



## **Aaron**

See HÂRÛN.

## **‘abâ’ah**

An outer wrap or cloak, sometimes striped.

## **‘Abbâsids**

The SUNNÎ dynasty that ruled from 133/750 to 657/1258, succeeding the ‘UMAYYAD dynasty. The hereditary caliphs of this dynasty claimed legitimacy through descent from al-‘Abbâs, the uncle of MUHAMMAD, making them part of the family of the Prophet (AHL AL-BAYT). The city of BAGHDÂD was built as their capital. Under their rule, and often as a direct result of their patronage, the earliest major works of Islamic law (SHARÎ‘AH), QUR’ÂN commentary, (TAFSÎR), and history (*ta’rîkh*) were written. Under the patronage of ‘Abbâsîd rulers and their courts, all of the intellectual and artistic fields of Islamic civilization developed and flourished. Because most histories of early Islam were written under their control and for their aggrandizement, negative views of the ‘Umayyads and the SHÎ‘î were often a part of their polemical picture of early Islam. Such views have often been incorporated into Western scholarship about Islam to the detriment of a more balanced view of the character

of all the early groups. Modern attempts to revive the caliphate have often looked to reviving the legitimacy of the ‘Abbâsîd dynasty. (See also KHILÂFAT MOVEMENT.)

## **‘abd** (Arabic: servant, slave)

This is used frequently in compound names, where the second element is a name or epithet of God, such as ‘Abd Allâh (also written as ‘Abdullâh), Servant of God, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmân, Servant of the Merciful, etc. Muslims consider being a “slave” of God to be a high honor and the highest form of piety. While Islamic religious texts do not condemn slavery, it is not fully condoned as an institution either. A slave who is a Muslim should be manumitted, even if he converts while a slave, and the ḤADÎTH contains numerous statements that recommend freeing slaves or ameliorating their lives through good treatment.

## **Abdalîs**

See DURRÂNÎS.

## **‘Abd Allâh b. al-‘Abbâs**

See IBN ‘ABBÂS.

## **‘Abd al-‘Azîz, Shâh** (1746–1824)

A prominent Indian ŞUFÎ religious reformer and SUNNÎ polemicist against SHÎ‘î

beliefs and practices, his *Tuhfat-i isnâ 'ashariyyah* should be singled out among his writings for lasting impact, influencing religious discussions in PAKISTAN.

**Abdel Rahman, Omar** (born 1938)

Egyptian fundamentalist and spiritual leader of AL-JAMĀ'AT AL-ISLĀMIYYAH, he was convicted of heading the plot to bomb the World Trade Center in New York City in 1993, and is serving a life sentence in a maximum security prison.

**'Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Ḥāshim**

The Prophet MUḤAMMAD's grandfather, who became his guardian after the death of his father, 'ABDULLĀH. He is featured prominently in the pre-Islamic history of the KA'BAH and the well of ZAMZAM, the water of which was his right to distribute to pilgrims bound for MECCA. In the Year of the Elephant, the year of the Prophet's birth, he is said to have been involved in repelling the attack of the forces of the Ethiopian general ABRAHA, who attacked Mecca.

**'Abd al-Qâdir b. 'Alî b. Yûsuf al-Fâsî** (1007/1598–1091/1680)

He was the chief member of the ŞÛFÎ establishment in Morocco in the eleventh/seventeenth century. He is primarily noted as the progenitor of a line of religious scholars and aristocrats in the city of FĀS.

**'Abd al-Raḥmân, 'Ā'ishah** (born 1913)

Prominent Egyptian author who wrote under the name Bint al-Shâti'. Her *al-Tafsîr al-bayânî lil-Qur'ân al-Karîm* argues for including the study of QUR'ÂN in literary studies. Her writings about women and Arabic literature can be regarded as religiously conservative. She has argued against historical influence on the Qur'ân and against multiple

interpretations of Qur'anic words and verses.

**'Abd ar-Râziq, 'Alî** (1888–1966)

Egyptian intellectual whose *al-Islâm wa-'usûl al-ḥukm* (Islam and the bases of political authority), published in 1925, argued against the notion that Islam is a political as well as spiritual system and is still the subject of debate today.

**'Abduh, Muḥammad** (1849–1905)

Egyptian theologian, reformer, and architect of Islamic modernism, his aim was to restore Islam to its original condition through the elimination of TAQLĪD (adherence to tradition). He considered revelation and reason to be compatible and thought that sound reasoning would lead to a belief in God. For him, science and religion were compatible, and he asserted that one could find the basis for nuclear physics in the QUR'ÂN. His most popular work, *The Theology of Unity*, has influenced many subsequent modernists, such as RASHĪD RIDĀ.

**'Abdullâh b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib** (died c. 570)

Father of the Prophet MUḤAMMAD by ÂMINAH BT. WAHB, he was of the HĀSHIMITE clan, and died before Muḥammad's birth. According to the SĪRAH, he possessed the light (NÛR), which he implanted in Âminah, from which came the Prophet.

**Abdurrahman Wahid** (born 1940)

Known as Gus Dur, he is a prominent Indonesian modernist, reformist, and theologian, leader of the NAHDATUL ULAMA, an association of traditionalist religious leaders. He became the president of Indonesia in 1420/1999 in the aftermath of scandals that had rocked

the country, but became caught up in scandals of his own, and, as this is being written, is about to be impeached by the legislature.

### ABIM

Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, a Malaysian Islamic youth movement founded by Anwar Ibrahim. The organization has widespread influence in Malaysian society.

### ablution

Ritual cleansing to remove impurities, ablutions are of two sorts, major, *GHUṢL*, and minor, *WUḌŪʿ*. *Ghusl*, the complete washing of the body, is required after sexual intercourse, masturbation and involuntary sexual emissions before a worshiper can perform a valid prayer, recite verses from the *QURʿĀN* or touch a copy of it. In order for the *ghusl* to be valid, the worshiper must recite the declaration of intent (*NIYYAH*). *Wuḏūʿ*, the washing of the head, face, hands and forearms to the elbows, and the washing of the feet three times, is required before prayer. *Wuḏūʿ* is normally performed with ritually pure water, but, under some circumstances, sand or dust may be used accompanying the washing gestures. This is known as *TAYAMMUM*. *SUNNĪ* and *SHĪʿĪ* differ about some aspects of this practice, *ShĪʿĪ* insisting that the feet be washed, while some *SunnĪ* allow the shoes to be rubbed if the feet have been placed in clean shoes at the place of *wuḏūʿ*. Mosques generally provide facilities for *wuḏūʿ*, and the traditional bathhouse, the *ḥammâm*, was a place for *ghusl*. As a result of this religious requirement, when Muslims expanded into what had been the ancient Roman world, they incorporated Roman waterworks and improved on them. In the Middle Ages, Islamic cities were among the cleanest in the world, and Muslims were leaders in this branch of civil engineering.

### abortion

Abortion, when understood as the intentional expulsion of the fetus to terminate a pregnancy prior to full gestation, is regarded by most Muslim jurists as contrary to Islamic law (*SHARĪʿAH*) and, therefore, blameworthy. Following the principles of the sanctity of human life, abortion may not be used to terminate an unwanted or unplanned pregnancy. Some schools of law, such as the *HANAFĪ* school (*MADHHAB*), allow therapeutic abortion prior to the 120th day of the pregnancy, the day of *ENSOULMENT*, but only for valid concerns for the health of the mother. After ensoulment, the fetus is regarded as having legal rights that can compete with the rights of the mother.

