Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

Research Response Number: DZA35610
Country: Algeria
Date: 18 November 2009

Keywords: Algeria – Muslims – Hadith – Communal violence – Koranists – Sunna – Shias – Kafirs – Apostasy – Saudi Arabia – al-Azhar University – Asylum seekers – Returnees from the West – Lakemba mosque – Belmore mosque

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Questions

1. What is the Hadith? What is its relationship to the Koran? Is it different in Algeria from other Islamic countries?
2. Was there political and religious unrest in Algeria in 2001-2005? Was there open discussion about different Islamic practices?
3. What information is there about koranists in Algeria or in Australia? Are there any Koranist mosques? What are beliefs of Koranists, including prayer and Ramadan practice?
4. What is the Sunna?
5. What is a "Kafir" (infidel)? Would it mean something special in Algeria?
6. How is Shi'a Islam different? How is it practised in Australia?
7. What is the influence of Saudi Arabia and the Azhar University on the Algerian Islamic Faith?
8. Is there any evidence that a failed asylum seeker would be persecuted on return to Algeria? Are returnees from the West treated with suspicion? Are those who practice other Islamic beliefs treated badly?
9. Please provide information about the Tabliz (or Tabligh) Lakemba Mosque and the Mosque in Belmore. Do the Imams change regularly at the Lakemba Mosque? What are the prayer days and times at both mosques?
10. Deleted.

RESPONSE

1. What is the hadith? What is its relationship to the Koran? Is it different in Algeria from other Islamic countries?

Sources report that the *hadith* are a record of the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Mohammad. They are regarded as second only in importance to the Koran as a source for Islamic law (*sharia'ah*). According to sources there are differences between the Sunni collections of the *hadith* and the Shi'ite collections. No information was found in the sources consulted on the *hadith* being different in Algeria from other Islamic countries.

Professor Abdullah Saeed, at the University of Melbourne, outlines the *hadith* in the book *Islam in Australia*:

> Next to the authority of God is the authority of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet explained what the Qur'an meant and put qur'anic instructions into practice. A good example of this is prayer. The Qur'an commands Muslims to perform daily prayers, but it does not give any details as to how, when and what form these prayers should take. The Prophet Muhammad explained prayer in detail and showed Muslims how to perform it. For Muslims, it is essential to learn about what the Prophet taught, said and did in order to practise Islam in their daily life.
>
> Traditions about the life of the Prophet are known as hadith. They are the recollections of individuals who lived with the Prophet and who later reported things that the Prophet said and did, what he approved of, and other information about him.
>
> In the first 300 years of Islam, hadith collectors travelled across the Islamic world, studying with prominent scholars of hadith, collecting and writing them down, determining which hadith were reliable and which were fabricated and had been wrongly attributed to the Prophet. In the process, these hadith scholars compiled many volumes that list what they considered to be reliable hadith. Some of the most famous collections are those by the Sunni scholars, Bukhari and Muslim, and the Shi'i scholar, Kulayni (Saeed, Abdullah 2003, *Islam in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, p.119 – Attachment 1).

Glassé writes in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*:

> Hadith (lit. "speech", "report", "account"). Specifically, Traditions relating to the deeds and utterances of the Prophet as recounted by his companions…
>
> Hadith are divided into two groups: *hadith qudsi* ("sacred Hadith"), in which God Himself is speaking through the Prophet, and *hadith sharif* ("noble Hadith"), the Prophet's own utterances. Hadith may enunciate doctrine or provide a commentary upon it. They deal with the contents of the Koran, social and religious life, and everyday conduct, down to the tying of sandals. They are the basis, second only to the Koran, for Islamic law (*shari'ah*).
>
> The *Musannaf* are collections classified by subject: The most respected collection of all is the *Jami as-Sahih* of Muhammad Ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari (d. *256*/870). This has 7,397 Hadith under 3,450 subject headings (*bab, abwab*)…
>
> The *isnad* is the chain of transmission. Distinctions are made according to whether the Hadith was "heard"; "reported"; "disclosed"; "found"; and other categories relating to the circumstances of transmission. The transmission is the *riwayah*; the transmitter is a *rawi*, who, it was admitted, could edit the Hadith and improve upon its form and style, whence the

same Hadith is found reported in different degrees of amplitude. The *matn*, meaning "letters" (*mutun*), is the actual text of the Hadith.

The canonical collections grade Hadith according to indices of authenticity. The highest grade is *mutawatir*, that is recurrent or reported by many different sources; then *sahih* "reliable"; *hasan* "good"; *da'if* "weak", and *mawdua*, or "fabricated". When collections of Hadith began to appear, there were also studies by scholars of what they considered to be fabricated Hadith; there was a saying that there is no more reprehensible act than the fabricating of Hadith, which shows awareness that many Hadith were not historically authentic.
…
The Shi'ites call Hadith by another word by another word, *khabar* ("news", pl. *akhbar*). For Shi'ites, the authenticity of a Hadith is guaranteed not by an *isnad* which begins with the Companions, but by its transmission through Ali and the Imams of Shi'ism. The Shi'ite collections of Hadith, which were made during the Buyid period from *320-454*/932-1062, are considerably larger than the Sunni ones, and contain references to the Imams not found in Sunni collections…

…Even if, from a historical point of view, a particular Hadith is false, it does not necessarily follow that the opinions, practices, or doctrines linked with it are suspect. A Hadith may be false in the sense that the Prophet never spoke the words, but nevertheless true in that it is wholly consistent with his message (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'Hadith' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., London, pp.159-162 – Attachment 2).

The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World includes the following information on the *hadith*:

HADITH. In Islam *hadith* is the term applied to specific reports of the prophet Muhammad's words and deeds as well as those of many of the early Muslims; the word is used both in a collective and in a singular sense. After the Prophet's death, his companions collected reports of what he had said and done, and they recounted the reports among themselves in order that the living memory of Muhammad's example might influence the community of believers…

After two centuries of collecting, transmitting, and teaching *hadith*, during which the quest for reports became one of the most respected occupations of the Muslim community, scholars intensified the work of codifying the bulk of the material. The ninth century CE produced six massive collections, which have won almost universal acceptance by the Sunni community as the most authoritative. They are commonly known by the names of their compilers: al-Bukhari (d. 870); Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 875); Abu Da'ud al-Sijistani (d. 888); Ibn Majah al-Qazwini (d. 887); Abu Isa al-Tirmidhi (d. 892); and Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Nasa'i (d. 915). Two other collections as well have always enjoyed great favour with the Sunnis, namely those of Malik ibn Anas (d. 795) and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855). These are only the most important examples of the large number of collections that appeared during this period and later, which classified thousands of reports according to the transmission of different authorities.

The Shi'is use the above collections, but they are selective in their recognition of the companions as valid authorities. In addition, they consider *hadith* from the imams as fully authoritative. From the standpoint of their particular beliefs, the Shi'is revere four books as particularly significant, the collections by Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni (d. 940), Muhammad ibn Babuyah al-Qummi (d. 991) and Muhammad al-Tusi (d. 1068) who compiled two collections (Esposito, John L. (ed.) 1999, 'Hadith' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Vol. 2, pp.83-84 – Attachment 3).

Moojan Momen in *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* writes that the "main sources for all rituals and legal practices in Islam are the Qur'an and the Traditions (*hadith*)" (Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** p.172 – Attachment 4).

Momen also comments on the Shi'ite *hadith* (the Traditions) collections as follows:

> Since the Prophet and, for Shi'is, the Imams were sinless and infallible, their words and deeds are a guide and model for all to follow. These were eventually written down after being transmitted orally for several generations. Thus each *hadith* consists of the names of the chain of transmitters (*isnad*) followed by the text (*matn*) of the Tradition being transmitted. The *hadith* constitute the *Sunna* (practice) of the Prophet and Imams. They are also frequently called *khabar* (information, plural *akhbar*) by Shi'is.
>
> In Sunni Islam there are six collections of Traditions relating to the Prophet and passed on by his companions which are regarded as canonical. In Shi'i Islam, however, the majority of the companions, in accepting the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman in preference to Ali, are considered to have erred and, therefore, cannot be regarded as reliable transmitters of Traditions. The Shi'i Traditions usually rely on the words or actions of one of the Imams and even those that go back to the Prophet are usually transmitted through one of the Imams…
>
> There are four early collections of the *hadith* that have become regarded by Shi'is as canonical. These were written by three authors who are known as the 'Three Muhammads':
>
> a. *Al-Kafi fi Ilm ad-Din* (The Sufficient in the Science of Religion) by Muhammad al-Kulayni (d. 328/939)…
> b. *Man la yahduruhu al-Faqih* (He who has no Jurist present) by Muhammad ibn Babuya (d. 381/991)…
> c. *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* (The Rectification of Judgements) by Shaykh Muhammad at-Tusi, Shayku t-Ta'ifa (d. 460/1067).
> d. *Al-Istibsar* (The Perspicacious) by the same author (Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** pp.173-174 – Attachment 4).

