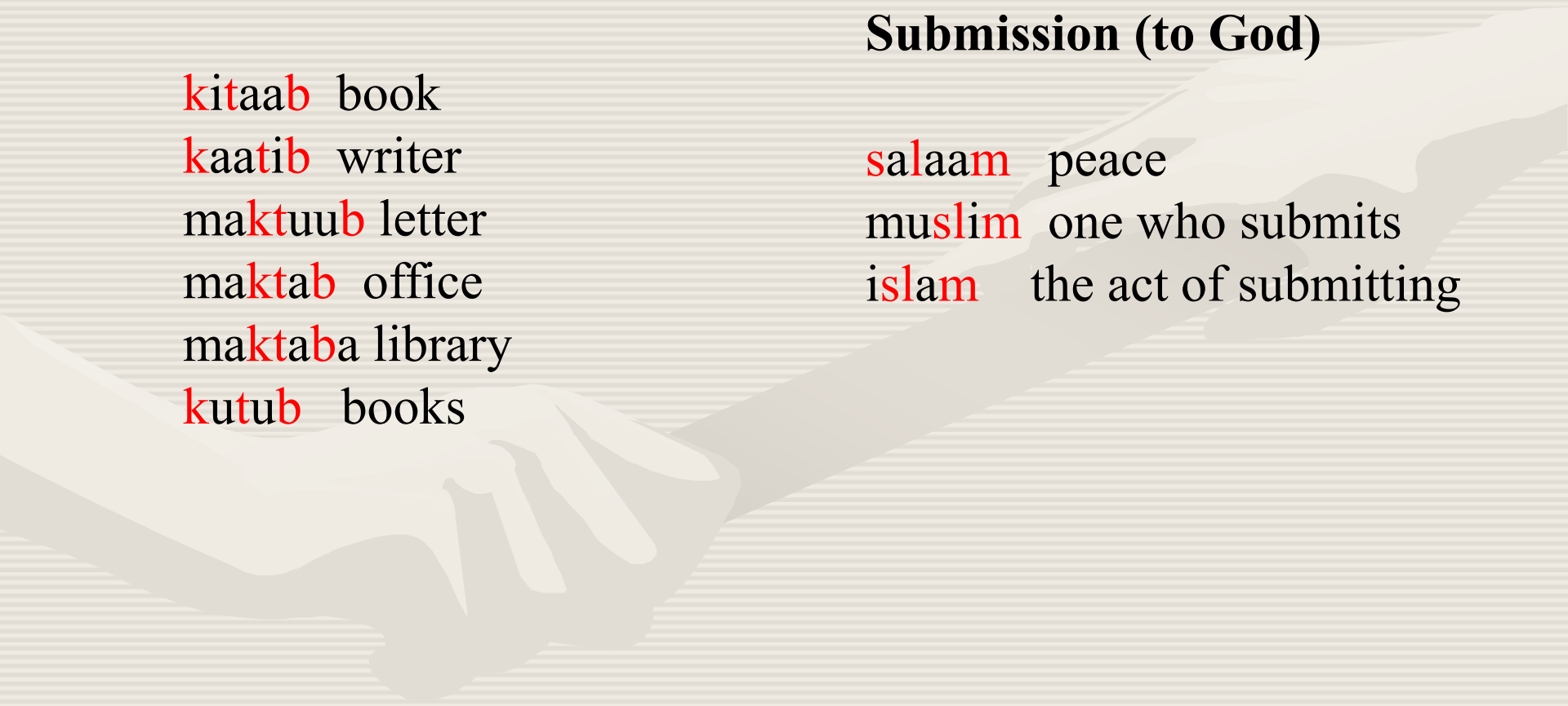
ku**tub** books

s-l-m = peace,
Submission (to God)

sa**laam** peace

mu**s**lim one who submits

is**l**am the act of submitting



Sounds of Arabic

Sounds English has that Arabic doesn't: p, v, g

Sounds Arabic has that English doesn't:

‘ayn

ghayn

qaf

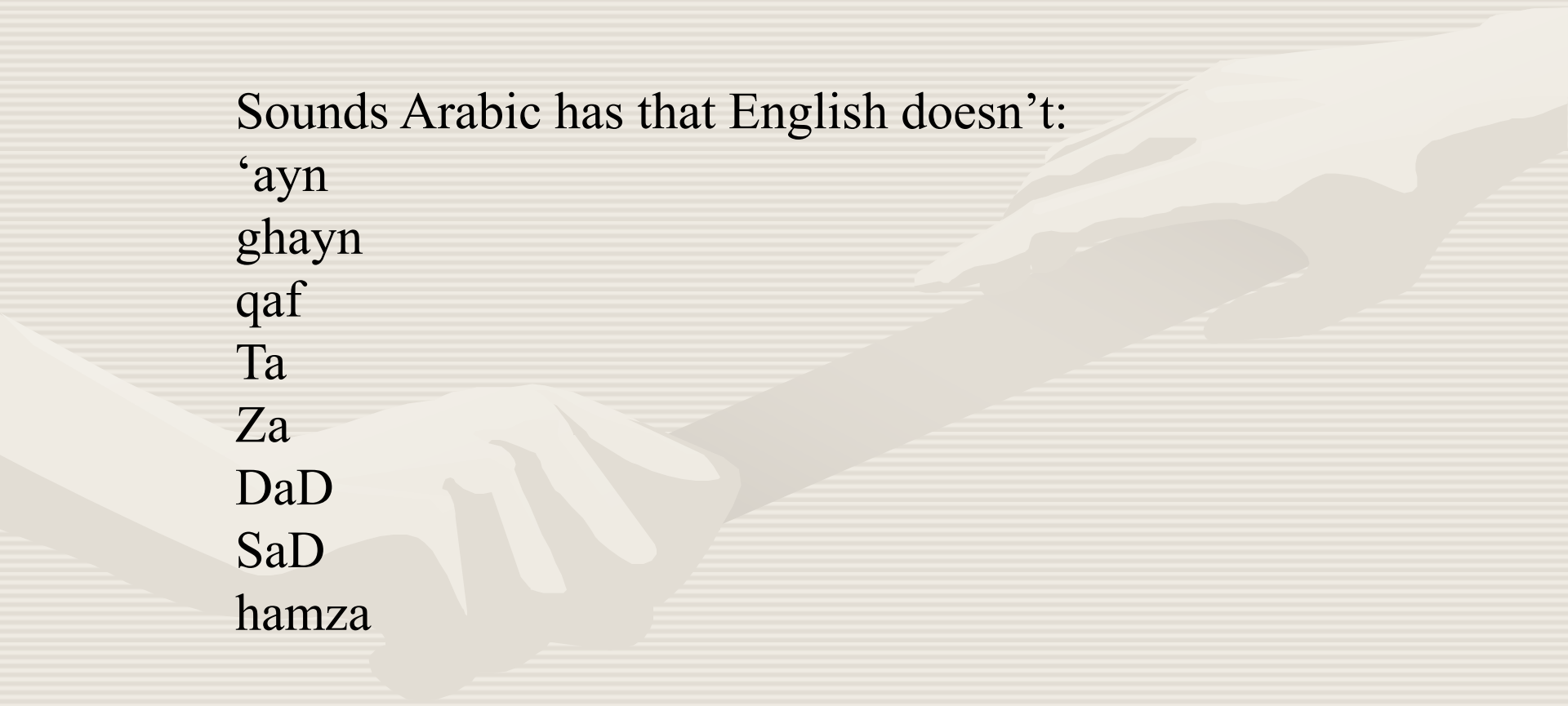
Ta

Za

DaD

SaD

hamza



Arabic You Already Know

admiral
adobe
alchemy
alcohol
alcove
alfalfa
algebra
algorithm
alkali
almanac
amber
apricot
artichoke

