

Two Narratives of Islamic Revival

Islamic Television Preaching in Egypt



John Erik Sætren

Dissertation for the degree philosophiae doctor (PhD)
at the University of Bergen

2010

Acknowledgements

A number of people have helped me in various ways throughout the three years I have been working with this dissertation. At the University of Bergen, thanks go first and foremost to my two supervisors Ludmila I. Torlakova and Richard J. Natvig. They have guided and supported me through the process of writing this dissertation. Special thanks also go to Joseph N. Bell, the founder of the Arabic section in Bergen, who has contributed with his wealth of knowledge. In addition to these three, I would also like to thank my colleagues Pernille Myrvold and Eirik Hovden for sharing their insights and making life at the University enjoyable. The interdisciplinary PhD research forum for Middle Eastern Studies, led by Knut S. Vikør, has been an important arena for exchanging ideas and insights. Many thanks go to all those who have participated in discussing my work on various occasions. I also thank Rasmus T. Slaattelid and Håkan Rydving for their enriching comments on my theory of science paper, which came to be a fundamental constituent of the dissertation. At the University of Copenhagen, thanks goes to Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen for leading The New Arabic Media Seminar in Cairo 2008, and the Khuṭbah Workshop the following year in Copenhagen. Both were of immense value. In addition to those already mentioned, I would particularly like to thank Jamie Furniss, Tore Rydland, Anders M. Gullestad, and Ehab Galal for their useful comments on my work.

In Cairo, I would like to thank all the teachers who enthusiastically taught me Arabic throughout the three years I spent there. I am also very grateful for the help I received from my good friends Muhammed alShahat, Khalid Abouel-lail, Ashraf Ali, and Ahmed Seddik, with regard to translation and other difficulties I encountered in my primary material. My assistants, with whom I spent more than one thousand hours watching, listening to and transcribing these programs, also deserve special thanks for their persistence. Also the tens of people who helped me in Egypt and Yemen to write

down the remaining transcripts of the programs when I was running out of time deserve special gratitude.

On a more personal note, I want to thank my family, and particularly my dear parents Randi and Finn, my sister Merethe, and my brother Kjetil. I thank them and all my friends who have fondly endured the three years it has taken me to produce this dissertation. There is another special person to whom I would like to express my loving gratitude. Ingrid Cecilia Holthe has endured living with me and giving me moral support through some periods of extremely intense work I went through to finish this study within the set time. Thanks for filling my life with inspiration and meaning. I also thank Ingrid's family for their caring support. I dedicate this work to my grandfather, John A. Furnes, who sadly passed away last year. I miss you greatly.

Abstract

Since the turn of the millennium, the interplay between Islamic revivalism, economic liberalization, and new media has created a new form of popular Islamic preaching framed as television programs. From the pulpit of the television screen, Muslim preachers, male and female, call Muslims to change and live their lives in accordance with Islam. In Egypt and beyond, this new wave of preachers is both a product of and a contributing factor in the current religious revitalization in the Muslim world. By way of an examination of the Scene of Ramadan 2008 A.D./1429 A.H., I have chosen two series as the lens through which to study two of the most important preachers in the field, 'Amr Khālīd and Muḥammad Ḥassān. The initial enquiry was to locate the message of these preachers and the way in which this was communicated through television. The more specific enquiry became to arrive at an understanding of how these two preachers construe collective identities that they encourage their listeners to conform to, and how these are construed through television. The two cases are interesting because they represent two dominant positions within the two main trends of preaching today. My findings were that these two preachers represent two different styles of television preaching that seek to shape different types of identities. The preachers work on their audiences to make them agents within their distinct projects of Islamic Revival.

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
ABSTRACT.....	5
CONTENTS.....	6
FIGURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.....	9
KEY TO transliteration	10
NOTE FOR THE READER.....	11
1 INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 RELEVANCE.....	15
1.2 DISCOURSE THEORY.....	17
1.2.1 <i>Motivation</i>	17
1.2.2 <i>Islamic Discourse</i>	19
1.2.3 <i>The Discursive “Order”</i>	21
1.2.4 <i>A Cultural Approach</i>	24
1.2.5 <i>Identity Construction</i>	28
1.3 TEXT ANALYSIS	30
1.3.1 <i>Parameters</i>	31
1.4 CONTEXTUALIZATION	41
1.5 INTERPRETATION.....	43
1.6 OUTLINE.....	44
2 NEW “SPACES” FOR PREACHING.....	46
2.1 POLITICS AND POWER STRUCTURES	46
2.2 THE RISE OF TV PREACHING.....	52
2.3 NEW “SPACES” FOR PREACHING	60
2.3.1 <i>Iqra’ and al-Risālah</i>	62
2.3.2 <i>Al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah</i>	65
2.3.3 <i>Non-Religious “Spaces”</i>	69
2.4 TV PREACHING IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE – INTERPRETATIONS	69
2.5 CONCLUSION	74
3 THE FIELD OF ISLAMIC TELEVISION PREACHING.....	76
3.1 THE RAMADAN SCENE 2008.....	76
3.1.1 <i>Iqra’ and al-Risālah</i>	76

3.1.2	<i>Al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah</i>	82
3.1.3	<i>Non-Religious “Spaces”</i>	87
3.2	TWO CASES	92
3.2.1	<i>Tensions and Controversies</i>	92
3.2.2	<i>Muḥammad Ḥassān</i>	96
3.2.3	<i>‘Amr Khālīd</i>	103
4	THE IMAMS OF GUIDANCE AND THE LIGHTS OF THE DARK	110
4.1	COHESION	110
4.1.1	<i>Series Structure</i>	110
4.1.2	<i>Title Sequence</i>	112
4.1.3	<i>Program Composition</i>	115
4.2	MISE-EN-SCÈNE	117
4.2.1	<i>Set</i>	117
4.2.2	<i>Décor</i>	118
4.2.3	<i>Framing</i>	119
4.3	ETHOS	120
4.3.1	<i>Initial Ethos</i>	120
4.3.2	<i>Derived Ethos</i>	121
4.3.3	<i>Textual Ethos</i>	123
4.4	LOGOS	125
4.4.1	<i>The Young</i>	126
4.4.2	<i>Leaders</i>	130
4.4.3	<i>The Rich</i>	133
4.4.4	<i>Women</i>	136
4.4.5	<i>Preachers</i>	140
4.4.6	<i>Personalities</i>	143
4.5	PATHOS	147
4.5.1	<i>Stimulation</i>	147
4.5.2	<i>Moving</i>	149
5	THE STORIES OF THE QURAN BY ‘AMR KHĀLĪD	153
5.1	COHESION	153
5.1.1	<i>Series Structure</i>	153
5.1.2	<i>Title Sequence</i>	155
5.1.3	<i>Program Structure</i>	158
5.2	MISE-EN-SCÈNE	160
5.2.1	<i>Set</i>	160

5.2.2	<i>Décor</i>	162
5.2.3	<i>Framing</i>	163
5.3	ETHOS	164
5.3.1	<i>Initial Ethos</i>	164
5.3.2	<i>Derived Ethos</i>	166
5.3.3	<i>Textual Ethos</i>	169
5.4	LOGOS	172
5.4.1	<i>The Young</i>	174
5.4.2	<i>Leaders</i>	178
5.4.3	<i>The Rich</i>	181
5.4.4	<i>The Family</i>	183
5.4.5	<i>The Citizens</i>	185
5.4.6	<i>Personalities</i>	189
5.5	PATHOS	199
5.5.1	<i>Stimulation</i>	199
5.5.2	<i>Moving</i>	202
6	SUMMARIZING AND COMPARING	207
6.1	COHESION	207
6.2	MISE-EN-SCÈNE	209
6.3	ETHOS	211
6.4	LOGOS	212
6.4.1	<i>Shared Categories</i>	213
6.4.2	<i>Disparate Categories</i>	218
6.5	PATHOS	221
7	CONCLUSION	225
7.1	TWO STYLES OF ISLAMIC TELEVISION PREACHING	228
7.2	TWO TYPES OF MUSLIM IDENTITIES	229
7.3	TWO PROJECTS OF ISLAMIC REVIVAL.....	231
	SOURCES.....	233

Figures and Illustrations

Figure 1.1. Three-dimensional conception of discourse.....	25
Figure 1.2. Horizontal and Vertical Creation and Interpretation of Meaning	32
Figure 1.3. Parameters of Comparison	41
Figure 1.4. Applied Model of Discourse	44
Figure 1.5. Dissertation Outline.....	45
Illustration 3.1. Selection of Preachers on Iqra', Ramadan 2008.....	77
Illustration 3.2. Selection of Preachers on al-Risālah, Ramadan 2008.....	79
Illustration 3.3. Selection of Preachers on al-Nās, Ramadan 2008	82
Illustration 3.4. Selection of Preachers on al-Rahmah, Ramadan 2008	85
Illustration 3.5. Selection of Preachers on Non-Religious Channels, Ramadan 2008.	87
Illustration 4.1. Series Structure, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.....	111
Illustration 4.2. Title Sequence, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.	113
Illustration 4.3. Program Composition, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.	116
Illustration 4.4. Studio settings, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.	117
Illustration 4.5. Framing, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.	120
Illustration 4.6. Gestures and Facial Expressions, Imams of Guidance and [...]	148
Illustration 5.1. Series Structure, Stories of the Quran.	154
Illustration 5.2. Title Sequence, The Stories of the Quran.	156
Illustration 5.3. Program Composition, Stories of the Quran.	160
Illustration 5.4. Studio Setting, Stories from the Quran	161
Illustration 5.5. Décor, Stories of the Quran.....	162
Illustration 5.6. Framing, Stories of the Quran.....	163
Illustration 5.7. Gestures and Facial Expressions, Stories of the Quran.....	200

Key to Transliteration

Consonants

ا	a	ج	j/g	ض	ḍ	ل	l
ء	ʾ	ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	م	m
ب	b	خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	ن	n
ت	t	ر	r	ع	ʿ	ه	h
ث	th	ز	z	غ	gh	ة	h/t
د	d	س	s	ف	f	و	w
ذ	dh	ش	sh	ق	q	ي	y
		ص	ṣ	ك	k		

Vowels and Diphthongs

َ	a	ِ	i	ُ	u
آ	ā	ي	ī	و	ū
أ	ā	ي	īy/ī	و	ūw/ū
أ	ā	ي	ay/ē	و	aw
		ى	ā		

Note for the Reader

For the transliteration of Arabic I have used a slightly adapted version of the *Library of Congress* (LC) system: 'ayn and hamzah are written /' / and /' /, respectively, and 'alif maqṣūrah is written /ā / instead of /á /.. In Egyptian names *gīm* is used instead of *jīm*, and /ē / replaces the diphthong /ay /, where appropriate. Words not found in the *Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary* on the Internet are generally transliterated. Owing to the varying conventions of the transliteration of Arabic names of persons and places, these are also mostly transliterated, since transliterations make it easier to conduct Internet searches in Arabic. The transliterations follow English conventions of capitalization.

As for translations of parts of television programs, I have placed weight on conveying the meaning of the preachers' statements. The syntactic structures of oral discourse are very different from those of written discourse, and may involve half sentences, fragments, and silent pauses. Thus I am not only translating from one language into another,¹ I am also transforming, or reducing, oral language into writing.

For the Quran, I have used M. A. S. Abdel Haleem's translation (2005).² The strength of this translation in relation to this specific study is its modern, clear and easy style, and its use of contemporary English. This corresponds to the general style of mass media Islamic discourse and makes it easier for the reader of this dissertation to follow the meaning of the Quranic verses quoted. The frequency of Quranic quotes, particularly in the case of Muḥammad Ḥassān, has forced me to leave out many of them, while others have been paraphrased.

The most important sources for this dissertation are television programs. When I refer to these, I sometimes indicate the relevant time intervals. The time starts at 00:00 when the preacher appears on the screen, after the title sequence. It is paused during

¹ Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *Sur la Traduction* (Paris: Bayard, 2004).

² *The Qur'an*, trans. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

commercial breaks, and continues when the preacher is back on the screen. The length of the commercial breaks may vary from episode to episode. In most versions of these programs found on the Internet, there are no commercial breaks.

1 Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium, the interplay between Islamic revivalism, economic liberalization and new media has created a new form of popular preaching framed as television programs. From the pulpit of the television screen, Muslim preachers, male and female, call Muslims to change and live their lives in accordance with Islam. This new wave of television preachers is both a product and cause of the current religious revitalization in the Muslim world. As preachers (du‘āh s. dā‘iyah), these actors participate in the call (da‘wah) to piety and moral reform.³ Da‘wah may be understood as “a religious duty that requires all adult members of the Islamic community to urge fellow Muslims to greater piety, and to teach one another correct Islamic conduct.”⁴ It is a multifaceted piety movement centred on moral reform, but which is also tied up with projects of societal reform and transformation. Furthermore, it is part of the larger project of creating an Islamic revival (al-Şaḥwah al-Islāmīyah). These preachers are both a result of and one of the driving forces behind the re-Islamization witnessed over the past forty years in Egypt and beyond.⁵ Greater attention to religious observance (prayer, fasting, dress, pilgrimage), has accompanied the creation of new institutions (welfare organizations, Islamic banks, finance houses, insurance companies, schools, clinics, and hospitals).⁶

³ In Egypt, the person who presents, or personalizes, such a program is called a *dā‘iyah* (pl. *du‘āh pl. f. dā‘iyāt*), a common designation for any preacher who calls other Muslims to piety outside the setting of the Friday Service. *Dā‘iyah* has the narrower meaning of “a preacher”, but also has the wider meaning of “an activist”. It is used about a person who undertakes da‘wah.

⁴ Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2005), 57.

⁵ Re-Islamization can symbolically be understood as “the processes whereby various domains of social life are invested with signs and symbols associated with Islamic cultural traditions.” Salwa Ismail, “Islamism, Re-Islamization and the Fashioning for Muslims Selves: Refiguring the Public Sphere,” *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights* 4, no. 1 (2007): 2; ———, *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism* (2003), 2.

⁶ John L. Esposito, “Modernizing Islam and Re-islamization in Global Perspective,” in *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, ed. John L. Esposito and François Burgat (London: Hurst & Company, 2003).

I started observing the scene of television preaching in Egypt in 2004. My interest was aroused when one of my teachers of the Arabic of the Quran introduced me to ‘Amr Khālid’s books. As part of studying the chapter “The Cow”, we read ‘Amr Khālid’s (b. 1967) and Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī’s (1917–1996) commentaries. Khālid’s text struck me as easy to understand and my curiosity was whetted by the way in which he connected the Quranic message to people’s everyday lives. I decided to find out more about him, and borrowed some videos and compact discs from a friend to watch his programs.

Throughout the following two years which I spent in Cairo, I witnessed the impact of ‘Amr Khālid’s message on the upper segments of Cairene youth: being pious was cool, some of my female friends took to wearing the veil, and many youths engaged in welfare projects fronted by Khālid. In 2005 and 2006 when I was working on my Master’s thesis about Khālid, he was omnipresent in the public sphere: he appeared on al-Jazeera commenting on the Pope, and was in Denmark organizing a conference on dialogue. This culminated in *Time* magazine presenting him as one of the hundred most influential people in the world in 2007.⁷

However, when I submitted my thesis in late 2006, the scene of television da‘wah was changing. While this scene had been dominated by Khālid and a series of other figures often referred to as “The New Preachers”, a different type of television da‘wah, popularly called “The New Salafis”, was now appearing on screens. This was a more conservative current that seemed more popular among the middle and lower social classes. Instead of the social activism that had been advocated by “The New Preachers”, the theological reform advocated by these preachers represented a similar yet different type of da‘wah. From the start, there was a tension between these two trends: They inhabited conflicting positions in terms of questions of engagement with society, religious authority, and gender roles, to mention but some. In my PhD project, therefore, I decided to compare Khālid with whom I understood to be the most popular Salafi preacher at the

⁷ See Asra Nomani, “‘Amr Khālid,” in *Time Magazine* (2007).
www.time.com/time/specials/2007/time100/article/0,28804,1595326_1615754_1616173,00.html
[accessed November 30 2010].

time, Muhammad Ḥassān. During Ramadan 2008, I recorded their Ramadan series. Muḥammad Ḥassān, who had set up his “own” channel, al-Raḥmah (May 3, 2007), presented the Ramadan series *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark* in 24 episodes. Amr Khālīd presented *The Stories of the Quran* in 29 episodes, on the channels al-Risalah, al-Miḥwar and Dubai TV. Ramadan series is a chain of television programs broadcast throughout Ramadan. They often start on the first of Ramadan, and end towards the three-day feast at the end of the month, *ʿĪd al-Fiṭr*. The individual programs are called “Ramadan Lessons” (durūs Ramaḍān), or merely “Ramadans” (Ramaḍāniyāt).⁸ Thus, preachers’ ambitions to bring about moral reform correspond to Ramadan as a period of piety and *self-improvement*, when many Muslims repent and seek forgiveness from God.⁹ My mission, therefore, became to find out *in what ways ʿAmr Khālīd and Muḥammad Ḥassān differed with regard to the way in which they called Muslims to piety in their Ramadan series as presented in 1429/2008*.

1.1 Relevance

Islamic mosque and cassette preaching has been the subject of several excellent studies. The studies of Richard Antoun¹⁰ and Patrick Gaffney¹¹ documented and described the Islamic sermon in local contexts, as well as its non-ritual counterpart, the religious

⁸ Ramaḍāniyāt is used for all kinds of series of lectures, programs or the like throughout Ramadan. I use the term mainly to refer to preaching monologues that may be understood as hybridized forms of the traditional religious lesson, the non-liturgical variant of the Islamic khuṭbah. I will therefore speak of the single programs as both television programs and television lessons.

⁹ Ramadan is not only the high season for television preaching, but also, more generally, for larger television series such as television dramas and soap operas. During Ramadan, most Muslims in Egypt fast from the time the sun rises until it sets. Then they meet with their families and friends, to break the fast and eat a meal (iḥṭār). Later in the evening, it is customary to perform additional evening prayers (tarāwīḥ). Ramadan preaching programs are broadcast throughout the days, but it is in the evening, after the evening prayers, that the most famous preachers are broadcast. Thus, the programs fit well with the evolution of the days of Ramadan.

¹⁰ Antoun, Richard T. *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: A Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

¹¹ Gaffney, Patrick D. *The Prophets Pulpit: Islamic Preaching in Contemporary Egypt*, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

lesson.¹² Equally, the studies of Halldén (2001) and Hirschkind (2006) extended our understanding of the Islamic sermon and its rhetoric, particularly with regard to cassette preaching. However, despite the virtual omnipresence of television preaching within popular culture in the Middle East, to my knowledge no one has conducted a larger enquiry into the phenomenon in its own right, on the basis of primary sources, acknowledging its multimodal nature.

This does not imply, however, that the practice has passed unnoticed. On the contrary, most major international newspapers have written about the phenomenon, and there are a number of academic studies that relate to the phenomenon, most of them focusing on ‘Amr Khālid. Their different perspectives cannot be dealt with here, but in general these studies do not study television preachers directly based on television broadcasts, but indirectly based on secondary sources, such as summaries of these programs in Arabic or English posted on Khālid’s website, or books that summarize their content. A partial exception is Wise (2003) who based her Master’s thesis on episodes from Khālid’s first series *Words from the Heart*. Galal’s study (2009) is also very valuable as it provides an overview of different types of Islamic television programming, including television preachers. The studies of Haenni and Tammām (2002, 2005, 2006) are excellent studies of the phenomenon of “The New Preachers” in its early phase, but do not really include television as a variable, although Haenni (2006) explains the phenomenon well within his frame of post-Islamism. The studies of ‘Amr Khālid’s rhetoric by Jacob Høigilt (2010, 2008) examine Khālid’s books from a socio-linguistic approach. In Arabic, academic studies are hard to find, but the sociologist Aḥmad Zāyid (2007) has provided a case study of Khalid’s series *Lifemakers* and *Until We Change Ourselves*. The works of Wa’il Luṭfī (2005, 2007) and Muḥammad al-Bāz (2004) must be read critically. Although none of them cite any sources, they contain valuable empirical

¹² See also Antoun, Richard T. “Themes and Symbols in the Religious Lesson: A Jordanian Case Study.” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 4 (1993): 607–24.

data on the history of television preaching in Egypt. They also provide an insight into popular and leftist conceptions of the phenomenon. Ironically, by far the most valuable source in Arabic for this study has been the numerous articles published by various scholars on IslamOnline, most importantly those by Ḥusām Tammām, whose insights have been of great value. Finally—but perhaps most importantly—there are at least two forthcoming studies that are likely to extend our knowledge. As a sample, Moll (2010) looks into the production part of television preaching and has announced a forthcoming thesis on the topic, and Rock (2010) has conducted a convincing analysis of Khālīd’s television series *Lifemakers*. Interestingly, Rock also expresses a hope to perform a comparison of ‘Amr Khālīd, Muḥammad Ḥassān and Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb in the future. Both theses will be interesting to follow.¹³ None of these studies, however, go as far as analyzing television preaching discourse at a “textual” level as it is presented on television. They say hardly anything about how Islamic television preachers communicate their messages to audiences.

1.2 Discourse Theory

1.2.1 Motivation

From the very start, my study of preachers was influenced by criticism such as that of Francois Burgat (2003), Olivier Roy (2004), and many others, who call for a move towards less essentialist and culturalist re-presentations of Islam, maintaining that the Western discourse and its essentialist approaches have engendered reductionist presentations, veiling the diversity of Islam. It is argued that the problem is grounded in the category “religion” having been bound to a Western scientific discourse which has failed to clearly distinguish between ontological and methodological realism—thereby

¹³ Yasmin Moll, “Islamic Televangelism,” *Arabic Media & Society* Spring 2010, no. 10 (2010). Aaron Rock, “Amr Khaled: From Da‘wa to Political and Religious Leadership,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 20.

uncritically and unconsciously reducing data about religion to fit within a mainly Protestant designed *sui generis* category of what religion is, or ought to be. As a result, social and political movements characterized by their use of religious discourse have been viewed through the prisms of belief systems, rather than studied as complex sociological formations subject to socioeconomic variables such as power, economy and technological developments. In this respect, perhaps the most important developments within the study of Islam in the past thirty years have been the integration of perspectives of scholars of non-Western background into the academic discursive tradition. In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said defined and examined “Orientalism” as a type of discourse, and illustrated how political and cultural imperialism is expressed through academic literature.¹⁴ Talal Asad has written along the same lines, illustrating the weaknesses of Clifford Geertz’s paradigmatic definition of religion as a cultural system.¹⁵ Asad points to the contingency of any definition of religion, and remarks the fact that Geertz’s definition ignores how power legitimizes and invalidates religious discourse.¹⁶ Both Said and Asad’s works build on those of Foucault, particularly his ideas about discourse and power. By building on these insights, the intention of the model proposed below is to move the focus away from the ideational level and Islam as a belief system, and towards religion as a system of communication and shared action.¹⁷ Attention is drawn towards the *public* display of religious propositions, and collectively shared meanings in context.¹⁸

¹⁴ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1978).

¹⁵ See Clifford Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System,” in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. I.M. Banton (London: Tavistock, 1966); ———, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹⁶ Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 27–54.

¹⁷ Kocku Von Stuckrad, “Discursive Study of Religion: From States of the Mind to Communication and Action,” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 5, no. 3 (2003): 268.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 259.

1.2.2 Islamic Discourse

In this thesis, the term discourse has two different meanings. First, it is used in the most general sense, as a countable noun, referring to a way of signifying experience from a particular perspective. One may thus speak of feminist discourses, political discourses, and, as I will, Islamic discourses. This presupposes that one can distinguish one type of discourse from another. A second, more abstract and methodological usage of discourse will be language use conceived as a sociocultural practice. This second meaning builds on a social theory of discourse launched by Norman Fairclough that will be explained later in this chapter. Until then, discourse will be used in the first sense.

What then is the basis on which Islamic discourse in the first sense may be distinguished from other types of discourses, and what does signifying experience from an Islamic perspective involve? It may be argued that saying that one particular perspective is Islamic must be based on an idea of what Islam is, and is therefore both essentialist and reductionist. However, any cognition rests to some degree on phenomenological conceptions. The big difference is that discourse theory—unlike the schools of phenomenology—accepts that meaning can vary as a function of context and thereby acknowledges that there is a variety of “Islamic” voices. Islamic television preachers, for example, adopt different positions with regard to particular questions, and each maintains that his or her position is the correct one. Discourse theory is a framework that helps the researcher see different actors order meaning in different ways. These differences between perspectives are actually the “engine” of any discursive “field”.¹⁹

Thus, instead of focusing on the “essence” of Islam, one focuses on different conceptions of what Islam is in particular contexts. However, to distinguish Islamic discourse from other discourses, one has to define some criteria. Moreover, a delineation

¹⁹ This is an analogy to the way in which Foucault sees the epistemological object. The object, here “Islam”, can never be fully defined. However, the effort to do so creates difference and incompleteness. This difference is the engine that drives the competition over “truth”. Cf. Michel Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir* (Edition Gallimard, 1969), 59–71.

must be based on what is generally understood as Islamic, while challenging what is pre-conceived as Islamic. Societies change, modern societies differentiate, and discourses—in their functional nature—seek to conquer and infiltrate new practices and systems of knowledge. Hence, the proposition is to understand Islamic discourse as a type of argumentation whose most fundamental trait is that it draws upon the canon of Islamic texts considered authoritative in the respective contexts. This definition rests on a criterion of *intertextuality*. Intertextuality refers to “how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualize and dialogue with other texts.”²⁰ Arguably therefore, it is the reference to the Quran, the Sunna or related texts by scholars that makes a discourse Islamic, and infuses the discourse with “Islamic” authority. No legitimate claims about what Islam is can be made without such references.

This methodological realism works particularly well in the study of Islamic discourses because with its different variations, Islam has a relatively clearly defined canon of texts, and an established literature based on these. This criterion can be well understood by an exercise in self-reflexivity that is particularly applicable to academic texts. This text, for example, contains a number of explicit references to Western academic texts. These texts infuse my text with some kind of authority and position it within a particular genre and a tradition. Similarly, Islamic preachers continuously refer to the Islamic canon to make their ideas legitimate.

Accordingly, my working definition of Islamic discourse will be thus: a way of representing the world that contains continuous references to texts that in their respective context are authorized as Islamic, normally the Quran, the hadith, and related commentaries, in response to a particular context. Intertextuality may also be seen as the chain that binds Islamic discourses together historically. According to Julia Kristeva,

²⁰ Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2003), 17.

intertextuality inserts the past into the text, by absorbing it and building on it. Such a reference also draws upon the inherent knowledge among the audience of such texts.²¹

Undoubtedly, this working definition of Islamic discourse is broad and textualist, but it is useful for my purposes. It allows me to attribute relevant qualifiers and create compounds that connect Islamic discourse to specific practices. For example, when I want to be specific with regard to practice, I may speak of Islamic television preaching discourses, or a liberal Islamic *fiqh* discourse, or the like. By adding attributes to it we are able to speak about a variety of ways of representing the world that all nevertheless have Islamic texts as their fundamental point of reference.

1.2.3 The Discursive “Order”

[...] ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied [...] without their configurations of power.²²

Islamic discourse, like any discourse, is controlled. It has been common in the “West” to regard religion as separate from politics and power.²³ However, power is central to the way in which religious discourses are shaped by their cultural, social, and discursive environment, and to gain a better understanding of how religious “truth” is created. Islamic discourse must therefore be studied with regard to these processes.²⁴ Michel Foucault was the theorist who most systematically showed how the production of knowledge is affected by power. He demonstrated how the production of discourse in any society is controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a number of procedures.²⁵

²¹ Cf. Julia Kristeva, “Word, Dialogue and Novel,” in *The Kristeva reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

²² Said, *Orientalism*, 5.

²³ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 46–54.

²⁴ Asad proposed seeing Islam as a *discursive tradition*, “a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present”. ———, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986), 7.

²⁵ Michel Foucault, “L’ordre du discours,” *Leçon inaugurale au Collège de France* (1970): 10.

For him discourse is one of the systems through which power circulates, and a particular discourse produces and constitutes a kind of power in relation to a regime of truth. He argues that:

Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned [...].²⁶

Within such a regime, or *discursive order*, different discourses compete for hegemony, for the right to define what should be held as true at any given moment. They may be in conflict or they may cooperate, but to function in an effective way they must operate within the given order. In other words, discourse theory does not see subjects as “free”. Rather, subjects operate within orders of discourse and regimes of truth. As much as they create reality, they are constituted by it. Following Foucault, the subject is neither autonomous nor sovereign. Human beings are basically not free to signify as they please. They must adhere to the rules and the structures within which they operate.²⁷

Foucault distinguishes between two principal types of subjects. First, when a person, “the sender subject”, signifies by producing a statement, this person personifies the discourse, and adopts a subject position. Second, the person exposed to this statement, “the receiving subject”, is not merely exposed to a text as an object, but is considered a subject that actively enters into dialogue with the statement. The “receiving subject” may *identify* with and submit to the propositions of the discourses. In that case the receiver also internalizes the structures of power inherent in the propositions, and may be said to become a bearer of these.²⁸ This could be called the process of adopting the position of a subject vis-à-vis a certain discourse. Thus, statements, or propositions, position both

²⁶ Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 72–3.

²⁷ Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 208.

²⁸ Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying practices* (London: SAGE in association with The Open University, 1997), 56.

subjects, those who produce a discourse, and those addressed.²⁹ Similarly, the French philosopher Louis Althusser argues that “receivers” of texts enter into a process of interpellation with the text. In this process language construes a *social position* for the individual, and hence turns it into an ideological subject.³⁰ If people adopt the subject positions prescribed in a discourse, they simultaneously subject themselves to the ideology inscribed in it.³¹ For Althusser, ideology constitutes individuals as conscious subjects of society, and subjugates them to ideology.³²

Moreover, this way of thinking implies adopting a self-reflexive stance towards one’s own research. If this methodological realism is applied to our own discourse, *homo academicus* has to adopt a self-reflexive stance. What kinds of power structures circulate within academic discourse, and what kinds of positions does one as a “Western” researcher adopt? Academic discourses are situated within specific practices and represent particular perspectives on the world. I am not speaking about an auto-analysis, such as Pierre Bourdieu’s *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse*.³³ Rather, instead of simply reducing the object of study to fit our own truth regime, the researcher must be emphatic about engaging in a dialogue with the object of study, or, to put it somewhat differently, adopt a stance between two regimes of truth.³⁴ As researchers we adopt subject positions with regard to the way in which we describe and analyze the objects of study. This does not imply cultural or moral relativism, as some may argue. Communication always takes part within the discursive regime of which one is part. Any rebelling against this order is punished. Moreover, any attempt to communicate research must be re-coded and made meaningful within the researcher’s own discursive order. The positions one adopts as a researcher can never be neutral, but they can be more or less self-conscious.

²⁹ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1992), 43.

³⁰ Louis Althusser and Ben Brewster, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London 1971), 174.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, 153–9.

³³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* (Paris: Raison d’agir, 2004).

³⁴ Shi-xu, *A Cultural Approach to Discourse* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 57–61.

1.2.4 A Cultural Approach

How can one translate the principles discussed above into a model applicable in practical research? The model I shall propose involves seeing discourse as belonging to three different, yet intertwined layers. I will see discourse as a text that is part of a discursive and a sociocultural practice.³⁵ This is first and foremost a model to conceptualize a text's context—the relations between the text and the structures that surround it. Text is here understood in its widest sense, and includes television programs. While a range of schools exists that each advocates specific perspectives on discourse, I shall combine two of them: Critical Discourse Analysis and a Cultural Approach to Discourse.

The British scholar Norman Fairclough is one of the founders of the school of Critical Discourse Analysis. He combines linguistic analysis with social research. Heavily influenced by the works of Foucault, he sees language as “an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always has to take account of language”.³⁶ Fairclough's project is to combine a linguistic analysis of language with social research. He argues that the relation between language and social structures is dialectic. Language is both socially shaped, and socially shaping. According to him, discourse can be socially constructive in three ways. First, language creates social identities and *subject positions*. Second, language constructs relationships between people, and third, language constructs knowledge and belief. These functions co-exist and interact in all discourses, and he calls them respectively the identity, relational and ideational functions of language.

To conceptualize better the relationship between language and social structure, Fairclough adopts a three-dimensional view of discourse. He sees discourse

³⁵ The use here of the label discursive practice is different from Foucault's concept of *pratique discursive*. His term encompasses both what I call discursive and social practice. See Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir*, 162.

³⁶ Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2.

simultaneously as text, discursive practice and sociocultural practice. Each of these levels addresses specific issues. A focus on a text as part of a *sociocultural practice*, for example, raises questions about the social, economic, and political environments that surround and regulate it. Regarding a text as a *discursive practice* involves examining how a text is produced, consumed, and distributed. This entails a focus on the generic properties of texts, in addition to how the text is mediated. The level of discursive practice is therefore similar to the concept of *genre*. Seeing a text as discourse in the sense of Norman Fairclough, therefore, basically means recognizing that any text is part of a sociocultural and a discursive practice. He underlines that these overlap and must not be seen as separate dimensions:

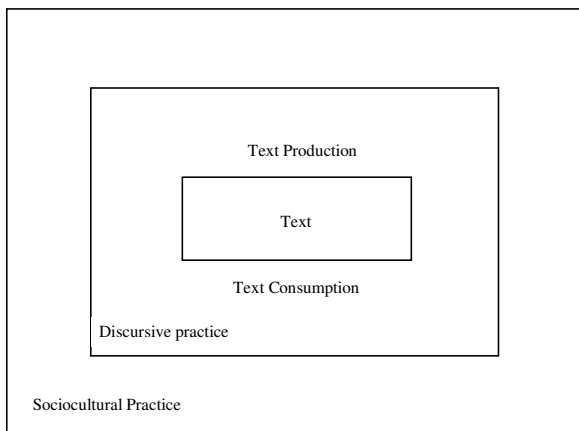


Figure 1.1. Three-dimensional conception of discourse³⁷

Fairclough’s model thus connects Islamic discourse and texts, as defined in 1.2.2, to discursive, social, and cultural structures that shape its production. Still, in practice,

³⁷ Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 73. Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1995), 59. Fairclough has several similar models. In this model, I have replaced his term “discourse practice” with “discursive practice”, a term that Fairclough also uses in his later works.

Fairclough undermines the importance of the cultural dimension of discourse. When he arrives at the textual level of analysis, he remains, to a certain degree, caught within “the prison house of language.” Although, in his later books, he seeks to develop typologies and focuses useful to humanistic studies, he remains focused on minute textual details. As he states himself: “The sort of detailed text analysis I introduce [...] can be applied to samples of research material rather than large bodies of texts.”³⁸ Analytical categories, such as word choice, intertextuality, structure, and so forth may be useful—a focus on modality, personal pronouns, collocations, semantic relations less so.³⁹ His focus on linguistic categories flows of course from the fact that Fairclough first and foremost seeks to build models for linguists who want to engage in studying the relation between language and social structures, and not vice versa. He wants to say something about how language use connects to social structures within a familiar context. Thus, Fairclough undermines cultural context as an analytical variable. How can intertextuality, for example, be studied if one lacks substantial knowledge of the context of which the text is part, and how can one *a priori* know that this category is useful for understanding the text under study? How can Islamic television preaching in Egypt be analyzed if the researcher has little or no knowledge of Islam and Egyptian culture?