2. Was there political and religious unrest in Algeria in 2001-2005? Was there open discussion about different Islamic practices?

During the period 2001-2005 Algeria had already faced over a decade of civil strife which included extreme violence by various armed Islamic groups. Sources have reported continued attacks by Islamic groups in the 2001-2005 period. Country information indicates that violent clashes erupted in 2001 following the death of a student in police custody in Kabylie. Violent demonstrations were also reported by Berbers in Kabylie. According to reports the level of violence, in comparison to previous years, decreased in 2005.

The UK Home Office briefly outlined the situation in Algeria from the 1960s to 2005 as follows:

> 2.1 In the 1960s and 1970s, under President Houari Boumedienne, Algeria embarked on a programme of industrial expansion. Economic recession and social unrest in the 1980s forced President Chadli to introduce political and economic liberalisation at the end of the decade. Political parties such as the FIS (Front Islamique du Salut), a broad coalition of Islamist groups, sprang up. In December 1991 the FIS dominated the first of two rounds of legislative

elections. Fearing an Islamist take-over, the authorities intervened in January 1992, cancelling the elections. The FIS was then banned, triggering a vicious armed civil insurgency, which although significantly reduced in intensity, continues to affect some areas of Algeria. At least 100,000 people are thought to have died in the conflict, many in horrific massacres committed by the most extreme of the various armed Islamic groups.

2.2 One Islamist group, the Armee Islamique du Salut (AIS), declared a ceasefire in October 1997 and later came out in support of the "national reconciliation" policy of President Bouteflika (elected April 1999). The AIS subsequently disbanded in January 2000. Many political prisoners were pardoned, and several thousand members of armed groups were granted exemption from prosecution, under a limited amnesty which was in force up to 13 January 2000. Following extensive security force operations the Groupe Islamique Armée (GIA) poses a reduced threat within Algeria. The Groupe Salafiste pour la Predication et le Combat (GSPC) is thought still to have around 500 armed insurgents. The conflict is estimated to have claimed over 400 lives during 2004.

2.3 Since April 2001, there has also been serious unrest in the Kabylie region east of Algiers. During the initial protests in April 2001 (following the death in custody of a Kabylie youth) at least 50 people died after being shot by members of the security forces. The Algerian government set up a National Commission of Inquiry, whose preliminary conclusions were published in July and confirmed in December 2001. The Commission concluded that the gendarmerie and other security forces had repeatedly resorted to excessive use of lethal force.

2.4 The President is elected by a popular vote for a five-year term. The last presidential election was held on 8 April 2004. Abdelaziz Bouteflika was re-elected for a second term with 85% of the vote. Turnout was around 58%.

2.5 Algeria continues to be perceived by many observers to be making sustained efforts towards establishing peace and security on its territory. However, the national reconciliation process remains fragile and there are continuing reports of human rights abuses in the country. The Law on Civil Harmony (adopted in July 1999 and overwhelmingly endorsed in a national referendum in September 1999) did not bring an end to the political violence, and indiscriminate attacks on civilians by armed groups, as well as clashes between the latter and the government forces, continue to take place.

2.6 In September 2005, the Algerian public approved a 'Charter for Peace and Reconciliation' by referendum. The Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation provides for an amnesty for individuals involved in earlier terrorist acts but excludes those involved in massacres, rapes or who carried out bombings in public places. In November 2005, opposition parties keep their majority in local elections in the mainly-Berber Kabylie region, held as part of a reconciliation process (UK Home Office 2006, *Operational Guidance Note: Algeria*, 22 May, p.2 – Attachment 5).

Information in the *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition* the FIS, AIS, GIA and the GSPC, later succeeded by the Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)), are illegal fundamentalist groups operating in Algeria. It was stated that "By 2003 the GSPC was one of the few Islamist groups "still fighting"" ('Algeria' 2009, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press Electronic Library http://library.cqpress.com/phw/document.php?id=phw2009_Algeria&type=toc&num=3 – Accessed 27 October 2009 – Attachment 6).

Political Handbook of the World Online Edition also outlined the political situation between 2001 and 2005 as follows:

Current issues. Facing an extremely difficult task in convincing the Algerian populace and the international community of the legitimacy of the April 1999 presidential poll, President Bouteflika moved quickly to establish his leadership credentials by, among other things, announcing plans for a "civil concord," which proposed amnesty for most fundamentalist militants in return for their permanent renunciation of violence and surrender of arms. The pact easily secured legislative approval in the summer and was endorsed by 98 percent of those voting in a national referendum on September 16. By the end of the cut-off date for the amnesty in mid-January 2000, upwards of 6,000 guerrillas had reportedly accepted the government's offer. However, most of them came from the FIS-affiliated Islamic Salvation Army, which had already been honoring a cease-fire since 1997. Significantly, the GIA rejected the peace plan, and deadly attacks and counterattacks continued on a nearly daily basis throughout the summer of 2000.

Despite the partial success of the civil concord, some 2,700 deaths were reported in 2000 from the ongoing conflict, and an upsurge of antigovernment violence was reported in December. In early 2001 President Bouteflika promised an "iron fist" in dealing with the remaining militants. However, the government faced a new crisis in April when riots broke out within the Berber population in the Kabylie region after a young man died under inadequately explained circumstances while in police custody. Government forces responded with a harsh crackdown, and some 1 million demonstrators reportedly participated in the anti-regime protests that ensued in the Kabylie region and other areas, including Algiers. More than 60 people were killed and 2,000 injured in the clashes, which, fueled by economic malaise and long-standing concern over the authoritarian rule of what one journalist described as the "overwhelming power of an opaque military leadership," continued into 2002, prompting the leading Berber parties (the FFS and the RCD) to boycott the national legislative poll on May 30.

Deadly bomb attacks continued in 2003, mostly the work of the GIA offshoot called the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat-GSPC*). However, the level of violence was greatly reduced from its height earlier in the decade (as one reporter put it, dozens killed per month rather than dozens per day). Most observers credited President Bouteflika's resounding reelection in April 2004 to popular appreciation of the improved security situation, along with recent economic advances and Algeria's renewed international status in connection with the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

A January 2005 accord between the government and Berber representatives called for enhanced economic support for Berber areas and appeared to reduce unrest within the Berber community. Even more significant was a national referendum on September 29 that overwhelmingly endorsed the government's proposed national charter for peace and reconciliation. The charter called for amnesty for most of the Islamic militants involved in the civil war that had started in 1991, although leaders of the "insurrection" were barred from future political activity. Collaterally, the charter praised the role of the army in the conflict, effectively eliminating any possibility that excesses on the part of the security forces would be investigated. (It was estimated that 6,000-20,000 Algerians had "disappeared" as the result of the army's anti-insurgency measures.) Most major political parties supported the charter, and President Bouteflika staked his political future on its passage. The government reported a 97 percent yes vote and an 80 percent turnout, although the latter figure was broadly discounted by opponents of the initiative as well as some independent analysts. (It was noted that turnout in Berber regions appeared to be less than 20 percent.) Despite protests over the perceived heavy-handedness of the government in stifling effective opposition to the charter, the consensus appeared to be that the vote was a clear indication that the majority of Algerians were prepared to put the matter behind them. (It was estimated that the conflict had cost more than $30 billion and left 150,000-200,000 people dead.) However, the state of emergency remained in effect "until terrorism is completely defeated."

> After several months of debate, the legislature approved the details of the peace and reconciliation charter in February 2006, and in March several thousand "Islamist" prisoners were released. A $400 million fund was established to provide compensation to the civil war's victims, although they were precluded from filing other legal claims against the government. Critics of the plan denounced it for "sheltering" the military and security forces and demanded a more intensive, "South African-style" truth and reconciliation approach under which the facts of individual cases would be revealed prior to the issuance of pardons.
>
> The government offered remaining militants six months to accept the amnesty offer, but the GSPC, now formally aligned with al-Qaida (as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb [AQIM]…), stepped up its attacks in late 2006-early 2007, targeting Western business interests as well as Algerian police. The spate of bombings appeared to undercut the turnout (35 percent) for the May 2007 assembly balloting, as did what was widely perceived to be popular discontent with the political process as a whole. Nearly 1 million ballots were spoiled by voters, apparently to protest the entrenched status of the ruling coalition. Critics were also discouraged by the reappointment of most of the incumbent ministers in the cabinet reshuffle of June 4 and by the FLN/RND/MSP domination of the November local elections. Attention subsequently focused on a series of deadly bomb attacks (including an assassination attempt against the president) in December and into the first half of 2008. Meanwhile, discussion continued regarding possible constitutional revision to permit a third term for President Bouteflika when his term expires in April 2009, despite reports of his poor health ('Algeria' 2009, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press Electronic Library http://library.cqpress.com/phw/document.php?id=phw2009_Algeria&type=toc&num=3 – Accessed 27 October 2009 – Attachment 6).