### Abraha

An Abyssinian general who ruled Yemen and, according to legend, tried to capture *MECCA* in the year of *MUḤAMMAD*'s birth. His use of a war elephant and his defeat are referred to in *Q. 105*, known as the "chapter of the elephant." (See also *FĪL*.)

### abrogation (Arabic *naskh*)

The doctrine, based on *Q. 2:106; 13:39; 16:101; 17:86; 87:6–7*, that God rescinded some previous revelation to the Prophet. Later jurists applied the doctrine to argue that the *QURʿĀN* superseded Jewish and Christian scripture. Jurists also used the doctrine to harmonize apparent contradictions in the *Qurʿānic* text. (See also *NĀSIKH WA MANSŪKH*.)

### Abû Bakr (573–13/634)

Close Companion of *MUḤAMMAD*, father of *Muḥammad*'s wife *ʿĀʾISHAH*, and first caliph of Islam, he accompanied *Muḥammad* on the *HIJRAH*. When he assumed the caliphate, the nature of the office had not been defined, and *Abû*

Bakr decided to follow the “example” of Muḥammad. One of his first acts was to send Muslim forces north into Byzantine territory, thus starting the expansion of Islam out of Arabia. Attacks by Arab tribes, challenging the new caliph and fledgling Muslim state, forced him to change the job from part-time administrator to full-time general and leader of a growing community. In the two years that he ruled, he set a pattern of strong, pious governance.

**Abû Dâ'ûd, Sulaymân b. al-Ash'ath** (202/817–275/889)

One of the six highly ranked compilers of ḤADĪTH in the SUNNĪ tradition. He wrote most of his major works in the city of BAŞRAH, but is said to have traveled widely to collect the materials for his major work, the *Kitâb as-sunan*. He is credited with being the first to give detailed notes about his estimation of the soundness or weakness of traditions, providing a basis for later *ḥadīth* criticism. While he does not rank as high as AL-BUKHĀRĪ and MUSLIM, his collection contains a number of citations not contained in the works of those two.

**Abû Dharr al-Ghifârî** (born 32/652)

An early Companion of MUḤAMMAD who advocated, during the reign of the caliph 'UTHMĀN, that more wealth be given to the poor. Some accounts of his life say that he was the fifth person to believe in Muḥammad. He is held as a model of proper Islamic social justice by some modern Islamic socialists. (See also ŞAḤĀBAH.)

**Abû al-Futûḥ ar-Râzî** (died c. 525/1131)

The author of one of the earliest SHĪ'Ī commentaries on the QUR'ĀN. He wrote in Persian because Arabic was little understood by the majority around

him. He claimed to have been influenced by AṬ-ṬABARĪ and AZ-ZAMAKHSHARĪ.

**Abû Ḥanîfah** (81/700–150/767)

Founder of the ḤANAFĪ school of SUNNĪ law, which is characterized by the use of RA'Y (individual legal opinion). Little is known about his life. He lived in KÛFAH as a cloth merchant, and collected a great number of traditions, which he passed on to his students. He never held any official post or worked as a judge, (QĀDĪ).

**Abû Ḥatim ar-Râzî, Aḥmad b. Ḥamdân** (died c. 322/934)

An early ISMĀ'ĪLĪ DĀ'Ī, who operated in the region of Rayy (Tehran) and Daylam. His best-known work is a dictionary of theological terms.

**Abû al-Hudhayl al-'Allâf** (c. 131/749–235/849)

Mu'tazilite theologian who helped develop KALĀM. His theology served to counter the foreign influences of his time, such as dualism, Greek philosophy, and the anthropomorphists within the Muslim traditionalists. (See also MU'TAZILAH.)

**Abû Hurayrah** (600–58/678)

A close Companion of the Prophet from the battle of Khaybar (7/629), he was reputed to have a phenomenal memory, transmitting over 3,000 Prophetic traditions. He is known as Abû Hurayrah because when he worked as a goatherd he kept a small kitten to play with. Biographies attribute a number of uncertain names to him, including 'Abd Allâh and 'Abd ar-Raḥmân, names he took when he converted to Islam. He was suspected by his contemporaries of fabrication, and modern scholarship assumes that some of the traditions were ascribed to him at a later time, but Western scholarship has probably been

too harsh in attributing to him the fabrication of those ḤADĪTHS that are not genuine. (See also ṢAḤĀBAH.)

**Abū Lahab, ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib**

An uncle and violent opponent of MUḤAMMAD, mentioned in Q. 111 as condemned to Hell along with his wife for their opposition.

**Abū al-Layth as-Samarqandī, Naṣr b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm** (died c. 393/1002)

A ḤANAFĪ theologian and jurist, his works have become popular throughout the Islamic world, particularly in South-east Asia. He wrote a TAFSĪR, and several other works, including a theological tract in question-and-answer form, titled ‘*Aqīdah*, which has been printed in Malaysia and Indonesia with interlinear translations.

**Abū al-Qâsim**

One of the nicknames of the Prophet. (See also MUḤAMMAD.)

**Abū Sufyân** (563–31/651)

The aristocratic general of the MECCA-based opposition to MUḤAMMAD at the battles of BADR and Uḥud. At the battle of KHANDAQ (the battle of the Trench) he withdrew his troops, realizing the futility of the cause. He later accompanied Muḥammad on one of his campaigns. He became one of Muḥammad’s fathers-in-law when the Prophet married one of his daughters, ‘UMM ḤABĪBAH.

**Abū Ṭalīb’ ‘Abd Manâf b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib**

Uncle of MUḤAMMAD and father of ‘ALĪ. He provided support for Muḥammad after the death of his grandfather, ‘ABD AL-MUṬṬALIB, and protected Muḥammad from attack by the pagan

Meccans. According to tradition he died three years before the HIJRAH, unconverted to Islam. Later Muslims have speculated about his fate, since he died before the establishment of Islam but had aided Muḥammad and the Muslims so importantly.

**Abū ‘Ubaydah** (died 18/639)

One of ten believers promised Paradise by MUḤAMMAD, he was a distinguished warrior for Islam and was active in the formation of the early Islamic state.

**Abyssinia**

Known in Arabic as Ḥabash, Abyssinia, now called Ethiopia, played an important part in the early development of Islam. It was to there that MUḤAMMAD sent the first HIJRAH, a small band of Muslims who were, according to tradition, well received in the court of the Christian ruler, who is said to have remarked on the similarity between Christianity and Islam. In the pre-Islamic period, there were active trade relations between Abyssinia and MECCA, and it was from there that ABRAHA came. Islam penetrated only slowly into the interior of Ethiopia, but the development of an active slave-trade helped promote conversion to Islam along the coast. In modern times, although Muslims comprise a large minority of the population, the country is so thoroughly identified as Christian that Islam has little influence on the social and political fabric of the country.

‘Ād

The people of the prophet HÛD mentioned frequently in the QUR’ĀN (Q. 7:65ff., 11:50ff., 26:123ff., *et passim*.) Their failure to heed Hûd’s warnings resulted in their destruction. The people of ‘Ād, along with the people of THAMÛD are mentioned in the Qur’ân in the ranks of those destroyed by God

for disobeying Him, as exemplars of bad behavior.