My overall objection to Fairclough can be formulated in one sentence. His model does not take into account that meaning is produced in different ways across languages and cultures. His approach, particularly in the fashion he applies it, can only be applied to a very small amount of texts and to a large degree it presupposes that the observer is familiar with the contexts of the text. First of all, in cultural and religious studies, approaching a text often requires a long process of fieldwork. Before one can start analyzing a text, one needs to study the language, find how such texts work, how it relates to other texts in the same genre as well as other texts, which practices that are connected

³⁸ Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse*, 6.

³⁹ This is based on a reading of Fairclough 2003; 1995a; 1995b; 1992.

to it, and what kinds of institutions control it. Only through a process of *textual fieldwork* can one determine which categories are relevant for attempting to understand the meaning of a text. I will therefore re-orient Fairclough's model towards cultural and religious studies.

The Chinese discourse analyst Shi-xu argues that Western sociolinguists seem to operate as if texts function in the same way across languages and cultures.⁴⁰ So as to acknowledge that there are a variety of ways of constructing meaning, he proposes a Cultural Approach to Discourse Analysis.⁴¹ In brief, such an approach raises the general question of the way in which communication is shaped as a *cultural practice*.⁴² This, I believe, is an important extension of Fairclough's model, and a correction that makes the cultural element explicit. The focus is thus moved away from the linguistic level towards a more ethnographically oriented analysis that emphasizes meaning and context as the most important sources of interpretation.⁴³ Unlike Critical Discourse Analysis, whose agenda is often to uncover hidden power relations, Shi-xu alters the overall agenda. He envisages Cultural Approach to Discourse Analysis as contributing to cross-cultural understanding. In light of this, he recommends researchers preoccupy themselves with discourses of the "culturally other", discourses that are "marginalized" and unfamiliar in one's own discourse community, in the sense that they are not familiar.⁴⁴ To this end, Shi-xu recommends a focus on *identity* discourse: texts through which identity is brought into being and the circumstances in which this takes place. This entails a focus both on the "nature" of identity and "the textual and contextual properties that go to constitute them".⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Shi-xu, *A Cultural Approach to Discourse* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 133.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁴² Donald Carbaugh, "Cultural Discourse Analysis: Communication Practices and Intercultural Encounters," *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 36, no. 3 (2007), 168.

⁴³ Shi-xu, *A Cultural Approach to Discourse*, 35.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 168.

1.2.5 Identity Construction

How then, can a study of discourse become oriented towards a study of identity and its constitutive properties? Foucault's and Althusser's model of the sender and the receiving subject is a good place to start: Given that the subject receiver identifies with a discourse and exposes itself to it, it enters into a process of interpellation with the text. Within this process, the subject may submit to its propositions or reject them. Similarly, television audiences enter into dialogue with preaching programs, where they "meet" the preacher who personifies the television program. The preacher who exploits the identificational function of language to its fullest seeks in his or her capacity as a caller to shape the identities of the audience in the direction of adopting a more pious lifestyle. They seek to create new social identities—what I will refer to as audience positions. Through the use of language, preaching texts can be seen as telling the audience who to be.⁴⁶

Satellite television is an excellent site for the shaping of collective identities, but such a study may also be informative with regard to discovering already established identities.⁴⁷ People absorbing preaching programs on television do so mostly at home, often in a family setting. As a contrast, they do not go to a mosque to participate in a communal event subject to mechanisms of social control. While watching television during Ramadan is likely to be a collective event as well, it takes place in the more private space of people's homes. From an audience perspective, television programs are not discrete texts, like a book for example. They are part of the uninterrupted and organized

⁴⁶ It may be argued that three functions of language are simultaneously at work in a text: the textual, the ideational and the interpersonal. The textual function is related to how a text, a statement, or a television sequence is constituted, while the ideational function concentrates on the signification experience. As for the interpersonal function, on which this study will focus the most, this is concerned with how identities and relations are constituted. Cf. M. A. K. Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning* (London: Edward Arnold, 1978). Also cf. Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 17.

⁴⁷ I focus on the medium of television, and the context of Ramadan. People may record or download these programs from the Internet and watch them in other settings.

sequence—what Raymond Williams calls *flow*—of television programs.⁴⁸ Exposed to this flow, television audiences have the power to choose which programs to watch. They become audiences when they feel that a program addresses them and shares their “worldview”.⁴⁹ Watching television, therefore, normally depends on a process of *identification*. The program must speak the “language” of the audience. Consequently, people would normally watch programs with which they identify. There is “identity accordance” between the pre-established identity of the viewer and the one offered by the program. Thus, television discourse can be regarded as a “vivid projection of our collective subconscious.”⁵⁰ In such a perspective, studying television discourse is a study of pre-existing identities. This is something that may be said to be strengthened by capital structures that seek to make as many people as possible watch the different programs.

On the other hand, there are those, such as Bourdieu in his essay on television, who maintain that television can be a powerful instrument of social change.⁵¹ There are types of television programs that are designed to change people’s identities and behaviors. Commercials are the strongest example of this, be they for political parties or commercial goods. Television da’wah is a genre of television where both the television channels and the preachers have outspoken ambitions to change people. Still, a study of television programs as texts can say nothing definite about real audiences. Unlike Lila Abu-Lughod in her work on Egyptian television *Dramas of Nationhood*, for example, the research for this thesis did not include fieldwork aiming to study the “reception” of the television

⁴⁸ Raymond Williams and Ederyn Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*, Routledge Classics (London ; New York: Routledge, 2003), 86. Flow is used here in a wider sense than Williams’ first use. The point is that audiences are increasingly able to put together and control their own flow.

⁴⁹ Helen Fulton, *Narrative and Media* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

⁵⁰ P.H. Wood, “Television as Dream,” in *Television: The Critical View*, ed. H. Newcomb (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁵¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Sur la télévision: Suivi de L'emprise du journalisme* (Paris: Raisons d’Agir Editions, 2008).

discourse by actual viewers.⁵² Since I nevertheless refer to audience, it may be helpful to clarify that television programs have two different types of audiences. First, there is the audience who actually watch a program in their homes—the *perlocutionary audience*. Second, there is the “imaginary” audience for whom the program is designed—the *illocutionary audience*.⁵³ In any case, what concerns me here is what identities these programs propose for their different audience segments, how they try to shape their audience.

Expanding on the insights of Shi-xu and Fairclough, the analysis of Ḥassān and Khālid’s Ramadan series is orientated towards a focus on what kinds of identities they propose Muslims adopt. How are these constructed through text and what discursive and sociocultural elements are shaping and vital for understanding their discourses?

1.3 Text Analysis

The focus on identity was developed after a long process of learning by trial and error. Which questions to ask and which analytical categories to use in a cultural approach to discourse analysis, can only be developed through a process of studying the text and the discursive practice of which it is a part. In this the approach is anti-reductionist, and responsive to what Derrida warns against as the totalizing tendency within the social sciences.⁵⁴ It is the primary material that has primacy together with a focus on meaning and the re-contextualization of such. In encountering the curious phenomena that the Ramadan Series admittedly were, I first had to engage in the process of finding out what these texts meant and how they worked. This took place after I had recorded the programs. Ramadan series are complex, multimodal texts whose meaning is often

⁵² Cf. Lila Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁵³ Rosemary Huisman, “Aspects of Narrative in Series and Serials,” in *Narrative and Media*, ed. Helen Fulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 153.

⁵⁴ Cf. Derrida, Jacques. “La structure, le signe et le jeu dans le discours des sciences humaines.” In *L’écriture et la différence*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967, 409–28.

expressed through allegories, and through arguments made by way of intertextual references to the Quran, hadith and other authoritative sources. In Egypt, I transcribed these programs to be able to analyze them better. I worked with Egyptian assistants who helped me go through them. Working with the assistants not only helped understand the language, but also offered an opportunity to discuss various interpretations of the programs. For Khālid's programs, I hired a fifty-year-old Egyptian engineer. For Ḥassān, I worked with a professional Arabic teacher and a student of Dār al-'Ulūm in his twenties. The time I spent with them greatly helped me understand Ḥassān's and Khālid's programs. The preachers' humor, their vivid metaphors and their social criticism, often expressed allegorically, are dimensions of such discourses that are easily missed by non-native speakers. By studying the transcripts we made of these series and by watching them, I started coding the material. For each of the fifty-four programs, I wrote a summary. As I became familiar with their structures, it became easier and easier to decode their message. After I had gone through the texts, I started a process of initial broad-brush coding.⁵⁵ A comparison of Ḥassān and Khālid required my developing a set of parameters that both captured the generic properties of the Ramadan series and that could respond to my inquiry.

1.3.1 Parameters

Developing parameters was challenging because the aim was not to study these preachers as producers of dead texts, but to understand how the different channels of discourse interacted. This was part of recognizing the multi-modal character of these discourses and the fact that the Ramadan series are not authored by single individuals. Producers, cameramen, set designers and musicians are only some of the actors at play. For example, the visual dynamics of the Ramadan series are created by camera operators and editors who switch angles, zoom in and out, pan across the set, and change depth of field.

⁵⁵ Cf. Sonja K. Foss, *Rhetorical Criticism* (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press Inc., 2009), 389.

below—and the dissertation in general—prioritize the verbal, but also recognize the importance of the visual and the musical modes. In the analyses of the television series, I use screen shots to illustrate the visuals. In view of the centrality of pictures, I prioritize the visual over the musical. While I do describe the way voices are used and how these figure in arguments, I do not, as Hirschkind does, illustrate oratory art by using musical notation.⁶⁰ The following section illustrates how my main parameters: cohesion, *mise-en-scène*, ethos, logos, pathos, have been developed on the basis of my primary material, and also serves to introduce relevant theory.

1.3.1.1 Cohesion

Cohesion focuses on structure, and comprises three subsections: series structure, title sequence, and program structure. It focuses on the elements that weave the programs and series together. Regarding *series structure*, the focus is on how the television series are coordinated with the course of Ramadan. The parameter also provides an overview of the series' general composition, and their overarching theme. The second element of particular interest is the title sequence. As part of the flow of television programming, the Ramadan series are introduced by a *title sequence*. This marks the boundary between one part of flow and other parts of flow.⁶¹

In television preaching, these are shorter or longer sequences that combine graphic design, music or sound effects, in addition to artwork. They announce the beginning and the end of the series and function as sequences of transition, before and after commercial breaks. The parameter also examines the *program structure* of the compositional elements

⁶⁰ Cf. Hirschkind, Charles. *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 157–8.

⁶¹ Jonathan Bignell, *An Introduction to Television Studies* (London: Routledge, 2004), 115.

of each individual program. In this, it pays particular attention to the way in which the Ramadan series combines elements from the master genre of the Islamic *khutbah*.

1.3.1.2 *Mise-en-Scène*

Organization, this time visual, is also the main principle behind the category *mise-en-scène*. Taken from French, the term has its origin in theatre and literally means “to put on stage.” In television and film studies it refers to “the contents of the frame, and the way that these are organized.”⁶² I focus on three dimensions: set, *décor*, and framing. *Set* refers to how the scene is organized. In the case of television preaching, sets are with few exceptions *non-narrative*. They rarely create the illusion of an everyday room, but are especially designed to address the television audience directly. A similar setting is often found in news programs, for example. Such spaces do not create the illusion that “we” as audience do not exist, as is the case with narrative settings in films. Rather, non-narrative spaces acknowledge the audience by directing attention towards the eye of the camera, where the audience is located.⁶³ In television preaching monologues, the preacher typically sits behind a desk, in an ordinary chair.⁶⁴ A second element of *mise-en-scène* is *décor*. This is concerned with the visual qualities of the space of the studio. This includes lighting, colors, decorations, and clothing.⁶⁵ Finally, I discuss how the camera relates to the set and the *décor*, through *framing*. The way in which the camera frames by zooming in, pulling back, varying shot size, angle, composition, and so forth, are important elements of the visual dynamism of the Ramadan series.

⁶² John Gibbs, *Mise-en-scène: Film Style and Interpretation* (London: Wallflower, 2002), 5.

⁶³ Jeremy G. Butler, *Television: Critical Methods and Application*, ed. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann, LEA’s Communication Series (Mahwah, New Jersey: LEA Publishers, 2007), 140.

⁶⁴ It can also be mentioned that such productions are very cheap compared to narrative settings that have to be shot on various locations and often include a large number of actors.

⁶⁵ Here I refer to monologues such as my two cases. There are also dialogues and more advanced settings, but I will not treat these here.

1.3.1.3 Ethos

In what ways do Khālid and Ḥassān make people believe that they have the answer? Ethos as I use it is concerned with the character of and the authority of the preachers as well as how the preacher builds up the authority of the series. First, *initial ethos* refers to the established authority preachers bring with them into a text—what makes the audience identify with the particular preacher and choose to watch him or her. What are the sources of such authority? The preachers' style, age, gender and background, such as education and experiences prior to becoming a preacher, are important elements here. For a dā'iyah who often lacks a formal Islamic education, personal narratives of conversion and devotedness and how these are staged through media play an important role.⁶⁶ Moreover, social engagement and welfare work are translated into social capital and goodwill. Many television preachers are marketed like any other media star, and professional techniques of marketing are applied to establish their ethos. Second, I will study the preachers' *derived ethos*—how the preachers' authority is constructed within the text. How do they demonstrate competence, real intention and build up their relation with the television audience?⁶⁷ How do the visual and the musical modes work with regard to this question? Fairclough, for example, argues that television seeks to reduce the social distance between who is speaking on the screen and the television audience. Close-ups of people's heads and faces create an atmosphere of intimacy.⁶⁸ Moreover, how does the way in which the preacher speaks and dresses function? With regard to dress, in his book *Discourse and Interpretation*, the exiled Egyptian professor Abū Zayid describes a television debate between him and the Islamic thinker, Muḥammad 'Ammārah on al-Jazeera. He describes how 'Ammārah dressed up in a traditional *galabīyyah*: He carried his prayer necklace in

⁶⁶ Cf. Armando Salvatore, "Social Differentiation, Moral Authority, and Public Islam and Egypt." *Anthropology Today* 16, no. 2 (2000): 13.

⁶⁷ That a preacher has good intentions and speaks from the heart was something that many Egyptians I spoke to advocated as the most important quality of a preacher.

⁶⁸ Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, 39.

his hands, and spoke in High Arabic. Abū Zayd comments that he then realized that even before they had begun the debate, the war had started. He realized that ‘Ammārah would use all means to win the debate.⁶⁹ As for the auditive dimension, one should consider the mastering of the Arabic language as a source of authority. The art of reciting the Quran is held in high esteem and may in itself be regarded as a partial manifestation of the divine. The beauty of the Quranic language is seen as a miracle and remains a high ideal to follow. In his essay “Art as a Cultural System”, Geertz discusses the force of eloquence: “‘andu klām, ‘he has words, speech, maxims, eloquence,’ means also, and not just metaphorically, ‘he has power, influence, weight, authority’”.⁷⁰

Finally, *textual ethos* is a matter of how the authority of the series is established in the course of the programs, and how it is given relevance. Preachers draw on different sources for their preaching. The preacher selects and adapts these. What is the relevance of the series to “this world”? How do intertextual and interdiscursive references to the Islamic canon infuse the discourse with authority? For example, how do preachers incorporate elements from the speeches of the Prophet and the Caliphs, and the authoritative master genre of the *khuṭbah*?⁷¹ Examples of such elements are sequences of the praising of God (ḥamdallah), the Prophet (al-ṣalāh ‘alā al-Nabī), and very often, the crowd. Moreover, the preachers may use the introductory clause *ammā ba’d* (now then), imitating the Prophet.⁷² A particular case of intertextuality is the insertion of Quranic verses into the discourse of these preachers. The power of such insertions can be understood by referring to what Mikhail M. Bakhtin identifies as an “authoritative discourse”. In this perspective, the Quran possesses an authority that is unique, timeless,

⁶⁹ Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd, *al-Khiṭāb wa-al-Ta’wīl: Sulṭah Siyāsīyah wa-Sulṭat al-Naṣṣ* (Casablanca, Marokko: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-‘Arabi), 6–8.

⁷⁰ Clifford Geertz, “Art as a Cultural System,” *MLN Comparative Literature* 91, no. 6 (1976): 1493.

⁷¹ *Khuṭbah* refers to the speech given on the occasion of the weekly Friday prayer, the two big Feasts (‘Īd al-Fiṭr and ‘Īd al-Aḍḥā), in addition to some other special occasions.

⁷² Cf. Bukhārī, Jum‘ah, Bāb 29.

taken for granted, that demands instantaneous acknowledgement—an authority that is already there when the television audience encounters it.⁷³

1.3.1.4 *Logos*

In Aristotle's rhetoric, *logos* includes both information and argumentation.⁷⁴ Here *logos* is taken to mean the ideals according to which preachers seek to shape and position their audiences. Preachers and audiences meet in television programs. In this process, the preacher with his or her collaborators work on their audience to pull them in particular directions. I shall refer this as *audience positioning*. The parameter concentrates on discussing the main question of this dissertation—what kinds of identities are the preachers trying to shape?

The dominating mode of argumentation used by preachers on television in general, and the two cases of this dissertation in particular, is *narrative* in structure.⁷⁵ The protagonists or the heroes of these narratives function as characters for identification. These narrated stories are mostly based on accounts from the hadith literature, second only to the Quran in textual authority. While many of these may be associated with the Quran, it is not easy, as pointed out by Jonathan P. Berkey, to draw ethical precepts from the Quran alone.⁷⁶ Popular stories in television preaching are the stories about the Prophet and his companions, the stories of the Prophets, the stories of the Quran and the stories of the early Muslim campaigns.

The power of the narrative as a tool to shape identities is well acknowledged. Gavin Flood, for example, argues that narratives play an essential role in establishing

⁷³ Cf. Michail Bakhtin and Michael Holquist, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 342.

⁷⁴ Øivind Andersen, *I retorikkens hage* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget AS, 2007), 42.

⁷⁵ The frequency of the use of narratives will be illustrated in Chapter Three where I comment on the diversity of series that were broadcast during Ramadan.

⁷⁶ Jonathan P. Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle 2001), 5–6.

moral identity for the self, within a given society. He also emphasizes the function of the narrative in creating existential coherence.⁷⁷ According to Mieke Bal, narrative is a powerful mode of argumentation that embeds a truth claim: “its status as exemplum, as illustration, as a replacement of proof [...]”⁷⁸ Researchers have also pointed to the narrative as a source of entertainment and stimulation applied to attract viewers and which is motivated by a desire to magnify profit.⁷⁹ As a parallel to the dominance of the narrative structure in Islamic television preaching, Eugene L. Lowry has observed a shift in Christian preaching towards more narrative preaching in the age of mass media.⁸⁰ Finally, such narratives may function as powerful allegories for the present. In this respect, stories are one of the most efficient tools with which television preachers may address and express social critique. For example, an established allegory of power, injustice and disobedience to the rule of God is that of Pharaoh.⁸¹ As remarked by Stuart Hall referring to literature, political critique in authoritarian contexts is often expressed allegorically.⁸² Such allegories are polysemous by definition and pose particular challenges for any interpreter.

1.3.1.5 Pathos

In this thesis, pathos is concerned with the way in which the preachers stimulate the audience to sit through the programs and how they seek to move the audience in the

⁷⁷ Gavin D. Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (London: Cassell, 1999), 129. Based on Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 2007), 205.

⁷⁸ Mieke Bal, *On Story-Telling: Essays in Narratology* (Sonoma, California Polebridge Press, 1991), 1.

⁷⁹ Fulton, *Narrative and media*, 3.

⁸⁰ Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as a Narrative Art Form* (Louisville, KY Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 105–6. For the importance of narrative in the Biblical literature and more, see Paul Ricoeur and Mark I. Wallace, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

⁸¹ An example of this is found in Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 191–218.

⁸² Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power,” in *Formations of Modernity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Open University/Polity Press, 1992).

direction of their propositions, particularly by evoking their sentiments. I shall call this first element *stimulation* and the second *moving* (lat. movere). These are closely interconnected, but the first presupposes the second. If people are not stimulated to attend to what is said, they cannot be moved.⁸³ Regarding the first, Jean Baudrillard in *Simulacres et simulation* points to television as presenting a simulation of reality that surpasses reality in its expressive and representational power, with the effect of the implosion of meaning.⁸⁴ Along the same lines, Kathleen Jamieson argues that television's visual grammar is associative, something that makes it difficult for viewers to demand evidence and understand how they are affected. The package of text, music, and visuals is difficult for the human self to process.⁸⁵ Still, television preaching has a non-narrative space usually with only one main actor. Having pointed out the importance of holding the audience's attention to prevent them from switching channel, the parameter of stimulation discusses how the program works to hold the viewer's attention. As Jeffrey K. Hadden explains: "The logic of television is simply that if you want people to watch a program, you must entertain them-visually, orally, totally."⁸⁶ Visually, camera-work, clipping, the changing of frames and zooming to create intimacy and so forth, are important elements. In addition, the preachers' gestures and mimicry to express sentiments are elements. Preachers use their hands and facial expressions as an emblem, as signs that take the place of words. Second, they may use their body as an illustrator of the message. Third, the body may be used to display affect.⁸⁷ Musically, I discuss voice use with regard to

⁸³ *Movere* is the Latin word, usually used in place of the Greek *pathos*, indicating how the rhetoric tries to move the audience. Another Latin word used is *flectere* which may be translated as "to bend". Both meanings are incorporated in the term used here, "moving".

⁸⁴ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacres et simulation* (Paris: Galilée, 1981).

⁸⁵ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Dirty Politics: Deception, Distraction and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 10–11.

⁸⁶ Jeffrey K. Hadden and Charles E. Swann, *Prime Time Preachers: The Rising Power of Televangelism* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1981), 18.

⁸⁷ These three categories are taken from Paul Ekman, Wallace V. Friesen, and Phoebe Ellsworth, *Emotion in the Human Face: Guide-lines for Research and an Integration of Findings*, Pergamon General Psychology Series PGPS-11 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1972).

elements such as rhythm, pitch, and voice quality. This element is inspired by Charles Hirschkind who advocates the importance of preachers' vocalizations as an instrument to move audiences towards correct ways of being and acting.⁸⁸ He states that "musicality is not an aesthetic gloss applied to a discursive content, but a necessary condition for sermonic speech and for ethical action more generally".⁸⁹ This takes the discussion into the dimension of the parameter which I refer to as *moving*. How are attempts made to move the audience towards the logos of the series? A key element in this is *identification*. In narrative preaching, the narrator will try to evoke empathy for the protagonists of the stories who present the models for correct behavior. They will use particular characters to address particular segments of the audiences. Mary, the mother of Jesus, will for example at the various stages of her life serve as a source of identification for girls and women. Imaginative language is a technique that preachers use to make the audience imagine and see the narrated scenes before them. Hirschkind, who calls this effect the "cinematic imagination", exemplifies this by referring to how the blind 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk uses the verbal as a camera to make the audience imagine scenes vividly before them. This aims to create an effect on the audience as if they were there experiencing it themselves. When such imaginative presence is combined with passionate scenes, this rhetorical device may be very effective in moving the audience in the desired direction. A final element of *moving* that I shall pay particular attention to is that of *tarhīb* (also *takhwīf*) and *targhīb* (also *wa'd*). *Tarhīb* (from the verb *rahhab*, to terrify, to frighten) is a rhetorical technique used in classical and modern homiletics to evoke a fear of the torments of Hell. It may be formulated as a reminder or as a warning. The opposite device is that of *targhīb* that seeks to tempt the audience with the pleasures of Paradise.⁹⁰ There is

⁸⁸ Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape*, 113.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 151–60.

extensive literature on hadiths that may be used for such purposes. Such techniques may also be used in order to evoke a fear of or hope for what will happen in “this world”.

The following figure gives an overview of the various parameters and their subsection:

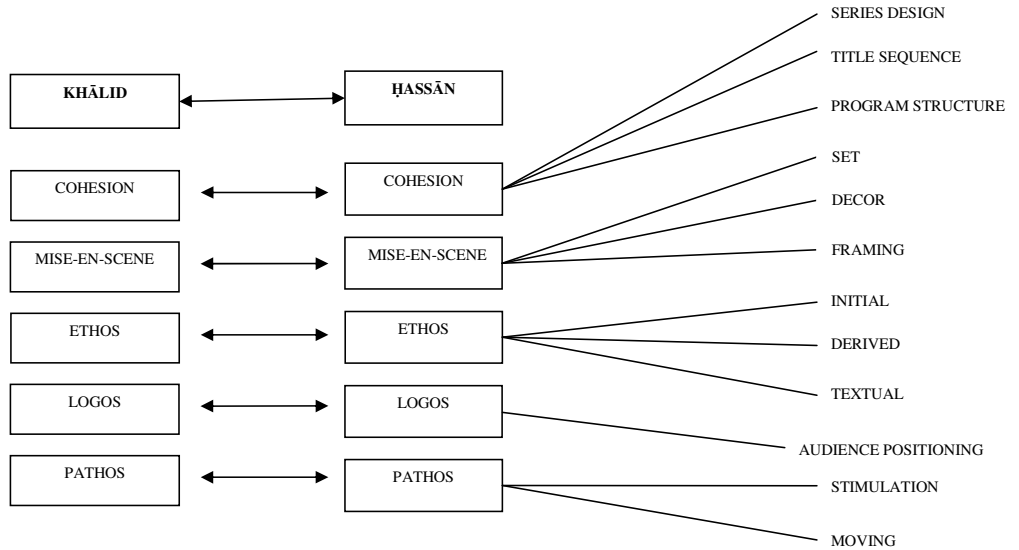


Figure 1.3. Parameters of Comparison

1.4 Contextualization

While the first part of the fieldwork was conducted in Egypt and concentrated on collecting, writing down and studying with native speakers the series of Ḥassān and Khālīd, the second part of the fieldwork actually took place on the Internet. As part of studying the discursive practice of Islamic television preaching and situating ‘Amr Khālīd and Muḥammad Ḥassān in the field of preaching, I sought to examine the diversity of Islamic television preachers who appeared on satellite television Ramadan

2008. At first it seemed impossible to map the different series that were broadcast on the different channels. However, as I searched on the Internet I discovered that a wealth of these series were available. Surprisingly, I was able to gather almost all the programs I searched for on the net. In most cases, I was able to download the whole series that was often composed of twenty to thirty episodes. The result was a collection of more than thirty different Ramadan series broadcast during Ramadan 2008. This gave me a unique overview of the variety of discourses that existed and the considerable choice that audiences were confronted with. In addition, I read about the current developments in the field in newspapers and followed debates on the Internet and on television. In this way I was able to adopt a synchronous view of the context. YouTube in particular became an important source of understanding how preachers dialogued and competed in the field of Islamic television preaching, and how they position themselves vis-à-vis each other. It also provided an insight into the variety of formats and styles that existed.

With regard to the wider social context, I examined which elements that could be seen to control television preaching discourses. Egyptian newspapers provided an important source here. Which were the institutions that had the *power* to sanction these discourses and how did political and economic contexts affect their production? This also led to examining the channels on which these preachers appear and examining what characterized these new “spaces” for Islamic preaching. Most of the information about the respective channels was collected from the respective channels’ websites. Finally, I made efforts to investigate how Islamic television preachers were defined by other voices in the public sphere and to situate the phenomenon historically.

1.5 Interpretation

The discursive and sociocultural contexts are emphasized as important sources to interpreting these texts. While Ḥassān's and Khālid's preaching is broadcast all over the world, I have chosen to focus on the Egyptian context as the primary resource of interpretation. Situating television preaching as part of a discursive practice has also involved interpreting these discourses in light of how they are consumed. In this matter I have focused on television. This is not to ignore that television preaching may be watched in a variety of settings. Acknowledging that Ramadan series are subject to the logics of television has had important consequences for the performance of this study and the interpretation of the texts. In all research constructing a context is a subjective matter. Teun van Dijk, for example, advocates context as "the discursively relevant properties of the communicative situation." A context consists of the relevant properties of the social situation.⁹¹ This view coincides with Shi-xu's advocacy of context as a resource for interpretation.

The synchronous concept of context that I have opted for requires a cross-disciplinary approach. The dissertation combines perspectives from Arabic language studies, comparative religion, Islamology, media studies, and sociology. No such texts could have been studied in depth unless I was a trained Arabist. Moreover, my background from comparative religion and Islam studies played an important part. In addition. The interpretation of Khālid's and Ḥassān's series has been enriched by this multi-perspective strategy of interpretation and analysis. The application of the theory onto my primary material and context as a resource for interpretation are illustrated in the following model:

⁹¹ Teun A. van Dijk, *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 4–5.

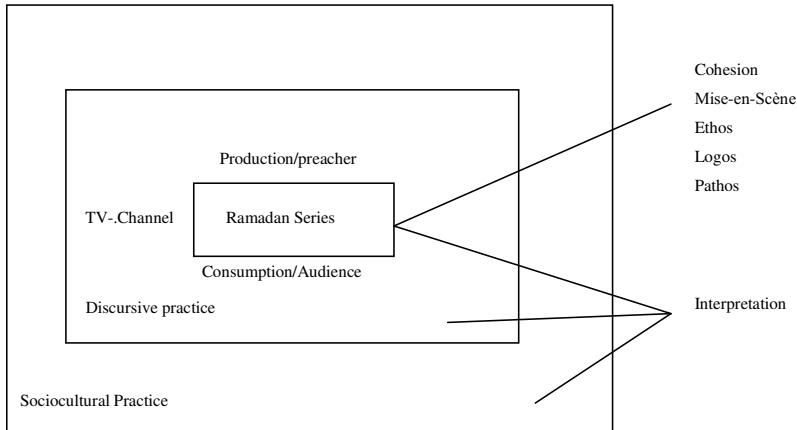


Figure 1.4. *Applied Model of Discourse*⁹²

1.6 Outline

In Chapter Two, I will introduce the reader to the history of television preaching and the elements that led to the rise of the phenomenon of Islamic television preaching as we see it today. The goal of the chapter is to situate the television discourses of Ḥassān and Khālid within a larger context of social and political structures. Moreover, it seeks to introduce the new Islamic television channels as “spaces” within which preachers operate. It examines how these spaces are controlled and what characterizes them. In Chapter Three, I move on to describe the variety of preachers who operate within these new “spaces” of preaching. Focusing on the scene of Ramadan 2008, I describe the polyphony of voices that surrounds those of Ḥassān and Khālid, as well as the considerable choice that confronts television audiences. From this, I explain the different trends that dominate in the field of preaching and explain the relevance of Ḥassān and Khālid as key actors within these. This paves the way for the analysis of their respective Ramadan Series in

⁹² Inspired by Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. Christopher N.Candlin, Language in social life (London: New York: Longman, 1995), 98.

Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Six summarizes and compares the two cases of the foregoing chapter, and Chapter Seven concludes on the main enquiry of the thesis, concerning the ways in which these two preachers attempt to shape Muslim identities through television da'wah. This structure can be schematized as follows:

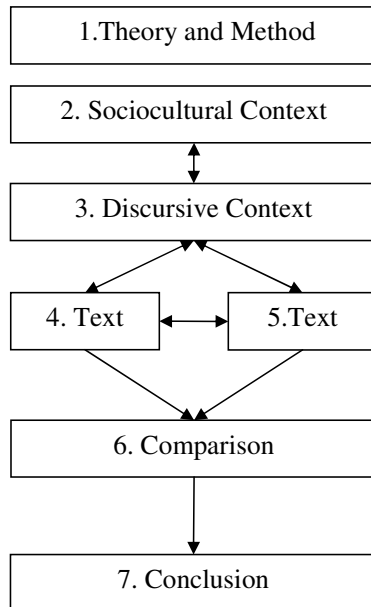


Figure 1.5. Dissertation Outline.

2 New “Spaces” for Preaching

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the texts of Ḥassān and Khālid as part of the larger phenomenon of Islamic television preaching in Egypt. I describe TV channels as new “spaces” for preaching, and examine how political power circulates within these. I start by describing the political context. Thereafter I present a compressed history of the phenomenon in Egypt, followed by a description of what I see as three main types of “spaces” for preaching. Finally, I discuss different perspectives on television preaching in Egypt. The chapter thus introduces my case studies as part of a larger social practice conditioned by power structures, which is essential for any interpretation of such texts.

2.1 Politics and Power Structures

Politics in Egypt, in 2008, can be understood as what Thomas Carothers calls *dominant-power politics*. This label refers to countries with limited political space. They have some of the basic institutional forms of democracy and some political contestation by opposition groups. However, “a movement, a party, an extended family, or a single leader—dominates the system in such a way that there appears to be little prospect of alternation of power in the foreseeable future”.⁹³ In such a system there is no clear distinction between the State and the ruling party, and while elections occasionally seem open to contest, their results are in fact under the control of the State. Such systems are often marred by large-scale corruption and crony capitalism.

The Republic of Egypt has a parliament and a consultative council, but politics is dominated by the government and the National Democratic Party (NDP). There are several political parties, but none of them poses any threat to the regime. The only opposition movement with some force is the Muslim Brothers. However, the organization is officially banned as a political party, and its candidates run as independents in

⁹³ Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 11–12.

parliamentary elections. Although its independent candidates secured 20% of the parliamentary seats in the 2005 elections, their increased parliamentary representation is not necessarily a sign of greater influence. My own impression is that the Muslim Brothers has lost much of the power it had as a “pure” opposition movement. Freedom House’s 2010 report classifying Egypt as “not free” puts it well: “Egypt is not an electoral democracy. The political system is designed to ensure solid majorities for the ruling NDP at all levels of government.”⁹⁴ A number of other respected reports, such as Polity IV’s global reform report 2010⁹⁵ and International Crisis Group’s report on Egypt 2005,⁹⁶ draw similar conclusions: No real political opposition is tolerated. Broadly, such an authoritarian system has prevailed since the 1952 revolution, through Nasser, Sadat, and now Mubarak.⁹⁷

One of the key structural obstacles to democratic development, freer media, and thereby a more open public sphere is the close relationship between political and economic power in Egypt. The country performs poorly on both the corruption indexes of Transparency International and the scorecards of Global Integrity. Domestic reports have also uncovered systematic corruption, such as those issued by the Egyptian general auditor and the Ministry of State for Administrative Development. The highly acknowledged researcher ‘Abd al-Khāliq Fārūq argues that corruption is institutionalized and permeates the entire public sphere.⁹⁸ Authoritarian regimes tend to exercise control and censorship over the media, and so is the case in Egypt. While an increase in satellite

⁹⁴ www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7816. [accessed August 7 2010]. Freedom house is a NGO based in the US that conduct research and publish reports on democracy, political freedom and human rights.

⁹⁵ www.systemicpeace.org/Global%20Report%202009.pdf. [accessed August 7 2010]. Data from Polity IV is widely used in the political sciences, particularly for purposes of more quantitative analysis.

⁹⁶ ICG, “Reforming Egypt: In search of a Strategy,” in *Middle East/North Africa Report* (Cairo: Bruxelles: International Crisis Group, 2005).