Amnesty International reported anti-government protests and clashes with security forces in the period 2001-2004, including in the predominantly Berber (Amazigh) region of Kabylie. The protests were reported following the death of a schoolboy in Kabylie in 2001 and deteriorating socio-economic conditions (Amnesty International (undated), *Amnesty International Report 2005* – Attachment 7; Amnesty International (undated), *Amnesty International Report 2004* – Attachment 8; Amnesty International (undated), *Amnesty International Report 2003* – Attachment 9; Amnesty International (undated), *Amnesty International Report 2002* – Attachment 10).

Amnesty International reported that in 2005, although "hundreds of people were killed" the level of violence decreased in comparison to previous years (Amnesty International (undated), *Amnesty International Report 2006* – Attachment 11).

The Europa World Yearbook 2008 publication indicates that violent clashes erupted in 2001 following the death of a student in police custody in Kabylie. Violent demonstrations by Berbers in Kabylia were also reported ('Algeria' 2008, *The Europa World Yearbook 2008*, Routledge, London, p.525 – Attachment 12).

In addition to clashes with militant Islamic groups and demonstrations by Berbers, US State Department reports on religious freedom for the years 2001-2005 refer to government action taken on the appointment of preachers to mosques and banning the use of mosques for public meeting places outside prayer hours. The US State Department religious freedom report for 2005 states:

> Self-proclaimed Muslim terrorists continued to justify their killing of security force members and civilians by referring to interpretations of religious texts; however, the level of violence perpetrated by terrorists continued to decline during the reporting year.

…In 2005, the Government decided to take full control of curriculum for students at Islamic institutions which develop religious cadres. The Government also appoints imams to mosques and by law is allowed to provide general guidance and to pre-screen and approve sermons before they are delivered publicly. In practice, the Government generally reviews sermons after the fact. The Government's right of review has not been exercised with non-Islamic faiths. The Government also monitors activities in mosques for possible security-related offenses, bars the use of mosques as public meeting places outside of regular prayer hours, and convokes imams to the Ministry of Religious Affairs for "disciplinary action" when warranted.

In February 2004, the imam of the Emir Abdelkader Mosque in Constantine attacked the independent press during the Friday sermon broadcast on state television and radio. The imam stated that cartoons by Ali Dilem of the French-language daily La Liberté undermined the sanctities of Islam, called him a collaborator with the enemies of Islam, and urged Muslims to boycott the newspaper. Similar content was heard during the sermons in Batna, Khenchela, Guelma, and Algiers. Because the Government can pre-screen the content of sermons, most observers viewed the verbal attack as an election year ploy sanctioned by the Government to discredit the independent press and as an inappropriate use of the mosque to further political objectives. Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia called the sermon "a regrettable event."

Amendments to the Penal Code in 2001 established strict punishments, including fines and prison sentences, for anyone other than a government-designated imam who preaches in a mosque. Harsher punishments were established for any person, including government-designated imams, if such persons act "against the noble nature of the mosque" or act in a manner "likely to offend public cohesion." The amendments do not specify what actions would constitute such acts.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides some financial support to mosques and, in February 2005, created an Educational Commission within the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The commission is composed of 28 members in charge of developing an educational system for the learning of the Qur'an. The commission is supposed to set the rules for hiring teachers for the Qur'anic schools[1] and madrassahs, and ensure that all imams are of the highest educational caliber, and present messages in line with government guidelines in place to stem Islamic fanaticism.
…The Ministries of Education and Religious Affairs strictly require, regulate, and fund the study of Islam in public schools. Private religious primary and secondary schools operate in the country; however, the Government did not extend recognition to these institutions during the reporting year, and, therefore, private school students must register as independent students within the public school system to take national baccalaureate examinations. In May, the Ministry of National Education required private schools to submit their educational programs for approval. The Government has given official authorization to only 22 of 200 private schools so far. This measure was widely directed toward insuring that schools supported by Saudi Arabia were conforming to Government standards of religious teaching.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides some financial support to mosques and pays the salary of imams. Mosque construction is funded through private contributions of local believers. Following the May 2003 earthquake, the Government assisted the reconstruction efforts of some Christian churches. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, there are nine Christian religious workers funded by the Government.
…Abuses by Terrorist Organizations

[1] "Qur'anic schools" in this context may refer to schools at which a full course culminates in the Koran being completely memorised (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'Koranic School' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., p.270 – Attachment 14).

> The country's decade-long civil conflict pitted self-proclaimed radical Muslims belonging to the Armed Islamic Group and its later offshoot, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, against moderate Muslims. While estimates vary, approximately 100,000 to 150,000 civilians, terrorists, and security forces have been killed during the past 13 years. Radical Islamic extremists have issued public threats against all "infidels" in the country, both foreigners and citizens, and have killed both Muslims and non-Muslims, including missionaries. Extremists continued attacks against both the Government and moderate Muslim and secular civilians; however, the level of violence perpetrated by these terrorists continued to decline during the reporting period. As a rule, the majority of the country's terrorist groups do not differentiate between religious and political killings (US Department of State 2005, *International Religious Freedom Report 2005 – Algeria*, 8 November – Attachment 13).

In similar terms the US State Department reports on religious freedom for the years 2001-2004 refer to action taken by the government concerning the appointment of preachers to mosques and banning the use of mosques for public meeting places outside prayer hours (US Department of State 2001, *International Religious Freedom Report 2001 – Algeria*, 26 October – Attachment 15; Department of State 2002, *International Religious Freedom Report 2002 – Algeria*, 7 October – Attachment 16; US Department of State 2003, *International Religious Freedom Report 2003 – Algeria*, 18 December – Attachment 17; US Department of State 2004, *International Religious Freedom Report 2004 – Algeria*, 15 September – Attachment 18).

3. What information is there about koranists in Algeria or in Australia? Are there any Koranist mosques? What are beliefs of Koranists, including prayer and Ramadan practice?

Information on these questions is provided under the following headings:

Beliefs
Hadith and Sunnah
Gathering places
Prayer
Fasting
Pilgrimage
Al-Azhar University
Wahhabis
In Australia
In Algeria

Beliefs

Country information indicates that Koranists (Quranists) only accept the Koran as the sole source of religious guidance. Sources report that Quranists views on *hadith* and S*unnah's* place in Islam vary. The Ahl Al-Quran group appears to view both *hadith* and S*unnah* as unreliable, although one of its followers considers that they should not be rejected out of hand. Information accessed on the Quranists.org website considers the S*unnah* as being in the Quran and considers *hadith* as unreliable. However, Momen writes that the S*unnah* is part of the *hadith*. Quranists do not consider themselves to be a religious sect or political party. Sources refer to Ahl Al-Quran being founded in Egypt in the 1980s by Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour, a professor at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo and dismissed in 1987 because of his beliefs. One article refers to these developments as being "part of a historically-rooted

"Quran Alone" movement with a rich intellectual heritage". A 2007 *Gulf News* article noted that the Quranist movement started in the 1970s in Pakistan and then spread elsewhere (US Commission on International Religious Freedom 2009, *Annual Report 2009*, May, p. 161 – Attachment 19; Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20; 'The Sunnah is in the Quran!!!'(undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/ – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 21; Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** p.173 – Attachment 4; Elmarzouky, Nora & Jones, Marisa 2007, 'Crackdown on the Quranists', *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*, Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, Vol. 13, No. 150, p.3 http://www.eicds.org/english/publications/civilsociety/07/June07Issue.pdf – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 22; El-Khashab, Karim 2007, 'Matters of Faith', *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, Issue no. 852, 5-11 July http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/852/eg12.htm – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 23; Witter, Willis 2007, 'Anti-al Qaeda base envisioned; Exiled Egyptian cleric seeking to reclaim Islam in 'war of ideas'', *Washington Times*, 26 September – Attachment 24).

The Quranist website (http://quranists.org/), affiliated with a group named People-Pro-God, describes a Quranist as "someone who follows the Quran and the teachings that are found in it". It states that Quranists are also known as "Ahlul-Quran, Quranies, Quranites, Quraniyoona, Quran-aloners & Quranists". It continues, however, "not all of these Quranist groups hold the same opinions about Salat, Ramadan, the role of the Hadeeth or Pilgrimage" ('Welcome to the Quranist Path', 'Disclaimer' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/ – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 21).