**adab** (Arabic: knowledge, politeness, and education)

This term parallels the Arabic word ʿILM, meaning “knowledge of the non-religious sciences.” Knowledge of the two combine to form a complete Muslim.

### Adam

The first human created by God, and known as Abū Bashār, the Father of Humans, he was created out of clay and allowed to dry, after which God breathed into him His spirit. He is said in the QURʾĀN to be God’s viceroy, and to have been taught all the names of things in the universe, which set him above the angels. All the angels prostrated themselves before Adam except the rebellious IBLĪS. The figure of Adam is prominent in many extra-Qurʾānic legends and stories. According to one of these, he built the foundations of the KAʿBAH and performed the first worship there. In another story, an eagle and a fish discussed their sighting of the first human and remarked that, because of his upright walk and his hands, they would not be left alone in the depths of the sea or the heights of the air. He is held to be the first prophet. (See also NABĪ.)

### adat or adat law

Customary law in Southeast Asian Islamic communities regarded as harmonious with Islamic law and holding a status close to natural law. *Adat* law, or its equivalent, has developed alongside SHARĪʿAH and complementary to it to provide regulation of those areas that *sharīʿah* does not cover. There has been much discussion among legal scholars about the role and legitimacy of *adat* law, but most allow its function on the principle that what is not expressly

forbidden by the *sharīʿah* is permissible. (See also ʿURF.)

### aḍḥā

See ʿĪD AL-AḌḤĀ.

### adhān

The call or announcement to prayer preceding each of the five canonical prayers. In a mosque, it is made by a muezzin (Arabic MUʾADHDHĪN), but each Muslim can also pronounce the call. SUNNĪ and SHĪʿĪ practices vary slightly in their wording, and the tunes vary slightly from place to place in the Islamic world. The first person to be appointed by MUḤAMMAD to call the Muslims to prayer was BILĀL, whose stentorian voice could be heard throughout MADĪNAH. The Sunnī call consists of seven elements:

1. *Allāhu akbār*: ALLĀH is most great.
2. *Ashhadu ʿan lā ilāha illa-llāh*: I testify that there is no deity but Allāh.
3. *Ashhadu ʿanna Muḥammadan rasūlullāh*: I testify that Muḥammad is the prophet of God.
4. *Ḥayya ʿalā ṣ-ṣalāt*: Come to prayer.
5. *Ḥayya ʿalā l-falāḥ*: Come to salvation.
6. *Allāhu akbar*: Allāh is most great.
7. *Lā ilāha illa-llāh*: There is no deity but Allāh.

These elements are repeated a varying number of times in each call, depending on the region and the school of Islamic law. In many mosques, electronic recordings on timers have replaced the human call. Shīʿīs will add *Ashhadu ʿanna ʿAlīyyan wāliyyu-llāh* (I testify that ʿAlī is protected by God), between 3 and 4 above, and *Ḥayya ʿalā khayri-l-ʿamal* (Come to the best deed) between 5 and 6 above.

### adoption

Adoption has no standing in SHARĪʿAH in spite of MUḤAMMAD’s adoption of Zayd

b. Ḥârithah. The adopted child retains both the biological family name and inheritance status. Muslims have resorted to using such devices as the WAQF TO PROVIDE INHERITANCE OUTSIDE THE *sharî'ah*'S STRICTURES.

### al-Afghânî, Jamâl al-Dîn (1839–97)

Islamic modernist, pan-Islamist, and anti-imperialist, who influenced Muḥammad ʿABDUH and RASHÎD RIḌÂ among others. His diverse ideas have become popular with many different modernist groups.

### Afghanistan

Situated in Central Asia, and historically part of Persia, or Greater Iran, this Muslim country has been a buffer in the post-World War II period between Pakistan, Iran, and a number of former Soviet Islamic republics. The official



*Shrine complex of Ali, Mazar-i Sharif, Afghanistan.*

languages are Pashtu and PERSIAN (Dârî), and a minority of the population speaks Uzbek, Turkmen, Balochi, and Pashi. Bilingualism is common. Its diverse inhabitants are predominantly SUNNÎ, with about fifteen percent SHÎʿÎ. Having achieved independence from the Soviet occupation in 1409/1989, until recently it was under the rule of the TĀLIBÂN, an Islamist group whose aim is to rule Afghanistan according to their strict interpretation of the SHARÎʿAH. The estimated population in 2000 was 24.8 million.

### Afsharids

The dynasty that ruled Iran from 1736 to 1796 and was named after its founder, Nâdir Shâh Afshâr.

### afterlife

The QURʼÂN is filled with passages that indicate that all souls will have an afterlife, either in Heaven or in Hell, depending on each person's faith and actions in this life, and that every soul will be judged at the Day of Judgment (YAWM AD-DÎN). Muslims differ about whether torment or reward starts immediately or is deferred until the Day of Judgment and whether believers will actually behold the face of God in Paradise. (See also JAHANNAM; AL-JANNAH; MUNKAR WA-NAKÎR)

### Aghâ Khân

Title of the IMÂM of the NIZÂRÎ ISMĀʿĪLÎ leader since the nineteenth century. The current *Imâm*, Prince Karim al-Husayni, Aghâ Khân IV, is held to be the forty-ninth hereditary *Imâm* directly descended from ʿALÎ and MUḤAMMAD'S daughter, FĀṬIMAH. In addition to his role as a spiritual and intellectual leader of the community, the current Aghâ Khân has founded the Aghâ Khân Foundation, a recognized leader in international development.

**‘ahd** (Arabic: command, covenant)

This term is used in the QUR’ÂN to mean, among other things, God’s covenant with humans and the commands in that covenant. It also means a religious pledge or vow, such as to fast under certain circumstances. By extension, it has also come to mean a political or civil agreement or contract, which is often pledged with religious reference or sanctions.

**ahl al-ahwâ’** (Arabic: people of inclination)

Derived from a term in the QUR’ÂN meaning “predilection,” it is applied in the SUNNÎ tradition to people who deviate from the accepted general norm of beliefs and practices, without, however, becoming heretics or apostates.

**ahl al-bayt** (Arabic: people of the house)

This term occurs twice in the QUR’ÂN (Q. 11:73, 33:33). In Q. 11:73 it refers to the “house” or family of the prophet IBRÂHÎM, while in Q. 33:33 it has a more general sense. In its pre-Islamic usage, the term was applied to the ruling family of a clan or tribe, and thus it implies a certain nobility and right to rule. In post-Qur’anic usage, particularly among the SHÎ’Î, it has come to mean the people or family of the household of the Prophet, in particular Muḥammad’s cousin and son-in-law, ‘Alî b. Abî Tâlib, his wife, the Prophet’s daughter, FÂTIMAH, their sons Ḥasan b. ‘Alî and Ḥusayn b. ‘Alî and their descendants (IMÂMS), revered especially by the ITHNÂ ‘ASHARIYYAH SHÎ’Î. One of the main differences between SHÎ’Î and SUNNÎ beliefs is the strong reverence held among the SHÎ’Îs for the family of the Prophet. In popular belief, this is sometimes raised to a cosmological level, with the belief that the family of the Prophet holds the world together,

and that it was for the family that the world was created.

**ahl al-dhimmah**

See DHIMMÎ.