⁹⁷ Muḥasin al-Sanūsī, “Usāmah al-Ghazzālī Ḥarb ‘fī al-Mamūn’: al-Taghyīr fī Miṣr mundhu ‘Ām 52 Yatimmu fī al-Judrān wa-al-Dīkūr.. wa-al-Asāsāt kamā hiya,” *Al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, December 5 2005.

⁹⁸ al-Jazeera, “al-Taḡārīr al-Dawlīyah wa-al-Rasmīyah ‘an al-Fisād fī Miṣr,” in *bi lā Ḥudūd* (Cairo 2010).

broadcasting and internet use,⁹⁹ together with an increasing willingness to criticize the state in newspapers and literature, may point in a promising direction, my position is that it is new media that have contributed to increased pluralism in the public sphere and have also posed a real and major challenge to the power monopoly of the state. Television provides a good example of this.

The Egyptian state has always been in full control of national radio and television networks. State television, like in many other countries, has been an effective instrument for the propagation of state national ideology and policies.¹⁰⁰ However, Satellite TV led to significant changes. In a period of investment and economic growth, the phenomenon of satellite television led to the emergence of new channels that opened national and transnational discursive spaces. Spurred by technological developments, Arabsat, set up by the countries of the Arab League, became operative in the mid-eighties. In Egypt, the state, together with private investors, launched Nilesat 101 in 1998, and Nilesat 102 in 2000. It was only natural that these investments coincided with some privatization of the television sector. In 2000, Egypt passed a law that allowed for privately owned satellite channels, and set up media production cities, from which Egyptian owned channels must be broadcast.¹⁰¹ These are ironically often referred to as “free” zones, but in fact exist in order to facilitate complete state control over television production.

The first privately owned Egyptian satellite channels were Dream TV and al-Miḥwar. According to Naomi Sakr, business leaders with a close relationship to the ruling elite were granted licenses and benefitted from this privatization.¹⁰² Still, the state retained considerable control over the sector. Dream and al-Miḥwar agreed to be partly owned by the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU). ERTU’s stake in Dream, for example,

⁹⁹ www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2009&country=7601.

¹⁰⁰ Lila Abu-Lughod, *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Naomi Sakr, *Satellite Realms: Transnational Television, Globalization and the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001).

¹⁰¹ Naomi Sakr, *Arab Television Today* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 7.

¹⁰² Sakr notes that it was primarily business men in close to Mubarak who benefited from this shift. *Ibid.*, 28.

restricted the channel from producing independent news broadcasts, because these would compete with the productions of their own departments.¹⁰³ Moreover, the state was a shareholder in the production facilities of the media production cities and appointed new bodies to control the Media Free Zones. The Public Authority for Investment and Free Zones¹⁰⁴ was authorized to suspend licenses, and has not hesitated to do so. This is a highly effective mechanism of control since, as part owner of the Nilesat satellites, the state requires any channel that wishes to broadcast from Egypt to have a license. Thus, what at first view might be regarded as a privatization and an opening up of the sector, can better be described as a continuation of state control, although of a more subtle nature.

Over the past decade, and particularly since 2005, the number of satellite channels has skyrocketed. Today Nilesat hosts more than 470 TV channels and Arabsat 344.¹⁰⁵ Around 10% of these are religious, the great majority of which are Islamic. Though many of the channels are broadcast on both satellites, the numbers nonetheless reveal the choice television viewers are confronted with. This increased pluralism, along with the number of new satellite providers, makes it more difficult for single states to exercise control in the sphere of television. The *Media Charter*, issued February 12, 2008, at the initiative of the Egyptian Minister of Information, Anas al-Fiqī, is an effort to counter this. The charter, signed by most of the Arab Ministers, except those of Qatar and Lebanon, targeted the channels broadcasting via Arabsat and Nilesat satellites.¹⁰⁶ It states that all Arab satellite channels require a contract with the respective authorities to obtain a broadcasting license. Furthermore, it affirms that no channels may broadcast content offensive to political

¹⁰³ Ibid., 28–30.

¹⁰⁴ In Arabic: *al-Hay'ah al-`Āmmah lil-Istithmār*.

¹⁰⁵ See www.arabsat.com/pages and Channels.aspx www.nilesat.com.eg/channels.htm.

¹⁰⁶ Ehab Galal, "Identiteter og Livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv: En innholdsanalyse af udvalgte programmers positioneringer af muslimer" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Copenhagen, 2009). See also 'Alyā' Sa'īd, "al-Faḍā'iyāt fī-Sijr al-Aqmār al-Šinā'iyah," *IslamOnline*. IslamOnline, "Wathīqah 'Arabīyah li-Iskāt al-Faḍā'iyāt al-Mustaqillah," 2008.

leaders or disparaging religious symbols, or of such a nature that it might interfere with social harmony and national identity. Failure to comply with the charter leads to sanctions, first warnings, then confiscation of equipment and finally, cancellation of permit.¹⁰⁷

Since 2008, the authorities seem to be struggling to find a balance between issuing new permits and controlling the pluralism of channels. A number of channels have been shut down, temporarily or permanently. Judging from the comments of the owners and the general directors of the channels shut down, there seems to be no effective institution that supervises and sanctions channels according to the measures outlined above. Their reactions seem to imply that they see the controlling bodies as arbitrary, governed by political decree. What consequences this may have for the future of the industry in Egypt is difficult to tell. It is a fact, however, that the authorities have adopted a stricter line *vis-à-vis* the Islamic channels. Several have been closed down. January 3 2008, al Fajr was taken off the air, in February al-Ḥikmah and al-Barakah, and in April al-Zawrā' and al-Ḥiwār.¹⁰⁸ The withdrawal of these licenses indicated a stricter line from the relevant authorities and was a show of force by the Government.

At the time of writing, there were developments indicating that censorship was taking a new turn. As channels broadcast from Egypt on Nilesat reach a large audience internationally, the content of Islamic channels has been debated. In May 2010, this had important repercussions for the channel al-Raḥmah. Because of a complaint about its contents from French broadcasting authorities, the channel had to move to Arabsat and Nursat.¹⁰⁹ In October, Egyptian authorities led by the Minister of Information started a

¹⁰⁷ Galal, "Identiteter og Livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv." For an unofficial translation of the charter into English, see www.arabmediasociety.com/countries/index.php?c_article=165 [accessed November 2 2010].

¹⁰⁸ Habbah Ḥassanayn, "Awwal Ḍaḥāyā Wathīqat al-I'lām: 5 Faḍā'iyāt Dīnīyah Tuwājihu Shabḥ al-Ighlāq" *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm* 2008. In English, see for example, Amira Al-Tahhawi, "Al-Baraka TV, First victim of the Arab charter?," *Menassat* 2008; Alexandra Sandels, "Egypt Pulls the Plug on another TV station," *Menassat*, April 3 2008.

¹⁰⁹ See the section on al-Raḥmah later in this chapter as this closure was not connected to domestic issues.

large-scale campaign: First, in early October the permit of al-Badr was withdrawn. Second, the four channels owned by the Saudi Arabian company Barāhīn temporarily lost their permits. The channels al-Nās, al-Ḥāfiẓ, al-Khalījīyah, and al-Ṣiḥḥah wa-al-Jamāl were thus taken off air.¹¹⁰ Third, twelve other channels were shut down, among them the popular al-Ḥikmah and al-Raḥmah.¹¹¹ The latter channels were accused of broadcasting radical content and contributing to tensions and sectarian conflict. The Minister said that the channels were welcome to broadcast again when they had complied with the conditions set by the state.¹¹²

Among the reasons given were also that these channels communicated a negative image of “the other”, contributed to creating strife between Sunnis and Shiites outside Egypt, and spread extreme views. The Minister said that “space” had to be purified from strife, ignorance, extremism, and deviation.¹¹³ Thus Egyptian governing bodies exercise considerable control over the channels broadcast from Egypt, both Islamic and non-religious. The 2008 charter increased coordination between the Arab states in this matter. This is in addition to the increased control of Islamic preaching discourse outside the sphere of television. Ever since the 1956 revolution, such discourses have increasingly come under stricter and stricter control.¹¹⁴ The current Minister of Religious Endowments, Ḥamdī Zaqqūq appointed in 1996, has initiated a wide range of reforms to increase the

¹¹⁰ Ḥamdī Dabash, “Ijtīmā’āt Mukaththafah bayna al-Fiqī’ wa-Aṣḥāb al-Qanawāt al-Mughlaqah li-Inhā’ al-Azmah.. wa-Anbā’ an ‘Awdat al-Bathth Qarīban” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, October 20 2010.

¹¹¹ According to al-Jazeera this happened after Nilesat had made an agreement with the Jordanian Nūrsāt. Al-Jazeera, “Miṣr tūqaf wa-tundhir 32 faḍā’iyah,” *al-Jazeera*, October 20 2010.

¹¹² Muṣṭafā Sulaymān, “al-Fiqī Akkada anna Hurriyat al-’lām lā Ta’nī al-Tajāwuz,” *al-’Arabiyah*, October 19 2010.

¹¹³ Al-Jazīrah, “Miṣr tūqaf wa-tundhir 32 faḍā’iyah.” The opposition and Human Rights organizations claimed that this was a step taken by the regime in order to limit freedom of speech prior to the elections scheduled for November 2010.

¹¹⁴ Already in the 1960s Borthwick wrote that preachers could only deal with political and social issues as far as they support the state, and that all religious institutions, mosques and ‘*ulamā*’ were under the strict control of the state. Bruce M. Borthwick, “The Islamic Sermon as a Channel of Political Communication,” *The Middle East Journal* 21, no. 3 (1967): 304–5.

state's control over religious training and Egypt's mosques and imams.¹¹⁵ Today, one needs a permit from the Ministry to preach. Imams are appointed by the Ministry,¹¹⁶ and very few mosques have escaped Zaqqūq's project of nationalization.¹¹⁷ In other words, the general picture seems to be that the state seeks to control Islamic preaching discourse in all arenas, something that underlines the importance of understanding and interpreting such discourses in light of the structures of hard power that control their "spaces".

2.2 The Rise of TV Preaching

It is in light of the structural environment described above that the relatively short history of Islamic television preaching must be viewed.¹¹⁸ The phenomenon of television started on state television, and can be seen as part of the state's desire to spread "state Islam". In Egypt, the first famous television preacher was Muḥammad Mitwallī al-Sha'rāwī (d. 1998). Al-Sha'rāwī preached his way into the hearts of the Egyptians with his simple style, and his use of humor and examples from everyday life to which people were able to



¹¹⁵ The administration of the mosques and their Imams are two of the most important tasks of the Ministry and accordingly they have two branches or sub-ministries to deal with these two responsibilities.

¹¹⁶ Law 238 of 1996 states that "it is not allowed for any person to preach (yakhṭubu) in the Mosque or give a religious lesson without having obtained a permit (taṣrīḥ) from the Ministry of Endowments".

¹¹⁷ When Mubarak took power in 1981, 5600 mosques were under the administration of the Ministry. This number had increased to 20,000 when Zaqqūq took over the Ministry. According to the Minister himself, today the Ministry is in charge of 103,000 mosques throughout the country. 20,000 imams have a certificate that allows them to preach. Aḥmad al-Buḥayrī, "Ḥamdī Zaqqūq: Lā Ushāhid al-Faḍā'iyāt wa-Asma' anna Mashāyikha-hā Yushshaghghilūna al-Nās bi-Umūr Tāfīhah," *Ahl alQuran*, September 13 2009. In *Crisis of the Religious Establishment*, originally a collection of newspaper articles published throughout 1996, the Islamic intellectual Muḥammad Salīm al-'Awwā, expresses his frustration over these changes. Asserting the importance of the Friday Sermon Pulpit as one of the most important sites for influence in all Islamic culture, he argues that these new laws increased the distance between the people and the Ministry, turning the representatives of the latter into clerks whose task were surveillance, instead of sources of knowledge who were able to put people right by way of scholarly arguments and authority. Muḥammad Salīm al-'Awwā, *Azmat al-Mu'assasa al-Dīniyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2003), 45–60.

¹¹⁸ There are channels that serve Shiite audiences, Sufi-audiences, as well as those that specialize in Quran reciting such as the Sudanese Sāhūr and the Qatari, Shā'ir al-Rasūl. Here I focus on mainstream Sunni preaching.

relate. He became a popular figure already in the 1970s, and his programs are still re-broadcast.¹¹⁹ As the first television icon of popular Islam, he captured the masses with his weekly program, *Khawāṭir al-Sha‘rāwī*, a series broadcast every Friday, starting in 1977. During my fieldwork, inquiring about people’s favorite preacher, al-Sha‘rāwī often came up: “Did you ever listen to al-Sha‘rāwī? He is Islam”. In the era of state television, al-Sha‘rāwī was, not surprisingly, a close ally of the regime, and he became known as the “preacher of the state”.¹²⁰ In view of the politics at the time, al-Sha‘rāwī represented an intermediate position between the leftists and the Islamist oppositions. He was a useful ally of Presidents Anwar al-Sadāt (1970–1981) and Ḥusnī Mubārak (1981 to present). Still, in his later years, he challenged the regime on several issues, including questions of female circumcision, which he was for, family politics and organ transplants.¹²¹ Al-Sha‘rāwī also played a vital role in creating new pious ideals for women and was an important factor in calling women to adopt the veil.¹²² Al-Sha‘rāwī’s passing away in 1998 created a void in the field of Islamic television preaching, and Egypt approached the millennium with an absence of Islamic public icons.¹²³ Two years before, the intellectual Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī, the Shaykh of al-Azhar, Jād al-Ḥaqq, as well as the great mosque speaker and cassette favorite ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk had passed away.¹²⁴ In the field of television preaching, however, two preachers are worth mentioning. These figured on state television and represented a trend that combined discourse from the natural sciences with Islam.

¹¹⁹ Kepel notes that al-Sha‘rāwī was omnipresent on state television in the 1970s and 80s. Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 172-73.

¹²⁰ Andrew Hammond, *Popular Culture in the Arab World* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2007), 91.

¹²¹ Sanā‘ al-Sa‘īd, *al-Sha‘rāwī bayna al-Siyāsah wa-al-Dīn* (Cairo: Dār al-Faṭḥ lil-I‘lām al-‘Arabī, 1997).

¹²² Lila Abu-Lughod, *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998), 251.

¹²³ Muḥammad al-Bāz, *Du‘āh fil-Manfā* (Cairo: al-Fāris, 2004), 19.

¹²⁴ For a content analysis of Kishk’s sermons as written in the collection of al-Maktab al-Miṣrī al-Ḥādīth, see Johannes J.G Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1986).

The first and most important of these, Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd (1921–2009), was trained as a medical doctor, but became a leading Islamic intellectual and media star. His program series *Science and Faith* was first screened beginning in the early 1970s. According to Armando Salvatore, Maḥmūd preached a blend of religion, science, and common sense. He illustrated and explained natural phenomena, pointing to God as the cause behind these wonders.¹²⁵ Another preacher who gained some popularity was the geologist Zaghlūl al-Naggār. He started to preach in the 1990s, and his main message was that Islam could be proved through the natural sciences.¹²⁶ Still active, al-Naggār will be discussed further in the next chapter, which will describe the field of Islamic preaching today.



This near absence of Islamic public icons coincided with the technological developments and the privatization of the television industry that spurred a revolution in the field of Islamic television preaching. Outside Egypt, the first Islamic satellite television channel, Iqra' was established in 1998 by the Arab Media Corporation and came to be transmitted throughout the Arab world on Arabsat. According to Abdul Qader Tash, the idea behind Iqra' was to make use of television to assert Arab and Muslim identity in a period of global change, countering what was seen as Western distortions of Islam. A second vision was to give Muslims, particularly the minorities outside the region, an alternative to “Western TV programming.”¹²⁷ Iqra' inaugurated a new genre of Islamic TV programming and, as the preacher Muḥammad Ḥassān aptly put it, it is “the mother of all Islamic TV channels.”¹²⁸ Although Iqra' broadcast a variety of generic

¹²⁵ Salvatore, “Social Differentiation, Moral Authority, and Public Islam and Egypt,” 12–13.

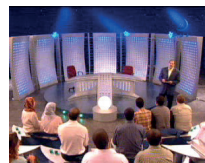
¹²⁶ al-Bāz, *Du'āh fīl-Manfā*.

¹²⁷ Abdul Qader Tash, “Islamic Satellite Channels and Their Impact on Arab Societies: Iqra Channel—a Case Study,” *TBS Journal* 13, no. Fall (2004).

¹²⁸ “Episode 1,” in *Awṣā-ni Khalīlī* (Egypt Iqra', 2008).

content, da‘wah, what I refer to as preaching, came to be an important part of its programming.¹²⁹

In Egypt, the new private channels, such as al-Miḥwar and Dream that did not have a religious profile also started to screen preachers. These new “spaces” for Islamic da‘wah resulted in the adaption of formats from “secular” television, such as talk shows, competitions, and call-in programs. The combination of new formats, charismatic preachers, and marketing strategies to increase audiences proved a success. The first new Islamic icon to rise from this combination was ‘Amr Khālid, whose transmissions many believe mark a new era of television preaching. His show, *Words from the Heart*,¹³⁰ was picked up by the general manager at Iqra’ in an effort to make the channel more attractive to a younger audience.¹³¹ The show proved an enormous success, and came to account for 80% of Iqra’’s advertising revenue.¹³² A star was born, who through satellite television reached an international audience with his message. The marriage between Islamic television preaching and business proved beneficial for all concerned. Khālid’s novelty was not only stylistic. In content, his initial message of repentance, conversion, piety, and love, and his later focus on reform through self-development, addressed a segment of Egyptian society that had not previously been part of the religious revival. ‘Amr Khālid



¹²⁹ The use of the concepts of “Islamic TV channels” and “Islamic TV programming”, requires the researcher to question what this concept refers to. Following Abdul Qader Tash, Ehab Galal points out that “Islamic channels” are not exclusively pre-occupied with preaching (da‘wah). More generally, they embed a specifically Islamic perspective on life and promote a pious religious life-style as part of “Islamic identity politics”. Their content may often be explicitly Islamic, but often includes a blend of news, documentaries and films that cannot be defined as “Islamic”. What is more crucial is that none of these programs conflict with Islamic values. He moreover sees these channels as more or less apolitical, since they do not support any state or political movement. Galal, “Identiteter og Livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv, 80. See also Tash, “Islamic Satellite Channels and Their Impact on Arab Societies”.

¹³⁰ See Lindsay Wise, “Words from the Heart: New Forms of Islamic Preaching in Egypt “ (Unpublished Master’s Thesis, University of Oxford, 2003). She comments upon three of the programs in the series.

¹³¹ Sakr, *Arab Television Today*, 154.

¹³² Samantha M. Shapiro, “Ministering to the Upwardly Mobile Muslim,” *New York Times Magazine* (April 30 2006). *Words from the Heart* was also broadcast on al-Miḥwar and Dream TV.

helped people from the upper classes come to terms with Islam, and found followers particularly among youth and women. Khālīd was thus part of a phenomenon that arose as a direct consequence of the mediatization of preaching through television. It marked the rise of a new group of preachers who competed with other types of messages and entertainment within the sphere of popular culture and became media stars. These new preachers contrasted themselves with what they described as the old, more traditional preachers, who were unable to make Islam relevant to Muslims in a period of instability and social change. They became famous as “The New Preachers” (al-Du‘āh al-Gudud).¹³³ Most were already famous when they entered television. They became famous for their preaching in mosques, in addition to more private settings, such as clubs, meetings, and weddings. Beside Khālīd, preachers such as the al-Azhar educated Khālīd al-Gindī, the Yemenite ‘Alī al-Jufrī and the Kuwaiti Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān, were leading figures. These preachers’ particularities will be addressed in the next chapter, but in general, they distinguished themselves through their pedagogic style and ability to make Islam relevant for people in their everyday lives. With the partial exception of al-Gindī, these preachers also represented a train of thought that was concerned with economic development through individual change, co-existence with the cultural “other” and social development. Theologically, it is true that these preachers did not represent anything new.¹³⁴ Their ideas were mostly in line with the tolerant *wasafī* ideology promoted by Islamic intellectuals and thinkers such as Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī and Muḥammad ‘Ammārah. To this, they added a spice of neo-liberalism. Still, as I will show, their mediation between Sunni orthodoxy and global reality created new ideal identities for Muslims.

Patrick Haenni sees the interaction between the new class of rich Egyptians and Islam to have created a conservative revolution among the upper classes of Cairo. He

¹³³ Occasionally called *New sheiks* (al-Shuyūkh al-Gudud).

¹³⁴ Preachers simply do not have any authority to question the basic fundamentals of Islam. Still, as will show, they do certainly participate in the debate about what is correct Islam, in several questions.

describes a type of commercialized Islam, fronted by preachers, pietistic TV hosts, independent intellectuals, and entertainment celebrities. He observes a current of religiosity that includes elements of syncretism, self-development ideology, Neo-liberalism, and Protestant ethics. This movement started in the upper segments of society and represented a type of religiosity specially designed for them.¹³⁵

‘Amr Khālid was the primary exponent of the movement described by Haenni. In a few short years, Khālid went from merely being a popular television preacher to fronting a social movement grounded on a combination of Islamic principles and organizational culture. In an article published in *al-Hayāh*, Haenni went so far as to say that Khālid seemed to have initiated the most important social reform movement in the Arab world, outside the Muslim Brothers.¹³⁶ While in retrospect that may have been an overstatement, Khālid’s social movement remains influential today.

2006 marked the start of a period of increased pluralism in the field of television preaching. First, al-Risālah, an Islamic channel similar to Iqra’, was launched. The second and more fundamental change was the emergence of a number of Salafī oriented preachers and channels. From being a channel of popular entertainment, al-Nās (people) had by the end of 2006 become a stronghold for this type of preaching. Most of these preachers already had large crowds of followers from their mosque preaching. They challenged the authority of “The New Preachers” by questioning their competence and lack of schooling in the Islamic sciences. While “The New Preachers” preached hybridized discourses often referring to contemporary texts and examples, “The New Salafis” preached a more theological message, and sought inspiration primarily from the Prophet and his companions, in content as well as in form. As I will show, they therefore also represented a totally new style of television preaching. The channels that broadcast

¹³⁵ Patrick Haenni, *L’islam de marche: L’autre révolution conservatrice*, La république des idées (Paris: Seuil, 2005), 7–18.

¹³⁶ ———, “Al-Dā’iyah al-Ashar fī al-‘Ālam Yasta’īdu ‘an al-Jihād bi-al-Iḥsān wa-al-Ta’āqūd... ‘Amr Khālid Zāhirah Islāmīyah Ḥadīthah khārija al-Namūdhaj al-‘Almānī al-Faransī,” *Al-Hayāh*, June 16 2006.

them were also substantially different from al-Risālah and Iqra'. Iqra' had become famous for promoting female television preachers and media stars wearing colorful headscarves and dresses, which Arab media called the "New Religious Look". Conversely, the "Salafi spaces", for the most part, did not want women on their screens at all. The "conversion" of the channel al-Nās meant that women disappeared from its screen, together with "inappropriate" commercials, and pop-music. The latter was replaced by a new genre of Islamic hymns (*anāshīd*).¹³⁷ Moreover, the "New Salafi Preachers" represented a break with the main stream *wasafī* ideology of the state and most leading intellectuals. Their message was more polarized; their portrayals of the "other" were more negative and they were critical towards anything coming from "outside" Islam. Whereas critics had accused "The New Preachers" of fronting a type of Islam where everything was allowed, calling their approach "Islam Light" or "air-conditioned" Islam, the Salafī preachers turned their attention more towards self-sacrifice, insisting on how tough it was to resist the temptations of the modern period.

The reception of televised Salafī preaching was immense, and especially the trio Muḥammad Ḥassān, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya'qūb and Abū Ishāq, turned al-Nās into the most popular Islamic channel in Egypt.¹³⁸ This success encouraged investors to extend their venture. The owner of al-Nās, Manṣūr b. Kadsah, transformed al-Khālījīyah from a channel that screened music videos, to an Islamic channel. The same company also launched al-Barakah, focused on Islamic economy and lifestyle programs. Moreover, they launched al-Ḥāfīz, which specialized in Quran recitation and memorization, as well as the channel al-Ṣiḥḥah wa-al-Jamāl (Health and Beauty). All of these channels operate from

¹³⁷ Several reports indicate that the number of viewers skyrocketed after this development. Cf. 'Alī 'Abd al-'Āl, "al-Salafīyūn wa-Qanāt al-Nās," *IslamOnline*, May 7 2008.

¹³⁸ A survey conducted by ERTU in 2007 showed that al-Nās was the most viewed channel in Egypt at that time: Mohamed El-Sayed, "Screens to Heaven'," *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, March 4–10 2010. Several other reports indicate that al-Nās has been and remain among the most popular Islamic channels in Egypt. See for example, Sulaymān Muṣṭafā, "Qanāt 'al-Nās'.. min al-Salafīyah ilā al-Tadayyun al-Jadīd," *IslamOnline* 2008.

the Media City and transmit through Nilesat.¹³⁹ Other important channels that were launched in the same period were al-Ḥikmah and later, al-Raḥmah. Since 2006, the rate of the establishment of new Islamic channels has accelerated. Interesting newcomers include al-Azharī, a channel that is not formally linked to al-Azhar, but seeks to broadcast and promote Azhar scholars. The field of preaching has become more inclusive with the establishment of Sufi channels, like al-Ṣūfiyah, and Christian broadcasting has also been let into the family with the channel of the Coptic Orthodox church in Egypt, Aghapy TV.¹⁴⁰

This mushrooming of new channels has increased pluralism and competition, and the field is in constant development. The phenomenon of television preaching started as a part of state television. Towards the turn of the millennium, the privatization of the sphere of satellite television, as well as new technologies, led to the establishment of new TV channels that became new pulpits of preaching. From then on, the history of television preaching in Egypt can be divided into two phases. First, the period from 2000 to 2005, dominated by Iqra' and the non-religious channels. This was followed by a period of tension and competition between the new preachers and the new Salafī trend. The different positions within these trends will be clarified in the next chapter. But before entering into detail on that matter, it will be helpful to introduce the types of channels that have made the phenomenon of this new generation of TV preachers possible.

¹³⁹ "Miṣr Tasmaḥu bi-Faḍā'iyyah lil-Aqbāṭ," al-Jazeera.

¹⁴⁰ Most of the Christian channels are, as far as I know, not allowed to transmit on Nilesat. Christians who want to watch Christian television normally buy a package that gives them access to Hot Bird, operated by the French based provider Eutelsat.

2.3 New “Spaces” for Preaching

The religious satellite channels have played a highly influential role on the Islamic scene. These are the media that created the phenomenon of “The New Preachers”; the most important religious phenomenon in recent time.¹⁴¹

Television *da‘wah*, both in the wider sense of the word, and the stricter sense as preaching, must be studied in relation to the institutions and the infrastructure that created the phenomenon of television preachers, the new television channels. Metaphorically, following the expert on Islamic Television, Ehab Galal, these channels can be described as new “spaces” for religiosity, not directly connected with the traditional religious institutions. These spaces exist more independently, across a variety of different physical media. The religious Arabic mediascape consists of different spaces that compete. These exist side by side with more traditional spaces of religiosity, such as the mosque and the family.¹⁴² An important point is that television channels are far from neutral. They are political, economic, ideological and media actors. First, they operate in a market regulated by political decrees. Broadcasting content that fails to comply with state regulations may result in penalties, such as the revocation of the channel’s license, thus putting them off the air, or refusal of access to production facilities. These channels must navigate within the matrix of “red lines”, censorship and state control. Moreover, owned by investors, they operate in a market and depend on income from commercials. In this respect, television preachers and programs are commodities developed and “sold” in a market place.¹⁴³ The channels are also ideological in the sense that most religious channels have an implicit or explicit ideological agenda. This is reflected in how they identify them-

¹⁴¹ Ḥusām Tammām, “al-Faḍā’iyāt al-Dīnīyah wa-al-Du‘āh al-Judud wa-‘Almanat al-Tadayyun,” IslamOnline.

¹⁴² Galal, “Identiteter og Livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv”, 98.


¹⁴³ An illustration is how the Islamic television channels were affected by the worldwide economic crises. Writing late summer 2009, the IslamOnline journalist, Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd describes cancellations of series, dismissals of employees and the closure of channels as consequences. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, “Bi-Fi’l Tadā’iyāt al-Azmah al-Māliyah,” *IslamOnline* 2009.

selves, the kind of programs they select and who owns and runs them. Importantly, also, they are media institutions with a number of employees who produce, edit, design, and create the visual and auidial experience for television audiences.

Today, one may say that there are three different “spaces”. The first, represented by Iqra’ and al-Risālah, advocates pluralism, openness towards the world and has a commercial profile. They tend to broadcast the whole spectrum of different trends. Moreover, they screen female preachers and advocate welfare work and social issues. The second group represents a more conservative trend, and can more or less be called Salafi channels because a high number of preachers oriented towards Salafism play an active role in shaping their programming. Their programming tends to be restrictive about importing program formats from the “West”, and they rather create their own formats and styles. This group comprises the channels al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah, as well as al-Khalījīyah, al-Hāfiẓ, al-Barakah, al-Fajr and al-Hudā. The third space of preaching consists of channels that do not have an Islamic agenda, but mix Islamic content with all types of entertainment and programs. Typically, they broadcast some of the most popular preachers, particularly during Ramadan. Thus, religious preaching is broadcast together with the flow of non-religious programs, some of which are clearly in conflict with Islamic preaching. They therefore differ from the Islamic channels in that they do not select their programs according to the criterion that they must be in accordance an Islamic agenda.¹⁴⁴ This thesis discusses al-Miḥwar and al-Ḥayāh as examples representing this group.

¹⁴⁴ Ehab Galal poses the important question of what makes a TV channel Islamic. His answer, agreeing with Tash (2004, 3), is that Islamic television contains a specifically Islamic perspective on life, but that these channels are not only concentrated around the diffusion of Islam. They show a range of other programs such as news, documentaries and films that cannot be defined as Islamic. Therefore, it is more correct to say that these channels promote a pious religious life-style as part of Islamic identity politics. Their content may not always be explicitly Islamic. But at least the films, entertainment programs and so forth that they broadcast do not conflict with Islamic values. He also states that these channels are not directly political in the sense that they do not openly support any state or political movements Galal, “Identiteter og Livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv”, 80.

2.3.1 Iqra' and al-Risālah

The channel Iqra' (Read!) is the earliest and historically the most important carrier of Islamic preaching in the Arab world. The name Iqra' is probably inspired by the Sura of the Clinging Form.¹⁴⁵ The channel was founded in 1998 by ART (Arab Radio and Television) and is owned by the Saudi billionaire Şāliḥ Kāmil. Its  launch was motivated by a desire to counteract misrepresentations of Islam and to strengthen Arab and Islamic identity.¹⁴⁶ It has been a commercial channel from the start. It has a broad reach, being broadcast through six satellites, including Arabsat and Nilesat.¹⁴⁷ Iqra' was founded as part of the *da'wah* movement and has a clear Islamic profile:

Iqraa Channel seeks to build a modern Muslim society that truly believes in and loves God and His Prophet Muhammad, acts upon the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition and follows in the righteous Muslim ancestors' lead. Iqraa Channel aims to help Muslims apply the teachings of Islam that call for tolerance and for addressing others mildly; a Muslim society whose members will be able to positively interact both on the local and international levels. Iqraa Channel also aims at presenting the true moderate face of Islam to people in the West where media does not present an objective view of the Islamic Law.¹⁴⁸

In other words, the channel has an unmistakable ambition of spreading Islam, and contributing to tolerance without affirming any political or sectarian affiliation. Its focus on positive local and international interaction bears close resemblance to the statutes of early modernists, such as 'Abduh and Riḍā, who called for modernization based on the Quran and the righteous Muslim ancestors. The channel's openness towards the West, despite its advocacy of cultural protectionism, points in the same direction.

¹⁴⁵ The name Iqra' may be seen as an analogy to how the Prophet was made "spokesperson" for the message. In the sura God addresses the Prophet: "Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clinging form. Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by [means of] the pen, who taught man what he did not know (Q96:1-5)."

¹⁴⁶ Maha Shahba, "Iqra: Channel with a Mission," *TBS Journal* 14, no. Spring (2005).

¹⁴⁷ The satellites are Arabsat 2B/4B, Nilesat 101, Hot Bird 8, Asiasat 2, and Anik F3. According to its Webpage, it covers more than 80% of the world.

¹⁴⁸ www.iqraa-tv.net/ar/AboutIqraa.aspx [accessed August 11 2010]

During the first two years, Iqra' was dominated by various talk shows, which constituted around half its programs. Later, contests and reportages became part of its programming. Films were restricted to historical themes, and there were no series or dramas dealing with contemporary problems. However, from 2000 onward the channel changed its profile. It increased the number of programs concerning women and the family and moved the focus from children to youth. It still did not broadcast news, but strengthened its social, educational, and family profile.¹⁴⁹

The new star 'Amr Khālīd fitted well into this new profile. His talk show *Words from the Heart* and the series *Let Us Meet the Beloved Ones*, broadcast from 2001 to 2003, focused on contemporary social problems. Many of today's preaching stars also began their careers on Iqra' during this period. The Ramadan 2002 program, for example presents, 'Amr Khālīd with *Words from the Heart*, 'Alī al-Gufrī with *The Guidance of Prophethood*, Khālīd al-Gindī with *The Medicine of Heaven*, Ṣafwat Ḥijāzī with *Believing Women*, and Jāsim al-Muṭawwa' with *The House of Scholars*. Moreover, there were several series by women: Du'ā' 'Āmir presented a show called *The Domain of Women* and Nevine al-Gindī hosted 'Ablah al-Kaḥlāwī in another series.¹⁵⁰ These are all important actors in the field today who will be introduced in the next chapter.

The presence of female preachers on Iqra' is significant. It played an important role in developing the new type of religious piety and fashion that led many women to adopt the veil. For a number of those who already preferred the veil, Iqra' represented a possibility of having a career on television. Iqra' recruited a number of female TV presenters from state television, where wearing veil was not yet tolerated.

After twelve years as one of the dominating actors in the field, Iqra' remains one of the most vital spaces for TV preaching. In an interview its Cairo director affirms that the goal of the channel is to present what they see as the real image of a true and tolerant

¹⁴⁹ Tash, "Islamic Satellite Channels and Their Impact on Arab Societies."

¹⁵⁰ al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, "Qanāt "Iqra'" al-Faḍā'iyyah ta'iddi Mashāhī-ha bi-Barāmij Munawwa'ah," 2002.