The Quranists.org website states that Quranists have differing opinions on their beliefs based on the different interpretations of the Quran ('Quranist Beliefs' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/ – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 21).

According to the Quranists.org website Quranists have the following beliefs in common:

> Faith, Submission & Devotion to the god of Abraham (God bless him & Keep him)
> Faith in God's prophets, laws & angels
> Belief in the Quran as God's message
> Avoidance of Evil deeds & Racing towards all Good.
> God & The Quran as our Guide
> Prayer
> Fasting
> Respect for others' freedom of religion & of culture.
> Doing Right by our families, friends, neighbors, migrants, the abandoned and those less fortunate.
> The study and practice of the whole Quran with intelligence and reason as an axis of our faith.
> The belief that extremism (Al-I'tidaa'u) is disliked by God.
> The belief that Submission to God is the only religion God accepts from humanity ('Quranist Beliefs' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/ – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 21).

The Quranists.org website has a link to another Quranist website, the International Quranic Centre (IQC) at http://www.ahl-alquran.com/arabic/main.php. The founder of the IQC is Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour, a former professor at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, dismissed in

1987 because of his beliefs. A group of Quranists associated with Dr. Mansour refer to themselves as "Ahl al-Quran"[2] in Arabic (Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20; Elmarzouky, Nora & Jones, Marisa 2007, 'Crackdown on the Quranists', *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*, Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, Vol. 13, No. 150, p.3 http://www.eicds.org/english/publications/civilsociety/07/June07Issue.pdf – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 22).

The beliefs of Quranists as outlined on the International Quranic Centre website are as follows:

> The term "Quranic People" provides a conceptual umbrella for Muslims who subscribe to the following beliefs:
>
> 1. The Quran is the sole source of Islam and its' laws.
> 2. The Quran is comprehensive, completely sufficient in itself.
> 3. The Quran was revealed to Mohamed to clarify all controversial and mysterious religious issues.
> 4. The Quran -not the Hadith- was the prophet Mohamed's only tradition and he was ordered to abide by it alone.
> 5. Islam is the religion of peace, mercy, justice, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion ('About Us' (undated), International Quranic Centre website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/aboutus.php#iqc – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 25).

The Quranists goals as set out on the website are as follows:

> 1) To advocate peaceful reform in the Muslim world based on democracy and human rights and to offer practical strategies for such change;
> 2) To mobilize on the web and convene in person open-minded scholars of the Quran to share research demonstrating the consistency of Islam with democracy;
> 3) To communicate the value of ecumenical democracy to Muslims of all denominations;
> 4) To initiate a real inter-religious dialogue among Muslims, Christians, Jews, and members of all religions who believe in creating societies based upon tolerance and justice.
> 5) To educate Muslims in America to understand and interpret Islam as consistent with American democracy ('About Us' (undated), International Quranic Centre website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/aboutus.php#iqc – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 25).

Information accessed on the International Quranic Centre website also states that Quranists are a "group of educated open-minded individuals" and not a political part or religious sect:

> As scholars, researchers, and advocates, the Quranic People aim to assist the peaceful reform of Muslim countries and societies by going back to the authentic source of Islam – the Quran. The Quranic People believe that reform will flow from the objective understanding of the Quran, according to its original terminology. By such careful reading, one can judge the past and present actions of Muslims in relation to the word of God alone. The Quranic people aren't a political party or a religious sect, but rather a group of educated open-minded individuals who share the simple but profound and powerful beliefs outlined above ('About Us' (undated), International Quranic Centre website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/aboutus.php#iqc – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 25).

[2] In English: People of the Quran.

A *Washington Times* news article states that the Quranists are "neither Sunni nor Shi'ite". The article also mentions that Quranists "especially anger Sunni Muslims by rejecting the Hadith and Sunna" (Witter, Willis 2007, 'Anti-al Qaeda base envisioned; Exiled Egyptian cleric seeking to reclaim Islam in 'war of ideas'', *Washington Times*, 26 September – Attachment 24).

Hadith and Sunnah

Sources vary as to the place of *hadith* and S*unnah* as sources of Islamic rituals and laws for Quranic groups. The Ahl Al-Quran appears to view both *hadith* and S*unnah* as unreliable, although one of its followers considers that they should not be rejected out of hand. Information accessed on the Quranists.org website considers the S*unnah* as being in the Quran and considers *hadith* as unreliable.

According to the *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, Mansour and other Quranists view the Koran is the only source of Islamic thought and that the S*unnah* is tainted by inaccurate *hadiths* and thus cannot be relied upon. It notes that this view is "seen as verging on heresy by many Islamic scholars":

> Quranists believe that only the Quran, and not the *Sunna* – Prophet Mohamed's sayings and doings – should form the framework for Islamic thought and practice, a position seen as verging on heresy by many Islamic scholars.
>
> … Mansour, who lives in the US, has published several books and articles suggesting that the process of compiling the *hadith* (the prophet's sayings) was inherently flawed, and that many sayings attributed to the prophet may well not have been uttered by him. Mansour, and other Quranists, argue that the Quran should be the only source of Islamic thought, noting that the Sunna has been tainted with many inaccurate *hadiths* and is therefore not a reliable source for understanding Islam (El-Khashab, Karim 2007, 'Matters of Faith', *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, Issue no. 852, 5-11 July http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/852/eg12.htm – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 23).

The International Quranic Centre website of Ahl Al-Quran under its 'Terms of Publication' states that is for "all those who believe that Qur'an is the ONLY source of Islam rituals, guidance and explanation of its legislations" and rejecting the use of the *hadith* and S*unnah* in interpreting the Quran:

1. The major intention of establishing and founding the site "Ahl-Al-Quran" is to unify all those who believe that Qur'an is the ONLY source of Islam rituals, guidance and explanation of its legislations. So, it will be forbidden for anyone who adopts what-so-called Prophet Narrations (Haddith or Sunnah) to be used or adopted to express certain point of view or interpret the Holy Qur'an ('Terms Of Publication' (undated), Ahl Al-Quran website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/terms.php – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 26).

Information accessed on the Quranists.org website argues that the S*unnah* is part of the Quran:

> The meaning of the Arabic word *Sunnah* as Muslims use it today is the same as the Arabic word *Uswatun* to be found in the Quran. It means example or exemplar. Sunnis, Shiites and other Muslims believe that this Sunnah or example of the last prophet can only be found in the early Islamic compilations they call the Hadeeth (literally narrations and/or events). The

> current idea of the Sunnah may be based on these Hadeeth but following these Hadeeth does not equal following the *Sunnah*. Those who look for this *Sunnah* in the Hadeeth are very mistaken. The Sunnah of our beloved last prophet (God bless him and keep him) cannot be found in these books. The hadeeth are essentially hearsay and rumor. As for almost all commonly accepted hadeeth, these rumors were only authenticated by confirming the good reputations of the narrators, mostly after they had already passed away. Authenticating the reputation of a person does not authenticate his story. Many of these rumors contradict each other and even contradict the Quran, despite classifications of sahih (sound), hassan (excellent) or da'eef (weak). Yet Muslims do not want to give them up because they fear that they are giving up following the example of the last prophet.
>
> Following the Hadeeth DOES NOT equal following the *Sunnah*…
>
> Contrary to what Sunni, Shiite or other Muslims may say Quranists/Quranites/Quran-aloners are very respectful of our last prophet and do obey him. We also are commited to following his example. However, the Sunnah as far as we see it is not in the hadeeth and cannot be ascertained from non-quranic rumors and hearsay. **We see the Sunnah clearly in the Quran and in how the Quran tells the last prophet what to say and do** ('The Sunnah is in the Quran!!!' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/ – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 21).

However, one Quranist has also reportedly stated that "Quranists do not reject the *hadith* and *Sunna* out of hand":

> Fathi Mohamed, a 25-year-old follower of Mansour, told *Al-Ahram Weekly* the aim of the group is to filter elements that have led to the emergence of extremism and fundamentalism from Islam.
>
> "If you look at many extremists you will find that they rely on the hadith and not the Quran," argues **Mohamed, who remains keen, nonetheless, to stress that Quranists do not reject the *hadith* and *Sunna* out of hand**. "We differentiate between issues like how to pray, fast and perform the Haj, practices passed down from generation to generation, and issues that are open to interpretation," he said.
>
> Mona, a fellow Quranist, adds **that such an approach has been growing in popularity for some time**. It only attracted the attention Al-Azhar, however, and as a consequence the attention of State Security, security body, when Quranists launched a website that contained criticisms of many of Al-Azhar's recent pronouncements (El-Khashab, Karim 2007, 'Matters of Faith', *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, Issue no. 852, 5-11 July http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/852/eg12.htm – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 23).