**ahl al-ḥadîth** (Arabic: supporters of tradition)

The term generally refers to those in the second Islamic century who advocated the centrality of ḤADÎTH from the Prophet in the formation of the Islamic state. While there was considerable debate about how to apply the *ḥadîth*, and which were valid, the traditionists also came to mean those who, in subsequent centuries, stood in opposition to making speculative theology, KALÂM, central to religious understanding.

**ahl-i ḥadîth** (Persian/Urdu from Arabic: people of tradition)

Those members of a sect of Muslims in India and Pakistan who claim to follow only the traditions of the Prophet. They reject the necessity to follow any school (MADHHAB) of Islamic law or any other form of TAQLÎD. They attempt to identify and eliminate any innovative practice (BID‘AH) from any source. As a result, their opponents call them WAHHÂBÎ, after the movement in Arabia, but they deny this, since they hold that even the Wahhâbî are practitioners of *taqlid*, since they accept the legal pronouncements of AḤMAD B. ḤANBAL. The movement, which originated in the nineteenth century, has an active training network, with its own schools and publications, the most prominent of which is *Ahl al-ḥadîth*, a weekly publication.

**ahl al-ḥall wa-al-‘aqd** (Arabic: people of influence)

The person or persons qualified to elect a caliph (KHALÎFAH) in Islamic political theory. The number varies from one person, usually a caliph designating a

successor, to a body of persons representing all Muslims and acting as a SHŪRĀ, which body would have power over any ruler.

**ahl-i ḥaqq** (Persian: people of truth)

An esoteric syncretistic offshoot of Islam based on additional chapters of the QUR'ĀN, they are found primarily in Iran. They are a secret group, whose writings are difficult for the uninitiated to understand because of their use of secret and technical terms. They believe in successive ages in which the Divine is made manifest and in metempsychosis and a series of reincarnations of humans in which the actions of previous incarnations are rewarded or punished. They are led by rīrs and worship in assemblies that often involve animal sacrifice.

**ahl al-kitāb** (Arabic: people of the book)

A concept that originated in the QUR'ĀN, these people were originally Jews and Christians who had received revelations from God. The term was extended to others as Islam spread into India and China. Membership in the group entitled a person to preferred status in Islamic law as DHIMMĪ.

**ahl al-ṣuffa** (Arabic: people of the row)

The name of a group of poor and pious Muslims who made the HĪJRAH with MUḤAMMAD and were wards of the community. Much legendary material surrounds the history of this group, whose numbers range from slightly above thirty to over a hundred.

**Aḥmad al-Badawī** (c. 596/1200–675/1276)

The most popular of the saints (*walīs*), in Egypt. At the age of thirty, he underwent a mystic transformation that involved reading the QUR'ĀN in its seven

readings, refusing to speak and only communicating by signs, renouncing sexual relations, and making journeys to the tombs of famous holy persons, mainly in Iraq. He is said to have induced a famous woman, Fāṭimah bt. Barrī, to propose marriage to him, but then rejected her offer. This story has produced a popular Arabic romance. After a vision, he journeyed to Ṭantā, in Egypt, and stood on the roof of a private house gazing at the sun until his eyes turned red, all the while fasting for forty days. He is credited with a miraculous cure of a boy with diseased eyes. After his death, a mosque was built over his grave, which has become the site of veneration and of miracles. He appears to have become the patron saint of prisoners and the finder of lost articles.

**Aḥmad Barelwī, Sayyid**

See BARELWĪ, SAYYID AḤMAD.

**Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal** (164/780–241/855)

MUḤADDITH, theologian, and founder of the HANBALĪ MADHHAB, he was persecuted by the 'ABBĀSIDS during their inquisition (MIḤNAH) because he refused to say that the QUR'ĀN was created. This persecution, involving beatings and imprisonment, earned him great status among the opponents of the *mīḥnah* and of the beliefs of the MU'TAZILAH. His most famous work, the *Musnad*, was only partly completed by him and was finished by his son, 'Abd Allāh. It is organized by the name of the first member in the ISNĀD and not by subject, as with the other major collections. The collection reflects his intellectual strength as more than a mere collector of tradition, and the MADHHAB that follows him is based on his subtlety of thought and his reliance on ḤADĪTH rather than personal judgment (RA'Y). His school has the reputation of being

stringent among the four SUNNĪ schools of Islamic law. Through IBN TAYMIYYAH, Ibn Ḥanbal has influenced the WAHHĀBĪ movement and the SALAFIYYAH.

### Ahmadiyah, or Aḥmadiyyah

A proselytizing messianic reform movement in Islam, started in India and based on the teachings of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (d. 1908), who regarded himself as the MAHDĪ and appointed by God to reform and restore Islam. He also claimed to be an *avatar* of the Hindu deity Krishna and the incarnation of JESUS. When he died, his followers elected a successor (*khalifah*), and began to operate as an independent religious group. The group split into two, with the more modernist one moving to Lahore. The Ahmadiyah Movement in Islam has congregations around the world and its members contribute monthly sums to the central organization. It is strongly committed to missionary work, (DA'WAH), and publishes editions of the QUR'ĀN and numerous religious tracts. They believe that their reformed version of Islam represents the true religion, and they include the mention of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad in their creed. In 1984, the government of Pakistan declared the movement to be un-Islamic for its claim that there were non-legislative prophets after Muḥammad, and the worldwide movement moved to London. The term is also used as the name of a major ṢŪFĪ order in Egypt, also known as the Badawiyya.

### Aḥmad Khān, Sir Sayyid (1817–98)

An Indian Islamic modernist who promoted modern education, ecumenism, and social reform. He came from a noble but impoverished Islamic family and, through hard work, became a judge at the court of justice in Delhi under the rule of the East India Company. After

the Indian Mutiny of 1857, he decided to work toward the betterment of Indian Muslims and in conjunction with the British government. After visiting England, he started a journal, *Tahdhīb al-akhlāq*, with the aim of removing prejudice and ignorance among his fellow Muslims. He drew inspiration from SHĀH WALĪ ALLĀH, and founded the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, later Aligarh Muslim University. He saw the essential harmony between science and religion, contending that “the work of God (nature) was identical with the word of God (the QUR'ĀN). He was attacked as a *neḥarī*, a naturist, by his opponents for demythologizing the Qur'ān, but this opposition was overcome by his vision of a strengthened Islamic community in the subcontinent. Some see him as a spiritual forerunner of the idea of PAKISTAN. He was knighted by the British, thus earning the honorific “Sir” as well as “SAYYID.”

### Ahmad Sirhindi

See SIRHINDĪ, AḤMAD.

### ‘Ā’ishah (614–58/678)

The daughter of ABŪ BAKR, she was the Prophet's third and favorite wife, whom he married after the death of KHADĪJAH, his first wife. Extensive biographical traditions describe her as playful, witty, intelligent, well educated, and, in later life, a potent political force. She was betrothed to MUḤAMMAD when she was still a child, and it is said that she brought her dolls with her when she went to live with him. Her playfulness clearly attracted the Prophet, who is said to have enjoyed playing games and running races with her. A well-known incident occurred that threatened her marriage while she was on a raid with Muhammad. She left her camel-litter (Arabic, *ḥawdah*) shortly before the troop broke camp, dropped a necklace, and spent some time looking for it.