Islam. The channel seeks to eliminate misunderstandings about Islam, both among non-Muslims and among the Muslims themselves, as well as to preserve Islamic cultural values and norms.¹⁵¹

In 2006, the Saudi Arabian prince al-Walīd b. al-Ṭalāl reduced his stake holdings in ART, the patron company of al-Iqra', and started his own venture in the business of religious television, which became known as al-Risālah. Joining him in the new venture was the former ART producer Aḥmad Abū Haybah, who had contributed to the fame of 'Amr Khālīd, as well as the Kuwaiti preacher Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān, who became al-Risālah's General Director since its inception.¹⁵² Al-Suwaydān, who had been featuring on Iqra', brought with him many of the popular female TV presenters from Iqra'.¹⁵³ Al-Risālah was officially launched in March 2006. The channel was similar to Iqra' in many respects, but went a step further in commercialization and created an even more liberal and trendy "Islamic look." Like Iqra', the channel seeks to promote tolerance and pluralism, but it focuses much more on questions of Arabic identity than does Iqra'. Other important focuses are education and development. The channel's slogan for Ramadan 2007 was the first words of Quran 3:133: "Hurry towards your Lord's forgiveness, and a Garden [Paradise]!" On its webpage al-Risālah presents itself as



a satellite channel that works to support Islamic and human values and gather the Arabic family in front of its screen by presenting an intellectual and visual wealth of especially focused and varied educational programs, in particular regarding social, developmental and legal, questions that the Arabic family needs to know about ...¹⁵⁴

When al-Risālah was launched it benefited from the experience of crew and producers from the Rotana group, also owned by Prince Ṭalāl. Al-Suwaydān adapted many well-

¹⁵¹ Shahba, "Iqra: Channel with a Mission."

¹⁵² Sakr, *Arab Television Today*, 154–5.

¹⁵³ al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, "Mudīr Qanāt "al-Risālah": 40% min Muqaddimī Barāmij-nā Fannānūn Mu'tazilūn," 2006.

¹⁵⁴ www.alresalah.net/index.jsp?inc=12&type=1&lang=ar [October 5 2009]

known television series screened in the West. In addition to featuring many different preachers, the programs are varied and include programs on Arab history and civilization and many lifestyle programs. Al-Risalah continued the tradition that Iqra' had started eight years earlier, and the two channels share a similar agenda. They broadcast preachers from all trends, are liberal, are open to the world and are concerned with construing Islamic and Arab identity in a period when they see the West as dominating. Iqra' and al-Risalah broadcast many of the same preachers. Still, they are also competitors in an increasingly competitive market.

2.3.2 Al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah

The second type of “space” is very closely linked to a group of preachers, the most important of whom are Muḥammad Ḥassān, Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī and Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya'qūb. The channel al-Nās started broadcasting in January 2006. It was not originally an Islamic channel, and broadcast music videos, light entertainment, dream interpretation programs, religious programs, talent shows, as well as recordings from wedding parties. During 2006, al-Nās was “born again” as an Islamic channel. It changed its slogan from “al-Nās, a channel for all People” to “A screen that takes you to Paradise”.¹⁵⁵ During the same period, it became a stronghold for Salafi preachers. It changed its policies and was to become the Egyptian pioneer of a new type of Islamic television programming, seen as much more conservative than the channels of Iqra' and al-Risalah. Allegedly, it was the Salafi preacher Abū Ishāq who demanded that the channel stop screening female television hosts and that it forbid music. Others claim that the channel adopted these measures in response to requests from viewers.¹⁵⁶ In any case, the demands from the Salafi preachers led to a dispute with the channel's general manager, who did not want the preachers to dictate the channel's policies. This dispute

¹⁵⁵ IslamOnline, “Qanāt al-Nās: Na'm lil-Wa'z lā li-al-Siyāsah,” 2006. The name al-Nās also give connotations to the Quran as its name is identical to the title of chapter 114.

¹⁵⁶ 'Abd al-'Āl, “al-Salafīyūn wa-Qanāt al-Nās.”

culminated in early 2008, when the trio Muḥammad Ḥassān, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb and Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī withdrew from the channel. The reason was that the channel’s director hosted ‘Amr Khālīd and the popular Sufi shaykh, Aḥmad ‘Abdu ‘Awaḍ as guests on a TV show. Antagonistic towards both ‘Amr Khālīd and Sufism, the Salafis did not want to appear on the same screen with them.¹⁵⁷

Al-Nās’s presentation on its website is a bit vague, perhaps unsurprisingly, given that the channel’s identity seems to be rapidly shifting. As of August 10, 2010, it presented itself as a cultural and social channel with a religious character that seeks to update its viewer on issues concerning the Islamic Ummah. It aimed to address all people, but particularly children and youth. Moreover, it envisioned leading people away from “the purposeless media”. More specifically, importance is attributed to strengthening people’s faith and their adherence to the principles of Islamic Law (al-shar‘). In relation to the cultural other (al-ghayr), it announced that it lends an ear to and will discuss other points of view, as long as there is no conflict with “Islamic principles.”¹⁵⁸ It stated clearly that it sought to cooperate with official religious institutions like the Islamic universities and al-Azhar. Choice of words and passages do, however, signal a different stance towards the West than that of al-Iqra’ and al-Risālah: The channel sought to immunize Muslim children against intellectual and social imperialism, establish a spirit of self-sacrifice (taḍḥīyah) and effort among Muslim children, and to contribute to cooperation, efficacy and productivity. More generally, it sought to help people achieve Paradise through knowledge, sound deeds, and the call to God. The channel’s guidance is the Quran, the Sunnah, and the sayings of the Companions, and it sought to establish and develop a religious, cultural and scientific awareness in its audience. In an interview with



¹⁵⁷ Muṣṭafā, “Qanāt “al-Nās”.. min al-Salafīyah ilā al-Tadayyun al-Jadīd.”

¹⁵⁸ www.alnas.tv/target.php?page=about [accessed August 10 2010].

IslamOnline, the former General Director, ‘Āṭif ‘Abd al-Rashīd¹⁵⁹ said that al-Nās had no political agenda, arguing that the channel is not a religious, but a media institution. Interestingly, he says that one of the differences between al-Nās on the one hand and al-Risālah and Iqra’ on the other, is that al-Nās would never present political views. He also denied that the channel was affiliated with Salafism,¹⁶⁰ a claim that has become increasingly implausible as the years have passed.

The establishment of the channel *al-Raḥmah* in 2007 was perhaps due to the disputes about policy within al-Nās. Under the direction of Muḥammad Ḥassān, who is also sometimes referred to as the channel’s owner,¹⁶¹ it adopted a more conservative stance than al-Nās, with a Salafi profile. The channel presents itself as a “bright, sparkling star shining, glittering in the sky of satellite channels”.¹⁶² The name, *al-Raḥmah*, which means “mercy”, is inspired by the Quran. It is indeed an epithet applied to the Prophet and is incorporated in the slogan, in green calligraphy, at the bottom of the logo, which is a citation of Q21:107: “It was only as a mercy that We sent you [the Prophet] to all people”¹⁶³ “We”, here refers to God, as it usually does in Quranic Arabic. The channel has a clear Islamic profile and a clear focus on the Prophet, who occupies a very central space in Salafi ideology, an issue I will come back to.



According to its website, al-Raḥmah seeks a middle way between *al-aṣālah*, the fundamentals of Islam, and present day reality. It is not fanatic (*muta‘assib*); it does not

¹⁵⁹ Al-Rashīd is now the Director of al-Ṣiḥḥah wa-al-Jamāl and al-Ḥāfīz, while Muḥammad ‘abd al-Jawwād is directing al-Nās.

¹⁶⁰ IslamOnline, “Qanāt al-Nās: Na‘m lil-Wa‘z li-al-Siyāsah.”

¹⁶¹ Nathan Field and Ahmad Hamam, “Salafi Satellite TV in Egypt,” *Arabic Media & Society* Spring no. 8 (2009).

¹⁶² www.alrahma.tv [accessed April 4 2010].

¹⁶³ This underscores the importance of the Prophet and his Sunnah in the ideology of the channel, and lends authority to the channel. Identifying with the Prophet in such a direct way indicates a great degree of self-awareness, and is likely to be an effective way of building up its ethos: How could any Muslim be negative to al-Raḥmah as it presents itself?

seek to conspire against anyone (yata‘assabu li-aḥad); nor is it affiliated with any organization or party. It addresses all Muslims irrespective of location, and seeks to spread the message of the Prophet and the example of His Companions through da‘wah, so that the Ummah will rise again. It promotes itself as a “pure” screen (shāshah ṭāhirah), and contrasts itself to channels showing music videos with dancing women.¹⁶⁴ During the period following its inception, the channel appears to have been run without commercials. However, in an address on al-Raḥmah, Ḥassān announced to the TV audiences the impossibility of running the channel without income from commercials. Yet, he underlines that al-Raḥmah will never ever broadcast any commercials that may be in conflict with the Message.¹⁶⁵ It may also bear mention that both al-Nās and al-Raḥmah have been accused of promoting anti-Semitic content. This led French authorities to put pressure on Nilesat, who finally took al-Raḥmah off the air in May 2010. The channel then moved, first to Arabsat, and later to Nursat.

Al-Ḥikmah (Wisdom) is similar to al-Raḥmah, being a channel that specializes in the Prophet’s Sunnah and the related sciences. It aims to spread the pure and correct message about the Sunnah to Muslims and to non-Muslims as well, so as to acquaint the latter with the correct Islam. The channel started to broadcast during Ramadan in 2006/1427AH, and its slogan is from Q24:54: “If you obey him [the Prophet, my comment], you will be rightly guided”. The channel broadcasts through Nilesat and Nursat.¹⁶⁶ It seems to be owned by three different companies, something that appears to have delayed it at the start, as it was stopped by Nilesat for a period in January 2008, reportedly for not having provided the necessary forms.¹⁶⁷ According to Wikipedia Arabic, the Salafī trio mentioned above, al-Ḥuwaynī, Ya‘qūb and Ḥassān, supervise the

¹⁶⁴ www.alrahmah.tv [accessed April 4 2010].

¹⁶⁵ YouTube, “Sā‘id Qanāt al-Raḥmah,”

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=88iSw-B5Pcg&feature=related). [accessed September 8 2010].

¹⁶⁶ www.alhekmah.tv/about.aspx [accessed October 27 2010] and al-Miṣrī al-Yaum, “6 Faḍā‘iyāt Jadīdah Yabda‘u Baththa-ha al-Rasmī fī ‘īd al-Fiṭr,” October 25 2006.

¹⁶⁷ Ḥassanayn, “Awwal Ḍaḥāyā Wathīqat al-I‘lām: 5 Faḍā‘iyāt Dīnīyah Tuwājihu Shabḥ al-Ighlāq’.

channel.¹⁶⁸ What is certain is that the star of the channel and its main patron is Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, the main ideologist among the three. He is discussed in more detail below.

2.3.3 Non-Religious “Spaces”.

There is a third type of “space” for Islamic preaching on television, one that does not have an Islamic agenda. This may include private, semi-private and state channels.¹⁶⁹ It is difficult to say how important they are compared to the religious channels, but both al-Miḥwar and al-Ḥayāh are popular. These channels are not ideologically neutral; for instance I have never seen a Salafī preacher preach on either of them. Rather, ‘Amr Khālid, ‘Alī al-Jufrī and Muṣṭafā Ḥuṣnī and Khālid al-Gindī seem to be among their favorites. Both are private, broadcast on NileSat. Al-Miḥwar is owned by the Egyptian businessman Aḥmad Bahgat through the Sama Group. Al-Ḥayāh is a younger channel that seems to cater to many of the same viewers as al-Miḥwar.

2.4 TV Preaching in the Public Sphere – Interpretations

It is easy to agree with Eickelman and Anderson’s thesis that new media and television have led to a more open contest over “the authoritative use of the symbolic language of Islam.” It has empowered people who otherwise would have had no access to enter a public discussion about Islam. Through new media, local disputes become international, and there is evidence that these developments have led to an increased fragmentation of religious authority.¹⁷⁰ However, the concept of “an emerging public sphere” situated outside formal state control is severely questioned by the findings of my study. Islamic

¹⁶⁸ ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/قناة_الحكمة [accessed December 9 2010].

¹⁶⁹ State television remains very important in Egypt. Still, it is only recently that they have renewed their religious broadcasting. Very recently, the state channels seems to be catching up, but I have had to limit myself to satellite television. The State Muftī ‘Alī Gum‘ah seems to have taken over the role of al-Sha‘rāwī as the state’s television shaykh, but it is doubtful whether his programs can be classified as *da‘wah*. In any case, it is not broadcast by satellite and is on the side of this thesis.

¹⁷⁰ Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, Indiana Series in Middle East Studies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 1.

TV preaching discourses by and large seem to apply considerable self-censorship and operate within the red lines drawn by the authorities. If they fail to do so, they are warned or halted. They also seem to operate within the scope of what al-Azhar deems acceptable. In an interview on al-‘Arabīyah in 2005 al-Ṭanṭāwī said that if these actors say something that is in conflict with Islamic Law it was al-Azhar’s duty to correct it. If not, they would not intervene.¹⁷¹ Certainly, there have been numerous discussions around fatwas and single statements, but the impression remains that the state institutions have been allowing the phenomenon to unfold relatively unobstructed. It therefore seems wrong to interpret the phenomenon as a counter-state movement. Rather, I suggest that we view it as part of a religion’s defense against the mediatization of competing world views and systems of knowledge.

In terms of asserting Arab and Muslim identity within the world of television, preaching has undeniably been a success. Few can dispute the success of Islamic preaching on television. The actors and the channels themselves see television as a blessing that allows them to communicate their moral messages to the Islamic Ummah. At the same time these preachers are part of the larger movement that often is spoken of in terms of an Islamic revival. But it must also be considered that television preaching as a social practice interacts with the larger public sphere, and that not everyone welcomes this phenomenon.

One result is that many more secular intellectuals feel marginalized.¹⁷² The most frequent critique has come as a result of the commercialization of Islamic discourse. It is argued that preaching has become dominated by business thinking where attracting followers and profit is more important than representing the “true Islam”. Those who adopt this point of view have attacked many of the TV preachers for lacking knowledge

¹⁷¹ al-‘Arabīyah, “Al-‘Ayn al-Thālithah: Zāhirat al-Du‘āh al-Judud,” (2005).

¹⁷² Jamāl al-Bannā, “Tarkhīṣ bi-al-Dhabḥ,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm* 2008.

and being too interested in fame and money.¹⁷³ The term “touristic religiosity” has been used to describe the activity of watching television preaching as mere entertainment. This has been connected with the business of organizing luxury pilgrimage trips to Mecca, and that of issuing fatwas.¹⁷⁴ That preaching was profitable became clear when the Arabic edition of Forbes revealed that many of these preachers earned hundreds of thousands of US dollars every year.¹⁷⁵

A more political interpretation comes from those who argue that television preaching is part of the authorities’ package designed to delude the people, to take their attention away from politics. The Leftist critic Muḥammad al-Bāz, for instance, sees the focus on love towards God and emotionalism as sapping the ideals of revolution and protest.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, the respected political scientist ‘Amr Shubkī connects the New Preachers to the ruling party (NDP). Like al-Bāz, he argues that the preachers’ focus on “a new reality” is a way for the ruling party to move people’s attention to something other than politics. Shubkī argues that in a post-Islamist era without the tensions between the Left and the Brotherhood, Mubarak had a unique chance to create democracy. Instead, the public sphere was emptied of any political movement, and questions about what is religiously permitted replaced real political questions. Moreover, he questions the thesis of Islamization, arguing that morality in Egypt has never been lower than now. He rhetorically asks how it can be that people are becoming more and more pietistic at the same time as the country becomes more and more penetrated by corruption. He maintains

¹⁷³ Nabīl Sharaf al-Dīn, “Dalīl al-Dā‘iyah al-Riwwish,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yaum*, May 25 2008.

¹⁷⁴ See for example, Saḥr al-Ja‘ārah, “Amrāḍ al-Shuhrah,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yaum* 2008.

¹⁷⁵ al-Miṣrī al-Yawm, “Fūrbs: ‘Amr Khālid A’lā al-Du‘āh Dakhlan fī 2007 bi-2,5 Milyūn Dūlār,” February 25 2008.

¹⁷⁶ al-Bāz, *Du‘āh fīl-Manfā*, 16.

that Islamization is something that takes place visually and is only skin deep.¹⁷⁷ Another public discussion has emerged following the appearance of Salafi preachers over the past five years. This concerns the increased influence of Saudi Arabia and Wahhabism. Many of the Salafi preachers have spent years in Saudi Arabia and studied under famous scholarly authorities there. Moreover, many satellite channels are owned by companies from Saudi Arabia. Many fear that this might lead to increased tensions between religious groups, particularly between Muslims and Christians in Egypt. Another concern has been whether the Salafi preachers' purportedly apolitical doctrine has the potential to turn political under certain circumstances. Several commentators have suggested that the regime is playing with fire by letting the Salafi preachers enter Egyptian homes through television. Such is the view presented by one of the most acknowledged specialists on Egyptian Islamic movements, Ḥussām Tammām, in several articles.¹⁷⁸ The background for this is perhaps the Salafis strong focus on the early companions and their heroism in battles. This focus involves a stress on martyrdom in the name of Islam and on self-sacrifice in resisting the "enemy".

One of the few more academic analyses in English so far about Salafi preaching on television is a shorter article by Nathan Field and Ahmad Hamam. Quoted in the article, the Egyptian novelist 'Alā' al-Aswānī calls Salafism "a kind of Christmas present for the dictators because now they can rule with both the army and the religion". Interestingly, Field and Hamam conclude otherwise. Building upon interviews with a range of Egyptian intellectuals, they see the Salafis popularity as an expression of the absence of al-

¹⁷⁷ 'Amr Shubkī, "al-Tadayyun al-Maghshūsh," *al-Miṣri al-Yaum*, September 17 2009. ———, "al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī wa-al-Tadayyun al-Jadīd," *al-Miṣri al-Yawm*, December 7 2006. During my last one-year-stay in Egypt (2008–9) I made a very un-academic everyday asking my Egyptian friends, teachers, taxi-drivers and others whether they thought that society was becoming more Islamic. In fact, most people agreed with Shubkī that people have not become more religious (*mutadayyin*). Many saw contemporary society as increasingly lacking moral values, and described that the new type of extrovert religiousness one had witnessed the past years was outer and not inner. Such emic perspectives of "Re-Islamization" are interesting contrasts to the etic perspectives of the outside observer.

¹⁷⁸ Field and Hamam, "Salafi Satellite TV in Egypt." *Arabic Media & Society*, no. 8 (2009).

Qaraḍāwī and the Muslim Brothers on the scene. It is argued that if al-Qaraḍāwī were given equal access, he would probably draw higher ratings.¹⁷⁹ However, I do not see this as contradictory to al-Aswānī's view. I interpret the decision to allow access to the Salafi preachers as a strategy to separate religion and politics, and to diminish the influence of the Muslim Brothers. That Salafis do not openly say in interviews that they are critical to the Muslim Brothers is not sufficient evidence that they are not. Both their doctrine and their preaching suggest otherwise, as will be discussed further below. Both the preachers themselves and their followers are clearly opposed to politicizing Islam under the present conditions. Moreover, one should not underestimate these preachers as important allies for the state. For example, in the series *Special Evening*, the famous preacher and program presenter, Khālīd 'Abd Allāh, attacked the presidential candidate and former Director of the IAEA, Muḥammad al-Baradā'ī. The argument was that al-Baradā'ī wanted to remove the second article of the constitution that affirms that Islam is the religion of the Egyptian state, that Arabic is its language and that sharia is the main source of legislation. One of the program guests said that anyone who votes for al-Baradā'ī would be fighting against God and His Prophet.¹⁸⁰

Another issue that has been discussed—one of the reasons why many of these channels were shut down in October 2010—was the accusations that Salafi preachers were contributing to conflicts between different Muslims factions, and between Muslims and Christians, in Egypt. Salafi doctrine is *per se* critical of Sufism, and recent accusations of Sufis contributing to a 'shiification' of Egypt have encouraged the Salafis to go further with their critique. While I will return to these questions in the next chapter, there is little doubt that Sufism has been significantly discredited among its followers in

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Sārah Sanad, "Qanāt al-Nās: Kull Man Yantakhibu al-Baradā'ī Yuḥāribu Allāh wa-Rasūlahu," *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, April 6 2010.

Egypt and lost many of them after the entry of the Salafi preachers.¹⁸¹ The leader of the Sufi path al-‘Azīmah, says in the interview that the new Salafi dominated media is threatening the Sufi presence in Egypt. Salafism is distorting the view of Sufism, relating it to the National Democratic Party and Shiism. He says that the Sufis have been compelled to respond to this after a long period of silence on their part.¹⁸² The recent launch of Sufi channels should be seen against this ongoing background. All in all, the lack of historical distance from these unfolding developments and debates make them difficult to interpret. The phenomenon is evolving as these lines are being written. At the same time, the state is drawing up its red lines of what is permitted and what is not. Still, it is clear that television preaching and the ‘new spaces’ for Islamic discourse that TV channels represent have brought to life an unprecedented creativity and dynamism in the field of *da‘wah*, a development that will be addressed in the next chapter.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed television preaching as a *social practice* with the overarching aim of contextualizing the two case studies of chapters five and six. Television preaching in Egypt originated in an authoritarian climate, in which it continues to thrive. Existing side by side with the more traditional “spaces” of Islam, such as the mosque, television preaching, like mosque preaching, has been subject to what may be called a functional differentiation of religion. The religious and political spheres interact, but are still separate. This separation is assured by a strong state. The Egyptian channels still depend on the state-owned infrastructure, such as broadcasting networks and production sites and facilities. The economic dimension is also important. Making television programs and broadcasting is expensive, and part of a greater industry regulated by income and cost.

¹⁸¹ Husām Tammām, “As’īlah al-Zaman al-Salafī,” *IslamOnline*, May 15 2007.

¹⁸² Muṣṭafā Sulaymān, “al-Salafīyah wa’Fitnat al-Takfīr”.. Hujūm Mu’ākis li-Şūfiyat Mişr,” *IslamOnline*, July 21 2009.

The new spaces for preaching must be understood in light of political, economic and cultural constraints. Channels are not neutral “spaces” for preaching. They are the ideological actors and the institutions that finance and select what is broadcast to people. Moreover, religion as TV preaching is only a minor part of overall television broadcasting in Egypt and the region, and has to compete with other cultural expressions in the public sphere. All this should be kept in mind as I introduce the reader to a variety of actors in the field in the next chapter. What is important to bear in mind for the remainder of this study is that television preaching discourses are produced and consumed in the environment described above, and must be interpreted in that light. Without knowledge of how television preaching is “situated” within this social matrix, one has no corrective or resource for interpretation when one seeks to understand the “meanings” of texts or discourses that are produced within it.

3 The Field of Islamic Television Preaching

3.1 The Ramadan Scene 2008

In the book *Popular Culture in the Arab World*, Andrew Hammond describes Ramadan as the “annual carnival of Arab Television”.¹⁸³ Indeed, Ramadan is also the high season for television preaching productions. Many of the larger productions are designed particularly for the holy month. Drama series, films, and preaching compete for viewers’ attention. In this section, by commenting on the series featuring the most famous preachers, I will illustrate the discursive pluralism within the field of preaching and the considerable choice of preachers with which television audiences are confronted. Building on the metaphor of channels as “spaces,” I describe the actors who occupied these spaces during the month of Ramadan 2008. The section gives the necessary background for pointing out dominant trends, and for situating ‘Amr Khālid and Muḥammad Ḥassān within the field of Islamic television preaching.¹⁸⁴

3.1.1 Iqra’ and al-Risālah

Iqra’ presented a blend of different preachers.¹⁸⁵ The channel’s prime time preacher was Muṣṭafā Ḥuṣnī, who presented the series *The Hidden Treasure* (Illustration 3.1, frame 2). The series, which was subtitled in English, treated themes closely connected to Ramadan,

¹⁸³ Andrew Hammond, *Popular Culture in the Arab World* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2007), 231.

¹⁸⁴ This chapter is based on watching a number of these preachers programs, particularly those of Ramadan 2008. These were mainly downloaded from the Internet. There are few secondary sources on this topic. In some cases, therefore, I have, as the references show, used Wikipedia Arabic to obtain biographical information on the preachers. The Arabic version may yet not be as reliable as the English version. Still, used critically, it can function as an alternative source when other sources are difficult to obtain.

¹⁸⁵ In addition to those mentioned below, Zaghlūl al-Naggār, ‘Ā’id al-Qarnī and Muḥammad Ḥassān appeared on Iqra’. These will be discussed further below. Muḥammad Ḥassān who featured in the first half of series *Advise Me, My Friend!* praised Iqra’ as being the “mother” of the Islamic channels. “Episode 1,” in *Awṣā-ni Khalīlī* (Egypt Iqra’, 2008).

such as how to live piously, purify oneself from sins, and get closer to God. The series distinguished itself by broadcasting a three to four minute long reportage about ordinary people who told their personal stories of how they had repented and changed. One of these clips recounts the story of Aḥmad. He shares with the television audience how he used to be a rebel, and disobeyed God. In the clip, shot in his home and at work, he tells about his friends with whom he used to go out, and how several of them now have died—one while drinking, another while committing adultery, several others from overdoses. “They did not have good deaths”, he states.¹⁸⁶

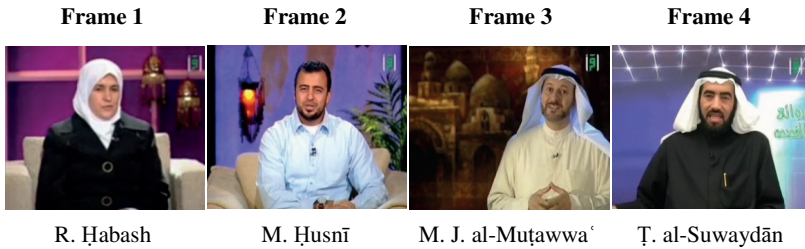


Illustration 3.1. Selection of Preachers on Iqra’, Ramadan 2008.

Ḥusnī, like many other preachers, makes frequent use of personal narratives of conversion. He has a very intimate and passionate style and frequently focuses on love and nearness to God in his programs. He conveys his message in easy, everyday language. Moreover, he is young and trendy and seems to address much the same audience as ‘Amr Khālīd. Although the two are close in these ways, Ḥusnī is much less preoccupied with social reform, and therefore less controversial. Ḥusnī is a lay preacher, being originally a business undergraduate from Ain Shams University. Still, he does hold a certificate from the Preparatory Institute for Preachers run by the Waqf Ministry.¹⁸⁷

A series particularly addressed to women was lead by the Syrian female preacher, Rafīdah Ḥabash (Illustration 3.1, frame 1), who featured in *The Spiritual Life of Women*

¹⁸⁶ Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī, “Ep.19,” in *al-Kinz al-Mafqūd* (Egypt: Iqra’, 2008), 15:00–19:30.

¹⁸⁷ www.mustafahosny.com/article.php?id=1123 [accessed November 22].

Preachers Among her goals were to familiarize people with Islam, counter Westernization and demonstrate how Islamic Law is relevant for women and their families. The show was structured in such a way that the female program host ‘Abīr Fawzī posed questions, and al-Ḥabash functioned as a teacher, giving answers. From what I can gather, al-Ḥabash is an increasingly popular preacher. She has become a fixture on Iqra’, and during the Ramadan seasons of 2009 and 2010 she presented, respectively, the series *Raise Me My Lord* and *Days with the Prophet*. Ḥabash has her own training Institute for preachers in Aleppo. Generally she focuses on the need for dialogue between religions, and calls for women to play a more active role in society.¹⁸⁸ Through her web forum, forum.alandaluse.net, she has created a platform for debating many of these questions.

While Ḥabash may be seen as a “culture broker” who mediates between Islam and women’s roles in society, Muḥammad Jāsīm al-Muṭawwa’‘s series *Social Inimitability* combined Islamic discourse with the social sciences. In it, al-Muṭawwa’ (frame 3) and Zaghlūl al-Naggār praised Islam as an ideal way of organizing society. Referring to fields such as economy, women’s rights and family life, the series aimed at showing the greatness of Islam as a social system and illustrating how modern social science confirms the superiority of sharia in this regard. Al-Muṭawwa’‘s style is very calm and pedagogic and he speaks only in High Arabic. He also plays an important role as the General Director of Iqra’. The fusing of modern science and the Quran has been the main goal of al-Naggār, something I will come back to.

Symbolic of the close relation between al-Risālah and Iqra’ was that Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān (frame 4), the General Director of al-Risālah, appeared on Iqra’ with the thirty-episode series *Masterpieces of Our Civilization*. Al-Suwaydān spoke, as he often does, about the greatness of the Arab civilizations of the past. He told stories with a moral

¹⁸⁸ Īmān ‘Abd al-Mun‘am, “Rafīdah al-Ḥabash Tad‘ū li-’Ḥayāt al-Qulūb” fī Ramaḍān,” *IslamOnline*, August 30 2008.

content, and focused on themes such as social justice, giving during Ramadan and solidarity with the poor.¹⁸⁹ At the same time, he warned against immorality, materialism, and hypocrisy, and called on people to conserve their morality, piety, and faith. Al-Suwaydān is well known for his liberal approach. He combines self-development, leadership culture, and Arabism in his call for Islam. He has authored tens of books in these fields, and has hosted a variety of television programs, such as the Islamic version of *Star Academy*. Al-Suwaydān was born in Kuwait, and holds a doctorate in petroleum engineering from the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma. His style is simple and he speaks High Arabic. In an interview, he says that he aims to present Islam in a way that people understand, with tolerance and simplicity.¹⁹⁰ His focus on success and management has also earned him many critics. Some Salafī preachers, for example, accuse him preaching an Americanized version of Islam.¹⁹¹

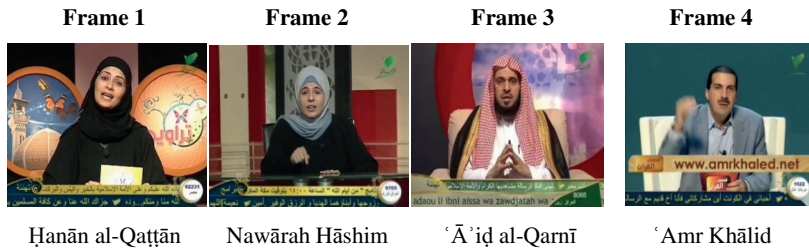


Illustration 3.2. Selection of Preachers on al-Risālah, Ramadan 2008.

Changing the channel to al-Risālah, what was most notable was the number of programs directed towards women. Series by the preachers Ḥanān al-Qaṭṭān, Nawārah Hāshim, Buthaynah Ibrāhīm, ‘Ablah al-Kaḥlāwī, and ‘Ā’iḍ al-Qarnī, all explicitly addressed

¹⁸⁹ Tāriq al-Suwaydān, “Ep. 2,” in *Rawā’i Ḥaḍāratinā* (Iqra’, 2008).

¹⁹⁰ Al-‘Arabīyah, “Al-‘Ayn al-Thālithah: Zāhirat al-Du‘āh al-Judud,” (2005).

¹⁹¹ www.suwaitan.com [accessed June 18 2010].

women.¹⁹² The prime time preacher of al-Risālah was ‘Amr Khālid, whom I will discuss in detail in Chapter 5 (Illustration 3.2, frame 4).

The series *Evening Prayers*, presented by Ḥanān al-Qaṭṭān (frame 1) was broadcast early in the day and particularly targeted younger girls. Ḥanān spoke about the practices of Ramadan and gave advice on how to remain pious and become better throughout Ramadan. She compared her series to a school, where the diploma at the end of the month was devoutness.¹⁹³ Otherwise, she focused on worshipping; self-discipline and how to bring hearts into balance. She also spoke about how one must train oneself in order to change and become successful.¹⁹⁴ Ḥanān’s style is easy and seems adapted to youth, and perhaps teenagers. According to Iqra’s web pages, she is the famous preacher Aḥmad al-Qaṭṭān’s daughter.¹⁹⁵ She lives in Kuwait, and holds a Master’s degree in fiqh. She works with training female preachers, and heads a learning institution under the Kuwaiti Ministry of Endowment. She is also engaged with personal and family training, for which she collects her inspiration from self-development techniques. She has figured on satellite television since 2006.

Also particularly addressed to women, ‘Ā’iḍ al-Qarnī (frame 3) presented the *The Happiest Women* in which he spoke about female ideals, and what he saw as characteristic for the world’s happiest women. This ideal type was modeled on women known from the Quran and Islamic tradition, such as Mary, Fāṭimah, Āsiyah and Asmā’. He focused on how happiness does not come through material goods, but through following Islam: A woman must be monotheist (muwaḥḥidah), right believing and pious. Moreover, she should fast and cover herself. He advocates that women remain faithful to

¹⁹² Other important preachers on al-Risālah were the already mentioned Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān, as well as Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī and ‘Ablah al-Kaḥlāwī. I will comment on these below.

¹⁹³ Ḥanān al-Qaṭṭān, “Episode 2,” in *Tarāwīḥ* (al-Risālah, 2008).

¹⁹⁴ ———, “Episode 1,” in *Tarāwīḥ* (al-Risālah, 2008).

¹⁹⁵ For an analysis of one of Aḥmad al-Qaṭṭān’s sermon, see Philip Halldén, “Islamisk predikan på ljudkassett”, 187–221.

their motherly and other family roles.¹⁹⁶ ʿĀʿid al-Qarnī’s style is very direct and scholarly, and he speaks in High Arabic. He wears a cloak and the characteristic Saudi headwear, the *kūfiyah*. Al-Qarnī is not a lay preacher. He holds a doctorate on interpretations of the hadith collector Muslim’s compilation of hadith. In Saudi Arabia he is a political figure and is one of the symbols of the Saudi reform movement of the 1980s and 1990s. As far as I can gather, it is only recently that he has started to host television programs. During Ramadan 1428/2007, he presented the program series *Keys*, and in Ramadan 2008 he was screened on at least three different channels. Al-Qarnī is the author of the bestseller book *Don’t Be Sad*, a standard commodity among sidewalk book vendors in Cairo which has also been translated into English.

Nawārah Hāshim delivered the series *The Seven under God’s Protection*. The “seven” refers to a group of young men among the Prophet’s companions. According to a hadith, these earned the protection of God through their good deeds. Hāshim told the stories of these men and presented them as ideals for Muslims to follow. She recounts how they contributed to the victory of the Ummah, and her aim was to illustrate how Muslims today can contribute to the Ummah and thus become among those protected by God.¹⁹⁷ The West is construed as materialist and a place where adultery and immorality thrive and are accepted, in opposition to the moral perfection fostered by Islam. The present is likewise characterized by immorality and chaos. For example, she attacked the media and those responsible for showing immoral programs on television, rhetorically asking how people who produce such immoral content on television sleep at night. She also warned extensively about sins such as adultery.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ ʿĀʿid al-Qarnī, “Episode 1,” in *The Happiest Women* (al-Risālah, 2008).

¹⁹⁷ Nawārah Hāshim, “Episode 7,” in *Sab’ah Yazulluhum Allāh* (al-Risālah, 2008).

¹⁹⁸ ———, “Episode 20,” in *Sab’ah Yazulluhum Allāh* (al-Risālah, 2008).

