

ISLAM AND THE ENGLISH ENLIGHTENMENT: THE UNTOLD STORY

This book provides an extensive exploration of the profound influence Islam had on the development of modern Western civilization. It delves deep into how Islamic ideas played a pivotal role in shaping key aspects of Western thought and institutions, including the English and American enlightenments, the Scientific Revolution, and the emergence of pluralistic democracies. The book argues that the foundations of contemporary freedoms can be traced back to Islamic ideals and practices. It highlights that prominent enlightenment figures like John Locke, Isaac Newton, and several Founding Fathers of the United States such as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin were proto-Muslim Unitarians, rejecting core Christian doctrines like the Trinity and Jesus' divinity in favor of a belief in the singular God. Therefore, the modern Western civilization is a product of Judeo-Christian and Islamic influences.

REVIEWS

"Islam and the English Enlightenment is a must-read for every serious student of history, religion, or culture."

Dr. Khaled Abou El Fadl
Distinguished Professor of Law, UCLA School of Law

"This is a book that anyone interested in stepping outside a Eurocentric view of the rise of the West and of the modern age must read."

Michael A. Gillespie
Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, Duke University

"Shaykh Zulfiqar has produced perhaps the most comprehensive and deep analysis of the Islamic influence on the English Enlightenment ever produced. Never before, to my knowledge, has the cross-fertilization of Western and Islamic ideas been so encyclopedically documented as it is here. In reading Islam and the English Enlightenment, you will never see the relationship between Islam and the West the same way again."

Robert F. Shedinger
Luther College

"In this well-researched yet extremely readable volume, Shaykh Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah has done a tremendous job of connecting the dots and showing how key doctrines and notions that emanated in Muslim lands migrated from Arabic sources to Latin treatises. After reading this work, the reader will be able to prove that had it not been for Islam's unique contributions, the European Reformation, Renaissance, and Enlightenment projects, would not have occurred as they did."

Dr. Yasir Qadhi
Dean Islamic Seminary of America



Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah



SHAYKH, DR. ZULFIQAR ALI SHAH

- ▶ Executive Director/Secretary General of the Fiqh Council of North America
- ▶ Director Religious Affairs of the Islamic Society of Milwaukee Ph. D. (Theology and Religious Studies) from the University of Wales, U. K.
- ▶ M.A. (Hons) & B. A. (Hons), *Usul-al-Din* from the International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- ▶ Taught at the following Universities:
 - International Islamic University Islamabad
 - University of Wales
 - University of North Florida
 - St. Thomas University
 - Cardinal Stritch University
- ▶ Former president of Sharia' Scholars Association of North America (SSANA) and Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) and Shaykh of many Muslims communities in North America.

MEET SHAYKH DR. ZULFIQAR ALI SHAH:

Shaykh Zulfiqar is a leading voice in the realms of Islamic scholarship and academia. As an accomplished theologian, thinker, historian, jurist, and leader. He seamlessly integrates traditional Islamic heritage with contemporary knowledge, making him an influential Muslim voice both in the Muslim and Western world.

THE JOURNEY TO SUCCESS

Shaykh Zulfiqar's academic and religious achievements are profound. He is currently the Executive Director and Secretary General of the Fiqh Council of North America and oversees religious affairs at the Islamic Society of Milwaukee. He began his scholastic path by memorizing the Quran and receiving pre-medical education before going on to earn additional degrees from the International Islamic University in Islamabad, Pakistan (IIUI). He earned a B.A. (Hons) and M.A. (Hons) in Usul-al-Din specializing in Comparative Religions. His years at IIUI were marked by close interactions and mentorship from eminent scholars hailing from renowned institutions such as al Azhar, Dar al Ulum, Umm al Qura, and Madinah, as well as institutions in Qatar, UAE, Jordan, Morocco, and beyond. Notable mentors include the current Shaikh al Azhar Dr. Ahmad al-Tayyib and Egyptian scholars Dr. Hussain Hamid Hassan, Dr. Hasan al Shafai, Dr. Ahmad al Assaal, and Dr. Mahmoud Mazrouah. Shaykh Zulfiqar also engaged with professors from prestigious universities including Temple, Oxford, Cambridge, and London, with Dr. Anis Ahmad as his mentor, who himself was a student of the late Temple Professor Ismail al Faruqi. Dr. Shah's relentless pursuit of knowledge reached its zenith when he successfully earned a Doctorate in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Wales, United Kingdom. This academic milestone was achieved under the esteemed guidance of Professor Paul Badham, an internationally acclaimed Christian theologian. Professor Badham is notably the son of Rev. Leslie Badham, who held the prestigious position of Vicar of Windsor and served as Chaplain to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth of England. Shaykh Zulfiqar's unique academic journey reflects a synthesis of Eastern and Western wisdom, creating a rich tapestry of knowledge and perspectives.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS

• Decades of Research Excellence:

Shaykh Zulfiqar's research journey spans over four decades, reflecting his enduring commitment to scholarship and intellectual exploration.

• Exploring Comparative Religions:

His work encompasses a meticulous examination of comparative religions, shedding light on the intersections and distinctions between Islamic thought and other major religious traditions.

• Comparative Fiqh:

Shaykh Zulfiqar's research also delves into comparative Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), offering insights into the multifaceted nature of Islamic legal thought and its relevance in a global context.

• Islamic Influence on European History:

Shaykh Zulfiqar's scholarship uncovers the intricate ways in which Islamic thought influenced pivotal moments in European history. His research reveals Islam's profound impact during significant European Epochs, including the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.

• Unveiling Intellectual Exchanges:

Shaykh Zulfiqar's pioneering research uncovers a rich tapestry of intellectual exchanges between Islamic Unitarian theology and Enlightenment luminaries. Figures such as John Locke, Isaac Newton, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin are explored in the context of their engagement with Islamic concepts.

• Inspiration from Islamic Concepts:

Shaykh Zulfiqar posits that these Enlightenment figures drew inspiration from Islamic concepts and the Ottoman societal model in their quest for a society anchored in values such as religious freedom, human rights, and constitutional guarantees.

Shaykh Zulfiqar's research contributions not only illuminate the historical interactions between Islam and the West but also provide valuable insights into the shared intellectual heritage of these two worlds. His work serves as a bridge between cultures and a source of understanding in an increasingly interconnected global society.

DIVERSE AND PROFOUND TITLES

Shaykh Zulfiqar's extensive body of work includes titles that delve into the depths of Islamic scholarship and its interactions with other religious traditions and historical European Epochs. Notable titles include:

- ▶ "The Concept of God in Judaic, Christian and Islamic Traditions"
- ▶ "Islam and The English Enlightenment: The Untold Story"
- ▶ "Islam's Reformation of Christianity"
- ▶ "St. Thomas Aquinas and Muslim Thought"
- ▶ "Astronomical Calculations and Ramadan: A Fiqhi Discourse"

MULTILINGUAL EXPERTISE

Shaykh Zulfiqar's linguistic prowess shines through in his publications. His writings are in English, Arabic and Urdu.

These publications reflect Shaykh Zulfiqar's deep scholarship, his commitment to cross-cultural understanding, and his dedication to fostering dialogue and intellectual exchange in the global arena.

GLOBAL RELEVANCE

In essence, Shaykh Zulfiqar's contributions to Islamic scholarship and thought resonate globally. His ability to bridge traditional Islamic principles with modern-day realities has solidified his reputation as a leading intellectual and scholar in both the East and the West.