Assuming that she was still asleep, the warriors loaded the litter on the camel and went off, leaving her in the desert. She was discovered by an attractive young man, who escorted her back to MADĪNAH, where gossip implied that there had been an improper relationship. A number of Muhammad's close advisors suggested that he return her to her father's house. Among those who advocated her return was 'ALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB, thus provoking a lasting enmity between the two. Her playful spirit is probably best illustrated by the story of the joke she played on Muḥammad. Honey was one of the Prophet's favorite foods, and his wives liked to treat him with it. One day, when he was returning from one of his wives, 'Ā'ishah pretended that he had bad breath. He was almost on the point of renouncing honey when she told him that it was a joke. In her later years, she assumed the role of leading matriarch of the community and a source of information about the Prophet. Particularly among the SUNNĪ, she was known as the "Mother of the Believers," the *'Umm al-Mu'minîn*. As with the other wives of the Prophet, she was forbidden to remarry after Muhammad's death, and was left a childless widow. Her political activity surrounding the caliph 'UTHMĀN is the subject of some controversy. She opposed his rule, but also opposed his assassination. At a critical juncture, she joined a ḤAJJ to MECCA and abandoned her leadership in the succession controversy. About four months after the assassination of 'Uthmān, she took a force of about one thousand, among the leaders of which were Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr. After taking the city of BAṢRAH, they met 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib in a battle known as the battle of the Camel, because most of the fighting was around the camel bearing 'Ā'ishah's standard. 'Alī won, and both Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr were killed. 'Ā'ishah was treated with respect and honor, and she spent the next two

decades in seclusion from the politics of the Islamic state. She eventually became reconciled with 'Alī, and her opinion was sought about every major event in the life of the community. She is regarded as an important transmitter of traditions about Muḥammad and to have possessed a codex of the QUR'ĀN.

**ajal** (Arabic: fixed term)

The word refers to the fixed term of a person's life, which is held in the QUR'ĀN to be neither prolonged nor shortened except as it is written in the book of God's decrees. The notion of a fixed term to life has been the subject of much discussion and speculation, some holding that if a person dies, whether young or old, it is a decree from God, and if that person had not died in the manner he did, then he would have died in some other manner. In modern times, this same argument is used to counter those who argue that one should not try to use modern medical means to save a person's life. It is argued that it is by God's will that life-prolonging means are available to humans.

**akdariyyah**

The name of a well-known difficult law case of inheritance involving a woman who dies leaving a husband, her mother, her grandfather, and her full sister. Different schools of law interpret this in different manners: only the ḤANAFĪ interpret the distribution to exclude the sister; the rest include all the heirs named in the QUR'ĀN.

**akhbâr** (Arabic: report; sg. *khbar*)

In early Islamic usage, this term was synonymous with ḤADĪTH. In later usage, it has come to mean those traditions that are secular and used for history (TA'RĪKH). They have the same literary form, with an ISNĀD and a MATN, but are usually not subject to

the same rigorous critique, and often the chains of transmission are incomplete.

**al-Akhḍar** (North African Arabic)

A dialect variant from North Africa for AL-KHAḌIR.

**al-âkhirah** (Arabic: the last, the final)

In Islamic ESCHATOLOGY it refers to both the final resting place of the soul and the end-time itself – after judgment, as opposed to this world. Over time, there has been considerable speculation about whether this is a spiritual or a physical realm and whether the delights and/or punishments described in the QUR’ÂN are to be taken literally or metaphorically. (See also YAWM AD-DÎN.)

**akhlâq** (Arabic: innate disposition)

This refers to ethics. Speculation about moral behavior in Islam has, for the most part, been within the confines of proper religious behavior, but the introduction of Hellenized notions of ethics caused many to treat this subject as separate from the religious codes of behavior. Among the philosophers and Hellenized speculative theologians, the introduction of the works of Aristotle chiefly led them to discuss issues of the innate goodness or evil in humans and the nature of natural law. These speculations influenced ADAB literature, which, in turn, influenced the theologian AL-GHAZÂLÎ. In modern Islamic thought, particularly in the colonial and post-colonial phase, Muslims speculating about ethics have been concerned with the ethical implications of activism, holding that moral behavior involves improving the lot of the community.

**âkhûnd**

Persian term for a religious leader. (See also MAWLÂ.)

**‘âlam** (Arabic: world)

Usually found in the plural, *‘âlamîn*, in the phrase, *rabb al-‘âlamîn*, “Lord of the Worlds,” it reflects the view of the QUR’ÂN that the universe consists of (probably) seven worlds and seven heavens, *samâwât*.

**Alamut**

The fortress of Alamut, situated on the summit of a nearly inaccessible peak in the Alburz mountains in Iran, was the headquarters of the ISMÂ‘ÎLÎ SHÎ‘Î from the fifth/tenth century through the seventh/thirteenth century. In the SAFAVID period it was used as a prison and called the “castle of oblivion.”

**‘Alawids**

The SHARÎFÎ royal family of Morocco, who have ruled since the seventeenth century.

**‘Alawiyah**

Also known as the Nuṣayriyyah, this is the only sect of the SHÎ‘Î “extremists” the GHULÂT, known to exist today. The term is derived from their veneration of ‘ALÎ B. ABÎ ṬĀLIB, and can refer to SHÎ‘Î in general. They are found mostly in western Syria. In their doctrine, they regard ‘Alî as divine. They also believe that they started as lights that were imprisoned in human forms and condemned to cycles of reincarnation, out of which only the elect can escape. In each epoch there is a trio of divine beings, ‘Alî, MUḤAMMAD, and SALMÂN AL-FÂRISÎ being this epoch’s trio. They appear, however, hidden, and it is the duty of the believer to recognize the trio and escape the cycle of reincarnation. Because JESUS was an earlier manifestation, some ‘Alawiyah celebrate Christmas. President Assad of Syria is of this group.

## Albania

A European country on the Adriatic sea, Albania, once a part of the Ottoman Empire, has a Muslim majority and is the birthplace of the BEKTĀSHĪ ŞŪFĪ order.

## Alexander the Great

See DHŪ-L-QARNAYN.

## Alf laylah wa-laylah (Arabic: *Thousand and One Nights*)

The title of an eclectic collection of tales from different periods and cultures set in a frame story. This set of stories, primarily meant as light entertainment, became popular in the West through the collections of the stories and the translations made by Orientalist travelers. The eighteenth-century French translation by Jean Antione Galland, and the nineteenth-century English translations by Sir Richard Burton and William Lane helped implant fantastic notions about Arab and Islamic peoples in the minds of Westerners.

## Algeria

The second largest African country, it is located in North Africa, the MAGHRIB, between MOROCCO and Libya and TUNISIA. During OTTOMAN times it was part of the empire, and then came under French influence and colonization in the nineteenth century. After a bitter war of independence from 1954 to 1961, Algeria became independent in 1962. The current government is besieged by radical Islamist groups, who are engaged in terrorist and guerrilla actions to force their acceptance in the electoral process from which they were excluded. The country is made up primarily of Arabic speakers of Berber origin, although only about thirty percent of the population speaks Berber. The country has a majority SUNNĪ population, is mostly rural and home to a variety of ŞŪFĪ orders. A once-

thriving Jewish population is now estimated to be around one hundred thirty thousand.

## ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (c. 597–41/661)

Son-in-law and cousin of MUḤAMMAD, he was the fourth caliph (KHALĪFAH) of the SUNNĪ and the first IMĀM of the SHĪ‘Ī. He was either the second to believe in Islam, after KHADĪJAH, or third, after ABŪ Bakr, a point much debated in Sunnī–Shī‘ī polemics. His blood relation to Muḥammad, his appointment by the Prophet at GHADĪR KHUMM, and his marriage to Muḥammad’s daughter, FĀṬĪMAH made him the first *Imām* among the Shī‘ī. They had two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and two daughters, ‘Umm Kulthûm and Zaynab. ‘Alī assumed the caliphate in 656, after the death of ‘UTHMĀN. Stories implicating ‘Alī in ‘Uthmān’s murder are without foundation and reflect an anti-‘Alid bias. He was, nevertheless, the most respected leader among those who opposed ‘Uthmān, and they looked to him to stop the innovations (BID‘AH) that the caliph had introduced. ‘Uthmān’s closest relative, MU‘ĀWIYAH, demanded the right of blood vengeance, and accused ‘Alī of harboring the murderers and of complicity in the killing. The underlying cause was, however, one of politics and the vision of the direction of the community, and the two soon left Arabia for their support strongholds in Iraq and Syria. In the ensuing civil strife, the two armies fought until the ‘UMAYYAD forces under Mu‘āwiyah appeared to be losing. ‘AMR B. AL-‘ĀṢ advised, according to legend, that Mu‘āwiyah have his men place copies of the QUR’ĀN on their lances as a signal to invite the two sides to decide by means of the holy Scripture. The QURRĀ’ among ‘Alī’s troops at first supported his participation in the arbitration. However, its terms ultimately proved harmful to his cause, at which point many of them turned against him

and seceded, blaming ‘Alī for submitting to the arbitration rather than relying on God. At the battle of NAHRAWÂN, ‘Alī attacked those of the secessionists who refused his amnesty and slaughtered many in a move that was roundly condemned at the time. The result was that ‘Alī was forced to retreat to Kûfah and abandon his fight with Mu‘âwiyah, after which ‘Alī’s influence declined. He was killed by a separatist (Khârijite) assassin, IBN MULJAM, in 661. The Shi‘î festival of Ghadîr, 18 Dhû-l-Hijjah, is celebrated to commemorate what they regard as his appointment as Muḥammad’s successor. (See also KHAWÂRIJ.)

### Aligarh

A town in Uttar Pradesh, India, associated with the reformist movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Khân, who started a boys’ school around 1871. By 1875, the school was operating on English models, and eventually developed into the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College. The main language of instruction was English, except for Islamic religious subjects. In 1920, the college became Aligarh Muslim University, absorbed a school of medicine, and became the institution that produced many Indian Muslim leaders in the first half of the twentieth century.

**‘Alī ilâhî** (Arabic: ‘Alī is my god)

A popular designation and term of opprobrium for those Shi‘î who are said to regard ‘ALÎ as divine.

**‘âlim**

See ‘ULAMÂ’.

**‘âlimah** (Arabic: learned woman; pl. ‘awâlim)

In Egypt this term refers to female performers of poems and songs associated with the MAWLID and recited at births, weddings, and during RAMAÐÂN.

**Aljamia** (Spanish, from Arabic *al-‘ajamiyyah*: non-Arabic)

The Spanish Romance rendering of the Arabic term for non-Arab, it refers to the dialect that developed among the northern Iberian inhabitants under Muslim rule, in which proto-Spanish and Arabic mixed. The literature, Aljamiada, is a mixture of Spanish and Arabic, usually written in Arabic characters and generally concerning religious or legal topics, although there are striking examples of SĪRAH literature, both in poetry and prose, and some important letters. This literature continued to be produced after 1492 until the expulsion of the Muslims from Spain in 1609 by King Philip III, and afterward by the MOORS in Tunisia.

### Allâh

The Arabic name for God. The name Allâh was known in pre-Islamic Arabia as the head of the pantheon among polytheists and as the name for God among Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews. With the advent of Islam, Allâh is defined as the One, eternal, neither born nor bearing and not having an equal (see Q. 112). Allâh is the creator of the universe and its judge, is merciful, compassionate, all-knowing, all-seeing, rewarding good and punishing evil. Muslims have developed numerous theologies to attempt to define Allâh, but there is no single theology or creed that embodies a universally accepted full definition. In general, Allâh is considered completely transcendent, and only communicates with humans through the intermediary of an angel, such as JIBRÎL, as in the case of the revelation to MUḤAMMAD. The Islamic mystical (ŞŪFÎ) tradition admits the possibility of apprehending the divine through a beatific vision, and many Muslims hold that all humankind will see Allâh on the Day of Judgment, YAWM AD-DÎN. The QUR’ÂN presents a few views of Allâh,

but is not a theological tract nor a treatise on His nature, except as it affects the human capacity to repent of sins and comply with divine regulations. Western scholarship has tried to demonstrate an evolution of the idea of Allāh through the chronological arrangement of the *sūrah*s of the Qurʾān, but most Muslim scholars see the revelation as a totality, and will admit only that humans may come to understand Him in a progressive fashion. Muslim exegetes of the Qurʾān know of ninety-nine “names” of Allāh, the so-called “beautiful names,” AL-ʾASMĀʾ AL-HUSNĀ. Some of these seem to be characteristics, like merciful or all-knowing, but others, along with other passages from the Qurʾān, imply that Allāh has human attributes. For some Muslims, the fact that He is described as a hearer or one who sees means that He has ears and eyes like humans. The anthropomorphists have been opposed from an early date by those who understand such terminology in a metaphoric or abstract manner (such as, for example, the MUʿTAZILĀH). The introduction of Greek philosophy (FALSĀFAH) into the theological debates in Islam complicated the discussion of the nature of Allāh just as it did in Western theology, since such a philosophical system strives to resolve all contradictions. At the core of Islamic understanding of Allāh, however, is the fact that God is a mystery, approachable but ultimately unknowable by humans.

### Allāhu ʾakbar

See TAKBĪR.

### Allāhummah (Arabic: O Allāh!)

An invocation of ALLĀH found in old Arabic texts.

### All-India Muslim League

A movement derived from the modernist Aligarh movement in 1906, it developed

into the movement that resulted in the creation of PAKISTAN under the leadership of MUḤAMMAD ʿALĪ JINNAH. After the creation of the state in 1947, it became one of several political parties in Pakistan.

### Almohads

See AL-MUWAḤḤĪDŪN.

### Almoravids

See AL-MURĀBĪṬŪN.

### Almsgiving

See ZAKĀT.

### Amal (Arabic: hope)

A popular militant SHĪʿĪ movement among Lebanese Muslims. Started in 1975, it has maintained ties with Iran since the Revolution of 1979. (See also AṢ-ṢADR, MŪSĀ.)

### Ameer Ali, Syed (1849–1928)

Indian jurist, historian, and modernist, best known for two influential books: *A Short History of the Saracens* and *The Spirit of Islam*. He came from an Indian ISMĀʿĪLĪ SHĪʿĪ family that was in service to the East India Company. He was educated in English and Islamic subjects and took particularly to the study of English law. At the age of twenty, he went to England, where he was called to the Bar. He served on the Bengal High Court and returned to England with his English wife in 1904. In 1883 he became the only Muslim on the Viceroy’s Council, and he was active in the British Red Crescent Society. He was active politically in both England and South Asia in promoting reform and developing the interests of Muslims. He was a supporter of the KHILĀFAT MOVEMENT along with the AGHĀ KHĀN. His book *The Spirit of Islam* was a liberal interpretation of Islam based on Western moder-

nist models. It became popular throughout the Islamic world and had great influence in the West, as did his *A Short History of the Saracens*. His irenic views did much to promote a better understanding of Islam among Western readers.