3.1.2 Al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah¹⁹⁹

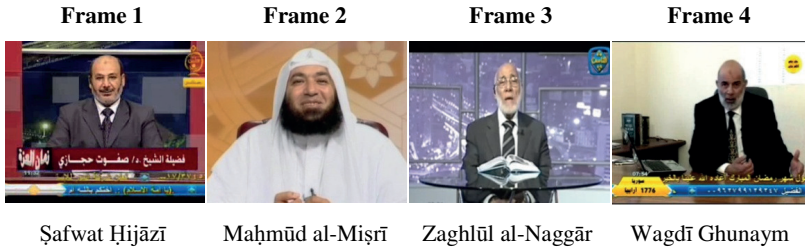


Illustration 3.3. Selection of Preachers on al-Nās, Ramadan 2008

Leaving Iqra’ and al-Risālah, and entering the space of the channel al-Nās—a stronghold of Egyptian Salafī preachers—one crosses a threshold: No female preachers, no pop-music, and a majority of preachers who fit the classic image of a conservative shaykh. During Ramadan 2008, the Salafī trio Ḥassān, Ya’qūb and al-Ḥuwaynī each presented series. Among other important stars were Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī, Zaghlūl al-Naggār, and Şafwat Hījāzī.

Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī presented the series *Joseph and Dreams* (Illustration 3.3, frame 2). He stated that he gave the series its name because he wanted all youth who are confronted with trials to dream, expressing hope that they would be blessed like Joseph. Basing his series on the Quranic chapter with the same name, he puts Joseph forward as someone who resisted the greatest temptations. Themes connected to Ramadan, such as repenting and seeking forgiveness run through the series.²⁰⁰ Al-Miṣrī, also called Abū ‘Ammār, was born in Cairo. He holds a bachelor in sociology and a diploma from the

¹⁹⁹ Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya’qūb was the prime time preacher on al-Nās. *The Origin of the Story* was based on the passages in the Quran that constitute the basis of the narrative tradition of The Stories of the Quran. However, unlike ‘Amr Khālīd—as I will show in chapter five—Ya’qūb did not base his series on the hadith collections of scholars such as Ibn Kathīr, as these do not meet the truth standards of the Salafī preachers who see these accounts as neither right of false. Ya’qūb and Iṣḥāq will be commented on below.

²⁰⁰ Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī, “Ep. 1,” in *Yūsuf wa-al-Aḥlām* (Egypt: al-Nās, 2008).

Preparatory Institute for Preachers from “Al-Azhar’s Legislative Assembly.”²⁰¹ According to his biography, he has also studied Islam under Egyptian and Saudi scholars.²⁰² He mentions Muḥammad Ḥassān and Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī as two of his main sources of inspiration. Al-Miṣrī’s style is softer and less controversial than that of the other Salafī preachers, but he shares with them a focus on the Prophet’s Companions and on eschatological questions. He speaks mostly in colloquial and smiles throughout his programs. He always dresses in white and has a characteristic thick black beard.

In the series *The Time of Glory*, Ṣafwat Ḥijāzī (frame 1) spoke about the magnificence of the Islamic past and praised the Prophet and his companions for their achievements. His style is highly narrative, and he retold these stories in his own words. For example, he praised the humaneness of Abū Bakr, and asked the audience to compare the principles he gave to Usāmah with what was going on in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and Somalia.²⁰³ Ḥijāzī has frequently figured on al-Nās. He is from the Governate of Kafr al-Shaykh and has studied in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and France. He holds a doctorate from the University of Dijon in France in Creeds and Comparative religion. According to Wikipedia Arabic, he is also a *khaṭīb* under the Waqf Ministry.²⁰⁴

Zaghlūl al-Naggār (frame 3), as mentioned, is famous for marrying modern science with the Quran and the Sunnah. In *The Scientific Inimitability of the Sunnah* he challenges evolutionism and argues that modern science actually confirms the cosmogony of the Quran and the creation of human beings. Zaghlūl uses his authority as a geologist and a scholar, and combines Islamic and natural science discourses. In general, Zaghlūl al-Naggār is the most prominent preacher working to Islamize science and to prove that Islamic cosmology is compatible with modern science. When I visited his house in the wealthy Cairo suburb of Maadi, he argued against the theory of evolutionism, maintaining

²⁰¹ *Ma’had I’dād al-Du’āh bil-Jama’iyah al-Shar’iyah bi-al-Qāhirah.*

²⁰² www.islamway.com/?iw_s=Scholar&iw_a=info&scholar_id=114 [accessed June 20 2010].

²⁰³ Ṣafwat Ḥijāzī, “Ep.4,” *Zamān al-’Izzah* (Cairo: Qanāt al-Nās, 2008).

²⁰⁴ www.ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/صفوت_حجازي [accessed December 9 2010].

that the human mind is so unique that it is not possible that mankind descends from apes. He likewise mentioned a range of natural phenomena, such as undersea currents that modern science has only just discovered. According to him, these were mentioned in the Quran long before, which proves its perfection. The titles of his works speak for themselves: “Islam and Modern Science,” “The Quran and Science,” “The Quran and the Universe,” “Earthquakes and Crises of the Century.” As shown in section 2.2, al-Naggār has been on the stage for many years. He has also had a regular column in the state newspaper al-Ahram.

Wagdī Ghunaym appeared on the channel al-Nās with a the series *Interpretation of “People”* in which he explained and interpreted the Quranic chapter People (al-Nās). Ghunaym is best known for being openly affiliated with the Muslim Brothers, and he is persona non-grata in Egypt. The sessions for this series were recorded in Johannesburg.²⁰⁵ According to reports, he has also been expelled from the USA, Great Britain, Bahrain, England and lately South Africa, accused of supporting terrorism and offending state officials. According to his website, Ghunaym was born in the Governate of Sūhāg in Upper Egypt, and holds doctorate in *fiqh* from a university in the US. In addition he holds a Master’s degree in Islamic Studies from The College of Islamic studies in Cairo and a Bachelor’s degree in Business from The University of Alexandria.²⁰⁶ He worked as a preacher in the United States from 2001 to 2004. Before he left Egypt in 2001 he had been in and out of jail for his political activism and his support of the Muslim Brothers.²⁰⁷ He now works as a preacher in Yemen, and he clearly sees himself as a Brother (ikhwānī).²⁰⁸ His style is at times uncompromising and inflamed, but many of his programs are also very calm.

²⁰⁵ Wagdī Ghunaym, “Ep. 1,” in *Tafsīr al-Nās* (South Africa: al-Nās, 2008).

²⁰⁶ ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/وَجْدِي_غُنَيْم [accessed December 10 2010].

²⁰⁷ Masrawy, “Wagdī Ghunaym: Anā Ikhwānī ḥattā al-Nukhā’,” 2009.

²⁰⁸ Muḥammad al-Shāf’ī, “Wagdī Ghunaym al-Muttahim fī Qaḍiyat al-Tanzīm al-‘Ālamī lil-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn,” *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, April 24 2010.



Illustration 3.4. Selection of Preachers on al-Raḥmah, Ramadan 2008²⁰⁹

On al-Raḥmah, Muḥammad Ḥassān, the channel’s general director, was the main star (Illustration 3.4, frame 2). His series *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark* will be examined in detail in chapter six. In addition Ḥāzīm Shūmān, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb and Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī were prominent figures. In *Nourishment of the Soul*, Ya‘qūb spoke of Ramadan as an opportunity to repent and start again. He sees present day reality as a period in which people worship “the body” and focus on the wrong things. Ya‘qūb seems to direct attention inwards toward people’s hearts. He argues the soul needs nourishment in the form of belief and worship, that God makes the hearts of believers happy, and if the soul and the heart are not given enough nourishment, they will become ill.²¹⁰ Generally Ya‘qūb’s sits alone in the studio wearing a white cloak. He uses his upper torso actively and applies his voice—his most effective rhetorical device—in accordance with the mood he desires to create, varying its pitch and strength. Ya‘qūb is popularly known as the preacher “who chants the verses of the Quran”. He smiles frequently, and close-ups of his face are common as he asks the audience questions such as: Who are you? and, How is your relationship with God? Ya‘qūb was educated as a school teacher, and with a teacher’s diploma he went to Saudi Arabia, where he studied and taught from 1980 to 1984. His position is very close to that of Ḥassān and Ishāq. He frequently

²⁰⁹ The capture of Ishāq is taken from al-Ḥikmah. However, he appeared also on al-Raḥmah.

²¹⁰ Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb, “Ep.1,” in *Ghadhā’ al-Rūḥ* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

preaches about the Prophet and his companions, whom he calls “The generation of empowerment (*tamkīn*).”²¹¹

By far the most ardent preacher among those I studied during Ramadan 2008 is Ḥāzim Shūmān (frame 3). He opens his series *Where are You Going, Youth?* at an extremely high pace, describing a tsunami. He recounts how people were enjoying themselves and committing sins when the wave came and turned everything upside down. He sees the tsunami as God’s punishment for sinful behavior. Accordingly, he warns youth against committing sins like “going out”, hanging out with girls, playing around, taking drugs—a list that seems to have no end. One should cease occupying oneself only with worldly things. Current society he describes as in a state of coma. He pauses once in a while to ask: Where are you going, youth? People must repent, he says.²¹² Shūmān is from Maṣūrah and is a medical doctor by profession. Shūmān entered the international spotlight when his negative characterizations of Jews led to the banning of al-Raḥmah from the satellite Nilesat, in April 2010.

Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī (frame 1) featured in several series on al-Raḥmah, al-Ḥikmah, and al-Nās. In *The Ladder to Good Fortune*, broadcast on al-Ḥikmah he criticized the “West” in general, and in particular the re-publishing of the cartoons of the Prophet in Western newspapers. He called on Muslims to boycott the countries involved, targeting Denmark specifically.²¹³ He also criticized domestic corruption and the West that he accused of making trade agreements to exclude other countries.²¹⁴ He moreover expressed regret that there are so few scholars and models today to guide Muslims in the direction of the Venerated Forefathers and the early scholars. He argued that it is difficult to be a Muslim today, and that: “whoever wants to enjoy this religion [Islam] has to return to the time of the first Forefathers”, the creed and the comportment of the Forefathers being the

²¹¹ ———, in *Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh wa-Alladhīna ma‘-Hu* (al-Raḥmah, 2009).

²¹² Ḥāzim Shūmān, “Ep. 1.,” in *‘Alā Fēn Yā Shabāb* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

²¹³ Abū Ishāq, “Ep. 1,” in *Sullam al-Su‘ūd* (al-Ḥikmah, 2008).

²¹⁴ ———, “Ep. 5,” in *Sullam al-Su‘ūd* (al-Ḥikmah, 2008).

only thing that is stable in today’s world.²¹⁵ I was astonished to find out that people spoke about Abū Ishāq as “The New Bukhārī”.²¹⁶ Certainly this was said with a hint of irony, but many do see him as a person with great authority on questions of hadith. He has become a symbol of the Salafī movement and is an acknowledged specialist on the works of Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Albānī, who is one of the main inspirers of literalist Salafism. Abū Ishāq is from Kafr al-Shaykh, in Northern Egypt. According Wikipedia Arabic, he studied Spanish at Ain Shams University. He claims to have studied under the former Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Ibn al-Bāz,²¹⁷ as well as under al-Albānī, whom he went to Jordan to meet on several occasions. Abū Ishāq draws much authority from this, and while al-Albānī had insisted that he did not take on any student, he reportedly changed his mind when he read Abū Ishāq’s first book. Central to Abū Ishāq’s thought is that many preachers and scholars have been quoting hadiths that are not authentic. For example, in a clip on YouTube, he indirectly criticizes ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk for quoting weak hadiths. In the same clip he also describes how he spent time together with Kishk in prison in 1981.²¹⁸

3.1.3 Non-Religious “Spaces”



Illustration 3.5. Selection of Preachers on Non-Religious Channels, Ramadan 2008.

²¹⁵ ———, “Ep. 3,” in *Sullam al-Su‘ūd* (Egypt: al-Ḥikmah, 2008).

²¹⁶ Besides Muslim, al-Bukhārī authored the most authoritative collection of hadith in Sunni Islam. His work, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, is one of six collections considered as “correct”.

²¹⁷ ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/أبو_إسحاق_الحويني [accessed September 11 2010].

²¹⁸ YouTube, “Mādhā Qāla al-Shaykh Kishk lil-Shaykh Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī,” (2009), (www.youtube.com/watch?v=29PweIq4S2M&feature=related), [accessed November 22 2010].

In addition to ‘Amr Khālid’s *The Stories of the Quran*, al-Miḥwar had two other prime time series: ‘Alī al-Jufri’s *O Disciple!* and Mu‘izz Mas‘ūd’s *The Right Way*. Broadcast over 30 episodes the Sufi preacher al-Jufri’s series was set in a mosque (Illustration 3.5, frame 1).²¹⁹ It was organized like a “session” (*majlis*), with an audience of only men. He focused on getting closer to God, on freeing the self from the material world, and cleansing the hearts of believers. He compared the human heart to a house with open windows. Sinful things come through the eyes, the ears and the mouth, and the heart must therefore be cleansed. God focuses on people’s hearts, he declares. Those who have committed sins must repent and invoke God’s name (*dhikr*). Invocations keep the devil away, he explains. In his preaching, he plays on the whole emotional register of the audience, and shifts from funny to deeply moving passages.²²⁰ Al-Jufri is from Yemen. He rose to fame in Egypt at the dawn of the new millennium and has been visiting the country regularly since 2002. In Egypt he is famous for preaching at private gatherings, particularly those of rich and influential Egyptians.²²¹ As a Sufi, he participates in celebrations of the moulids of the Prophet and Sufi Saints, and he traces his own ancestry back to Ḥusayn, son of ‘Alī, the Prophet’s cousin. He has for long been the only highly profiled Sufi preacher on the scene. Despite al-Jufri repeatedly underscoring that he never speaks about politics, according to news reports, he is not welcome in Egypt anymore. The reasons for this are unclear. In general, al-Jufri advocates dialogue and respect, and warns against discriminating against different Islamic factions. He has also maintained repeatedly that pursuing political power is not compatible with *da‘wah*.²²²

²¹⁹ The series had its own website still operative October 2010 (www.almoreed.com). Impressively, the site includes written manuscripts of the programs, and a function that allows the user to play and read the text.

²²⁰ The program is produced by the same program that produced ‘Amr Khālid’s *The Stories of the Quran*. With regard to the techniques used to film and frame the audience, many of the techniques are similar to those in Khālid’s series.

²²¹ al-Bāz, *Du‘āh fil-Manfā*, 121.

²²² Sāmī Kamāl al-Dīn, “al-Dā‘iyah al-Islāmī al-Ḥabīb ‘Alī al-Jufri lil-Miṣrī al-Yawm” *Iqḥām al-Ṭā‘ifīyah fī Muqāwamat al-‘Udwan al-Isra‘īlī Ya‘iddu Khiyānah*,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm* 2006.

The young preacher Mu‘izz Mas‘ūd (frame 2) presented the program *The Right Way*. The series was based on an informal dialogue in a homey setting between Mas‘ūd and the famous TV host Mu‘tazz al-Demīrdāsh. Both wore a suit and cultivated a trendy look. Mas‘ūd spoke extensively about Ramadan and discussed themes such as the purification of the soul, repentance, fasting and how to become a better Muslim. He also answered many basic questions about Islam posed by al-Demīrdāsh. Mas‘ūd has travelled widely abroad and has an international audience. He is a Faculty of Commerce graduate from the American University in Cairo, and is famous for using his personal narrative of change in his preaching. Mas‘ūd tells that he was a person who refused to take advice from anyone. He played in a band, drank, and engaged in what he describes as sinful behavior. At some point many of his friends died, and he became seriously ill. This led to an inner change. He describes how he experienced a total transformation, becoming directed towards God. He left singing and music to concentrate on reading the Quran. He decided that a way to thank God for this blessing was to tell others about his experience. Since then, he has taken courses in sharia under the Egyptian Mufti ‘Alī Gum‘ah.²²³ Mas‘ūd engages in cultural dialogue and is the preacher who appears the most liberal with regard to dress and lifestyle.

On al-Ḥayāh, Khālīd al-Gīndī (frame 4) presented the series *Sweet Pastries*. He spoke about the stories of the Quran, and people called in to ask everyday questions about Islam. Al-Gīndī has a degree from al-Azhar and worked as an official *khaṭīb* before he entered the limelight of the fatwā business and television preaching. He is most famous for pioneering the fatwā industry through the service “The Islamic Phone” (al-Hātīf al-Islāmī). The service allows people to call in and receive advice from scholars, for a fee, a service that today has expanded to the Internet.²²⁴ Recently, he founded the television channel al-Azharī. Although al-Azhar itself, interestingly, says it has nothing to do with

²²³ www.moezmasoud.com [accessed May 30 2010].

²²⁴ al-Bāz, *Du‘āh fil-Manfā*, 33.

the channel, the channel aims to promote the positions of al-Azhar in the Islamic mediascape. Al-Gindī is outspoken and at times controversial.

Another series on al-Ḥayāh was *Religion and Life* by ‘Ablah al-Kaḥlāwī (frame 5). She is among the most prominent female figures in the field of television preaching. Her series was hosted by Du‘ā’ ‘Āmir who for many is a symbol of beauty, and one of the first presenters who wore a headscarf on television. The screen was split in two. On the left hand side was Kaḥlāwī in her all-covering white gown. On the right was the presenter wearing a headscarf and a loose fashionable dress. People called in, and ‘Āmir passed on the questions to al-Kaḥlāwī. Questions concerned themes such as marriage and divorce, inheritance, worship and spirituality. Al-Kaḥlāwī gave her advice in a clear, emphatic manner, in colloquial Arabic. Each program showed a two to three minute long video clip of someone who had some basic need, be it surgery, a monthly allowance to survive, or a wheelchair. After the clip, people were asked to call in and give donations. Al-Kaḥlāwī gave her blessings to these and ended every program with a prayer. Reportedly, the program was very popular, and al-Kaḥlāwī is supposed to have refused any financial compensation for her appearance.²²⁵ It should be noted that al-Kaḥlāwī is a scholarly authority. She is a professor (*ustādhah*) in Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) at the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Studies for girls at al-Azhar University. In 1974 she earned a master’s degree in Comparative fiqh, followed in 1979 by a doctorate, both from al-Azhar. The same year she was appointed Head of the Section for Islamic Law at the Institute for Pedagogy in Mecca. She has been an important actor, teaching many so-called repenting artists.²²⁶

Finally, during Ramadan 2008, one had to look beyond the Egyptian channels to find one of the historically most important television preachers in Egypt, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-

²²⁵ Shimā’ al-Bardīnī, “Du‘ā’ ‘Āmir: ‘Ablah al-Kaḥlāwī Ta‘malu li-Wajh Allāh..wa-al-’Dīn wa-al-Ḥayāh’ Waṣala lil-Nās li-anna-hu Ṣādiq,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, September 29 2008.

²²⁶ www.ablaalkahlawy.com [accessed June 2010].

Kāfī (frame 3). He presented the programs *Wonders of the Heart* on Dubai TV and *Places of Celebration* on al-Shāriqah. I have not been able to obtain these shows, and can therefore not comment on them. Al-Kāfī comes from Minyā in Upper Egypt. He played an important role in the piety movement that developed around the Shooting Club in the Cairene neighborhood of Muhandesin towards the end of the 1990s.²²⁷ The club is a social arena in which many of the new rich gathered to listen to al-Kāfī's khuṭbahs and lessons. He particularly attracted a female audience, and accordingly became known as "The Women's Shaykh". He influenced the wives of Ministers, diplomats and business men, and most importantly, convinced a number of female artists to adopt the veil. Hence, al-Kāfī became a key figure of the phenomenon of the "Repenting Artists".²²⁸ The withdrawal of these artists created great headlines, especially as several of these artists reappeared, veiled, on the television screen. These women who now appeared with a new identity created much publicity for preachers such as al-Kāfī. They gave them credit for their personal transformations and thus became symbols of their message.²²⁹ Al-Kāfī's appearance on TV during Ramadan 1993, on a show hosted by Karimān Hamzah, the only veiled public broadcaster at the time, played an important role in making him a media star. Al-Kāfī's message to women was conservative, and he insisted that women should not go far from home unaccompanied.²³⁰ 'Umar 'Abd al-Kāfī is always handsomely dressed in a suit and tie. His style is somewhat academic and he speaks a high variant of Modern Standard Arabic. Besides being the author of a wide range of Islamic books, he holds a doctorate in agriculture.²³¹ Recently, his popularity seems to

²²⁷ For a description of one of al-Kāfī's meetings see Geneive Abdo, *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 143.

²²⁸ This refers to the tendency that profiled female dancers, actors and musicians retreated from the scene of entertainment, adopted the veil and opted for a more pietistic lifestyle.

²²⁹ Patrick Haenni and Tjitske Holtrop, "Mondaines Spiritualités: 'Amr Khālid, 'Skaykh branché' de la jeunesse dorée du Caire," *Politique africaine* 87, no. Oktober (2002): 50.

²³⁰ Lila Abu-Lughod, *Remaking Women*, 252.

²³¹ www.abdelkafy.com/ar/ [accessed June 18 2010]

have increased, and he has been used as a commentator on Islamic issues on both al-Jazeera and al-‘Arabīyah.²³²

3.2 Two Cases

Il s’agissait [...] de montrer en quoi consistaient les différences, comment il était possible que des hommes, à l’intérieur d’une même pratique discursive parlent d’objets différents, aient des opinions opposées, fassent des choix contradictoires.²³³

The previous section illustrated the diversity of the Ramadan series that were the backdrop for those of Muḥammad Ḥassān and ‘Amr Khālid during Ramadan 2008. It also illustrated the considerable choice that TV audiences are confronted with. The aim of this section is to present Ḥassān and Khālid as TV preachers and to discuss how they represent two different and dominant trends in the field of preaching. In doing so, I will build on the distinction established in the previous chapter between “The New Preachers” and the Wasaṭī movement on the one hand, and “The New Salafis” and the Salafī movement on the other. This roughly corresponds to the two different types of “religious” spaces discussed in section 2.3. I start by pointing to some of the controversies between these two camps. Then, I introduce the two preachers, and finally I connect these to the larger Salafī and Wasaṭī movements.

3.2.1 Tensions and Controversies

While the antagonism between “The New Salafī Preachers” and the “New Preachers” has been there from the start,²³⁴ it is not always easy pinpoint exactly how these two differ from each other. Still, as I discussed in chapter two, Salafī preaching represented a new

²³² Van Nieuwkerk, “‘Repentant’ Artists in Egypt: Debating Gender, Performing Arts and Religion,” *Contemporary Islam* 2 (2008): 203.

²³³ Michel Foucault, *L’archéologie du savoir* (Edition Gallimard, 1969), 271.

²³⁴ In lack of a better typology, I use these two emic designations. While preachers such as ‘Amr Khālid promoted themselves as a new generation of preachers, the Salafī oriented preachers would probably protest strongly against anything suggesting that their approach is new. My position is that the main element that makes these preachers “new” is their appearance on television.

type of Islamic television da‘wah that sought to create an Islamic alternative to what they saw as Western inspired Islamic TV programming. I have explained how women are nearly absent on channels such as al-Nās, al-Ḥikmah and al-Raḥmah, and how these channels use hymns instead of Islamic pop Music. One of the most interesting things in all this preaching is following the opposing views of “The New Salafi Preachers” and “The New Preachers” on various matters. A good way to do this is to examine recordings from television programs on YouTube by the followers of different preachers. Some of the recordings are edited by the preachers’ followers, and some have spurred long debates among YouTube users. The popularity of such recordings and the ensuing debates is indicated by the number of viewers reported to have watched the videos. To consider these in detail would constitute a study on its own, and I shall here refer to only a few cases, focusing on the controversies for the sake of illustration.

While many other preachers participate in the debates, the main antagonism appears to be between the Salafī trio Muḥammad Ḥassān, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb and Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, on the one hand, and ‘Amr Khālīd, Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī, Mu‘izz Mas‘ūd, Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān and ‘Alī al-Jufrī, on the other. “The New Salafi Preachers” accuse the latter of not being competent, of focusing on entertainment, and fronting a Western inspired form of da‘wah. Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, for example, criticizes Khālīd and the “two others” (most likely referring to Ḥusnī and Mas‘ūd) of having no knowledge. He mocks Khālīd and says that he cannot have read a single book of Islamic Law. Moreover, he pejoratively calls him “the mufti of the artists” and says that he promotes Western music and art instead of true Islamic art.²³⁵ Similarly, in a clip, most probably a sound recording from one of his *khuṭbahs*, Muḥammad Ḥassān in a very humoristic tone makes fun of Iqra’ and “their beautiful women.” He describes the TV station’s beautiful presenters as evoking temptation (*fitnah*) and distraction, rather than

²³⁵ YouTube, “al-Shaykh al-Ḥuwaynī Yuwaddīhu al-Mushkilah ma‘ Fikr al-Ustāz ‘Amr Khālīd “ (2007). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkakThjUZKo). [528543 hits, December 1 2010].

being appropriate to the call.²³⁶ Still, as pointed out in the foregoing section, Ḥassān appeared on Iqra' the same year that this clip was published on YouTube.²³⁷ In the comments following this clip, one of the YouTube users, probably one of Ḥassān's fans, commented that it was only after Iqra' had adjusted their policies that Ḥassān agreed to appear on Iqra' .²³⁸

“The New Preachers” are answering back. Muṣṭafā Husnī attacks the “New Salafis” (he does not mention any preachers specifically), both their approach and their concept of *bid'ah* (innovation, heresy). In a clip on YouTube, recorded from Iqra', Ḥusnī criticizes the tendency of these shaykhs to believe that they have no need for the four schools of law. Moreover, he questions their approach to hadīth and their labeling anything that breaks with their approach *bid'ah*. He argues particularly against their repeatedly expressed view that moulds are *bid'ah*.²³⁹ But Ḥusnī's attack has drawn retorts: Abū Ishāq, Ya'qūb and Ḥassān have repeatedly criticized Ḥusnī. He must answer for his views before God, they claim, and warn that his preaching is a form of misguidance. In a clip that is a true demonstration of his rhetorical skills, Abū Ishāq ridicules Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī for what he sees as his total lack of competence and for his preaching a type of Islam in which everything is permitted.²⁴⁰

Muḥammad Ḥassān and 'Amr Khālid exchange similar accusations. In one of his programs, Ḥassān interpreted Khālid to have said that the Prophet failed (*fashal*) in a

²³⁶ ———, “About Chanel Iqraa,” (2008). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=2y6w6QXjgqw&feature=fvw). [29134 hits, December 1 2010].

²³⁷ An interesting detail here is that on popular “Salafi” websites, such as www.forsanelhaq.com one will only find the episodes in which Ḥassān appeared and not any other programs from Iqra'.

²³⁸ An interesting detail here is that on popular “Salafi” websites, such as www.forsanelhaq.com one will only find the episodes in which Ḥassān appeared and not any other programs from Iqra'.

²³⁹ YouTube, “Khad'ū-ka fā-Qālū dī Bid'ah Muṣṭafā Husnī al-Ḍarbah al-Qāḍiyah “ (2009). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=4obAviEQPT4&feature=related) [2428 hits, December 5 2010]. The whole program is available from his webiste: www.mustafahosny.com/multimedia.php?id=439.

²⁴⁰ Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwāyṇī, “Radd al-Shaykh Abī Ishāq 'alā Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī,” in *Faḍḍaḍah Ḍmānīyah* (Egypt: Qanāt al-Nās, 2009). There is also a series of YouTube clips from this program. The first part with links to the others: YouTube, “Bidāyat al-Radd 'alā Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī 1/9,” (2009). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDNU9uivRI4&feature=related). [34422 Hits, December 1 2010].

battle. This led to reactions from the Salafī side, and various preachers commented on the dispute on television.²⁴¹ Muḥammad Ḥassān, who lays stress on the Prophet’s infallibility, accused Khālīd thus: “You [addressing ‘Amr Khālīd] are a failure; among the most failed people on earth.”²⁴² Khālīd, in his more diplomatic style, responded in a clip that it is wrong (*ḥarām*) to extract only a small sequence from his discourse, and he criticized Ḥassān (without mentioning his name) for making trouble out of nothing.²⁴³ There are several other clips in the same style. The preachers tend not to use names when they criticize each other. This reluctance is a point well illustrated in an interview with Muḥammad Ḥassān on al-Jazeera, where he says that there is no dispute between him and Khālīd, and that he had never mentioned him by name. At the same time, he utters critique towards Khālīd formulating himself in terms that are more general. He emphasizes that he could not accept anyone criticizing the Prophet and advises Khālīd to admit his mistake and clarify his position on the matter.²⁴⁴

Such tensions and controversies make the comparison of Ḥassān and Khālīd’s Ramadan series even more interesting. Two successful Egyptian Muslim TV preachers who are both part of the Sunni da‘wah movement seem to clash on a variety of issues. Before I move on to the case study to analyze in what ways they try to shape their audiences, I will describe Ḥassān and Khālīd further with a focus on their careers as television preachers.

²⁴¹ There are range of YouTube videos pieced together by YouTube users on this matter. Some have more than one million hits.

²⁴² YouTube, “Radd Faḍīlat al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān ‘alā al-Madū’ ‘Amr Khālīd,” (2008). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxSBfVVb5p0). [955536 hits, December 1 2010]. Cf. al-Sayid Zāyid, “al-Islāmīyūn - Muḥammad Ḥassān.. al-Salafīyah al-Miṣrīyah ‘indamā tatashakkalu khārij al-Ḥudūd,” *IslamOnline* 2009.

²⁴³ ———, *‘Amr Khālīd Yaruddu ‘alā Muḥammad Ḥassān* (2009).

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yq9RrNth8M). [438315 hits, December 1 2010].

²⁴⁴ ———, “al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān Yūjību..Limādhā Hājamtum ‘Amr Khālīd?,” (2010). (www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2C8joaZSm0&feature=related) [687 hits December 1 2010].

3.2.2 Muḥammad Ḥassān

3.2.2.1 Short Biography

Muḥammad Ḥassān is an Egyptian dā‘iyah who sees himself as part of the Islamic awakening, the Islamic movement.²⁴⁵ His early life and education reveal a blend of a traditional Islamic education and studies at Cairo University. He was born in the Egyptian village Damuh, in the Governorate of al-Daqahlīyah, in 1962. According to his website, he attended the local Quran School from the age of four. By the age of eight, he had memorized the Quran, and at 13 he gave his first *khuṭbah* in a neighboring village. Ḥassān went on to study media and communication at Cairo University.²⁴⁶ There he studied content analysis and public speaking, and obtained a Bachelor’s degree. During the same period, he started to study sharia, Islamic jurisprudence and *tafsīr* (Quran interpretation) under supervision of various shaykhs at al-Azhar. He also studied at the Institute for Islamic Studies in Cairo until his studies were interrupted by the compulsory military service in Egypt.²⁴⁷

Later Ḥassān combined his studies with working and teaching. Like many Egyptians, he went to Saudi Arabia to work. He worked as imam for more than six years in a mosque, and taught at the Islamic University of Imam Muḥammad b. Sa‘ūd. His subjects were hadith and the science of hadith methodology. According to his profile on the website of al-Raḥmah, he has studied under Saudi scholars such as ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-Bāz (1910–99), Muḥammad al-‘Uthaymīn (d. 2001) and ‘Abd Allāh b. Jibrīn.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Muḥammad Ḥassān, *Khawāṭir ‘alā Tarīq al-Da‘wah* (al-Manṣūrah: Maktabat Fiyād, 2006), 11.

²⁴⁶ According to Wikipedia Arabic (ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/حسان-محمد), when he was eighteen years old, he attended some meetings with Shaykh al-Albānī in Jordan [accessed August 7 2009].

²⁴⁷ When not stated otherwise the biographical information is collected from Ḥassān’s website. (www.muhammadhassan.com). [accessed June 6 2009].

²⁴⁸ These are all famous scholars. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-The Grand Mufti of Saudi-Arabia until his death in 1999 was a Salafī preachers.

Since returning to Egypt, Muḥammad Ḥassān has been dedicated to *da'wah* and has worked extensively as a preacher and a lecturer. He has been teaching at the Preparatory Institute for Preachers and at the Anṣār al-Sunnah University in the city Maṣūrah. Ḥassān is by many considered to have great scholarly authority, since he has studied under famous shaykhs, and taught and worked as an imam and *khaṭīb* (speaker in a mosque) for many years. Thus when he started appearing on satellite television, he was already famous as a cassette preacher and a *khaṭīb*. Indeed, the Ramadan Series *The Events of the End* on al-Nās, broadcast daily in the course of Ramadan 2006AD/1427H, brought a new dimension to his fame. As indicated by the series' title, it centers on eschatological themes, such as the Last Hour and the Day of Judgment. In a poetic style Ḥassān presents vivid images of the torments after death and stories about good and bad ways of dying, thus seeking to arouse fear in the audience and to move them away from sinful behavior. His oral style is very similar to that of the case study in the following chapter.²⁴⁹ The following Ramadan (2007AD/1428H) he presented the series *The Diseases of the Ummah*, also on al-Nās. In each program, he speaks about a disease, such as lack of belief, lack of morality and wasting time. He also warns, as he often does, against polytheism and *sihr* (sorcery). Many of the programs are particularly addressed to youth and deal with what Ḥassān calls the psychological defeat (*ḥazīmah nafsiyah*) that youth are experiencing today. He seeks to bring hope to the Ummah and calls on people to be diligent and work hard. He presents *The Diseases of the Ummah* as the diagnosis, while *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights* (2008) presents the solution. In 2007 Ḥassān set up his own channel, al-Raḥmah, and the series *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights* studied in the next chapter was the first Ramadan series he broadcast on this channel.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ The series was both widely available on Video CD and in book format in Cairo, 2008-09. Muḥammad Ḥassān, *Aḥdāth al-Nihāyah wa-Nihāyat al-Ālam* (Maṣūrah: Maktabah Fayyāḍ, 2007).

²⁵⁰ His series the following year (2009AD/1430AH) on al-Raḥmah was titled *Mishkāt al-Anwār*.

3.2.2.2 Main Ideas

A key element in Ḥassān's doctrine is his construal of the concept *tawḥīd*. In Islam, *tawḥīd* would normally mean to believe in the Unity of God as opposed to polytheism. However, in the thought of Ḥassān, the use of the term has wider implications: *Tawḥīd* does not only imply not to attribute partners to God. It also means that there is only one unique creed to follow, only one correct belief and method of worship. This is a very exclusivist approach. The practice of the Prophet and his early followers (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) is the example of correct conduct and ideal social organization. It represents what he calls "the Quranic society," characterized by perfection, balance and unity. A central idea in Ḥassān writings and preaching is that this practice and the ideals on which it is based must be followed if the restoration of the Ummah is to take place.²⁵¹

The call to *tawḥīd* is therefore the primary strategy to achieve change. The call is based on an exclusivist doctrine and includes a negative view of those who deviate from this straight path. Shiites, Sufis, and any other factions whom he sees as breaking with the principle of *tawḥīd* are considered inner threats to the unity of the Ummah. The major principle is that the Ummah should not be split into groups. Ḥassān would, therefore, also refuse to be called a Salafi. Rather, he sees himself as a Muslim or among the People of the Sunnah (*ahl al-sunnah*).