arsenal
atlas
average
azure
baroque
barrack
borax
caliber
candy
cane
carafe
cataract
caraway

check
check-mate
chess
chiffon
cipher
coffee
cornea
cotton
crimson
damask
elixir
gauze
ghoul

ginger
gypsum
hazard
jar
jasmine
julep
lemon
lime
lute
macabre
magazine
magnet
marzipan

mattress
mohair
muslin
orange
racquet
ream
retina
rice
saffron
sash
satin
sherbet
sofa

sugar
sumac
syrup
taffeta
tambourine
tariff
traffic
troubador
zenith
zero

Important Arabic terms

al- the

Allah God

‘abd slave/servant

Abdallah servant of God

hamd praise

Hamid, Muhammad, Ahmad, Mahmud

alhamdulillah, mashallah, inshallah

ism name

bismillah

Anatomy of Arabic Names

Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Tariq al-Dimashqi
Umm Ahmad
al-Jahiz

given name

ibn (bin) or bint: son or daughter

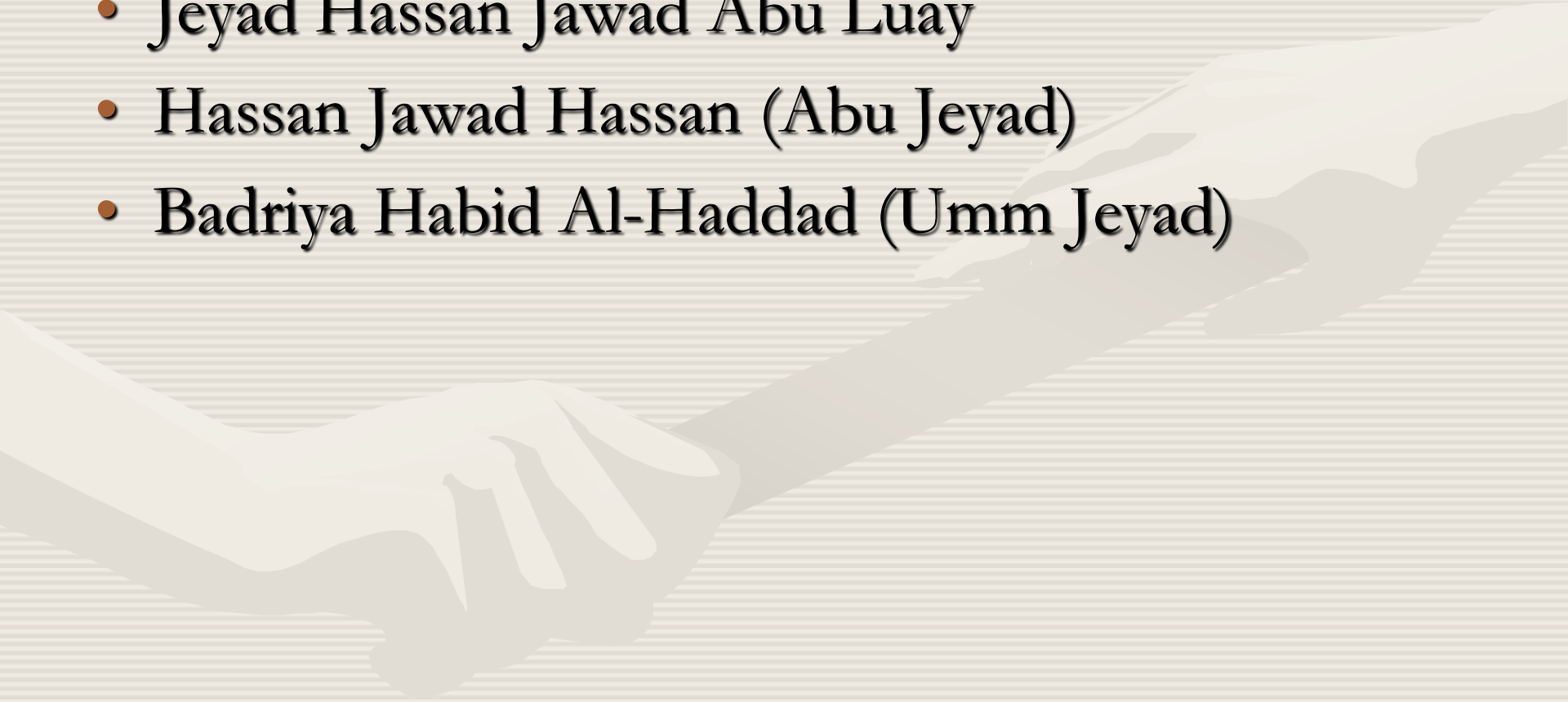
al- plus place name, tribal name, or description