**âmîn** (Arabic: safe, secure)

This term is used much like the English “Amen.” Cognate to similar terms in Christian Syriac and Jewish Hebrew, it is used as a response to a prayer or the recitation of the first SŪRAH of the QUR’ÂN. According to tradition, it has particular power when said in proximity to the KA’BAH.

**amîn** (Arabic: trustworthy)

In the sense of “trustworthy,” this term became an epithet applied to MUḤAMMAD because of his trustworthiness, as *al-Amîn*. It also is a term applied to Muslims who hold positions of financial or legal trust.

### Amînah

The name in the legendary TAFSÎR of one of the wives of SULAYMÂN (Solomon). She is the one to whom he is reported to have given his signet ring; she, in turn, gave it to a demon who took Sulaymân’s place. It was only after many adventures and much repentance, according to the story, that Sulaymân was able to get his ring and his kingdom back.

**Âminah bt. Wahb** (died 576)

The mother of the Prophet MUḤAMMAD, she belonged to the Zuhra clan of the QURAYSH, and is reported to have been of very noble lineage. She was married to ‘ABD ALLÂH B. ‘ABD AL-MUṬṬALIB, but the marriage seems to have been one in which she remained with her family, receiving visits from her husband. Her pregnancy with the Prophet is represented in miraculous terms

in the SÎRAH. She is said to have been visited by the angel JIBRÎL and told of Muḥammad’s impending birth and mission, and, during the pregnancy, a light is said to have shown from her womb bright enough to illumine the castles in Syria. She died when Muḥammad was six. Up to that time, Muḥammad was in her and her family’s care, except when he was sent to a wet-nurse among the bedouin tribe of the Banû Bakr b. Sa’d, a common practice among the Meccan elite. She is described in the *sîrah* as the most beautiful and noble woman in Arabia.

**amîr** (Arabic: commander)

The term has been applied as a title to generals, princes, governors, and even caliphs.

**Amîr al-Mu’minîn** (Arabic: Commander of the Faithful)

A title applied to caliphs, generally indicating their temporal power, whereas the term KHALÎFAH, (caliph), refers to their deputyship, and IMÂM to their role as a religious leader.

**amr** (Arabic: command)

The usual Qur’anic word for “command,” generally the divine command.

**‘Amr b. al-‘Âṣ** (died c. 42/663)

A Companion of MUḤAMMAD, he was one of the most astute politicians of his generation. After the siege of MADÎNAH by the people of MECCA in 8/630, he converted to Islam and was sent out as a missionary. The caliph ABŪ BAKR sent him at the head of an army into Palestine, and he commanded the army that captured Egypt. He also set up the system of administration of the country. He was replaced by the caliph ‘UTHMÂN, and retired from active life in disgust and consternation at his removal. In the arbitration between ‘ALÎ and MU‘Â-

WIYAH, he seems to have had a large part in maneuvering the process in favor of Mu'âwiyah. In the assassination plot that killed 'Alî, he seems to have escaped only because he was not feeling well that day and did not appear in public.

### Âmû Daryâ (Persian)

The river Oxus. Some Arab geographers also called this river *Jayhûn* after the biblical river Gihon, one of the rivers on the boundary of Paradise.

### 'ânâniyyah

One of many Jewish sects that flourished in the turbulent period at the end of the 'UMAYYAD and beginning of the 'ABBÂSID periods. Named after 'Ânân b. David, who flourished in the mid-eighth century, this sect was identified by Muslim heresiographers with the Karaites, and was granted equal status along with the Rabbinic Jews, *rabbâniyyah*, in the newly emerging 'Abbâsid caliphate.

### 'Anâq (Arabic)

In the ISRÂ'ÎLIYYÂT TAFSÎR tradition, she was a daughter of ADAM, the twin of Shîth (Seth), the wife of QÂBÎL (Cain), and the mother of the giant 'Ûj. In the stories that mention her name, the commentators hold that all of the early births after the expulsion from Paradise were male-female twins to provide enough pairs to populate the earth. In one of the traditions, Qâbîl killed his brother Hâbîl (Abel) out of jealousy, because Qâbîl wanted to mate either with his own sister or his mother.

### 'Anas b. Mâlik (died c. 91/709)

Early Companion of MUḤAMMAD and prolific traditionist. He participated in the wars of conquest and in the FITNAH wars on the side of 'Abd Allâh b. az-Zubayr, the rival caliph. This earned him some political trouble, but his reputation as a traditionist did not suffer, and

his heritage is found in the major *sunan* collections.

### al-Andalus

The term derived from the Germanic Vandals and used by Muslims in the medieval period to refer to the Iberian peninsula or to that portion of the peninsula held by Muslims. It is the preferred form for Arab writers to the name Ishbâniyah, Spain. The Latin-speaking supporters of the Reconquista, which ended with the expulsion of most of the Muslims in 897/1492, preferred the terms "Hispania, Spania, and Iberia."

### angels (Arabic *malâ'ikah*, sing. *malak*: messengers)

Supernatural, created beings mentioned in the QUR'ÂN as individuals and groups. Their functions include that of messengers, intercessors, recorders of deeds, and agents of divine punishment. IBLÎS is sometimes thought to be an angel as well as a JINN. JIBRÎL (Gabriel) was of the highest rank of angels and the bringer of revelation to MUḤAMMAD. At the time of the creation of the first human, ADAM, God instructed all the angels to bow to him. Iblîs refused and was cast out of the ranks of the angels along with some rebellious demons, to rule Hell and try to tempt humankind to evil. Islamic angelology owes much to the speculations by Jews and Christians, with which Muslim commentators became familiar at an early date. Just as in Jewish and Christian texts, angels are divided into two general groups, regular angels and archangels, the latter being capable of more important tasks and multiple assignments from God. In the TAFSÎR tradition, angels are grouped into tribes as well. In astrological speculation, an angel was supposed to be in charge of each star in each constellation, often lending a name to the star. (See also MUNKAR WA-NAKÎR.)

**Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia**

See ABIM.

**Anglo-Muhammadan Law**

The laws of personal status founded on British colonial interpretations of Islamic law and applied to Muslims in British colonial courts.

**‘ankabût** (Arabic: spider)

Spiders have a special place in Islamic lore, because a spider is supposed to have saved the lives of MUHAMMAD and ABÛ BAKR. While the two were fleeing the Meccans during the HIJRAH, they hid in a cave. A spider, presumably by God’s command, quickly spun a web over the entrance, so that the Meccans would think the cave to be empty, since they did not think a spider could spin so quickly.