Ḥassān translates his dichotomized theology into a similar view of current affairs. He conceptualizes the contemporary world within an Islamic cosmology where the battle between Truth and falsehood continues until the Last Day. The West and the East are described as *kāfir* (irreligious/unbelieving/infidel) and *mulḥid* (heretical/ unbelieving/atheistic).²⁵² He presents Islam as something substantially different from, as well as superior to, all other existing ideologies. Islam is a total way of life that should be rooted

²⁵¹ Cf. Muḥammad Ḥassān, *Ḥaqīqat al-Tawḥīd*, 3rd ed. (Manṣūrah: Maktabat Fayāḍ, 2006).

²⁵² Cf. Ḥassān, *Khawāṭir 'alā Ṭarīq al-Da'wah*, 50–53.

in the Quran and the Sunnah. He characterizes the present state of the religion as a state of crisis, disrupted by internal strife and confrontation with external enemies.²⁵³ The enemies are numerous, and they work constantly to conceal and thwart the Truth.²⁵⁴ Among the enemies are the West, the Zionists and the global economic system.²⁵⁵ This total uniqueness of Islam as compared to other systems of thought is discursively expressed through oppositions such as truth/falsehood, light/darkness and so forth.

Thus, while Ḥassān's project may be seen to be theological, there is also a clear anti-imperialist tone in his discourse. He refers to battles going on in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Somalia, vividly describing how Muslims are being killed at the hand of the enemies.²⁵⁶ But Ḥassān does not focus on politics. When he speaks about reform (*iṣlāḥ*), he refers primarily to rectifying belief and creed, and not political reform.²⁵⁷ He sees the "Islamic political project" as failed.²⁵⁸ Thus, while he is not interested in political power on the local level, he dreams of Islam becoming a more defining power on a global scale. Ḥassān sees changing the political system from above and establishing an "Islamic rule" as the wrong strategy. One needs to understand the Islamic creed correctly before starting to look for the particularities of the political system and seeking to establish Islamic jurisdiction. If such a system is established before all people follow the doctrine of *tawḥīd*, Islam will be exploited by one particular group as a tool of governance.²⁵⁹ Thus, while his final ambition of Islamic world dominance may certainly be seen as political, the strategy to reach this goal is apolitical.²⁶⁰ He states that laws are given by

²⁵³ Ibid., 49–50.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 109.

²⁵⁵ The economic system must be shaped according to the standards of Islam, and not according to the "stupid, profit-oriented economies of the West and the East", he writes ———, *Ḥaqīqat al-Tawḥīd*, 12.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Muḥammad Ḥassān, "Lesson 10," in *Aḥdāth al-Niyāyah* (Egypt: Qanāt al-Nās, 2006), 10:00–15:00.

²⁵⁷ ———, "Manhaj al-Taghyīr," [muhammedhassan.org](http://muhammedhassan.org/www.muhammedhassan.org/alkhotab_wa_alдорos/video/SaveFiles.aspx?hAudViD=1917&hRateID=6), www.muhammedhassan.org/alkhotab_wa_alдорos/video/SaveFiles.aspx?hAudViD=1917&hRateID=6. [accessed April 5 2009].

²⁵⁸ Ḥassān, *Khawāṭir 'alā Ṭarīq al-Da'wah*, 21.

²⁵⁹ ———, *Ḥaqīqat al-Tawḥīd*, 11–17.

²⁶⁰ Cf. ———, *Khawāṭir 'alā Ṭarīq al-Da'wah*, 109.

God and no law made by humans should ignore these: “No state or council, or parliament, or body or authority, or anyone, has the right to give human beings laws without God, ignoring the ruling of God.”²⁶¹ Thus, there is an implicit critique against policies contrary to what he sees as the interest of the Ummah, but it is not his mission to call on people to political change.²⁶²

Because the spread of *tawhīd* is what will lead the Ummah to rise again, preachers play an important role in creating revival. One should not waste one’s time on searching for worldly power, but rather engage in spreading the message: “In order for the march of this blessed troop to proceed the whole way, we need sincere, truthful and impartial preachers to lead this troop of goodness according to The book of God—the glorious and sublime.”²⁶³ Ḥassān underscores that preachers must possess knowledge. The Ummah lacks it today. In a recent interview, he emphasizes that distance between youth and [real] scholars must be erased. At the same time, he draws a contrast between what he sees as true scholars and those who present themselves as scholars but who have only read a few books. He speaks of these as the “scholars of evil (*‘ulamā’ al-sū’*)”. More generally, he sees the Ummah as moving from a state he calls “the crisis of the mind” to a stage in which people are aware of the crisis.²⁶⁴

3.2.2.3 Muḥammad Ḥassān and the Salafī Movement

In this dissertation, Muḥammad Ḥassān represents a Salafī oriented trend vis-à-vis ‘Amr Khālīd and preachers of his brand. In Egypt, Ḥassān is identified as a preacher who belongs to the group of “The New Salafis.” He shares this denomination with other TV

²⁶¹ ———, *Ḥaqqat al-Tawhīd*, 17.

²⁶² Recently he expressed in an interview on al-Jazeera that those “responsible” have yet contribute with anything positive for the Islamic Ummah. Over and above, this interview is a good illustration of how Ḥassān represents the contemporary world in terms of Islamic cosmology. Al-Jazeera, “Hassan on al-Jazeera,” (Doha: al-Jazeera, 2010).

²⁶³ Ḥassān, *Khawāṭir ‘alā Tarīq al-Da’wah*, 9–12.

²⁶⁴ Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, “al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān: al-Azhar lam Yamut wa-hunāk Mukhaṭṭaṭ Dani’ li-Isqāṭi-hi,” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, August 13 2010.

preachers such as Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb and Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī, who usually figure in “spaces” like al-Nās, al-Raḥmah and al-Ḥikmah. According to the Egyptian journalist Sayyid Zāyid, the Salafī preachers tend to focus on correct belief and creed. Moreover, they tend to preoccupy themselves with eschatological themes such as death, the pains of the grave and signs of the Last Day. Also, their exclusivist doctrine makes condemning of what they see as *shirk* (idolatry or polytheism) and idolatry a common theme. This includes an antagonistic stance towards Sufī preachers. The Salafī preachers also tend to speak in favor of *niqāb* as a correct Islamic practice.²⁶⁵ The Salafī preachers have been critical both of the Wasafī trend and of al-Azhar. In September–October 2009, the now deceased shaykh of al-Azhar, al-Ṭanṭawī, scorned an 11-year-old girl on a visit to an elementary school for wearing a *niqāb*.²⁶⁶ The trio Ḥassān, Ya‘qūb and Abū Ishāq, who argue either that *niqāb* is a duty (*farīdah*) or that it is at least legal (*shar‘ī*), went on air and fiercely criticized the shaykh of al-Azhar. Ya‘qūb, for example, appeared on al-Raḥmah and called on women who wear a *niqāb* to remain steadfast.²⁶⁷ In response, the shaykh of al-Azhar went on state television and said that the *niqāb* was a custom and not [part of] worship (*‘ibādah*).²⁶⁸

The Egyptian researcher Rafīq Ḥabīb presents a series of points that he sees as characterizing Egypt’s Salafī preachers. He argues that instead of looking for a balance and for compromises between Islam and contemporary reality, they seek inspiration from

²⁶⁵ Sayyid Zāyid, ““al-Salafīyūn” bayna Azmat Iqtiḥām al-Aqṣā wa-Ghaḍbat al-Niqāb,” *IslamOnline*, October 26 2009.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb, “Radd li-lladhīna Yurīdūna Man‘ al-Niqāb,” (Egypt: Qanāt al-Raḥmah, 2009).

²⁶⁸ YouTube, “Shaykh al-Azhar fī al-Bayt Bayt-ak Ḥawlah al-Niqāb,” (2009) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=XssLjdf4i1I&feature=related). [55652 hits, December 5 2010]. The critical position towards al-Azhar is shown also in other questions. Abu Ishāq, for example, has criticized the fatwā of al-Shaykh of al-Azhar that forbade female mutilation. In a clip, shown on the channel al-Shaqīrī, he says that the Shaykh of al-Azhar, then al-Ṭanṭawī does not know right from left in hadith science. He describes how the Shaykh used what al-Albānī had classified as a weak hadith. YouTube, “Ra‘ī al-Shaykh al-Ḥuwaynī bi-Shaykh al-Azhar,” (2008), (www.youtube.com/watch?v=wozBurwoWCI&feature=related), [56189 hits, December 5 2010].

what they see as the pure source of Islam, the first generations of Muslims. Although this includes political ideals, such as those of the Caliphs, their position is that politicizing Islam before all Muslims share the same creed is wrong and will only lead to the Ummah's fragmentation. The Salafis present an image of a perfect society and an Islamic state that stands in sharp contrast to that of today. They call for setting up a new reality, but have no strategy for its implementation.²⁶⁹

On a more global level, Ḥassān and the New Salafī preachers can be understood to represent what Bernard Rougier in his typology defines as literalist Salafism (*salafisme littéraliste*). Based on an analysis of contemporary movements (from about 1990), he argues that literalist Salafism rejects any form of political participation, and unconditionally abides Muslim rulers. He contrasts this approach to what he calls the *Salafī reformist* trend, which seeks political power, as for example, the Muslims Brothers, and *Salafī Jihadism*, which is characterized by a much more revolutionary approach.²⁷⁰ Literalist Salafism is associated with the hadith scholar Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī. According to Stéphane Lacroix, al-Albānī's focus on the hadith sciences represents a rupture with both the official religious institutions and the more politicized branches of Salafism. He argues that al-Albānī calls for a variant of Wahhabism that is purified of elements contrary to what is deemed the doctrine of the venerated forefathers. With regard to politics, al-Albānī was among the first who criticized Sayyid Quṭb.²⁷¹ Such a focus on creed and worship may well be described as entailing a decontextualization and transnationalization of Islam.²⁷² His position was that all Muslims agree on the necessity of establishing an Islamic state, but they differ over how to arrive at that goal.

²⁶⁹ Rafīq Ḥabīb, "al-Salafīyah wa-al-Wasaṭīyah.. Tabāyunāt wa-Mushtarikāt," *IslamOnline*, April 25 2009.

²⁷⁰ Bernard Rougier, ed. *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*, Proche Orient (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), 15.

²⁷¹ Stéphane Lacroix, "L'apport de Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani au salafisme contemporain," in *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*, ed. Bernard Rogier (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), 54.

²⁷² Laurent Bonnefoy, "L'illusion apolitique," in *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*, ed. Bernard Rougier (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), 146.

For him it was only the adherence to *tawḥīd* that could make disputes disappear so that all Muslims could be united in “one row.”²⁷³ Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, the intellectual leader of the Salafī preachers, draws heavily upon al-Albānī’s works, and Muḥammad Ḥassān frequently refers to him as well. As I have explained, the principle of *tawḥīd* flows all through Ḥassān’s discourse. Still, in general Ḥassān is known as a more moderate preacher than al-Ḥuwaynī and Ya‘qūb. In this study, I emphasize the uniqueness of Ḥassān’s discourse and I have chosen to focus on one particular Ramadan series. Still, it also makes sense to see him as a representative of Salafī da‘wah and literalist Salafism vis-à-vis ‘Amr Khālīd. This makes the comparison between their Ramadan Series interesting even on a more abstract level.

3.2.3 ‘Amr Khālīd

3.2.3.1 *Short Biography*

‘Amr Khālīd was born in 1967 in Alexandria and graduated from the Faculty of Commerce as an accountant in 1988. The same year he was a Head of the student union at the faculty. For years he worked in the Cairo department of the KPMG concern. In 2010, he obtained a PhD from Wales University on sharia.²⁷⁴

Khālīd started his career as a preacher in Cairo giving religion lessons at the Shooting Club, a popular social arena among Cairo’s upper class. As his rhetorical talent became known, masses of people began to show up for his lessons in the club’s mosque. However, the combination of charismatic preachers and enormous gatherings of people is not exactly the Egyptian Interior Ministry’s cup of tea. Khālīd was allegedly forced to quit preaching in the club, but he continued preaching at smaller gatherings such as the

²⁷³ al-Majdhūb, *‘Ulamā’ wa-Mufakkirūn ‘Araftuhum* (Riyad: Dār al-Shawāf, 1992), 302. Quoted in Lacroix, “L’apport de Muhammad Nasir al-Dīn al-Albanī au salafisme contemporain,” 55.

²⁷⁴ amrkhaled.net/newsite/uploads/Resume-English-updated.pdf [accessed December 3 2010].

Islamic salons, encouraging female artists to turn away from their “immoral” lives as actresses and entertainers, and to adopt the veil as a symbol of their transformation.

It was through his preaching in the Islamic salons that Khālid came in touch with Yāsmīn al-Khayyām, the daughter of the famous Quran reciter, al-Shaykh Maḥmūd Khalīl al-Ḥuṣārī. In 2001, she invited Khālid to speak in the mosques of her father, first in Masjid al-Maghfirah, in the area of ‘Agūzah, and thereafter in the bigger mosque in the suburb Sixth of October.²⁷⁵ Khālid continued to gain followers, and most likely following pressure from Egyptian authorities he left Egypt during the winter of 2002. Khālid’s lessons were relocated from the setting of the mosques to that of TV studios in the Middle East and Europe.

The first stage of his television preaching included talk show like *Words from the Heart* featuring guest such as repentant artists, and more narrative preaching in *Let’s Meet the Beloved Ones* (2001–2003) where Khālid focused on the Companions’ lives. While he also focused on youth and change in his early episodes, it is the series *Lifemakers* (2004–2005) and the social projects and the campaigns he initiated in the wake of this, that really started to make Khālid an important social figure. It is worth mentioning that through these series, Khālid has played an important role of developing the genre of Islamic TV preaching, and for a while, he worked with developing religious programs at Iqra’. Whereas his preaching in his early days had been concentrated more on moral issues and worship, *Lifemakers* made Khālid’s reform message more explicit. His aspirations of creating an economic and cultural renaissance in the Islamic world came to inspire a whole generation of upper segments youth all over the Arab Muslim world. In the Ramadan series studied in this dissertation, *The Stories of the Quran* (2008), Khālid started to become more explicit in his social and political critique. The second part of the series, aired during Ramadan in 2009, was banned from al-Miḥwar, probably due to state

²⁷⁵ Haenni et Holtrop, “Mondaines Spiritualités: ‘Amr Khālid, ‘Skaykh branché’ de la jeunesse dorée du Caire”.

pressure. Al-Miḥwar reported that they expected to suffer great losses due to the cancelling of the series.²⁷⁶ Because his critique, Khālid, living in Britain, seems yet again to be at odds with Egyptian authorities.²⁷⁷

3.2.3.2 *Main Ideas*

‘Amr Khālid’s preaching has from the start addressed in particular the upper segments of society, and especially youth and women. How Khālid addresses women was well illustrated in his early shows, such as *Words from the Heart*. In this show, famous women who had adopted the veil after a life in the limelight told their personal narratives of change and thus created role models for TV viewers to identify with. In Khālid’s preaching, he takes care to underscore how much Islam praises women, and he often contrasts this elevated position of women with that assigned them by Western immorality. He states clearly that men and women are different and have distinct roles in society. At the same time he underscores that they are equal before God. He takes a protective stance towards women and sees them as exposed to the threats of the mass media and Western culture.²⁷⁸

Khālid’s focus on development through faith has run through his whole discourse over the past years. Influenced by self-development and managerial thinking,²⁷⁹ Khālid has been seen as a primary exponent of a liberal trend open to commercial structures. Particularly in the series *Lifemakers*, he underlined the importance of working hard to succeed—how youth must tear themselves loose from their shackles to discover their talents and achieve worldly success. Positive thinking, efficacy and optimism were also

²⁷⁶ Haytham Dabūr, “‘al-Miḥwar: ‘Adam ‘Arḍ Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān Yukabbidu-nā Khasā’ira Fādiḥah “ *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, June 7 2009.

²⁷⁷ Cf. “al-Amn Yujbiru al-Dā’iyah ‘Amr Khālid ‘alā al-Raḥīl min Miṣr ... wa-Yamna’u Barāmijahu min al-Faḍā’iyāt al-Miṣrīyah “*Al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, June 3 2009. (www.almasry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=213505)

²⁷⁸ John Erik Sætren, “Islamsk diskurs i nye medier: Predikanten ‘Amr Khālid” (Unpublished Master’s Thesis, University of Bergen, 2006), 26–30.

²⁷⁹ See Haenni, *L’islam de marché*.

important themes. No one was more optimistic than the Prophet, he has said.²⁸⁰ Throughout *Lifemakers* he repeats the principle that if one believes in an idea and sticks with it, one will for certain achieve success before one dies.²⁸¹ So one must never give up. One must act here and now, be diligent and work hard. In propounding these principles, it may be noted, he is adopting a kind of preaching that Jakob Høigilt calls action-oriented preaching.²⁸² Among the most important acts are works of welfare. As I mentioned in the first chapter, this was something that I noticed while studying in Cairo in 2004 and 2005. Not surprising, given the media strategist that Khālīd has proven to be, there were many news reports about his efforts.²⁸³ In his programs he speaks of welfare works as something that translates into rewards. Doing something for others is also a way of doing something for Islam. He also presents this as the best way of combating sins, and as something towards which young women should direct their energy.²⁸⁴ Practicing what he preaches, he has launched welfare programs to fight poverty and illiteracy. His social activism and his influence on the upper segments of Egyptian society posed a challenge to the Egyptian state. It should not be left out that Khālīd has been widely engaged in dialogue. One of the initiatives that brought most fame was when he, along with Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān and ‘Alī al-Jufrī, went to Denmark to participate in a dialogue conference in the wake of the cartoon crisis in 2006. Al-Qaraḍāwī who saw as halting the protest movement criticized Khālīd for this.²⁸⁵ This indicated that Khālīd was ready to go a step

²⁸⁰ ‘Amr Khālīd, “Muqaddimah,” in *Ṣunnā’ al-Ḥayāh* (Iqra’, 2003), 55:00–59:00.

²⁸¹ Sætren, “Islamsk diskurs i nye medier”.

²⁸² Jacob Høigilt, “Writing Islamism: Rhetoric and Ideology in Contemporary Egypt” (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Oslo, 2008), 223.

²⁸³ See also al-‘Arabīyah, “Nashāṭ Shabābī Mukaththaf li-Musā’adat al-Aytām wa-al-Fuqarā’ wa-Tajhīz al-‘Arā’is: ‘Fā’il Khayr... Dūt Kūm’.. 250 Ḥarakah Khayrīyah Miṣrīyah Warāqa-hā ‘Amr Khālīd,” August 26 2005.

²⁸⁴ Khālīd, “Muqaddimah,” 23:00–26:00.

²⁸⁵ This created an interesting debate where the prominent Islamic journalist writer Fahmī al-Huwaydī criticized Khālīd and his initiative. He argued that Khālīd had no right to speak on behalf of the Islamic Ummah. Cf. Fahmī Huwaydī, “Ilā ‘Amr Khālīd: ‘Ud ilā Ahl-ak wa-Ummī-ak,” *Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ*, March 8 2006.

further than al-Qaraḍāwī to engage in cultural dialogue. Beyond this, they follow a similar line. For example, they both emphasize that Muslims in the “West” must take care to uphold their Islamic identity while participating fully in the societies where they live. They must find a balance between what Khālid calls *Integration and Introversion*.²⁸⁶ In this they tend to emphasize the principle of “centrism” which is one of the chief hallmarks of the *Wasaṭī* movement (*al-Wasaṭīyah*). Members of this trend often quote the Quranic verse: “We have made you into a just community” (Q2:143).

3.2.3.3 ‘Amr Khālid and the Wasaṭī Movement

So does the fact that Khālid frequently quotes the passage mentioned above make ‘Amr Khālid a Wasaṭī preacher? First of all, Wasaṭī is a label widely used by Islamic actors in the public sphere in today’s Egypt to define their approach. Representatives for al-Azhar use it, the Muslim Brothers use it, and the many Islamic thinkers who participate in the public debate, such as Muḥammad ‘Ammārah and Fahmī al-Huwaydī, use it. Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, one of the chief ideologue behind the movement, emphasizes its meanings as moderation and balance and describes it as an approach between the “liberalism” of the West, and what he calls the “narrow minded” neo-Salafī approach.²⁸⁷ I will not let al-Qaraḍāwī define the Salafī trend for me, but his statement illustrates what I see as one of the characteristics of the Wasaṭī movement: its open and adaptionist stance towards the rest of the world. For example, al-Qaraḍāwī’s later books, such as *Islam in the Age of Islamization*, demonstrate a high degree of adaptability. He stresses the importance of living in peace with other religions and cultures. Moderation or balance is a principle to be followed in nearly all questions.²⁸⁸ Al-Qaraḍāwī is one of the main ideologues behind the idea of the “Islamic Revival”. He is close to the early modernists such as Muḥammad

²⁸⁶ ‘Amr Khālid, “Bayna al-Indimāgh wa-al-Inghilāq, (Lecture).”

(www.amrkhaled.net/multimedia/multimedia172.html) [accessed June 2005].

²⁸⁷ Bettina Gräf, “The Concept of Wasaṭīyah in the Work of Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī,” in *The Global Mufti*, ed. Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen (New York: Colombia University Press, 2009), 218.

²⁸⁸ Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Khīṭābu-nā al-Islāmī fī ‘Aṣr al-‘Awlamah* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2003).

‘Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā in the sense that he wants to return to the sources of Islam in order to build something new in dialogue with the rest of the world. It is my contention that “The New Preachers” in general, and ‘Amr Khālīd in particular are part of this larger movement that has been dominating the Islamic field in Egypt since the dawn of the new Millennium. This is also the case for the channels al-Iqra’ and al-Risālah that advocate similar ideas in the way they present themselves to the public. These channels are “spaces” that seek to inform about Islam and to show its moderate face, as it is formulated on the Website of al-Risālah. Moreover, these channels tend to accommodate preachers from the diversity of Sunni Islamic factions. These are also the sites where female preachers figure. These may be understood as typifying an “Islamic feminism.” By entering the public space of satellite television through preaching and sometimes teaching others how to preach, they empower women within a patriarchal system and promote a type of Islam increasingly defined by women.²⁸⁹

Female preachers are a recent development. In Egypt, it was only in 1999 that al-Azhar University started to train female preachers.²⁹⁰ Pious women also played an important factor in bringing male preachers such as Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd (see section 2.2), ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Kāfī and ‘Amr Khālīd to fame. They were credit with inspiring famous women to adopt the veil and a pious identity. Famous women—actors, dancers, and singers—retreated from their lives in the limelight and played an important role creating new models for pious women. Many of these female “repenting artists” were recruited in the Islamic Salons where the male preachers preached.²⁹¹ This was part of a larger movement making it possible for women to be media stars without being considered

²⁸⁹ In religion as in politics women do not hold important positions of power. According to Kristianasen (2006) women constitute 53% of the population, but only hold 2.5% of political posts: Wendy Kristianasen, “Egypt: Islamic Sisters Advance,” *Review of African Political Economy* 33, no. 110 (2006).

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*: 745.

²⁹¹ Kristianasen, “Egypt: Islamic Sisters Advance,” 746.

immoral.²⁹² Moreover, the Wasafī trend seems to be at good terms with al-Azhar. This is also the case with “The New Preachers”. As pointed to by Jacob Høigilt, there seems to be a complimentary relationship between the state and “The New Preachers”.²⁹³ Preachers such as Muṣṭafā Ḥuṣnī and Mu‘izz Mas‘ūd have appeared on state television and the State Mufti ‘Alī Gum‘ah has appeared on al-Risālah and Iqra’ as well. A last point is that “The New Preachers”, such as Khālīd, Ḥuṣnī, al-Suwaydāh, al-Jufūrī, and Mas‘ūd tend to advocate dialogue with the West and the exchanging of ideas. Thus, in light of the above, it makes sense to understand ‘Amr Khālīd as a preacher who advocates Wasafīyah, and as a leading figure and a pioneer among “The New Preachers” with many of whom he has cooperated. He may be seen as representing these vis-à-vis the Salafī preachers and literalist Salafism.

²⁹² Egyptian state television, ERTU, prohibited their female presenters to cover their hair with a headscarf. Protesters argued rightly that Egypt had no law that prohibited wearing a headscarf on television. The result was that many of the ERTU’s female presenters and journalists started working for Islamic media such as Iqra See for example, Al-Sharq Al-Awsaṭ, “al-Tilifizyūn al-Miṣrī yamna‘u Dhuhūr al-Mudhī‘āt al-Muḥajjibāt ba‘d Ḥajb al-Badīnāt? ‘an Shashāti-ha,” October 9 2002. Or, ———, “Azmaḥ “Ghiṭā’ al-Ra’s” fi al-Tilifizyūn al-Miṣrī,” 2005. Cf. Nuḥā ‘Antar and ‘Āyshah Bābīwī, “Ṣālūnāt al-Muslimāt al-Jadīdāt’ fi al-Qāhirah Tasta‘īd ‘an al-Jihād’... bi-al-Nadam’.” *Al-Ḥayāh*, 8. juni 2006

²⁹³ Høigilt, “Writing Islamism”, 224.

4 The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark

The first Ramadan series I analyze is Muḥammad Ḥassān's *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark*. "Imams" in the title refers to the companions of the Prophet. The main idea of the series is that these can guide Muslims out of the inadequate present and towards the rise of the Ummah. I examine the parameters cohesion, mise-en-scène, ethos, logos, and pathos, according to the scheme outlined in the preceding chapter. These form the basis for the comparison with Khālid's series in the next chapter.

4.1 Cohesion

4.1.1 Series Structure

Ḥassān's series is composed of twenty-four programs. Each program focuses on one character. The majority of these are among the Prophet's companions. The exception is the second program that serves as an introduction to the series, and focuses on the authority of the companions. The first program, also partially an introduction, is dedicated to the Prophet. Ḥassān states that it is appropriate to start with the Prophet, before speaking about anyone else. This reflects Ḥassān's veneration for the Prophet who he describes as "the Imam of Guidance". After the two introductory programs, twenty-two programs follow, each treating the life story of one of the Prophet's companions. The order follows a hierarchy of authority typical for Salafī preachers: on the top are the Prophet and the four rightly guided caliphs, in chronological order. After them come the six others, besides the caliphs, who were promised Paradise, according to a famous hadith.²⁹⁴ Thereafter, seven more companions follow, before the five female characters of

²⁹⁴ Ḥassān justifies this order through a hadith that he quotes throughout the series: Abū Bakr is in Paradise. 'Umar is in Paradise. 'Uthmān is in Paradise. 'Alī is in Paradise. Ṭalhā is in Paradise. Zubayr b. 'Awām is in Paradise. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf is in Paradise. Sa'd b. Waqqāṣ is in Paradise. Sa'īd b. Zayd is in Paradise. Abū 'Ubaydah b. Jarāḥ is in Paradise (Tirmidhī, Book 5, Section 88).

Khadijah, Mary, Fāṭimah, ‘Ā’ishah, and Āsiyah. The series ends with a program about the grandchild of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. This final program functions as a denouement in that its main message is to provide an example that demonstrates that change is possible. Ḥassān states that although ‘Abd al-‘Azīz belongs to another period, his effort to revive the Ummah after a period of decay justifies his inclusion in the series. The figure below illustrates this structure:

INTRODUCTION The Prophet (1) The Companions (2)	THE OTHERS Abū ‘Ubaydah b. al-Jarāḥ (12) ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd (13) Khālid b. al-Walīd (14) Muṣ‘ab b. ‘Umayr (15) ‘Abd Allah b. al-‘Abbās (16) Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān (17) Mu‘ādh b. Jabal (18)
THE CALIPHS Abū Bakr (3) ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (4) ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (5) ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (6)	THE WOMEN Khadijah bint Khawlad (19) Mary (Maryam bint ‘Umrān) (20) Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad (21) ‘Ā’ishah bint Abī Bakr (22) Āsiyah bint Mazāḥim (23)
AMONG THE TEN Ṭalḥa b. ‘Abd Allāh (7) al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awām (8) ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf (9) Sa‘d b. Waqqāṣ (10) Sa‘īd b. Zayd (11)	DENOUEMENT ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (24)

Illustration 4.1. Series Structure, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.

Similar structuring can be found in other Ramadan series about the companions, primarily among other Salafī preachers. According to Bernard Rougier, in contemporary Salafism the Prophet is the greatest authority after God and the Quran. In matters where the Prophet’s example is silent, one refers to the practice and the words of the companions.

This begins with the four caliphs and thereafter the earliest scholars of Islam, such as ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd. In the end, Salafis may rely on the Followers (al-tābi‘ūn) as examples. It is on the basis of the above corpus—valid across time and space—that the Salafis deduct their doctrine, he argues.²⁹⁵ In other words, the structure has both an ideological dimension in that it represents a particular way of thinking about Islamic authority. Moreover, for an audience familiar with this order, the composition will be predictable and ordered. The inclusion of five females towards the end of the series underscores Ḥassān’s intention of addressing women. Two of these do not belong to the time of the Prophet: Mary, Jesus’ mother, and Āsiyah, Pharaoh’s wife. Moreover, women are only five in number, compared to eighteen males.

4.1.2 Title Sequence

An important element that contributes to the series’ cohesion is the title sequence. This combines a theme hymn (nashīd)²⁹⁶ with a sequence that visualizes some of the most fundamental ideas of the series (see illustration below). It starts by showing a waving banner that is hoisted on a flagpole. The banner is inscribed with the Islamic creed “There is no god, but God. Muḥammad is God’s Messenger”. Then, the names of the first four caliphs appear in calligraphy. These shapes fly through the air and unite with the flagpole, so that the flagpole becomes a letter in their names. This sequence is repeated four times, one for each caliph (Frame 1–4). Next, a lying, rotating, calligraphic silver construction that fills the whole frame appears. The names of the Prophet’s companions gradually appear around it, as the camera pulls back (frame 5–9). Then, the silver construction in the center starts to become illuminated; it tilts, and the illuminated name of the Prophet, Muḥammad, fills the frame (frame 10–12). Finally, the Prophet’s name in silver becomes

²⁹⁵ Rougier, ed. *Qu’est-ce que le salafisme*, 4.

²⁹⁶ The Islamic art of chanting hymns (inshād) is a combination of vocal and poetry. They are often an expression of love and praise for God, as well as for the Prophet and his companions.

lighter and lighter and starts fading away, as it glides into the figure of Ḥassān who sit by his desk and gradually becomes more visible (frame 13–15).












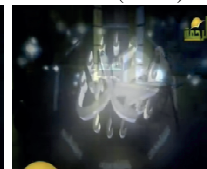
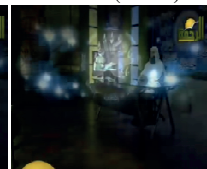
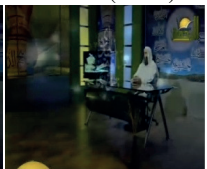
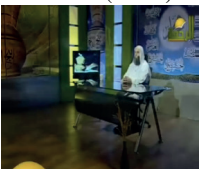
<p>Frame 1 (00:02)</p> 	<p>Frame 2 (00:07)</p> 	<p>Frame 3 (00:10)</p> 	<p>Frame 4 (00:33)</p> 	<p>Frame 5 (00:36)</p> 
<p>The waving banner, inscribed with “There is no god, but God. Muḥammad is God’s messenger”, is hoisted on a blue flag pole, against the background of a blue cloudy sky.</p>		<p>The name of each of the four first caliphs in calligraphy “flies” in. The flagpole with the banner becomes part of the caliphs’ names.</p>		<p>The frame changes and shows a close-up of a massive constellation in shining platinum-like grey.</p>
<p>Frame 6 (00:46)</p> 	<p>Frame 7 (00:53)</p> 	<p>Frame 8 (00:53)</p> 	<p>Frame 9 (00:57)</p> 	<p>Frame 10 (01:03)</p> 
<p>The constellation appears to be a lying massive of calligraphy. This starts rotating. The names of the four caliphs, now in green, start circling around it.</p>				<p>As it starts to tile, the Prophet’s name appears briefly before it is enlightened.</p>
<p>Frame 11 (01:07)</p> 	<p>Frame 12 (01:09)</p> 	<p>Frame 13 (01:10)</p> 	<p>Frame 14 (01:11)</p> 	<p>Frame 15 (01:12)</p> 
<p>The light becomes weaker and one can see the Prophet’s name in beautiful calligraphy</p>	<p>The camera pulls back, and the calligraphy starts fading away into the TV-studio.</p>	<p>The preacher appears more clearly among shimmering lights.</p>	<p>Ḥassān sits motionless in his cloak by his desk.</p>	<p>The studio is illuminated and Ḥassān starts speaking.</p>

Illustration 4.2. Title Sequence, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.

The title sequence functions as *metonymy* that incorporates many of the main ideas that follow.²⁹⁷ First, the hoisting of the Prophet and Islam’s banner creates associations to the victories and the rise of the Islamic Ummah. It may also be seen to epitomize the hope of victory again, one of series’ central themes. Second, the animation affirms the centrality of the Prophet in Ḥassān’s discourse: he was the one who received the revelation and spread this to the companions. As I will later show, this aligns with Ḥassān’s imagery throughout the series wherein the Prophet is the source of light that spread “the light of *tawḥīd*” to the companions and the Ummah. Third, the names of the companions that circle around the Prophet in the center serve to visualize Ḥassān’s focus on how the companions strove around the Prophet.

These visuals are carefully coordinated with the series’ theme hymn. The vocal chants the lyrics beautifully in a hymn of praise for the Companions and the Prophet. The hymn thematizes the way the companions strove, and their subsequent reward of Paradise. Like in the series title, the lyrics describe the Companions through the metaphor, “the lights of the dark”. As the silver constellation starts rotating (Frame 7–9), the vocal chants: “men who strove around the Prophet”. Below I have translated the hymn from Arabic. The refrain is chanted twice, and the verse once, before it starts over again:

Refrain:

Lights of the dark
The best of men
The imams of our guidance
The highest summits

Verse:

The Companions of Aḥmad [Muḥammad]
May my Lord’s content be upon them all until the Return
In our hearts for the unrivalled love
They are the source of our glory, in every circumstance
Men who strove around the Prophet
To Paradise,²⁹⁸ O, the best of men!

²⁹⁷ Metonymy here refers to how modern media tend to render complex messages into images and forms that the great mass public can grasp. It can be described as a ‘trope of reduction.’ Barry Brummett, *Rhetorical Dimensions of Popular Culture* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1991), 27.

²⁹⁸ The Arabic word used for Paradise is *firdaws* that in Islamic theology refers to the highest level of Paradise.

The combination of lyrics, vocal and animation constitute a powerful form of multimodal expression that audiences may well find impressive. It works on the audience to introduce the main ideas of the series, and prepares them for what follows. It sets the mood and seems to have a mnemonic function, reminding the audience of earlier episodes, and perhaps trying to attract them to follow the series. The sequence does not show any real life pictures, or anything that could resemble human shapes. Rather, the Prophet and the Companions are represented by calligraphic shapes, as customary in traditional Islamic art. The choice of a hymn instead of any other musical form also strengthens the impression of something genuinely Islamic. I will point to other functions of the title sequence later. For now it suffices to say that together, the sequence metonymizes core elements of the series, and form an important cohesive function.