With respect to the Shia, Momen writes that "The *hadith* constitute the *Sunna* (practice) of the Prophet and Imams" (Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** p.173 – Attachment 4).

It may be of interest that Elmarzouky and Jones write that there has been continual debate over the role of *hadith* in Islam:

> The ever-present debate over the place of *hadith* in Islam re-emerged with vigor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when esteemed scholars such as Rashid Rida and Muhammad Abduh in Egypt, as well as Ghulam Ahmed Pervez in India, emphasized the need to re-examine the role of *hadith* in the broader context of an effort to modernize Islam. As the

> Twentieth Century progressed, groups such as the United Submitters International the followers of Malaysian scholar Kassim Ahmad, and Ahl Al-Quran have continued to promote a reevaluation of the *hadith*. As the Ahl Al-Quran website suggests, their stance regarding the *hadith* tends to coincide with a more moderate view of Islam, as well as a desire to promote reconciliation between adherents of the three Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Elmarzouky, Nora & Jones, Marisa 2007, 'Crackdown on the Quranists', *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*, Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, Vol. 13, No. 150, p.3 http://www.eicds.org/english/publications/civilsociety/07/June07Issue.pdf – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 22).

Gathering places

Azar, Mansour's sister, has stated that Quranists are an "idealogical school" and do not have "gathering places", suggesting that there are no Quranist mosques:

> "We are not a sect, but an ideological school, which has no gathering places" (Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20).

In a similar vein Mansour has also stated that Koranists are "are connected globally through the Internet":

> Many Americans do not realize that there is a war being waged in Egypt against Muslim reformers. These reformers call themselves ''Koranists'' because they focus solely on the Koran and advocate a modern interpretation of Islam that rejects Shariah law.
>
> These self-declared leaders of the ''Islamic Reformation'' number in the thousands and are connected globally through the Internet…(Mansour, Ahmed Subhy 2009, 'Egypt persecutes Muslim moderates A shackled reformation', *International Herald Tribune*, 24 January – Attachment 27).

Prayer

Information on the Quranists.org website states the following on prayer:

> This organization of People Pro-God believes that prayer in the Quran is encouraged and it is only laid down as a requisite to pray at dawn and at dusk, including the times of night that join into these two times. Despite this, we believe that God accepts the prayer of His servants whether they pray 2 or 20 times a day, as long as that does not hinder them from fulfilling their duty to God in other necessary ways. From the Quran and the Classical Arabic language the prayer of a Quranist consists of no more than setting apart a time for God to focus on Him, bowing or kneeling. This is a part of the simplicity of the religion of the Quran. More than this is not required but it is not forbidden either ('The Way We See It' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/pillars.html – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 28).

More detailed information on prayer, accessed on the Quranists.org website, is attached ('Prayer: Refreshingly simple!' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/prayer.html – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 29).

Fasting

Information on the Quranists.org website relates fasting and the month of Ramadan as follows:

> A Quranist organization follows the rules of the Quran and judges by the Quran, doing this with logic, intelligence and careful scrutiny of the book. They do not follow or try to apply what they don't understand. This Quranist organization of People Pro-God understands that the fasting of the month of Ramadan does not necessarily consist in following the Islamic or pre-Islamic calendar and fasting during a month called Ramadan, rather it is fasting 30 days in a period of constant or intense heat, no matter what the location or time ('The Way We See It' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/pillars.html – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 28).

Pilgrimage

Information on the Quranists.org website states the following on the pilgrimage:

> The pilgrimage according to the Quranists of this organization of People Pro-God is understood to be the annual convention of Quranists on common grounds; convening on respected sanctuaries to create bonds, recognize each other and celebrate God, sacrificing to God the animals to be eaten, preparing them and feeding each other and those who are hungry with them. This convening includes the above as some of its Quranically prescribed rites, as well as other rites and activities such as bestowing honors and decorations on each other. This convention is to be held for 3 months, that is, 90 days and it is not necessary to go to Mecca but to any sanctuary erected as a house for God, where the activities of this pilgrimage mentioned in the Quran can be practiced.
>
> These 3 months are to fall at a time in which the season of pilgrimage will fall in both the spring and the winter according to the Quranically derived before-mentioned calendar, using the spring equinox as a middle point…('The Way We See It' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/pillars.html – Accessed 10 November 2009 – Attachment 28).

More detailed information on the pilgrimage, accessed on the Quranists.org website, is attached ('Pilgrimage: as it should be' (undated), Quranists.org website http://quranists.org/pilgrimage.html – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 30).

Al-Azhar University

Al-Azhar University, based in Cairo, is the most famous university in the Muslim world. The university found in *358*/969 has acquired "great prestige and reputation for authority in religious domains which it has kept to the present day". Al-Azhar University has reportedly rejected the views of the Quranists (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'al-Azhar' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., London, p.72 – Attachment 31; Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20).

Mansour[3], the founder of the Quranist movement, wrote on the Al-Azhar University and the movement in an *International Herald Tribune* article:

> …Al Azhar University, which is based in Cairo and is the leading center for conservative Sunni learning in the world, has rejected the views of the Koranists and has sought to systematically dismantle the movement (Mansour, Ahmed Subhy 2009, 'Egypt persecutes Muslim moderates A shackled reformation', *International Herald Tribune*, 24 January – Attachment 27).

The *Gulf News* cites views expressed by a professor at Al-Azhar University concerning Quranists:

> "The one who denies the Sunnah, which is a major source of legislation in Islam, is not a Muslim," said Refaat Othman, a professor of Sharia [Islamic Law] at Al Azhar. "Insistence on this denial is tantamount to apostasy," he said.
>
> Othman explained that the movement of the Quranists started in Pakistan in the 1970s and later spread elsewhere. "They are a heretical sect, who intends to play down its danger to Islam by claiming it is an ideological school." (Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20).

Similar views were also expressed by another professor at Al-Azhar and its grand imam:

> But Ahmed Basyouni, a professor of Islamic jurisprudence at Al-Azhar University, insists the Quranists have gone too far. "The Quran itself is very clear," he says. "It mentions that Muslims must follow the word of God and the ways of the prophet and there can be no argument there." Denying the doings and sayings of the prophet, accuses Basyouni, is to deny Islam.
>
> "These types of ideas are extremely dangerous and if we allow them to spread they will lead even more people astray."
>
> Similar views were echoed by the grand imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Mohamed Sayed Tantawi, who told reporters outside his office that the State Security has every right to arrest anyone who tarnishes the image of Islam. Asked by *Al-Ahram Weekly* where freedom of speech fits into the picture, he insisted the law was clear. "We respect freedom of speech but the law clearly places limitations on matters of faith." (El-Khashab, Karim 2007, 'Matters of Faith', *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, Issue no. 852, 5-11 July http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/852/eg12.htm – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 23).

Wahhabis

International Quranic Centre website notes that Quranist beliefs distinguish them from "Wahhabists and other Islamists" who require "violent jihad":

> These fundamental principles distinguish the Quranic People from those Muslims who follow the principles of the Wahabists and other Islamists who consider the central tenet of Islam to

[3] Mansour was reportedly dismissed by Al-Azhar University in 1987 (Al Sherbini, Ramadan 2007, 'Egypt to further probe Quranists', *Gulf News*, 9 August http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egypt-to-further-probe-quranists-1.194832 - Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 20).

> require violent Jihad ('About Us' (undated), International Quranic Centre website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/aboutus.php#iqc – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 25).

In *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam* Wahhabis are described as a "dominant sect in Saudi Arabia" and that "Wahhabism is a steadfastly fundamentalist interpretation of Islam" (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'Wahhabis' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., London, p.469 – Attachment 32).

In respect of Wahhabis and Saudi Arabia the *Washington Times* has reported that Mansour stated that a "real enemy" of Muslims is the Wahhabi culture:

> "Suppose you have here [in the United States] a base to counter al Qaeda in the war of ideas?" Sheik Mansour asked during a recent luncheon at The Washington Times.
>
> "You could convince a large number – millions of silent Muslims. We can convince them very easily that the real enemy is not the United States. It is not Israel. The real enemy is the dictators in the Muslim world and the culture of the Wahhabis and Muslim Brotherhood," he said, referring to the dominant arbiters of Islamic orthodoxy in Saudi Arabia and Egypt respectively.
> …
> From exile in the United States, he continues to attack the Islam of bin Laden and the Wahhabi Islam of Saudi Arabia that gave birth to bin Laden's beliefs. Sheik Mansour also attacks the Islamist vision of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, a group that rejects violence but shares the goal of a theocratic nationhood under Shariah, or Islamic law (Witter, Willis 2007, 'Anti-al Qaeda base envisioned ; Exiled Egyptian cleric seeking to reclaim Islam in 'war of ideas'', *Washington Times*, 26 September – Attachment 24).