abu or umm and oldest (male) child's name

Not real Arabic names: Abdul, Abu

Names

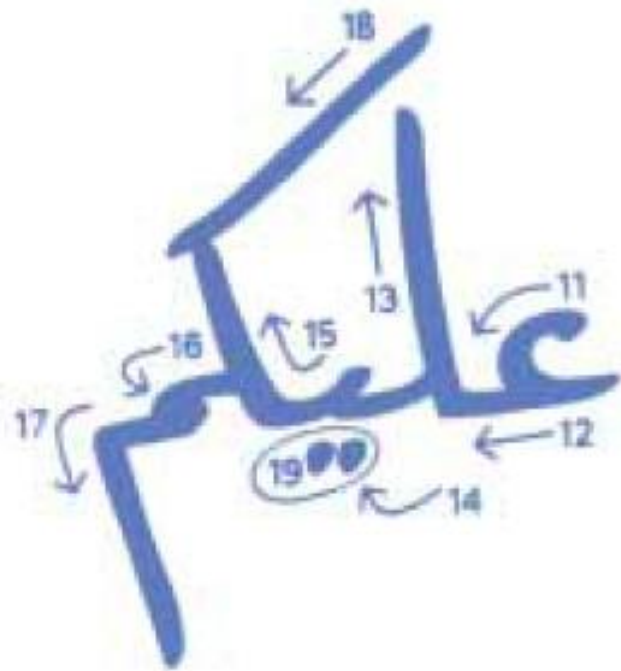
- Umm Luay
- Jeyad Hassan Jawad Abu Luay
- Hassan Jawad Hassan (Abu Jeyad)
- Badriya Habid Al-Haddad (Umm Jeyad)