4.1.3 Program Composition

The series' individual programs are characterized by consistency and predictability. They last one hour or more and have a rather fixed structure. There is no commercial break and no audience, so Ḥassān's monologue is of considerable length.²⁹⁹ After the title sequence, the programs start with a five minute-long *introduction*, which is very similar from program to program. This shares many of the features of a classic khuṭbah. Ḥassān starts by greeting the audience.³⁰⁰ Then, he praises God's sublimity, uniqueness, and oneness.³⁰¹ Next, he praises the Prophet (*thinā' lil-nabī*) and his followers. After these customary locutions, Ḥassān describes how the Prophet spread the Message and guided the *Ummah*—from a state of error (*ḍalālah*) to the religion of Truth. The structural marker “*ammā b'ad*”; “now then”, a customary feature of the khuṭbah, signals the start of the main body of the program. Here, Ḥassān switches into a more interpersonal mode of discourse, and starts approaching his audience: “Now then, may God preserve the lives of

²⁹⁹ Ḥassān is also famous for his long *khuṭbahs*.

³⁰⁰ Ḥassān greets the audience by saying “Peace, God's blessing and mercy be upon you.”

³⁰¹ In this sequence in Arabic known as *thinā' li-llāh*, Ḥassān also recites the Sura Purity [of Faith]: “Say, ‘he is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to Him’ (Q112:1–4).”

all of you, O dear distinguished brothers and sisters!” Ḥassān then underlines the importance of the the present being created in virtue of the past, before he gradually starts introducing the character of the evening. In the last sequence of this introduction, he prays for the audience to be gathered in Paradise with the Prophet and his Companions. The end of this introduction is announced by the structural marker “*aḥibbatī fī Allāh*”.³⁰²

This introduction transitions into the unique material for each program, the life story of one of the series’ characters. These biographies are weaved together by Ḥassān from the hadiths in which these characters appear, that he believes to be sound, The exception is the account of Mary which is predominantly based on the Quran. Thus, Ḥassān pieces these biographies together from a number of shorter narratives. The combination of these creates the larger narrative that binds the performance together. These chronologically ordered biographies follow the characters from birth to death. This creates a natural progress, from the beginning to the end of the program. The accounts typically include reports about the characters’ relation to the Prophet, early upbringing, when and how they converted, their achievements, their deaths, and, for the men, the battles in which they participated. This exposition invariably finishes with a short supplication: Ḥassān prays to God to be gathered with the Companion(s) in Paradise; he praises God, greets, and prays for the Prophet, his family, the Companions, and the audience: “Peace be with you, God’s mercy and blessings upon you.” Below, I have summarized this composition:

Title sequence.	<i>Aḥibbatī fī-Allāh</i>
Introduction	Main body
Greeting the audience.	Introduction of character.
Praise to God.	Description of kinship.
Praise to the Prophet.	Personal qualities and achievements.
<i>Amma ba ‘d.</i>	Conversion, participation in battles.
Praise and approximation to the audience.	Correcting the creed
Fixed introduction sequence	Short supplications.

Illustration 4.3. Program Composition, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.

³⁰² The use of “sequence” to describe a small part of a program, and “structural markers” to refer to how Islamic preachers punctuate the verbal performance by certain fixed expressions, such as *amma ba ‘d*’ and ‘*aḥibbatī fī-Allāh*’ is inspired by Halldén, “Islamisk predikant på ljudkassetten”.

Thus, Ḥassān composes his TV-program in a manner that will remind many of the *khutbah*. Again, this is an example of how Ḥassān strives to follow the example of the Prophet and the companions. They were the ones who set the examples of how to compose a religious speech, and Ḥassān integrates this style into his TV discourse.

4.2 Mise-en-Scène

4.2.1 Set

The set of Ḥassān’s series is non-narrative. Ḥassān sits behind a desk in a studio, and mostly faces the audience directly (See Illustration 4.4, frame 2–3). As mentioned, there is no studio audience. Ḥassān is dressed in a white cloak that covers the top of his head. He has a big beard that seems to be a characteristic of Salafi preachers. The set is minimalist, but uses technologically advanced décor. There is a television display on the front of Ḥassān’s desk, which shows images of a rotating Ramadan lantern, or the calligraphic shape of the evening’s hero (frame 6). The set is only sparsely decorated with material objects. A lantern (frame 5), some artificial flowers (frame 4 and 6), and a burning candle sometimes appear in the frame. The lantern is an important symbol of the feast of Ramadan, particularly in Egypt

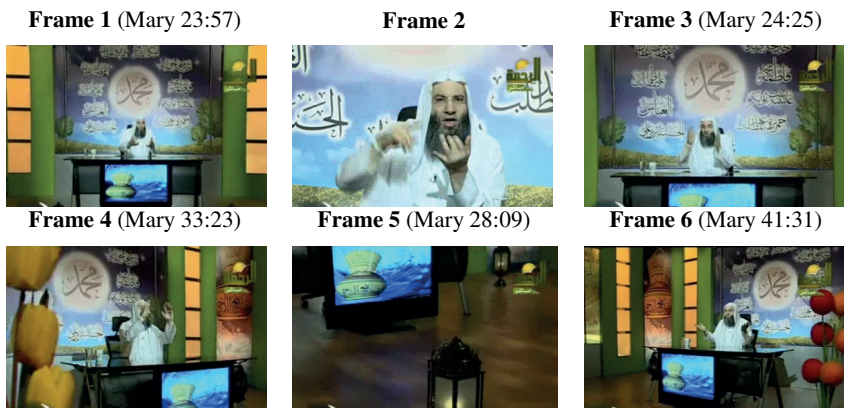


Illustration 4.4. Studio settings, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.

4.2.2 Décor

As shown in all the frames above, except frame 5, the most important decorative feature of the studio is a large artifact directly behind Ḥassān. In the centre of this background, just above Ḥassān's head, the name of the Prophet is written in calligraphy, inside a form in the shape of a full moon. This image strengthens Ḥassān's verbal descriptions of the Prophet in visual form: he often refers to “the moon whose light shone on the companions,” and “the sun from which the rays of the Prophet shone.”³⁰³ Not unlike the title sequence, the calligraphy of eleven of the Companions surrounds the Prophet's name. This is another visual representation of how Ḥassān describes the Prophet as a light from which knowledge and authority spread to the Companions. This also brings further strength to his descriptions of the Companions as “shining stars in space”, and—like in the series title—“lights of the dark”.³⁰⁴ What is more, the garden-like, green scenery that adorns the lower part of the artifact may suggest to the audience the Islamic conceptions of Paradise, with its lofty gardens and great trees (frame 3). Moreover, it associates the Prophet and the Companions with Paradise, and contributes to elevating them. In general, this artifact, nearly always part of the frame throughout the series, illustrates and intensifies the series' verbal propositions. At the same time, the artifact functions as an *anchor* in its relation to the verbal, in that the verbal fixes the meaning of the images.³⁰⁵ Like the title sequence, it also functions as a trope of reduction. The major difference is that the placard behind Ḥassān is part of the frame throughout the programs. A more anonymous part of the décor, is the colored panels on the sides of the placard. These are green—a color that often symbolizes the Prophet, and orange—that may allude to the light of Ramadan lanterns. These complementary colors create a warm and evening-like

³⁰³ This imagery will be treated more in detail under the heading of pathos.

³⁰⁴ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “al-Imām al-A'zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ.,” in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (Egypt: al-Rahmah, 2008), 59:45.

³⁰⁵ Roland Barthes, trans. and ed. Stephen Heath, *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 40–1.

atmosphere that corresponds to the late time in the evening when al-Raḥmah broadcast the series. Sometimes their colors change and create other effects.

4.2.3 Framing

Although the set and the décor may appear rather simple at first sight, the series' framing, editing, lightening, and camera works create a rather sophisticated visual expression that keeps the viewer alert. The cameras wander around the scene, pan, move sideways, zoom in, and pull back. The audience gets to see the preacher from different angles, from various distances, and different frames (see Illustration 4.5). The crew particularly uses the studio decorations on the placard behind Ḥassān actively. Throughout the series, they show close-ups of the names of the series' characters, as well as that of the Prophet (frame 9–11). These sometimes fade into the character of the Ḥassān (frame 12). Likewise, they audience can see frames with close-ups of Ramadan lanterns, burning candles and artificial flowers, as well as how the lightening is adjusted. For example, the moon above Ḥassān's head sometimes shifts between being white and having a yellow glow.

Frame 1 (ʿUmar 18:14)³⁰⁶



Frame 2 (ʿUmar 07:37)



Frame 3 (ʿUmar 24:23)



Frame 4 (Mary 33:03)



Frame 5 (Zubayr 06:32)



Frame 6 (ʿUmar 23:57)



Frame 7 (Mary 29:02)



Frame 8 (ʿUmar 11:29)



³⁰⁶ ʿUmar here refers to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the hero of the fourth program in the series.

Frame 9 ('Umar 17:45)



Frame 10 ('Umar 09:11)



Frame 11 (Zubayr 06:04)



Frame 12 ('Umar 09:02)



Illustration 4.5. Framing, Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark.

The set and the décor of Ḥassān’s series, like the title sequence, demonstrate a high degree of synchronization between the verbal message and the visual expression.

4.3 Ethos

4.3.1 Initial Ethos

Ḥassān has built up his status and position as a preacher over many years. He is a high standing member in one of the leading da‘wah organizations, “Ahl al-Sunnah wa-al-Jamā‘ah”, which administers thousands of mosques and provides welfare and training for preachers.³⁰⁷ and has authored many books. Furthermore, he is a very popular khaṭīb and one of Egypt’s most famous cassette preachers. As Hirschkind states from observing his khaṭbahs, Ḥassān “privileges the classical language, in a performance that combines a display of scholarly rigor with intense passionate expression.”³⁰⁸ This is the trademark of Ḥassān. He is both acknowledged as a scholar, as well as being a brilliant rhetor who is famous for preaching with a high degree of intention. Ḥassān has become even more famous through his preaching on television. When I conducted fieldwork in 2008, his Ramadan series *The Events of the End* was a bestseller among video CD sellers. At the time, I did not notice Ḥassān as part of the Egyptian mediascape apart from his appearances on al-Nās. However, his role as a general manager of the channel al-Raḥmah seems to have contributed to extending his fame. Recently, I have both read interviews with him in Egyptian dailies, as well as seen him appearing on al-Jazeera.

³⁰⁷ Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape*, 169.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 147.

4.3.2 Derived Ethos

In *The Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Dark*, Ḥassān takes care to build up his character as a scholar and as a preacher who preaches with intention, not motivated by material concerns. He takes on to imitate the Prophet and the Companions in the way he dresses, speaks, and composes his discourse. His white cloak, the Quranic style of his language, and the preacher ideal that he puts forward, all works to make the audience associate Ḥassān with the Prophet and his Companions. This also becomes evident by the framing of the series. In the title sequence, for example, Ḥassān's figure appears as the white, shining name of the Prophet fades away (Illustration 4.2, frame 11–15). During the series, the frame of Ḥassān is put on top of frames displaying the name of the Prophet or the companions, so that the two fade into one another (frame 12). Not to mention the fact that the Prophet's name is placed directly above Ḥassān's head throughout the series, with the companions in a circle around. Arguably, all this contributes to associate Ḥassān's person with these characters he praises so much throughout the series.

I think Ḥassān plays this role fascinatingly well. Through his purity of style and beautiful language, through which he strives for identification with these ideals, he practices this role remarkably well. He appears competent, and for some, it may be enough for Ḥassān to speak a few sentences for them to be convinced that he is widely read, and trained in the Islamic Sciences. The way he speaks in rhyme (saj') and recites verses from the Quran with ease is impressive. That said, it is difficult to say, of course, how edited these programs are and to what extent technologies are used to create an impression of seamlessness and ease. However, the degree to which TV-orality is edited and refined is in any case invisible to the viewers. The manner in which he continuously refers to hadith scholars, such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad and al-Tirmidhī, in addition to those scholars he refers to for correcting these, such as al-Albānī and Shākīr, gives his discourse a scholarly air. That he takes great care to provide the source of hadiths along with the name of the person who reported it, reinforces this further.

Ḥassān also builds up his ethos through the way that he speaks about the ideal preacher, it being implicit that he himself is part of that group. He constructs himself as

part of a “we”, which he contrasts to a negative “they”. This “we”, called the Ahl al-Sunnah, has knowledge and preaches with intention. They also have scholarly authority, and have a “pure” creed. Their counterpart refers to those who preach without knowledge, and do so for status and worldly gains:

It should never be permitted for a man sick of heart, with arrant creed, jumbled thinking and with affiliation due to a polluted/corrupt identity to speak about those pure men. Speaking about the Companions, May God be pleased with them, requires that one’s creed be pure, one’s intentions sincere, one’s transmission reliable, one’s understanding exact and that one have precise investigative eye for one-sided, false and invented rumors. I repeat, to speak about the Companions, May God be pleased with them, requires purity of the creed to check both the ascription (*sanad*) and text (*matn*). This needs schooling, learning, knowing jurisprudence, understanding and right judgment. It needs knowledge of the rules of the scholars of Hadith criticism (disparaging and authenticating). It is not right of anyone to flirt with what one does not know and to speak about those pure men and women³⁰⁹

A way of showing his true intentions is how Ḥassān describes the characters of the eulogies with great passion. He is attentive to profess a specific deep intention, and emphasizes that he does not speak out of worldly desires, but from, and with, his soul. He also adopts a stance of humility, repeatedly telling his audience that his words and his knowledge are inadequate to describe the great heroes of the past. His voice is full of emotion, and describes how his heart shivers when he studies their lives:

No one is able to describe and draw the position of the Radiant (Fāṭimah) but I shall make an effort despite my weakness and ignorance. I shall try hard as much as I can through these scholarly/elevated words to depict the portrait of this Radiant Virgin.³¹⁰

With regard to how Ḥassān addresses the television audience, the absence of an audience in the studio contributes to making predominantly referential. Yet, at times, he enters the interpersonal mode and addresses the audience directly in an informal manner. This switch from high, formal, and poetic language, to a friendly, Egyptian vernacular style, seems very effective. In general, when Ḥassān addresses the audience through vocatives, such as “O Youth!” and “O Women!” he takes care to include all people. To keep the audience alert, he uses imperatives such as “Pay attention! Take care to! Listen! And

³⁰⁹ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “al-Ṣaḥābah,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Masābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 5–6.

³¹⁰ Muhammad Ḥassān, “Fāṭimah,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Masābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 6.

Take caution!” At times, he unites with the audience through using the pronoun “we”. For example, he underscores that he is present, *together* with the audience, and that they will spend the night together with the evening’s hero: “tonight we will spend the night with her [Fāṭimah].”³¹¹ Other times, when Ḥassān quotes hadiths that contain words that are difficult for most people, he provides them with synonyms or explanations. All this creates an image of Ḥassān not only as a teacher and a scholar, but also as a friend who cares about the audience.³¹²

4.3.3 Textual Ethos

In Ḥassān’s series there is an interesting synergetic effect between the way in which he praises and elevates the Companions, and the way he builds up the authority of his message. The background for this is that it was the Companions who reported each others’ and the Prophet’s deeds. Ḥassān, therefore, takes care to construe each of the Companions as absolutely truthful. The rationale behind the Companions’ authority and status as infallible is linked to the hierarchy of authority discussed in the section on the structure of the series—God transmits knowledge to the Prophet through the revelation; the Prophet transfers this to his companions who act it out under the Prophet’s guidance.³¹³ Ḥassān presents society at the time of the Prophet as perfect. He emphasizes that God chose the Companions to act out the Message,³¹⁴ and that the Prophet guided them in building a perfect Ummah, by ordering what is right and forbidding what is wrong (Q3:110).³¹⁵ Because Ḥassān continuously refers to these hadiths, in addition to the Quran, the more he succeeds in convincing the audience that the early Companions were infallible: accordingly, a stronger truth value will be attributed to these reports, and the more solid Ḥassān’s message becomes. This takes us to the core of Ḥassān’s message

³¹¹ Ibid., 7.

³¹² Muḥammad Ḥassān, “al-Zubayr b. ‘Awwām,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 53:50. ———, “Mu’ādh b. Jabal,” in *A’immat al-Hudā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 13:00.

³¹³ He defines a companion as a person who met the Prophet, believed in him, and died being a Muslim (*māta ‘alā al-Islām*). Ḥassān, “al-Ṣaḥābah,”

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

which is based on following the example of the Companions. Ḥassān describes his examination of “the mothers of books” which enables him to summarize the life stories of these characters. This takes us to what I interpret to be the main message of the series.

Ḥassān also creates an exigency for his series by continuously describing the present as a place of chaos and makes parallels to the time before Islam. He describes the Ummah and today’s world as full of contradictions, temptations, crises, and troubles. The Ummah is under attack by enemies, who do everything in their power to prevent the new generation of Muslims being brought up according to the Quran and the Sunnah. The Ummah is neither self-sufficient nor independent, but controlled by the West. Moreover, people lack correct beliefs and worship false gods: “I do not know of any period in which false and invented gods have multiplied and spread like in the age of Internet and satellites,” he states.³¹⁶ What is more, people today live amid “evil”; they listen to the wrong people. Those who lie and betray religion for this world, for money and status, have split the Ummah, and standards have been mixed up.³¹⁷ Thus Ḥassān sees the current world as being in a state of decay, moving in the wrong direction. Hence, he constructs a need for his series, announcing that his goal is to turn people around and guide them through the example of the Companions out of an instable and chaotic present.

Not at all, on the contrary. I am only presenting it to the blessed Ummah as an admonition and lesson together, to bring up the generations according to this fragrant path and refined way of education after an epoch of westernization, distortion and misguiding. During this period the identity has been distorted, the creed and sense of belonging have been disturbed.³¹⁸

Hence, Ḥassān’s series grows out of the urgent need he perceives for Muslims to regain their identity, and their sense of belonging in a period of chaos dominated by Western influence. His mission is to lead Muslims away from this inadequate present and towards the ideal of the Companions.

³¹⁶ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “Sa’īd b. ‘Umar,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Hudā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³¹⁷ ———, “Hudhayfā b. al-Yamān,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³¹⁸ Ḥassān, “al-Imām al-A‘zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ.,” 9:15–10:15.

4.4 Logos

The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark is based on the biographies of the Prophet and his Companions. Ḥassān's overall message is that if Muslims follow these characters' examples, which are the main propositions of the series, the Ummah will rise again. These characters claim truth, are used as exempla, illustrations and proof.³¹⁹ These are, as the title indicates, the "imams of guidance" who can lead the Ummah out of contemporary chaos and towards the Truth:

Come with us to spend this holy month, this blessed month with these chosen flowers, these glimmering stars, shining constellations, good examples, high ideals and brilliant models of the "Imams of Guidance and Lights of the Darkness".³²⁰

Accordingly, Ḥassān attempts to make different segments of the television audience identify with these heroic figures and follow their examples. The underlying idea is that if people strive today to follow their examples, this will lead to a rise of the Ummah, parallel to the prospering and the extension of the Ummah that took place at the time of the Prophet and during the reign of the first rightly guided Caliphs. The first step towards the victory of the Ummah is their total submission to God and his Prophet.³²¹ This analogy between the rise of the Ummah in early Islam and the desired revival today runs throughout Ḥassān's discourse. Still, due to these characters' elevated status, it seems implicit that the audience can never become like these characters, even though striving to emulate them to the greatest extent possible is encouraged.

Ḥassān announces that he is addressing the whole Ummah, and he explicitly mentions leaders, rulers, scholars, preachers, men, women, businessmen, youth, and children.³²² In a way, since Ḥassān follows the lifelines of these characters, one can argue that he presents ideals for all people of all ages. This is partially true since one character in his youth may serve as an ideal for young people, and in adulthood as an ideal for a

³¹⁹ On the functions of the narrative: Bal, *On Story-Telling: Essays in Narratology*, 1.

³²⁰ Ḥassān, "al-Imām al-A'zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ.," 08:10–20.

³²¹ Muḥammad Ḥassān, "Ṭalḥā b. 'Ubayd Allāh," in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (Egypt: Qanāt al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³²² Ḥassān, "al-Ṣaḥābah," 10:40–55.

leader. Yet, overall, I interpret him as addressing more directly five particular groups: the young, leaders, the rich, women, and preachers. In addition, I have included the category of the “personalities”. In one sense, all the programs target the personalities of the audience. Moreover, there is not necessarily any correspondence between what these characters are famed for, and for whom they serve as ideals. In any case, the classification is my own, and is part of the way in which I have interpreted these programs.

4.4.1 The Young

Ḥassān’s primary target group seems to be young men, and he focuses on the young Companions as examples for them to follow. Ḥassān underscores the role of youth in disseminating the message of Islam. The youth sacrificed themselves the most, and built the Ummah. The elders were the thinkers and the planners. The underlying thought is that if the youth of today adopted the same qualities and performed the same actions as those of the young Companions, the Ummah will rise again.

Ḥassān describes the lives of the Companions before Islam, and underscores their transformation following their *conversion* to *tawḥīd*. Like the youth of today, they lived in a time of contradiction and crises, facing serious doubts, caught up in a struggle between religion and society.³²³ Nonetheless, they all chose Islam. Ḥassān describes how they moved from paganism to *tawḥīd*: from chaos to order, from falsehood to truth, dark to light; from low self-esteem to confidence, and so on. ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd, for example, went from working for the worst infidel to becoming the Prophet’s closest associate. Once poor, weak, and afraid, he became strong and brave. Like many of the other Companions, once he had adopted the belief of *tawḥīd*, he confronted any difficulty persistently.³²⁴ For example, Ḥassān elaborates on ‘Abd Allāh’s courageous recitation of the Quran before

³²³ ———, “Mu‘ādh b. Jabal.” Ḥassān exemplifies and comments that youth are caught up in a struggle between “clean” and “dirty” satellite channels.

³²⁴ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd,” in *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

the pagan leaders of Quraysh.³²⁵ He recounts that “the pagans” beat him to blood. Yet ‘Abd Allāh ignored the pain and persisted, and thus may be seen as a symbol of spreading the message to non-Muslims. Ḥassān encourages the youth of today to draw inspiration from his brave personality.

Moreover, Ḥassān advocates the way in which the young Companions, after adopting tawḥīd, resisted the pressure from Meccan society where idolaters predominated. Many of them came to pay a high price for their conversion. Ḥassān describes, often in detail, how they endured torture and pain for the sake of their belief. One example is Sa‘d who converted at seventeen. When his family discovered this, they pressured him to abandon his faith. In protest, his mother, for example, went on hunger strike. Yet Sa‘d resisted, and despite an unstable life marked by persecution and migration, he remained steadfast. Ḥassān explains that the more pain he experienced, the more steadfast he became.³²⁶ That piety is not easy is repeated throughout the series in the different programs:

Many people today, many of our youth and our children believe that life in piety is easy (rakhīṣah) and that being steadfast in this religion is pleasant. If wealth or money comes, and if a position/rank or fame or reputation is achieved, he flies along the way with those who walk.³²⁷

In the program about ‘Alī, Ḥassān focuses on his early life: the day of hijrah, ‘Alī, twenty-three years old, pretended to be the Prophet and slept in his bed to protect him, risking his life to help the Prophet escape. Ḥassān then contrasts those who sacrifice themselves for the Prophet, and those who dedicate their lives to worldly lusts and violence. He asks: “how different is a youth who offers his soul and his self to support God’s religion and God’s prophet, and a youth who dedicates his life to base lusts and despicable violence?”³²⁸ Moreover, Ḥassān expresses concern that groups deviating from the path of tawḥīd will delude youth. In response, he presents Ibn ‘Abbās as a model for

³²⁵ Ibid., 39:55–42:30.

³²⁶ ———, “Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³²⁷ ———, “‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³²⁸ This formulation points to the idea that “sacrificing oneself for Islam” does not mean using violence.

youth and calls on them to seek knowledge and understanding (fiqh). He quotes the Quran asserting that God will help Muslims to increase their knowledge (Q20:114). However, he also warns that people may have knowledge without understanding.³²⁹

A character explicitly addressed to rich youth and the lazy is hard-working Muṣ‘ab. His dedication to tawḥīd initially cost him both his wealth and his family bonds. However, by being industrious and persistent, he overcame these difficulties, and Ḥassān mentions the Prophet’s selection of him as a caller to Islam. Upon this, Ḥassān calls on youth to follow his example: “O youth, you who sleep during the whole day and stay up the whole night! If you only would stay up for the obedience of God, or even work in this world to make your homes happy! O youth learn from Muṣ‘ab b. ‘Umayr!”³³⁰

The biography of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān is an example of a narrative in which trade is a central theme. Ḥassān explicitly calls on those who are unemployed and who sit around in the streets to follow his example. Youth must go and search for work. If they are persistent, God will help them find appropriate work after a while, he states. He quotes the Quran (Q48:18) and affirms that God will help those who swear allegiance to the Prophet. He also recommends that youth engage in trade, and make ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s words their slogan: “Show us the market!” Nevertheless, Ḥassān’s call to youth is not without reservations. He uses the Quranic account of Korah to illustrate what happens to those who become wealthy, and do not remain thankful to God. Ḥassān recounts that Korah was granted wealth because of his wisdom (Q28:78), but failed “the test” by not being grateful (Q27:40). He failed to share the required portion of his wealth with the poor (Q24:33). Ḥassān asserts that “What has been passed down must be shared (Q57:7)”.³³¹ Thus, Ḥassān calls upon youth to engage in trade and prosper, while reminding and warning them that they must give a part of their proceeds to the poor.³³²

³²⁹ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās,” in *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³³⁰ ———, “Muṣ‘ab b. Umayr,” in *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³³¹ ———, *‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf*, *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³³² Ibid.

Finally, Ḥassān presents some examples for children. Here Zubayr and Fāṭimah are good examples, and courageousness and persistence are again important themes: Zubayr was twelve years old when he heard a rumor that someone had murdered the Prophet. At once, he set off to kill the perpetrator. However, when he arrived he found that the Prophet was safe. Yet Ḥassān praises him highly for his courage. He also describes in detail how Zubayr later experienced enormous pain when his uncle chased and tortured him. In the episode about Fāṭimah, Ḥassān focuses on her noble lineage, and how her parents, the Prophet and Khadījah, brought her up in “the house of tawḥīd”. Ḥassān particularly devotes attention to the account in which she bravely defended the Prophet: Abū Jahl, one of the Meccan leaders and hostile to the Prophet, mocked the Prophet at prayer by throwing animal waste on his back. Then, when no one else dared stand up for the Prophet, Fāṭimah placed herself between the Prophet and the people from Quraysh who were mocking her father.

Furthermore, Ḥassān praises Fāṭimah for being a “pure”, “shining,” and “virginal” girl. He describes her quest for knowledge and dedication to the message of *tawḥīd*. Ḥassān also addresses her example to wealthy youth, specifically to “those who are brought up in castles and comfort.” Ḥassān recounts that the Prophet’s daughter, like the young male Companions, lived in poverty and endured hardship before and after hijrah. Despite her hunger and pain, particularly after her mother’s death, she remained steadfast. Ḥassān also underscores her willingness to forego worldly possessions. This is particularly prominent in his account of her marriage to ‘Alī with whom she lived under poor conditions.³³³

Ḥassān’s biographies of the Companions which I interpret as addressing the young members of the television audience convey ideals closely linked to adopting the doctrine of tawḥīd. Youth is called to adopt tawḥīd, be persistent, and spread the message. Central themes are also that youth must see beyond material concerns and work hard. Yet an

³³³ This may be interpreted as a call to young girls not to engage in materialistic ways of thinking in relation to marriage.

important recommendation is also that they engage in trade. In doing so, they should ensure the poor are given their rightful portion. Although Ḥassān presents a number of ideals for the young in the audience, he formulates these more as recommendations than as demands. The young Companions' struggles and sufferings seem directed more towards young people who suffer materially, and have problems such as getting married due to their poverty, or finding work.

4.4.2 Leaders

Ḥassān addresses “leaders” through the phrase “those responsible”, and while the Caliphs’ roles as political leaders is implicit, I also see this position as addressing leaders in general terms. Abu Bakr, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, and ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, the great-grandson of ‘Umar who ruled 717–720, are the three characters personifying model rulers and leaders. The first two in particular represent perfect leadership and governance in accordance with God’s laws. The third, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, symbolizes that the Ummah can rise again, after periods of strife and instability. The general image of the leader is one who is faithful, just, honest, and humble towards power. Ḥassān recounts how social justice prevailed, the Ummah prospered, and expanded under their rule. He also underscores that all of the leaders whom he takes as examples were unanimously elected. Moreover, they showed mercy and humanity in war. Abū Bakr, for instance, ruled by God’s laws. During his rule social justice prevailed, and he acknowledged people’s right to remove him if he ruled contrary to the rule of God and the Prophet.³³⁴ Furthermore, he was just and merciful in war. Ḥassān extensively quotes Abū Bakr’s orders to the young general, Usāmah, before an important battle. Abū Bakr orders him not to kill children, the elderly and women, and to avoid destroying crops. Ḥassān contrasts these principles with what he sees as the current morality of the West and those who commit extremist acts in the name of Islam:

³³⁴ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “Abū Bakr,” in *A ‘immat al-Hudā wa-Masābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 56:30–57:00. This account is found in the sīrah of Ibn Hishām.

Do not burn a single palm tree, do not cut a single fruit tree, do not kill any child, and do not kill any elderly man, or a woman. Let the civilized people listen, let the accursed so-called western civilization listen, the one that spills blood and tears body parts, and accuse the religion of the Imam of the Prophets of extremism and sponsoring terrorism. Let the world know and learn the mercy of those [the Companions] even in wars.³³⁵

‘Umar, the second Caliph, shares many of the qualities of Abū Bakr. In addition, Ḥassān praises ‘Umar’s efforts to expand the Ummah and his defeat of the Persian and the Eastern Roman Empire.³³⁶ Moreover, Ḥassān places much weight on ‘Umar being one of the people and his lack of interest in material needs. He elaborates on his particular concern for the poor and that he took particularly responsibility for poor children. Ḥassān recounts a hadith in which ‘Umar hears a child crying out of hunger at the mosque. This makes ‘Umar himself start crying, whereupon he asks himself how many deaths he is responsible for. In what follows, he orders the distribution of food to the poor. Ḥassān contrasts ‘Umar’s care for children with those who use children in war, as human shields, or involve them in human trafficking. He also warns against depriving the poor of the portion of wealth to which they are entitled.

The biography of ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is the last program in the series. Ḥassān does not only present him as an ideal leader and ruler, but also as a symbol of revival. He is the character Ḥassān most directly addresses to rulers today. At the same time, he seems careful to emphasize that these are not the only ones to blame for the poor state of the Ummah. Rather, all Muslims are responsible: “We are all without exception responsible for the loss, the backwardness [of the Ummah] and its underdevelopment,” he states.³³⁷ Ḥassān provides an account of ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz leading the Ummah to return to its straight path—to the Truth. His parents brought him up in luxury. He wore the finest clothes and ate the richest food. Yet, while still young, he requested permission from his father to leave for Medina to study. He proved a quick learner and memorized

³³⁵ Ibid., 66:30–76:10.

³³⁶ While not stated explicitly, Hassan’s particular emphasis here may be interpreted as implying the capability of rightful Islamic rulers to defeat the superior imperial powers, which for today’s audience most probably refers to the West.

³³⁷ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz,” in *A ‘immat al-Hudā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 20:10–20.

the entire Quran. Despite his young age, he quickly earned a reputation as a scholar, to such an extent that he was nicknamed “the teacher of scholars”. He became famed for his sense of justice, his generosity, loyalty, and truthfulness. These efforts and his talent bore fruit and brought him to political office. First, he was appointed Governor of Medina, later he came to administrate the whole of the Hījāz.³³⁸ Then, when he was thirty-six years old, he took the office of Caliph. Ḥassān presents a detailed account of his appointment, of how it came as a complete surprise to almost everyone. Still, his election was unanimous.

Ḥassān alludes to the present by commenting that God before the rule of ‘Umar had bestowed on the Ummah a favorable climate, energy, brains, soil, and so forth, but that they had lacked a leader who ruled by the Book.³³⁹ According to the account, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz effectuated real change in short order. Only hours after his appointment, he started ruling by “the book” and the method of the Prophet: he redistributed land and returned property to the poor, took care of the sick and became one of the people. He proved pious, strong, and mindful of God, as well as humble and smart. Responsible for one fourth of the world, he ordered all the callers to prayer to spread the message around the world. Ḥassān recounts that in only two years, five months, and five days, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz had restored the Ummah.

Through the accounts of the Caliphs, Ḥassān seems predominantly to address viewers who are already leaders or rulers, or may be potential leaders. The ideal ruler follows God’s and the Prophet’s rule in the sense of tawḥīd. This implies that rulers should have great knowledge of Islam, rule with justice, be one of the people, and have concern for the poor. Furthermore, the Ummah must agree on their election. They were also immune to material concerns. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz epitomizes the return of the Ummah to tawḥīd after a period of what Ḥassān describes as decay and division. His example suggest an ideal path to political office which proceeds by immersing oneself in

³³⁸ Hījāz is a region in West Arabia, on the Red Sea Coast.

³³⁹ Ḥassān, “‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz,” 50.

the Islamic sciences and earning a reputation as a scholar, before one starts rising in political rank and finally becomes elected as the leader of the Ummah as a result of one's popularity. The way in which 'Abd al-'Azīz ruled by establishing justice and redistributing land serves as an image of an ideal "Islamic rule" in which social justice prevails.

Ḥassān's message grows out of the tension between the ideals he presents and the present, in which most Egyptians seem discontent with existing political rule. In this sense, one can interpret this as a social and political critique. The accounts suggest positions both for leaders and for those who want to be leaders. Yet Ḥassān says nothing specific about today's political reality, nor does he provide a roadmap to political power. Rather he leaves it up to the television audience to interpret what his message might be.

4.4.3 The Rich

In several programs, Ḥassān addresses the rich. In the section on "the young", I discussed how Muṣ'ab and 'Abd-al-Raḥmān function as models for youth to engage in trade. This section will elaborate more on the ideal of 'Abd al-Raḥmān, as well as those of Ṭalḥā and 'Uthmān. In these cases, Ḥassān further accentuates his positive image of trade and hard work. "What does the Ummah need more than its loyal, trustful, good-hearted, and pure men—those who know the value of money and the profession of locating money with their hands?" Ḥassān asserts that wealth is a necessity and a nerve of life. He exemplifies this by pointing out the da'wah's dependence on money. He continues by saying that if it had not been for money, his television audiences would not have been able to follow his series. For Ḥassān, the rise of the Ummah depends on money, as it must be economically independent.³⁴⁰

Ḥassān views wealth as something that belongs to God. He warns against monopolizing trade or wealth, as wealth comes only from God, and He is the one who will inherit the world in the End. He criticizes the economic inequality of contemporary

³⁴⁰ ———, *'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf*.

society, and expresses regret that some live in luxury, while others are not able to cover basic needs, such as schools, medicine, and food. Yet he sees the imbalance between rich and poor as something natural and God-given. He asserts that God prefers some to others in terms of wealth, but that God equally ensured the poor a share of this. Ḥassān comments that if God had bestowed everybody with wealth, one would for example not have found anyone to work in places such as factories.³⁴¹ Thus, the message seems primarily addressed to the rich who must share their wealth.