In Australia

No information was found in the sources consulted on Quranists in Australia.

In Algeria

The only information on Quranists in Algeria found in the sources consulted was that Ahl Al-Quran's representative in Algeria is Ibrahim Dadi ('About Us' (undated), International Quranic Centre website http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/aboutus.php#iqc – Accessed 9 November 2009 – Attachment 25).

4. What is the Sunna?

According to the entry for 'Sunnah' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*:

> Sunnah (lit. "custom", "wont", "usage", pl. *sunan*). A general term that can be applied to the usages and customs of nations, the predominant meaning of Sunnah is that of the spoken and acted example of the Prophet. It includes what he approved, allowed, or condoned when under prevailing circumstances, he might well have taken issue with others' actions, decisions or practices; and what he himself refrained from and disapproved of.
>
> The Sunnah is the crucial complement to the Koran; so much so, that there are in fact isolated instances where, in fact, the Sunnah appears to prevail over the Koran as, for example, when the Koran refers to three daily prayers (24:58 and 11:116), but the Sunnah sets five. On the

> other hand, there are cases from the earliest days of Islam of universal practices which appear to contradict express Sunnah.
>
> Moreover, the Koran does not make explicit all of its commands; not even all those which are fundamental. Thus it enjoins prayer, but not how it is to be performed: the form of canonical prayer (*salāh*) is based entirely on Sunnah.
>
> The importance of the Sunnah arises from the function of the Prophet as the founder of the religion, and hence the inspired and provident nature of his acts, and the Koran's injunction to pattern oneself after him: "You have a good example in God's Messenger" (33:21). The Prophet himself was aware of his acts as establishing custom and precedent, although he may not have known that such details as the way he tied his sandals would be a matter of record (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'Sunnah' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., London, p.441 – Attachment 33).

In respect of S*unnah* and Shiism, Moojan Momen in *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* writes that the "*hadith* constitute the *Sunna* (practice) of the Prophet and Imams" (Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** p.173 – Attachment 4).

Also in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*:

> According to the other major branch of Islam, Shiism, the ideals embodied in the Prophet's life could best be implemented through loyalty, devotion, and obedience to the divinely guided and properly designated imams, descended from the Prophet through his son-in-law 'Ali and his daughter Fatimah. The imams taught, confirmed, and further interpreted the Qu'ran and *sunnah*. Their authoritative role ensured consistency and continuity, and their guidance and teaching were regarded as congruent and coextensive with the *sunnah* of the Prophet. These commonly held beliefs, however, was developed and implemented differently among the Shi'i groups that emerged subsequently, such as the Ithna 'Ashari, Isma'ili and Zaydi sects (Esposito, John L. (ed.) 1999, 'Sunnah' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Vol. 4, p.138 – Attachment 34).

5. What is a "Kafir" (infidel)? Would it mean something special in Algeria?

According to *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, *kafir* means, in Arabic, "irreligious, unbelieving; unbeliever, infidel, atheist; ungrateful". Arabic is the official language of Algeria. The Berber language, Tamazight, became a "national language" in 2001. No information was found in the sources consulted to indicate that *kafir* means something special in Algeria (Wehr, Hans 1974, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, MacDonald & Evans Ltd., London, p.833 – Attachment 35; 'Quick Facts' in 'Algeria' 2009, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press Electronic Library http://library.cqpress.com/phw/document.php?id=phw2009_Algeria&type=toc&num=3 – Accessed 26 October 2009 – Attachment 36).

6. How is Shi'a Islam different? How is it practised in Australia?

How is Shi'a Islam different?

Definitive information on differences between Shi'a Islam and the Quranists was not found in the sources consulted. A *Washington Times* news article states that the Quranists are "neither

Sunni nor Shi'ite". The article also mentions that Quranists "especially anger Sunni Muslims by rejecting the Hadith and Sunna" (Witter, Willis 2007, 'Anti-al Qaeda base envisioned; Exiled Egyptian cleric seeking to reclaim Islam in 'war of ideas'', *Washington Times*, 26 September – Attachment 24).

Nonetheless, on the basis that Quranists consider the Koran as the sole source for Islam, Momen writes that the Koran and the Traditions (*hadith*) are the main sources for all rituals and law in Islam. He states that for Shi'is on "basic theological principles" "reason is the primary source":

> The main sources for all rituals and legal practices in Islam are the Qu'ran and the Traditions (*hadith*). In the matter of basic theological principles, however, Shi'is hold that reason is the primary source (Momen, Moojan 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Yale University Press, New Haven**,** p.172 – Attachment 4).

How is Shi'a Islam practised in Australia?

Definitive information on this question was not found in the sources consulted.

Saeed, although referring to Muslims generally rather than Shias specifically, writes on Muslims in Australia as follows:

> Perhaps more that any other single factor, Muslims in Australia are marked by their ethnic diversity. Muslims migration to Australia was, and is, from a variety of nation states themselves possessing distinct cultural and ethnic groups. Migrants coming to Australia bring not only their religious faith, but also their cultural identities with them, and quite often these cultural identities figure as strongly as the religious identity. Muslims also vary in their degree of commitment to Islam as well as in their approaches to it.
>
> There are further differences in the level of integration into Australian society, particularly among the second and third generation Muslims. Complicating all this is also the existence of an increasing number of converts to Islam from European backgrounds who were born and grew up in Australia. Thus not all Muslims share the same views on all issues, and often there is no one standard 'Islamic' view on many of the problems and issues Muslims face in their daily lives (Saeed, Abdullah 2003, *Islam in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, pp.64-65 – Attachment 37).

Saeed continued on Sunnis and Shi'is and refers to Shi'is in Australia:

> One of the most significant divisions occurred very early on in Muslim history when there was debate over who should succeed the Prophet as leader of the Muslim community. Some Muslims (later to be known as Shi'is) felt that the family of the Prophet should be given preference. Other Muslims (later to be known as Sunnis), who appeared to be in the majority, argued that political succession had nothing to do with the family of the Prophet as such, and that the office was open to anyone capable of handling it. The differences between the two groups widened over the centuries and took on theological connotations, but initially the distinction was merely connected to political succession.
>
> While the majority of the Muslim population in Australia is Sunni, a large number of migrants from Iraq, Lebanon and Iran are Shi'is. Within each group, there are legal, theological and ideological differences. Despite such sharp differences, prominent in the countries of origin, there appears to be a tendency on the part of both Shi'is and Sunnis in Australia to narrow their differences and come to a more common view of their identity as

> Muslims. Although there is somewhat of a sense of togetherness in a number of areas, the two groups still maintain some distinctions. Shi'i Muslims have their own mosques and schools, for example, and Sunni Muslims their own as well. However, at times Sunnis and Shi'is may share the same mosque for prayers and other social and religious functions (Saeed, Abdullah 2003, *Islam in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, pp. 64-65 – Attachment 37).

7. What is the influence of Saudi Arabia and the Azhar University on the Algerian Islamic faith?

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has the two holiest cities in the Islamic world, Mecca and Medina. The cities are the sites of annual pilgrimage by Muslims worldwide. A large proportion of the country's population belongs to the Wahhabi sect, a conservative Islamic religious sect. In addition, country information reports of Algerian concerns relating to the spread of Wahhabism and Salafism from Saudi Arabia through the country's mosques and education system.

According to the *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition* some 85% of the "indigenous population" of Saudi Arabia are Sunni Muslims of the "conservative Wahhabi sect". The two holiest cities in the Islamic world, Mecca and Medina, are in Saudi Arabia. These cities are the sites of an annual pilgrimage by Muslims ('Saudi Arabia' 2009, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press Electronic Library http://library.cqpress.com/phw/document.php?id=phw2009_SaudiArabia&type=toc&num=158 – Accessed 12 November 2009 – Attachment 38).

The US State Department reports that the Algerian government was concerned that schools supported by Saudi Arabia met Algerian government standards of religious teaching:

> The Ministries of Education and Religious Affairs strictly require, regulate, and fund the study of Islam in public schools. Private religious primary and secondary schools operate in the country; however, the Government has not extended recognition to these institutions pending a review of their educational programs as required by the Ministry of National Education since 2005. Consequently, private school students have to register as independent students within the public school system to take national baccalaureate examinations. The Government authorizes only 22 of 200 private schools. The Government has stated that the purpose of this measure is to ensure that schools supported by **Saudi Arabia** conform to government standards of religious teaching. There is no hate crime legislation (US Department of State 2008, 'Legal/Policy Framework' in *International Religious Freedom Report 2008 – Algeria*, 19 September – Attachment 39).