Writing Arabic

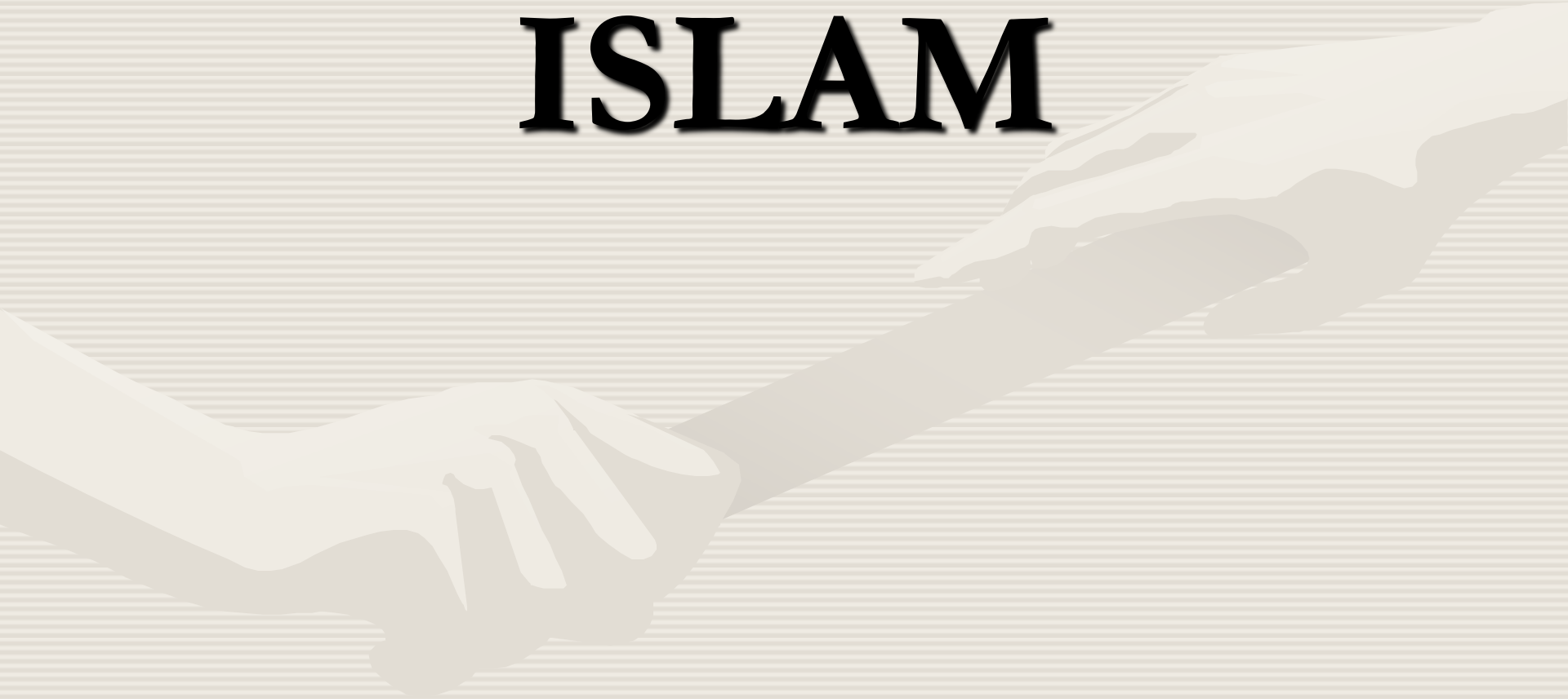
In a word	Alone	Alone		In a word	Alone	Alone
ضضض	ض	D		ااا	ا**	A
ططط	ط	T		ببب	ب	B
ظظظ	ظ	TH as in This		تتت	ت	T
ععع	ع	' or breathless A		ثثث	ث	TH as in Teeth
غغغ	غ	Gh		ججج	ج	J
ففف	ف	F		ححح	ح	H
ققق	ق	Q		خخخ	خ	KH
ككك	ك	K		د د د	د**	D
للل	ل	L		ذ ذ ذ	ذ**	TH as in This
ممم	م	M		ررر	ر**	R
ننن	ن	N		ززز	ز**	Z
ههه	ه	H		سسس	س	S
ووو	و**	W or U		ششش	ش	SH
ييي	ي	Y or I		صصص	ص	S

Write a Phrase in Arabic Script



Assalamu alaykum (Peace be with you)

ISLAM



Islam and Muslims

- The world of Islam is as diverse as the world of Christianity.
- Islam is experienced differently across cultures. In the words of a contemporary scholar of Islam: “Islam is like a river in that it takes its color from the cultural bed it flows through.”

What is ISLAM?

Islam is an Arabic word derived from the word peace, which also means submitting to a higher will.

Islam means seeking peace by submitting to the Divine Will.

Who are the Muslims?

- ❖ Individuals who completely and peacefully submit to the will of God, believe in the Articles of Faith and practice the Five Pillars of Islam.
- ❖ Muslims constitute 1/5 of world population, about 1.4 billion, and form the majority in 40 countries.
- ❖ Most Muslims live outside the Middle East.



Who is God in Islam?

Say: He is God, the One ; God, the Eternal and Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him.

Qur'an (112 : 1-4)

Who is God in Islam?