**anṣâr** (Arabic: helpers, allies)

They were the Medinese who welcomed MUHAMMAD and his companions after the HIJRAH from MECCA. Members of the two major tribes in MADÎNAH, the Banû AL-ʿAWS and the Banû AL-KHAZRAJ, as well as other Arabs who had belonged to the Jewish tribes, were active in welcoming Muḥammad to the city and gave hospitality to those who made the *hijrah* with him or shortly afterwards. Even though there were those who were not active in supporting the Muslims or who acted in ways that hindered rather than helped the early community, after the death of the Prophet, all those who came from Madînah were grouped together under this designation. In the early history of the community, the *anṣâr* were never as influential as the QURAYSH of Mecca and became part of the pro-ʿAlid movement against the ʿUmayyads. When the ʿAbbasids came to power, the term generally lost significance as a political designation, although individuals would

still bear the family designation Anṣârî. The term also designates a ŞÛFÎ activist political movement in the Sudan.

**apostasy**

See ILHÂD; RIDDAH.

**‘aqîdah** (Arabic: creed)

The QUR’ÂN indicates five basic articles of belief: belief in God, the prophets, angels, scripture, and the Day of Judgment, but does not formulate a formal creed. The later development of creeds in Islam are, for the most part, a result of sectarian disputes and are summaries of theological discussions. They are also sometimes short teaching texts to instruct children and converts. While there has never been a single, agreed-upon formulation of a creed, even among either the SUNNÎ or the SHÎʿÎ, most creeds have a number of concepts in common. The first is that ALLÂH is the only deity. He has no partners, was not born, and did not bear. This Qur’anic formulation lies at the heart of Islam. The second is that He is the creator of all that exists and everything belongs to Him and will return to Him. It follows that any possessions humans have are transitory, a gift from God, and must be used in the right manner. Additionally, reward and punishment on the YAWM AD-DÎN are real and based on the contract set forth between Allâh and humans in the Qur’ân and in the model of His Prophet, MUHAMMAD. Muḥammad is the last in a line of prophets sent by God to humankind, the first being Adam. Angels, devils, and JINN exist, and we interact with them according to God’s plan. Some Shîʿî will add various concepts about ʿALÎ B. ABÎ TĀLIB, and the KHAWĀRIJ held that anyone committing a major sin had renounced Islam by that act. Unlike Christianity, Islam is not a religion dependent on creeds. There have been no great councils or synods called to decide a single formulation, and

the SHAHĀDAH comes closest to a statement on which all Muslims can agree. Nor is Islam solely reliant on deeds. It is a middle way, requiring both belief (ĪMĀN) and acting correctly in the world.

**‘aqīlah** (Arabic: to bind)

A term that designates the person(s) bound by Islamic law, SHARĪ‘AH, to share the liability with someone who has committed a murder or inflicted bodily injury. The extension of liability varies among the several schools, (MADHHABS), of Islamic law, but generally it is confined to blood relatives, except in the case of ḤANAFĪ law, where the liability is extended to comrades in arms.

**‘aqīqah** (Arabic: red)

The name of the customary sacrifice of an animal on the seventh day after the birth of a child, on which day the child’s head is shaved and the child is named. The majority of the sacrifice is distributed as charity, but a ritual meal made from a portion of it, called a *walīmah*, should be consumed. If the ceremony does not take place on the seventh day, it can be performed later, even by the person him- or herself when they come of age. This practice, while widespread, is not based on Qur’ānic mandate and is customary.

**‘aql** (Arabic: intelligence)

Among Islamic theologians, this term is used to designate a kind of natural intelligence or knowledge, as opposed to tradition. It is also used as a technical term in Islamic philosophy, referring to the Neoplatonic concept of a universal intellect.

**‘aqrab** (Arabic: scorpion)

Because of the harmful or deadly character of the sting of the scorpion, verses of the QUR’ĀN are sometimes used as

talismans against it in customary practice. The scorpion is also a sign in the zodiac and is used to interpret dreams.

**‘Arab**

The designation ‘Arab has, over time, been subject to a wide number of definitions. In the pre-Islamic period, ancient classical authors used the term “Arab” and “Arabia” to refer to a number of pastoral nomadic war-like people on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean world and into Arabia, which included the Sinai peninsula and the Syrian desert. Archaeological evidence indicates that some, but not all, of these peoples spoke or wrote languages that seem to be related to modern ARABIC. The first of these peoples appear in Assyrian records in the ninth century B.C.E. With the rise of Islam and Muslim interest in preserving the history of the forebears of MUḤAMMAD we get a complicated and somewhat legendary picture of the ‘Arabs. According to some authors, the speakers of what would become the language of the QUR’ĀN were not the “true” or original ‘Arabs, but had replaced those people in the area of the HIJĀZ. These new ‘Arabs came, probably, from the coastal area of the Red Sea, as the name QURAYSH (probably “dugong”) indicates. As the Qur’ān set the standard for the language of Arabic, it was also used by some to define who was an ‘Arab by saying that anyone who spoke Arabic as his native tongue and participated in the culture of the ‘Arabs was ‘Arab. Under this definition, Jews and Christians have been considered ‘Arab at various times. Sometimes, the term ‘Arab meant being a pastoral nomad, a bedouin. One medieval chronicle asserts that the Kurds have ‘Arab, meaning that there are those Kurds who have a bedouin lifestyle. For some, being ‘Arab and being Muslim became more and more associated, so that we can, for example, speak of the

“Arab” countries of North Africa, even when most of the inhabitants are descended from Berber ancestors, because the countries were conquered by ‘Arab Muslim forces and incorporated into the expanding Islamic world. The rise of modern nationalism has transformed the definition yet again to mean that an ‘Arab is one who is a citizen of a self-designated ‘Arab country.

### Arabic

A Semitic language related to Hebrew and others, it is spoken in various dialects by the inhabitants of Arabia, the Middle East, and North Africa, including Muslims, Christians, and Jews. With the rise of Islam, it became the particular language of the QUR’ÂN, which became the dominant standard literary form, but did not eradicate the various spoken forms of the language, which differ from the written form to greater or lesser degrees. Some scholars of the language speak of a resultant “diglossia,” or quasi-bilingualism, among speakers of Arabic because of the differences between the spoken and written forms. Muslim Arabic is written in a cursive script derived from Nabataean and Syriac scripts, but Jews and Christians have written Arabic in the scripts associated with their sacred liturgical texts. Thus, there is an extensive literature in Judeo-Arabic, written in Hebrew characters and incorporating many Hebrew words, often Arabized. Christians wrote Arabic in Greek, Syriac, or Roman scripts, depending on their confession. The language of Malta is a North African-derived Arabic written in Roman script. With the spread of Islam, Arabic has become the liturgical language of Muslims worldwide.

### ‘Arafah

A hill and plain east of MECCA featured prominently in the ḤAJJ at which the pilgrims assemble for the WUQŪF on the

ninth of DHŪ-L-ḤIJJA, the month of pilgrimage. The name, which means knowledge, is associated with the sermon traditionally preached from that hill and from the recitation of the QUR’ÂN there.

### architecture

Muslim religious sites, such as the mosques (MASJID), MADRASAH, MAQĀM, and RIBĀṬ, have been a mixture of local styles and aesthetics and the requirements of the religion. Some features usually associated with Islamic places of worship are the MINARET, a niche marking the direction of prayer (QIBLAH), and facilities for ritual ablutions. The universal character of Islam has allowed great creative variation in architectural styles and decorations, usually avoiding pictorial representations.



*Islamic architecture is often highly decorative as demonstrated by this dome of the Shah Chiragh Shrine, Shiraz, Iran.*