The US State Department has also reported that the Algerian government is concerned about Islamist extremism in the country:

> The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides financial support to mosques and pays the salary of imams. The Government and private contributions of local believers fund mosque construction. The Ministry's Educational Commission is composed of 28 members who are in charge of developing the educational system for teaching the Qur'an. The Commission is responsible for establishing policy for hiring teachers for the Qur'anic schools and madrassahs, as well as ensuring that all imams are well qualified and that the imams instruction follows government guidelines aimed at stemming Islamist extremism (US Department of State 2009, 'Religious Demography' in *International Religious Freedom Report 2009 – Algeria*, 26 October – Attachment 40).

A 2008 news article reported on Algeria's concerns on the growth of Salafism, Wahhabism and Shi'ism in its mosques:

> In recent years, the country's mosques have experienced a worrisome proliferation of Salafism, Shi'ism, Wahabism, and even Kharidjism, Mohamed Aissa, the director of religious training at the Religious Affairs Ministry, said on Radio Channel 3 on Thursday [25 September]. "We are going to provide training and indoctrination to imams so they can cope with the proliferation of new rites which have been imported from abroad and disseminated via satellite channels or documents and CDs in front of mosques," Mr Aissa said.
>
> That official revealed the firing of 53 imams in the capital and the closure of 42 unauthorized Muslim houses of worship. He repeated the authorities' determination to monitor the exercise of religions in Algeria and criticized the recent report from the American Department of State on the decline of religious freedoms in our country. "The closure of Muslim houses of worship does not appear in this report, which is interested only in Christians," Mr Aissa said with regret.
>
> In recent years Algeria has been coping with a worrisome growth in Shi'ism and a return in force of Salafism. In certain mosques in the country, in the big cities in particular, the faithful adopt rites other than the Malikite rite that is in force in our country, which is often the source of tensions among practicing [Muslims]. Out of fear of reprisals on the part of the faithful, some imams close their eyes to religious practices that have been imported from Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, and Iran (Idir, Ali 2008, 'Algeria's religious authorities monitoring proliferation of "foreign" rites', *BBC Monitoring Service*, source: Tout sur l'Algerie, 26 September – Attachment 41).

A 2008 *New York Times* article comments on Algerian youth and Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia:

> There is a sense that this country could still go either way. Young people here in the capital appear extremely observant, filling mosques for the daily prayers, insisting that they have a place to pray in school. The strictest form of Islam, Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia, has become the gold standard for the young (Slackman, Michael 2008, 'In Algeria, a tug-of-war for young minds', *The New York Times*, 23 June http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/23/world/africa/23algeria.html?pagewanted=1&sq=algeria%20tug%20of%20war& st=cse&scp=1 – Accessed 4 July 2008 – Attachment 42).

Another 2008 article in *The Canadian Press* expressed Algeria's concerns about Salafism from Saudi Arabia:

> Algeria is worried about Salafism, an extreme branch of Islam that is a concern for authorities across North Africa. Imported from Saudi Arabia and backed by Saudi oil money, Salafism has gained a significant following not only in Algeria but in neighbouring Morocco, and has grown dramatically across the Middle East in recent years ('Algerian moderates fear hardening Islamic line' 2008, *The Canadian Press*, 5 November – Attachment 43).

In July 2009 *Reuters News* reported that the Algerian government was promoting Sufism against Salafism, which "has its roots in Saudi Arabia":

> In Algeria it [Sufism] has a low profile, with most mosques closer to Salafism – though not the violent connotations that sometimes carries.

…
Salafism has its roots in Saudi Arabia and emphasises religious purity.
…
The influential Algerian Salafist cleric Abdelmalek Ramdani, who lives in Saudi Arabia, called on his followers a year ago to keep away from politics and stop using violence.

But to Mouloudi Mohamed, an independent Algerian expert on Islamic issues, the best way to combat extremism is by going back to traditional Islam, not the Salafism that was imported from Saudi Arabia (Chikhi, Lamine 2009, 'Algeria sponsors Sufism to fight extremism', *Reuters News*, 8 July – Attachment 44).

Al-Azhar University

Specific information on the influence of Al-Azhar University on the Algerian Islamic faith was not found in the sources consulted. Country information indicates that Al-Azhar University is the pre-emininent Islamic learning institution in the world. Algerian students, imams and preachers have reportedly attended the university.

Information in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* states:

AZHAR, AL-. Situated in the heart of premodern Cairo, al-Azhar is the greatest mosque-university in the world today. Reluctantly adjusting to modern times over the last century, the millenium-old Azhar remains a focal point of Islamic religious and cultural life for Egypt and the entire Islamic world.
…
Outside Egypt, Al-Azhar is prized as a champion of Sunni Islam and the Arabic language. Students returning from studies at al-Azhar and Azhari professors and preachers on mission abroad are in demand throughout the Islamic world. Everywhere they have helped establish and improve Islamic schools and communal institutions (Esposito, John L. (ed.) 1999, 'Azhar, Al-' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Vol. 1, pp.168, 170 – Attachment 45).

A news article also described the university as the "top institution for Sunni learning in the Islamic world" ('Egyptian senior cleric condemns Algiers bombings' 2007, *BBC Monitoring Middle East*, source: Algerian radio, 16 April – Attachment 46).

The US State Department has reported that 99% of the population in Algeria is Sunni Muslim (US Department of State 2009, 'Religious Demography' in *International Religious Freedom Report 2009 – Algeria*, 26 October – Attachment 40).

In respect of Algerian imams, preachers and students attending the university a 2004 news article noted that the attendance of the Algerian students was funded by the Egyptian government:

According to IINA, the Grand Sheikh of the Azhar, Dr. Muhammad Tantawi, has approved the admission of imams and preachers from Algeria to attend the Azhar institution's retraining session which the institution holds every three months, the purpose of which is to impart on the participants Shari'a Knowledge and other related matters. The approval was the consequence of a meeting that was held here between the Grand Sheikh and Algeria's ambassador accredited to Egypt, Abdul Qader Hajjar. The ambassador lauded the role that is played by the Azhar on the international scale, as an authoritative institution in the field of the Islamic faith. There are at the moment 23 Algerian students pursuing higher studies at the

> Azhar, at the expense of the Egyptian government ('Algerian clerics to take part in Azhar training session' 2004, *IPR Strategic Information Database*, 8 December – Attachment 47).

A Jamestown Foundation article states that a graduate of Al-Azhar University had "belonged to the Algerian Salafi movement that helped create the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in 1989" (Boukhars, Anouar 2006, 'Islam, Jihadism and Depolitization in the French Banlieues', *TerrorismMonitor*, The Jamestown Foundation, Vol. IV, Iss. 18, 21 September, p.10 – Attachment 48).

8. Is there any evidence that a failed asylum seeker would be persecuted on return to Algeria? Are returnees from the West treated with suspicion? Are those who practice other Islamic beliefs treated badly?

Sources report that the failed asylum seekers may draw the attention of the Algerian authorities. Particular concerns have been raised about persons suspected of having links to Islamic movements facing hostile treatment on return to Algeria. It has also been reported that a returnee may face hostile treatment on return due to the authorities' perception that the person may have been involved in terrorism. One source noted that there is probably little danger for returnees who do not generate such suspicions.

In a 2007 paper published by the European University Institute, George Joffe writes on the threats to the safety of returnees in the following terms:

> In fact, it has long been the case that threats to personal safety face persons arrested for involvement in terrorist activities inside Algeria, persons returned from abroad whom the Algerian authorities suspected of involvement or association with terrorist activities in Europe, and former members of the FIS who may also be suspected of such activities. For persons who do not generate such suspicions – because, for example, they are clearly economic migrants, or have been involved in non-political criminal activities and have therefore been deported – there is probably little danger of return, apart from interrogation by the border authorities. However, if such a person has been involved in investigations into terrorist activities in Europe and this is known to the Algerian authorities, then there are severe risks that he or she will face such treatment upon return, even if they have not been charged in Europe. In short, the Algerian authorities, whatever assurance may have been given, will detain and mistreat persons they consider to be involved in violence…(Joffe, George 2007, *Britain and Algeria: Problems of Return*, European University Institute, pp.15-16 http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/7984/3/MIREM_AR_2007_03.pdf – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 49).

Joffe provides examples of mistreatment and concludes:

> The story of these cases demonstrates the extreme reluctances of the Algerian government, both for reasons of national sovereignty and, perhaps, because the constitutional authorities cannot guarantee the behaviour of the security forces, to provide any kind of security guarantees to returning Algerians who have been denied asylum and who may be implicated in allegations of terrorism. The process of deportation, therefore, contains some acute risks if the person concerned has been involved or has been suspected of having been involved in political activities either opposed to the Algerian state or involving political Islam. If he or she has not been so engaged, then in theory there should be no adverse consequences from return (Joffe, George 2007, *Britain and Algeria: Problems of Return*, European University Institute, p.18 http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/7984/3/MIREM_AR_2007_03.pdf – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 49).