“God is He, beside whom there is no other god; He knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.”

“God is He, beside whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy, the Peace, the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: Glory to God! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him. He is God, the Creator, the Evolver, the Form Giver. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names: whatever is in the heavens and on earth, does celebrate His Praises and Glory: and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”

(Qur'an 59: 22-4)

Who is Prophet Muhammad?



- ❖ Born in Makkah (Mecca) in the year 570 (CE).
- ❖ Received his first revelation from God at the age of forty, while engaged in a meditative retreat, through Archangel Gabriel (Holy Spirit).
- ❖ Revelations continued for twenty-three years, and are recorded in the Qur'an.

Qur'an



Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic guidance.



The Qur'an is the record of the words of God revealed to Prophet Muhammad in Arabic through Archangel Gabriel. This revelation came in phases and continued for twenty-three years.



Sunnah



Sunnah, the practices, examples and saying of Prophet Muhammad.



A major source of Islamic guidance.



Illustrates Islamic faith in practice.



Collected in hundreds of texts known as “*Hadiths*” (narrations).

Articles of Faith



Belief in the Oneness or Unity of the Divine.



Belief in Angels created by God



Belief in the Revealed Books of God.

Articles of Faith



Belief in the Messengers and Prophets.



Belief in the Day of Judgment.



Belief in Divine Dispensation.

The Five Pillars of Islam

Islam is built on five pillars, the first of which is a statement of faith. The other four are major exercises of faith



Declaration of Faith (Shahadah).



Prayer (Salah)



Obligatory Charity (Zakah)



Fasting (Siyam)



The Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Hajj





Spirit of Islam

- O mankind! We created you **from** a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things.
- Qur'an (49:13)

The Spirit of Islam

The leading features of Mohammedanism [Islam] involve this—that in actual existence nothing can become fixed, but that everything is destined to expand itself in activity and life in boundless amplitude of the world, so that the worship of the one remains the only bond by which the whole is capable of uniting. In this expansion, this active energy, all limits, all national and cast distinctions vanish, no particular race, no political claim of birth or possession is regarded—only man as a believer.

G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*

Respect of Religious Diversity

- **Muslims, like Christians and Jews, trace their religion to Prophet Abraham. Israelites are the descendant of Isaac and Arabs are the descendant of Ishmael.**
- **“Say (O Muslims), We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: we make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to God in submission.”**

(Qur'an 2:136)

Respect of Religious Diversity

Salvation: Devotion Not Association

“Those who believe (in the Qur’an), those who follow the Jewish (scripture), the Christians, and the Sabians, anyone who believes in God and the Last Day, and works righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Qur’an 2:62)

Search For Common Ground

"Say: O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than God."(3:64)

Religious Diversity

Mention the glory of Spanish Jewry in the days before the Inquisition and what comes immediately to mind are the southern cities of Cordoba and Granada, where giants of Jewish history like Moses Maimonides and Yehuda Halevi lived and wrote, and where highly literate Jewish communities helped the Muslim leaders of Spain create a glorious civilization at a time when Christian Europe was slumbering in the Dark Ages. Another city where Jewish life flourished before the Inquisition is Toledo, the beautiful former capital of Castille, located near Madrid in central Spain, which, like Cordoba and Granada, is today much visited by Jewish tourists from around the world.

Walter Ruby, Off the Beaten Path in Tarazona, Spain, Jewish Heritage

Islamic Civilization

The Muslims of Spain were the most cultured people of the West. Literature and art became their glories, and learning flourished when rulers, often men of letters themselves, invited some of the best scholars of the Muslim East to settle in Spain. By the twelfth century scholars from northern Europe were flocking to Spain to study, and through them much of the learning of the Arabs was passed to Christian Europe.

T. Walter Wallbank, et. al., *Civilization Past and Present*.

SOCIETY



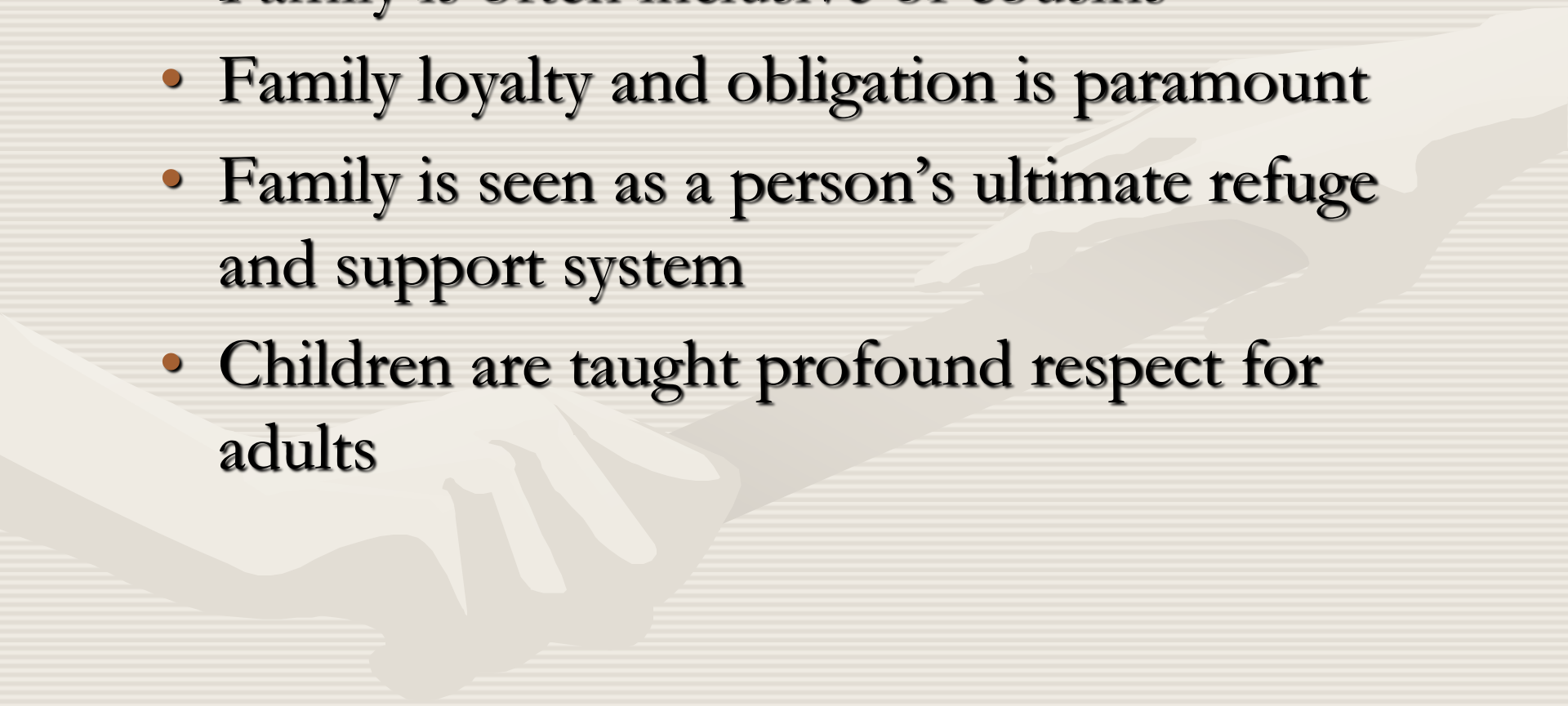
Continuity and Change

- Middle Eastern society has been in a state of flux for over a century, searching for a new direction and identity, and experiencing a great deal of tension as rivaling forces compete for its future.
- The most pronounced tension is between modernity and tradition, that increasingly takes the form of struggle between Islam and modernity.
- Islam is viewed by many Muslims not simply as a religion, but also as a cultural identity and heritage.
- While cultures and traditions vary markedly, the following qualities are often shared by M.E. Culture.