In May 2007 DFAT advised that although the details of a person's participation in an Islamic group would determine the response of the authorities, "a claim for asylum would also draw the attention of authorities":

> [Q.1. Are known FIS [Front Islamique du Salut] members likely to be interrogated by the Departement du renseignement et de la securite (DRS), or any other government agency, if returned to Algeria?]
> R.1. Interlocutors said that this was possible. Whether this was likely or not would depend on the degree of involvement by the individual in the FIS. Post notes that cases of indiscriminate torture occurred in Algeria in the 1990s, and this is not, in itself, a reflection of the degree of involvement of a person in the FIS.
>
> [Q.2. Are known failed Asylum Seekers likely to be suspected of terrorism and/or interrogated by the DRS, or any other government agency if returned to Algeria?]
> R.2. Interlocutors said they were unaware of cases involving failed asylum seekers returning to Algeria, so could not answer the questions drawing from previous cases. They said the membership/former membership of the FIS – and the details of their participation in the FIS – was likely to be the determining factor on the response by Algerian authorities, but a claim for asylum would also draw the attention of authorities. Please see the 2006 US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices for further information on torture in Algeria (DIAC Country Information Service 2007, *Country Information Report No. 07/40 – CIS Request No DZA8960: Algeria FIS*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 4 May 2007), 4 May – Attachment 50).

In a 2004 position paper the UNHCR stated that failed Algerian asylum seekers returned to Algeria "may face hostile treatment" because of the government's perception that "such persons may be involved in international terrorism". According to the UNHCR, for persons who have had prior links to Islamic groups "there is a strong presumption that such persons may be subject to persecutory treatment upon return". UNHCR states:

> UNHCR is concerned that asylum seekers found not to be in need of international protection, who are returned to Algeria may face hostile treatment due to the Algerian Government's perception that such persons may have been involved in international terrorism. In this regard, it should be noted that both the Groupe Salafist pour la Predication et le Combat and the Groupe Islamique Arme have been listed as proscribed organizations by the United States in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. Further, there are public reports that European (e.g., Spanish, Italian, German, French and British) intelligence/security authorities have uncovered networks related to these groups in recent months. It is alleged that these networks operate within the context of Algerian and other North African migrant communities in Europe.
>
> While UNHCR would not consider it within its purview to comment on the substance of such reports, it is noted that the above factors contribute to the suspicion with which rejected asylum seekers would be treated upon return to Algeria, notably those persons who have had prior links to Islamist movements. Therefore, there is a strong presumption that such persons may be subject to persecutory treatment upon return. While it could be expected that such persons may have a valid claim regarding real or imputed political opinion, it has been observed that certain asylum countries use unduly stringent criteria in their refugee determination processes, both on the interpretation of the refugee definition and on their credibility tests, and therefore some such applicants may have been improperly rejected.
>
> In view of the foregoing, UNHCR urges States to use appropriate care in applying the 1951 Convention criteria and in particular to consider within that determination the potential risks

> associated with prolonged stay abroad, particularly for those perceived to have links with Islamic groups (UNHCR 2004, 'UNHCR position paper on the return of Algerian nationals found not to be in need of international protection', December http://www.algeria-watch.de/en/unhcr_paper.htm – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 51). (CISNET Algeria CX175465)

Human Rights Watch also reported its concerns, raised in the context of the British government deporting terrorism and national security suspects, about returnees:

> Algeria's treatment of recent returnees raises additional concerns. Indeed, the Bouteflika government has already breached promises it made regarding the treatment on return of two Algerian nationals deported from the United Kingdom in January 2007. These promises were made by Algerian officials directly to the affected men, but the British government had facilitated contacts between the officials and the men. While not formal "diplomatic assurances" brokered between governments, these promises – which were breached to devastating effect for the men, Benaissa Taleb and Rida Dendani – are a window on the Algerian government's absence of good faith and the abuses returnees suffer on return (Human Rights Watch 2008, *Not the Way Forward: The UK's Dangerous Reliance on Diplomatic Assurances*, October, p.14 – Attachment 52).

Other information on the return of failed asylum seekers may be found in:

- Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2006, *DZA101152.E – Algeria: Treatment of failed refugee claimants returned to Algeria; whether low-ranking police officers or members of the security forces would be subject to any reprisals from state authorities (2004 – March 2006)*, 26 May – Attachment 53.

- RRT Research & Information 2006, *Research Response DZA30108*, 8 June – Attachment 54.

9. Please provide information about the Tabliz (or Tabligh) Lakemba Mosque and the Mosque in Belmore. Do the Imams change regularly at the Lakemba Mosque? What are the prayer days and times at both mosques?

Lakemba Mosque

The Tabliz/Tabligh Mosque may refer to the Lakemba Mosque which is also known as the Imam Ali ben Abi Taleb Mosque. Its location as stated on the Islamic Council of NSW website is 65-67 Wangee Rd. Lakemba. The mosque is run by the Lebanese Muslim Association and is attended by many Lebanese-Australian worshippers ('Mosques' (undated), Islamic Council of NSW website http://www.icnsw.org.au/index.php?page=mosques – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 55; Cubby, Ben 2007, 'Together under the minarets', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 April http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/together-under-the-minarets/2007/04/29/1177787974602.html – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 56).

According to *SBS 6.30pm TV World News Transcripts* the current imam is Sheikh Yehya Safi and a former imam was reported to be Sheikh Taj El-Din Hilaly. In March 2009 *The Australian* reported a split in the Lebanese Muslim Association and a breakaway faction had voted to dismiss the mosque's executive ('Muslims celebrate end of Ramadan' 2009, *SBS 6.30pm TV World News Transcripts*, 20 September – Attachment 57; 'Extremists should

leave the country: Hilaly' 2009, *SBS 6.30pm TV World News Transcripts*, 23 August – Attachment 58; Hohenboken, Angus 2009, 'Breakaway Muslims vote to dismiss executive', *The Australian*, 24 March – Attachment 59).

Information accessed from the Lebanese Moslem Association website on Friday 13 November 2009 shows the prayer times as:

> Sydney: Fajr – 4:10 | Sunrise – 5:45 | Zuhr – 12:40 | Asr – 4:23 | Maghrib – 7:36 | Isha – 9:10 ('Activities @ Lakemba Mosque' (undated), Lebanese Moslem website http://www.lma.org.au/mosque.php – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 60).

Saeed states that prayer times change almost daily. In a prayer timetable Saeed sets out the names of the prayer times as: *Fajr*/Dawn; *Shurug*/Sunrise; *Zuhr*/Noon; *Asr*/Afternoon; *Maghrib*/Sunset; and *Isha*/Evening (Saeed, Abdullah 2003, *Islam in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, pp.97-98 – Attachment 61).

Information listing the activities at the mosque, accessed from the Lebanese Moslem Association website on Friday 13 November 2009, suggests that there are a number of preachers active at the mosque ('Activities @ Lakemba Mosque' (undated), Lebanese Moslem website http://www.lma.org.au/mosque.php – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 60).

Belmore Mosque

The Belmore Mosque is also known as the Al Azhar Mosque. Its location as stated on the Islamic Council of NSW website is 172B Burwood Road, Belmore. Information accessed from the Al-Azhar Mosque website suggests that the mosque is run by the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah Association. Also, information in the *Sydney Morning Herald* states that it has a mixed congregation ('Mosques' (undated), Islamic Council of NSW website http://www.icnsw.org.au/index.php?page=mosques – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 55; 'Al-Azhar Mosque/Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah Association' (undated), Al-Azhar Mosque website http://www.alazhar.com.au/ – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 62; 'Cubby, Ben 2007, 'Together under the minarets', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 April http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/together-under-the-minarets/2007/04/29/1177787974602.html – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 56).

Information accessed from the Al-Azhar Mosque website on 13 November 2009 lists the prayer times as:

> **Fajr**: 30 minutes after Athan
> **Dhuhr**: 15 minutes after Athan
> **Asr**: 15 minutes after athan
> **Maghrib**: 5 minutes after Athan
> **Ishaa'**: 10 minutes after Athan
> **Jumu'ah – Friday Prayer**: 1:15pm ('Al-Azhar Mosque/Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah Association' (undated), Al-Azhar Mosque website http://www.alazhar.com.au/ – Accessed 13 November 2009 – Attachment 62).

Athan (Adhan) is the call to prayer (Glassé, Cyril 2001, 'Adhan' in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Stacey International, Rev. ed., London, pp.28-29 – Attachment 63).

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