Middle Eastern Culture

- Honor (self-respect to self-pride) and expectation of equal treatment regardless of wealth, position, or rank.
- Fierce sense of independence and resentment of imposed rules or decisions not sanctioned by social norms and customs.
- Strong loyalty to extended family, friends, and locality, and a great expectation of solidarity.
- Hospitality to guests and visitors.

Family Role

- Family is often inclusive of cousins
 - Family loyalty and obligation is paramount
 - Family is seen as a person's ultimate refuge and support system
 - Children are taught profound respect for adults
- 

Men and Women

- The public display of intimacy between men and women is considered offensive.
- This code also applies to husbands and wives
- The maintenance of family honor is one of the highest values.
- In Middle Eastern cultures, promiscuous behavior can be more damaging to family honor.
- Most Middle Easterners still prefer arranged marriage. The family always plays a major role in the decision of any member to wed.

Islam and Modernity

- The Shock of Modernity
 - Colonialism and the Loss of independence
 - Modern State and the Loss of local autonomy and control
 - Westernization and the Loss of Tradition
 - Fragmentation and the Loss of Unity
- Islamic Reassertion
 - Rejection: Radical Islam
 - Reconciliation: Reform Islam
 - Dualism: Traditional Islam

Modernization

- Islam was dismissed by the 1950s as Pre-Modern and obsolete:

Whether from East or from West, modernization poses the same basic challenge—the infusion of “a rationalist and positivist spirit” against which scholars seem agreed, “Islam is absolutely defenseless.”

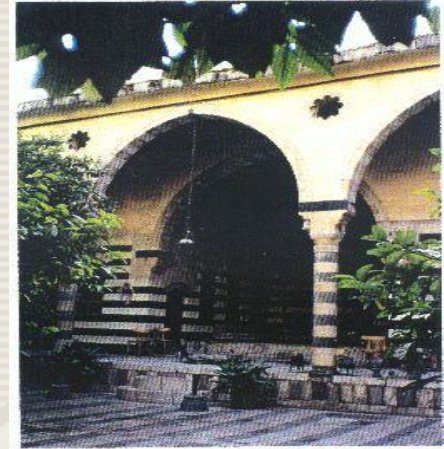
Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*

Traditional City



Narrow Allies, Plain External Design

Traditional City



- Privacy
- Open space is located within the traditional house.
- All Houses look alike from outside – no decoration.
- Court yard is located inside the house.

Traditional City



- ▲ Umayyad Mosque built 705-715 AD.
- ◀ Suq (Shopping Mall) Al-Hamiddiyyah.

Modern City



Modern Dubai



Modern Cairo

- Multi-Story apartment buildings is the new residential pattern.

Middle Eastern Women



Middle Eastern Women



Status of Women

- Statements on women's status vary in applicability depending on the country involved. For instance, in Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, educated women have been very active at all levels of society.
- In the Persian Gulf States, most women do not work. Those who do, work only in all-female environments such as schools and banks for women, except those in the medical profession
- Traditionally-oriented men and women don't see prevailing customs as restrictions-rather as protections

Women Social Participation

- Traditional Muslim societies are patriarchic.

- Modern Influence and Muslim feminism

- Islamic Influence and Revisiting Islamic Sources:

Believing men and women are the guardian and protector of one another, they both enjoin the good and prohibit evil, establish prayers, give for charity, and obey God and His Messenger.

(Qura'n 9: 71)

Politicization of Hijab

- Women attire (hijab) have been frequently viewed via a political lens.
- Kemal Attaturk prohibited Islamic outfit.
- Syrian government placed ban on the hijab in the 1980s.
- Turkey and Tunisia persecutes women who wear hijab since early 1990s.
- Iran and Saudi Arabia continue to enforce hijab.
- France outlawed hijab in late 2003.

More

- <https://fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf>