Similarly, Ḥassān tells how ʿAbd al-Raḥmān entered the sphere of business after leaving the battlefield. He proved himself an honest and generous trader. He traded and prospered, and became famous for his saying: “Show me the market! Where is the market? Ḥassān describes him as a master of money. Despite acquiring wealth very quickly, he never became avaricious, stingy or jealous. On the contrary, he remained loyal, high-minded, humble, and always acquired wealth lawfully. Throughout his life, he remained grateful to God, self-denying, and spent all his money for the sake of the Message. Ḥassān affirms that the more he earned, the more he gave, and vice versa. God bestowed on him great wealth, and “turned sand into Gold”. His motivation for entering business was not personal ambition. He did it because he saw that this was what his society and religion needed.³⁴²

Similarly, Ṭalḥā, after leaving the field of jihad, proved a skilled merchant. Ḥassān portrays him as inventive and honest. Despite the enormous wealth he acquired, he remained a good Muslim. He spent his money for the sake of God. He even worried that he had too much money, and hastened at such moments to distribute his wealth. He was generous towards others and modest towards himself. Ṭalḥā’s personality may in particular address people who had earlier thought of themselves as “fighters”. Ḥassān emphasizes that there is no contradiction between trade and jihād [struggle]. After one has left jihād, one must engage in trade and acquire success in this world as well.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid., 6.

The personality of the Muslim is complete. In business and trade, he is honest. At the same time you see him behind the Prophet of God in prayer, weeping. During the night he trembles before God like a sparrow that has been soaked by rain water. And in the field of jihād, you see him as a hero offering his life and his blood sacrificing himself for the sake of God and his Prophet (God bless him and grant him salvation)

Ḥassān calls on the rich to appreciate what God has bestowed on them. Can they recall where they were twenty or thirty years ago? Could they have hoped for a tenth of what they have now? From this, he urges the rich to give God his right, particularly as one is in the month of Ramadan. Interestingly, he calls on them not to forget the poor in Palestine, in Iraq, in Somalia, in Sudan, Afghanistan, Chechnya, in all the countries of Islam. This may suggest that his concept of “poverty” is partly political, and has to do with conflict and disenfranchisement as much as with material suffering.

‘Uthmān is another character that seems to address the wealthy among the audience. In his biography, Ḥassān does not stress his role as a ruler, but focuses more on his achievements, before he ascended the Caliphate. In three instances, Ḥassān presents him as an ideal in relation to wealth. First, the people in Medina lacked drinking water. The owner of the well, described by Ḥassān as a loathsome Jew, charged far too much for the water. ‘Uthmān, who was wealthy, asked the Jew if he could buy the well but he refused. ‘Uthmān then requested to buy half the well. Each of them would be in charge of it every second day. The Jew agreed to this. Subsequently, all the Muslims fetched water to last two days when ‘Uthmān was in charge. The story finishes with the Jew selling the second half of the well to ‘Uthmān. Second, Ḥassān explains that the Muslims at the time could not find enough space in the Holy Mosque in Mecca (Masjid al-Sharīf). The Prophet asked if anyone could expand it. Without hesitation, ‘Uthmān proceeded to buy the land in conjunction with the Mosque, and gave to the Prophet. A third example is ‘Uthmān’s monetary contribution to battles, such as against the Romans.

Finally, there is a narrative that can be read both as an attack on corruption, and as an address to the rich and people more generally to accept property laws. Ḥassān himself presents this as a warning against those who lay their hands on public fortune, be that land, real estate, transport, or any type of public property. Ḥassān recounts a hadith found

in both Bukhārī and Muslim, that a woman accused the Companion Sa‘īd of stealing her land. Sa‘īd prayed to God that if this woman were lying, she would be blinded and killed on her land. How could she accuse him, one of the Prophet’s Companions, of this? Indeed, one day when the woman was walking around on the land, she fell in a ditch and died.³⁴³ Upon this Ḥassān warns that God sees everything (Q14:42) and warns of God’s severe punishment.

This last story is open to interpretation. My assistant linked it to the problems with property rights in Egypt. He explained that people falsified public documents and bribed public servants and state officials to acquire land at an artificially low price, and sometimes actually confiscated the property of other people. As for the remaining narratives, Ḥassān acknowledges the importance of wealth while underscoring the social responsibility of the rich to share it with the poor. One must never let the personal ambition of earning money take control, and one must take care not to become stingy or jealous.

Wealth is seen as something temporary that belongs to God, as in the end, He will inherit everything. Moreover, Ḥassān asserts the importance of wealth to finance da‘wah and that Muslims must earn money for the sake of the Message. The example of ‘Uthmān is open to interpretation, but seems to assert the importance of economic power. He may serve as a model for the rich to contribute to the building of mosques, to secure economic independence, and, if taken literally, support struggles financially where Muslims are under threat.

4.4.4 Women

Ḥassān addresses five programs directly to women. In addition to Fāṭimah whom I commented on earlier, there is Khadījah, Mary, ‘Ā’ishah and Āsiyah. Through these characters, he seems primarily to address mothers and wives, as well as females more generally. Ḥassān addresses their examples to all the women in the world. He states that

³⁴³ Ḥassān, “Sa‘īd b. ‘Umar”.

the world is in need of these examples, because today it is the “fallen” women who are put forward as examples:

Listen, O Mothers! O Sisters! O Daughters! Learn tonight from the purest and most honorable examples, that I present tonight, and only to the women of the Ummah, but to the women of all nations in the world, in an epoch in which the frivolous women – and I do not exaggerate – in which the fallen women are put forward as ideals and examples.³⁴⁴

Ḥassān expresses female ideals by praising these characters as steadfast, loving, caring, pure, chaste, and moral. They converted to or were born into tawḥīd, and were fully dedicated to it.³⁴⁵ Hence, they chose a life of piety over what Ḥassān describes as the base lusts of the worldly. Khadījah—the “mother of the believers”—is the ideal mother figure. Ḥassān describes her as “the source of the light of tawḥīd” and “the creator of generations”. Moreover, she was “a river of kindness”, and “the very source of affection”. Ḥassān also emphasizes that she was knowledgeable, intelligent, and responsible: her household was the purest and most respectable that ever was. As a wife, she was faithful and loyal to the Prophet. When no one else believed in him, she filled him with confidence and steadfastness. She gave up her wealth, endured hardship, and stood by the Prophet in every situation. Accordingly, Ḥassān describes her as the very origin of fidelity and loyalty. Ḥassān sums up his image of the loyal wife as one who acts highly and mightily towards her husband, who loves him, is considerate and steadfast, and who acts by the word of the Prophet, despite hardship and difficult times.³⁴⁶

Another of the Prophet’s wives, ‘Ā’ishah, is also subject to extensive veneration. Ḥassān praises her for choosing her loyalty to Islam and the Prophet over the lusts of this world. Ḥassān contrasts her life of tawḥīd, in happiness and harmony, with the miserable and discordant life of the “worldly”.³⁴⁷ He devotes much attention to the story in which

³⁴⁴ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “Khadījah,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (Qanāt al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³⁴⁵ The exception of this is Mary.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ḥassān explains how the Prophet could take such a young wife. The Prophet was 53 years old, while ‘Ā’ishah was only nine. Ḥassān says that this is normally not acceptable, although at that time, before the implementation of Islamic rule, it was customary. But the case of this very marriage was an exception. It was a marriage arranged by divine decree, on the basis of a revelation received by Muḥammad.

one of the Prophet's companions accuses her of adultery. Ḥassān recounts that 'Ā'ishah travelled with her husband Muḥammad and some of his followers. 'Ā'ishah left the camp to search for her lost necklace, but when she returned the company had left. She waited until a man named Safwān b. Mu'attal rescued her, and took her to rejoin the caravan. Once they had returned, there were accusations against 'Ā'ishah that she had committed adultery. For one month, she and the Prophet lived with these accusations. The Prophet told 'Ā'ishah that if she were innocent, God would clear her name, and if she were guilty, she must acknowledge her sin and repent. Indeed, after a long period of waiting, the Prophet received a revelation that she was innocent, upon which God revealed a Quranic verse to warn people who falsely accuse and lie about women. These will face a painful punishment (Q24:11). Ḥassān recites and repeats the Quranic verses with God's judgment, while gently weeping, his voice quaking. On the one hand, the story addresses those who accuse women falsely: on the other, it also calls on women who commit sin to confess and repent. Ḥassān also praises the Prophet for his handling of the situation.

Mary, the mother of the Islamic prophet Jesus, is not one of the prophet's contemporaries, but Ḥassān includes her as a role model for women, particularly for mothers. Ḥassān bases his account largely on the Sura in the Quran that bears her name.³⁴⁸ Her strong belief, dedication, purity, and chastity are subject to extensive veneration.³⁴⁹ Ḥassān celebrates her as the best of girls and the best of women. He describes her as "the fortress of honor ('izz)", "the origin of faith", and "the very source of compassion". Ḥassān recounts that Mary was brought up in the chosen family of 'Imrān. Still, it was Zakarīyah, the prophet of that time, who raised her in an environment of abstemiousness, worship and prayer, remembrance and supplication.³⁵⁰ Hence, she reached the highest level of conviction (al-yaqīn). Mary was God-fearing and sinless, and was the one chosen to conceive Jesus which Ḥassān describes as the purest and only birth ever without a

³⁴⁸ Ḥassān also quotes some hadiths to affirm her status as the best of women, such as "the best of women is Mary", "the best girl of her time was Mary, the daughter of 'Imrān".

³⁴⁹ Muḥammad Ḥassān, "Maryam," in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Masābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 5.

³⁵⁰ In Islam, 'Imrān was Mary's father, but the Prophet Zakarīyah was assigned to take care of her.

father. From this, Mary becomes a symbol of God's power to grant life, and an ideal thanks to her dedication of her child to God.³⁵¹ Similarly, Ḥassān venerates 'Imrān's wife, Mary's mother, for dedicating her offspring to God (Q3:35).

Another example of this is Moses' mother. In a dramatized account, Ḥassān tells about her pain as she puts her trust in God and follows his call to her to place the newly-born Moses in a chest that she lets flow down the Nile, after Pharaoh's decision to kill all the newly-born babies of Egypt.³⁵² Ḥassān recounts that Pharaoh had a dream. His scholars interpreted it to mean that a future king from among the people of Israel would be born. This child would eventually deprive him of his power and wealth. Moreover, he would change the state's religion, and expel Pharaoh's people from the earth. To prevent this, Pharaoh decides to kill all newly-born boys. Moses' mother was filled with fear and anxiety after Pharaoh's decree. However, after a divine revelation (Q28:7), she sent her baby out on the Nile. Pharaoh's men found the box and brought it to Pharaoh and his wife, Āsiyah. Pharaoh wanted to kill the child, but when Āsiyah saw his special aura, she pleaded with Pharaoh to allow her to raise him in the palace. He allowed her to become very fond of Moses, and treated him like his own son. As Moses grows older, Pharaoh's nightmare becomes a reality. Moses announces himself as the new king. In this, Āsiyah supports Moses. Pharaoh then tortures and finally kills her. Accordingly, Āsiyah dies as a martyr for the message of *tawḥīd*. Ḥassān describes the moment of her death by explaining how God took her soul to Paradise, even before she had begun to feel any pain from the torture.³⁵³ Thus, the focus is on Āsiyah and her deeds. Ḥassān emphasizes that she gave up all her comfort, luxury, and joy for the sake of the Message. Ḥassān describes her as "a shining lamp in the castle of unbelief (*kufr*) and injustice", and as "a beautiful plant in desolate soil". Thus, according to Ḥassān, Āsiyah becomes an eternal example for all believers due to her demonstration of independence from worldly lusts, desires, and

³⁵¹ Ḥassān takes care to mention that in Islam he is a prophet like any other Prophet. He also stresses that Jesus preached nothing else than *tawḥīd*.

³⁵² Muḥammad Ḥassān, "Āsiyah," in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 15:00.

capriciousness (nazawāt).³⁵⁴ Ḥassān affirms this by quoting the Quranic verse that asserts that God made her an example for the believers (Q66:11).

Through several programs, Ḥassān addresses women and presents examples for them to follow. The most prominent figures are the ideal mother and the ideal wife. These are loyal to their husbands, pious, unconcerned with material needs, and agents of tawḥīd. Moreover, they possess qualities such as being knowledgeable, responsible, kind, affectionate, loyal, and faithful. All of them sacrificed themselves for tawḥīd in one way or another: Khadījah stood by the Prophet and supported him through hardship; ‘Ā’ishah chose the modest conditions of a life with the Prophet. She also suffered accusations of adultery. Mary suffered fear and pain when she conceived Jesus under the trunk of the tree. Moreover, Āsiyah was martyred, and Moses’ mother endured much pain when she sent her only child down the Nile.

From the above, the ideals that Ḥassān addresses to the female audience are closely connected to their role of supporting and raising men. They fill important roles as promoters of tawḥīd within the family. While Ḥassān relates male ideals to politics, trade, preaching, and fighting, he links ideals for women to the household, to upbringing and to upholding their morals. This says something about how Ḥassān thinks with regard to the difference between male and female roles in society.

4.4.5 Preachers

The ideal of da‘wah, which in Ḥassān’s discourse means spreading the message of tawḥīd, runs throughout the series. This position may be interpreted both as a call to people to preach and as model for people who are already preachers. In Ḥassān’s discourse, it is important to understand that preachers are also scholars, after the example of the Companions.

Two narratives are particularly informative in this regard. The most important is that of the Prophet himself. In the introduction of every single program, Ḥassān poetically

³⁵⁴ Ḥassān, “Āsiyah,” 13:00–15:00.

describes how the Prophet never rested or slept until he had informed the world about Islam—how he bore his sandals on his back, out of breath, the dust sticking to his head, as he wandered tirelessly to spread the message. The Prophet did not seek worldly gains, but was patient and endured persecution and difficulty. Ḥassān provides a portrait of the Prophet walking around enveloped in his cloak (Q74:1–7), pious and ascetic. Ḥassān asserts that the call is the preacher’s weapon, his family and wealth. Indeed, he argues, there is a mile’s distance between preachers who share the pains and the cries of the Ummah, and those whose interest is personal glory and the accumulation of money.³⁵⁵ For Ḥassān, da‘wah is the purest mission. “Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works for righteousness saying, ‘I am of those who bow in Islam’?” (Q41:33), he quotes.

In the story of Mary, Ḥassān calls on Muslims to spread the Message to the whole world. For example, he calls on Muslims to translate his programs and to spread the message that no religion holds Mary more highly than Islam:

O, Muslims, you who know very well other languages, strive for translating these programs to make the People of the world to know that there is no religion that venerates Mary as much as our religion, Islam.³⁵⁶

The second and most elaborate biography that reveals Ḥassān’s ideals for a preacher is that about Mu‘ādh. He serves an ideal both for the young, and for preachers. Ḥassān recounts his conversion to tawḥīd when he was eighteen. Ever since then, he worked tirelessly for the call (da‘wah). According to his biography, he collaborated with a group of young men who had lofty ambitions. Their relation to the Prophet was close, and they sought truth and truthfulness. Ḥassān tells the audience how these pure and good-hearted youths worked for the Message.

Throughout the series, Ḥassān emphasizes that people who preach must have knowledge. In view of that, Ḥassān describes Mu‘ādh as the bravest of scholars (miqdām al-‘ulamā’) and “the Imam of the wise”. He underscores his great and secret knowledge of

³⁵⁵ Ḥassān, “Muṣ‘ab b. Umayr,” 9.

³⁵⁶ ,———“Maryam,”

the permitted and the forbidden. He was specialized in the state of hearts and the trials and temptations to which people are exposed, and knew about everything that would happen up to the Day of Judgment.

In the program about ‘Alī, Ḥassān emphasizes the independence of preachers and scholars. He says that they do not betray religion for the worldly.³⁵⁷ They see conflicts before they arise, whereupon Ḥassān warns youth not to wage war or uproar on the basis of suspicion. Ḥassān states that there is a conflict between “true scholars” and “other scholars”. He says that there are always people who question the authority of scholars. He divides scholars in two groups: the scholars of evil (‘ulamā’ al-sū’) and the true scholars. He argues that the scholars of evil have split the Ummah, so that every group has become one party. He describes the current period as a time when those who lie are regarded as the true speakers, lusts have been spread and people betray religion for the transitory world, for the sake of status and money.³⁵⁸ As I pointed out in the section on ethos, it is implicit that Ḥassān himself belongs to the second group and personifies it. The evil scholars, he argues, “wear our clothes, but have wretched hearts and are fanatic.” He expresses worries that the wrong types of scholars guide people today, and quotes a hadith that he indicates as describing the situation today:

I heard Allah’s Apostle saying, “Allah does not take away the knowledge, by taking it away from (the hearts of) the people, but takes it away by the death of the religious learned men till when none of the (religious learned men) remains, people will take as their leaders ignorant persons who when consulted will give their verdict without knowledge. So they will go astray and will lead the people astray.

Ḥassān also offers some practical advice to preachers on how to win people’s hearts. He says that a preacher must distinguish between the tone (maqām) of jihād and calling to Islam. The tone of jihād is thick, masculine, and harsh, while the tone he suggests is

³⁵⁷ ‘Alī b. Ṭālib Muḥammad Ḥassān, “‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008), 55.

³⁵⁸ Ḥassān, “Hudhayfā b. al-Yamān.”

characterized by softness, blessing, and humility.³⁵⁹ In a comment that can be interpreted in the direction of how one should address those in political power, he says that Pharaoh, “who says that Egypt and its rivers are his (Q43:51),” must be addressed in the latter tone. Moreover, he underlines the importance of preachers being knowledgeable of the human self. Preachers must respect people, and not speak as if they are the god-fearing, and the audience the sinners. People will never listen to this, he argues. Moreover, the call must be executed with a smile. He affirms that those who call to guidance will receive reward such as the rewards of those who follow them. It is a duty for Muslims to preach the Message.³⁶⁰

The ideal preacher works only for the message, and is independent of worldly concerns. He criticizes those preachers he regards as not sharing the pains of the Ummah, those who preach for fame and worldly gains. In light of the antagonism between Ḥassān and the Salafī preachers on the one hand, and the “New Preachers” on the other, this may be interpreted as a critique of preachers such as ‘Amr Khālīd. Moreover, bearing in mind the critical stance of the Salafī preachers towards al-Azhar, his emphasis on the scholars’ independence seems to apply. Finally, this may be read as a critique of those who call for rebellion, without having the necessary understanding (fiqh). As pointed out in the section on ethos, here he is clearly defending his position and role as a preacher. The gentle style that he recommends fits well with his own image, and the smiling approach is one that is practised by other Salafī preachers such as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya‘qūb and Maḥmūd al-Miṣrī who were introduced in the previous chapter.

4.4.6 Personalities

Finally, Ḥassān praises a number of characters who are not specifically identifiable with categories such as “leader”, “women”, and so forth. Ḥassān does not praise these in a

³⁵⁹ Here he quotes the verse: “By an act of mercy from God, you [Prophet] were gentle in your dealings with them—had you been harsh, or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed and left you—so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. Consult with them about matters, then, when you have decided on a course of action, you’re your trust in God: God loves those who put their trust in Him.” (Q3:159)

³⁶⁰ Awjaba Allāhu ‘alay-nā an Nuballighhu Da‘wata-hu.

specific capacity or for the manner in which they played a specific role in society, but rather in a general way, for their struggle for Islam and their participation in the early battles of Islamic history. Hence, three characters personify heroism, jihad, extreme steadfastness, and loyalty.³⁶¹ These are the figures of the early Ṭalḥā, Khālīd b. al-Walīd, and Sa‘d, who were all prominent fighters. Ḥassān praises Ṭalḥā’s efforts and dedication in battles. He describes him as “the witness” (al-shahīd), “the glorious knight”, “the great giant”, and “the righteous hero”. Particularly in the Battle of Uḥud, he demonstrated loyalty, steadfastness, and submission to the Prophet’s orders.³⁶² He never gave up and fought to the very end. Passionately, Ḥassān describes how he shielded the Prophet with his whole body. Even after his hand was crippled, he continued fighting. One of the most vivid scenes is the time he carried the Prophet, when the Prophet was too tired, his face was cut up, his front teeth were broken, and the pure, noble blood was pouring from the Prophet as he was exposed to “real murder.” For this heroic effort, Ṭalḥā is spoken of as the living witness (al-shahīd al-ḥayy). Hence, Ḥassān presents Ṭalḥā as an example of those who fulfilled their pledge to God (Q33:23).

The antitheses of Ṭalḥā are those who disobeyed the orders of the Prophet and stopped fighting at the Battle of Uḥud. Ḥassān recounts that they thought that the enemy had killed the Prophet. Instead of continuing fighting, they started asking themselves what they were going to do now that the Prophet had died. As a result, according to Ḥassān,

³⁶¹ These episodes presented at least two problems with regard to interpretation. First, how was Ḥassān able to present eulogies of these martyrs on satellite television without being censored? Second, to whom does Ḥassān address these episodes? When I discussed this question with young men in Egypt, they mostly responded that these violent accounts are seen as accounts of past glory, close to that of freedom fighters, which in all cultures are celebrated without that celebration being interpreted as public incitement to violence. When I countered that Ḥassān puts these forward as ideals for Muslims today, the responses were that some of these characters were indeed symbols that inspired real fighters at given times in history. However, as Ḥassān formulated them, they did not understand them would interpret them as any incitement to violence. Rather, Ḥassān used their “capital” as fighters in order to inspire people to address “psychological” fights, in other areas.

³⁶² The Battle of Uḥud was the second battle between the forces of Muḥammad and the forces of Mecca, dated to 625AD/3AH. According to most sources, the Muslims were heavy outnumbered, but still had the upper hand. A fatal mistake led to a surprise attack by the Meccans who defeated the Muslims and almost killed the Prophet.

God made them lose the battle.³⁶³ From this, Ḥassān calls on the audience to follow the example of Ṭalḥā and “die for that which the Prophet died.” Ḥassān’s point is that people must not revert to their old ways despite the death of the Prophet (Q3:144).³⁶⁴ Ṭalḥā is the example that leads to the road to victory, while those who gave up represent the path to defeat.

In the program about the great Muslim conqueror Khālīd b. al-Walīd, Ḥassān explicitly tells the audience that he is recounting his biography to spread hope. He declares that by reminding Muslims of the glorious past, he intends to “tear out” the psychological defeat that currently fills the hearts of the believers. Through the example of Khālīd, Ḥassān seeks to replace this feeling of inferiority with confidence, energy, and truthfulness. Overall, he wants to ignite hope so that the Ummah will rise to dignity, like it did following the conquests of Khālīd b. al-Walīd.³⁶⁵ Ḥassān recounts how al-Walīd defeated on several occasions the enemy against all odds, against armies that outnumbered the Muslims. Al-Walīd was a military and strategic genius. When he faced the Romans, he regrouped his army, changed positions, equipped a rearguard with new banners, made the cavalry retreat and reappear, all to create the impression that the Muslim army was much bigger than it was, and generate the illusion that reinforcements from Medina were arriving.³⁶⁶

Still, when Ḥassān states that the Ummah today needs people such as al-Walīd: “Is there anything that the Ummah today needs more than people like Khālīd b. al-Walīd?”, his message seems addressed more to military generals than purely to the personalities of

³⁶³ The archers disobeyed the Prophet’s order to remain at their positions until the end. They thought the Muslims had won and dashed to acquire the booty. This allowed their enemies to regroup and attack, thus winning the battle. According to the account, God had filled the fighters with steadfastness and courage, after having put their trust in God (Q3:122). The Muslims thought they had won and started to collect war treasures, but a surprise attack by the Meccans turned victory into loss. Upon this, God sent down a revelation saying that He had made them strong, but because they disobeyed the orders of the Prophet, He prevented the soldiers from defeating the enemy as a punishment (Q3:152).

³⁶⁴ Ḥassān, “Ṭalḥā b. ‘Ubayd Allāh”.

³⁶⁵ The story about Khālīd is also a story about conversion. Ḥassān recounts that Khālīd went from being Islam’s worst enemy, to fighting for God and the Prophet.

³⁶⁶ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “Khālīd b. al-Walīd,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Hudā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

the audiences. His expression of regret for the lack of heroism today, and that Palestinian children have to teach men about sacrifice, is another ambiguous statement.³⁶⁷ Moreover, Ḥassān expresses remorse that the Ummah is ruled by others and depends on its enemies for weapons. He also calls on Muslims to give money to Palestine, Sudan, Iraq, and Darfur, instead of spending billions on sins and the “fallen ones”.³⁶⁸ He also makes statements, such as: “if we turn the anger, filling our hearts, against the enemies of religion [...] into invention, into a way of making this religion become victorious”,³⁶⁹ where he leaves it open to the audience to determine what he means by “invention”.

As I have pointed out earlier, Ḥassān calls the use of violence despicable.³⁷⁰ Several times, he states that no Muslim has the right to kill other Muslims in God’s name. He remains silent as to Muslims’ rights to kill non-Muslims.³⁷¹ In any case, one could argue that there is an underlying imperialistic tone to Ḥassān’s discourse. This points in the direction of something more than an inner struggle. He does not appear to refer to a domestic struggle, but seems to refer to a more global dream of the spread of the Ummah. In this, he not only acknowledges the need for steadfast personalities, and economic power, but also military power. In a context such as Egypt however, such a thought remains utopian, and it follows that people would probably not understand his program as any call to overthrow the regime. Rather, it seems part of a more distant dream of Islamic world dominance.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 3.

³⁶⁸ Ḥassān, “Muṣ‘ab b. Umayr.” What Ḥassān means by referring to the “fallen one” is open to interpretation, but those who share Ḥassān’s worldview would perhaps think about women who appear lightly dressed in music videos on certain satellite channels.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 7.

³⁷⁰ _____, “‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib.”

³⁷¹ Ibid.

4.5 Pathos

4.5.1 Stimulation

How does Ḥassān with his crew work to hold his audience's attention across the visual, musical, and verbal modes? Visually, the title sequence and the decoration of the studio are impressive and capturing. The framing of the decorations as well as the fading of Ḥassān into the verbal images of the companions are impressive effects. Likewise, the shifting of frames and zooming in and out create a dynamic feel to it. Ḥassān himself uses his upper torso, his hands, and his face as illustrators of the verbal and to show affect (see Illustration 4.6 below). The effects of his gestures and his mimicry increase in expressive power as the camera frames Ḥassān upper-body and face up close. This also creates a feeling of intimacy. When Ḥassān enters the different characters in his narrations, he effectively plays out their moods and feelings by changing the expressions on his face.

A characteristic is also that Ḥassān beats, and thereby strengthens the rhythm of his speech with his hands. Frequent use of parallelism has a similar effect. For example, the Prophet is variously entitled “the Imam of those who believe in the oneness of God” (al-muwahḥidīn), “the master of the messengers” (sayyid al-mursalīn), as well as “the model of those who tell the truth” (muḥiqqīn). These create long rhythmic sequences.³⁷² I understand Ḥassān's vocal not only to be an element of persuasion, but also as a source of entertainment and relaxation.³⁷³ This stimulating effect of his language brings to mind Barthes' essay “The Rustle of Language”, in which he discusses how language, when it reaches perfection, transcends the level of signification, so that the quality of the sounds disguises and becomes more important than the meaning.³⁷⁴ In the illustration below,

³⁷² The sound engineer sometimes adds echo to Khālid's vocal. Cf. ———, “al-Zubayr b. ‘Awwām,” 33:10; ———, “Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās,” 20:50.

³⁷³ Hirschkind makes a similar point. Some of his informants pointed out that sermon audition can be a source of relaxation. Many also pointed to the effect of the preacher moving their audiences across different sentimental registers. Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape*, 97.

³⁷⁴ Roland Barthes, “Le bruissement de la langue,” in *Le bruissement de la langue* (Paris: Edition de Seuil, 1984).

Ḥassān describes the hero of the evening very poetically describing the Companions as flowers and shining stars:

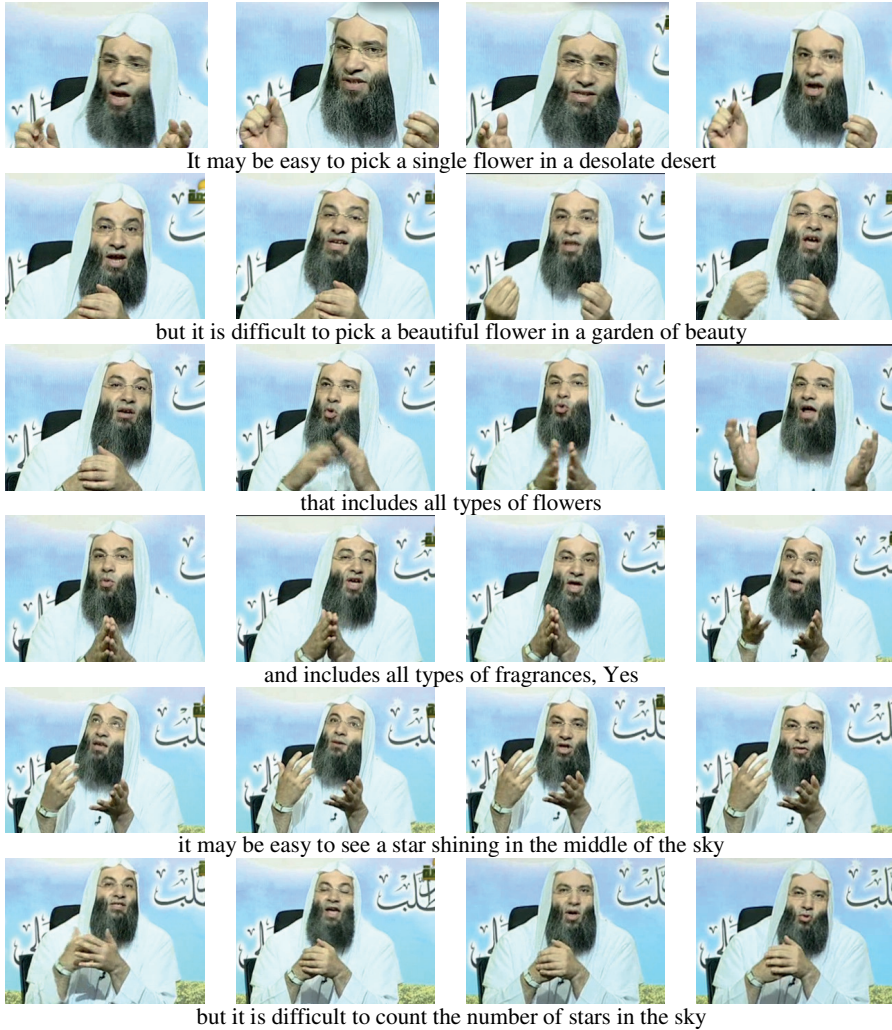


Illustration 4.6. Gestures and Facial Expressions, Imams of Guidance and [...] ³⁷⁵

³⁷⁵ These screen shots slightly zoomed in, grabbed every second. Grabbed from Muḥammad Ḥassān, “‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib,” in *A`immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābiḥ al-Dujā* (Egypt: Qanāt al-Raḥmah, 2008), 5:21–45.

Ḥassān's narration is full of imagery and contrasts. Through his descriptions he seeks the audience to see the scenes before them, and he often asks them directly to use their imagination. The scenes are often dramatic, exciting, dramatic, and passionate: "O Muslim (m), and you O Muslim (f), imagine (pl) as if you see God's messenger in the field [of battle] and his blood is streaming, him having been exposed to real murder."³⁷⁶ Another example is how he graphically and vividly describes how Muṣ'ab carried and raised the banner of Islam during the Battles of Badr and Uḥud.³⁷⁷ Ḥassān's verbal language becomes a lens that films the "events" of the companions' lives from birth to death. He starts the programs by narrating and praising the characters before naming them to make the audience guess about whom he is speaking. Ḥassān often addresses these accounts to the heart of the audiences, asking them to put their hands at their hearts when listening. He tells the main events of their lives and follows the characters to their deaths.

Finally, an example of how the three visual modes work together is his narration of when God reveals the innocence of 'Ā'ishah and warns those who put forward false accusations,³⁷⁸ Ḥassān recites in a voice full of passion, on the verge of tears. Simultaneously the camera frames his tearful eye, while echo and reverb is added to his voice.

4.5.2 Moving

Ḥassān's prime tool of moving the audience in the directions of logos—the ideal actions of the characters in the series—is to make the audience feel sympathy and identify with these. He points to parallels between the companions' lives the lives' of people today. Particularly, he seeks to make the audience recognize how much these heroes sacrificed for Islam, contrasting this to what people today do. The patterns of identification seem to be directed against people who are not materially wealthy. It is almost the Companions'

³⁷⁶ _____, "Ṭalhā b. 'Ubayd Allāh," 12.

³⁷⁷ _____, "Muṣ'ab b. Umayr."

³⁷⁸ It was a group from among you that concocted the lie – do not consider it a bad thing among you [people]; it was a good thing – and every one of them will be charged with the sin he has earned. He who took the greatest part in it will have a painful punishment (Q24:11).

sufferings take a moral character as they adopt *tawḥīd* and turn their backs on the material world. The TV-audience may think that, “Well, we are not rich, but at least we are living our lives in accordance with Islam”. For example, Ḥassān masterfully describes the pains of Moses’ mother as she dedicates her only child to God sending him out on the Nile in a chest, bidding him farewell. Ḥassān’s voice shivers and is on the verge of crying, and asks the audience to imagine the scenes before them.³⁷⁹ The contrast between what people today does for the Ummah and the contributions of the early Muslims is one of the main tools that he uses to pull the audience towards the ideals of these characters:

I want you to testify verbally: who amongst you have sacrificed something of his time, something of his money, something of his mind for the sake of God’s religion, the religion of the Chosen. Have you ever sat crying over this painful reality that your Ummah is going through? Have you ever noticed these things? Or do you eat your fill and sleep as much as you want as long you are safe in your bed and have enough to eat for the day, as long as you have a father who provides for you whatever you want – cars, food, drinks and clothes. We want sacrifice, you young people. I suffer extreme pain, by the Lord of the Ka‘bah when I see our Ummah still begging at the table of the world!³⁸⁰

Moreover, in accordance with his dichotomized view of the world, Ḥassān takes care to describe the total transformation that the Companions experienced as they adopted *tawḥīd*. The transformation these characters go through functions as *targhīb*. They move from darkness to light; insecurity to confidence; paganism to *tawḥīd*. This serves to bring forth a desire in the audience to become like them. ‘Abd Allāh al-Mas‘ūd, for example, went from working for the worst infidel to becoming the Prophet’s closest associate. He went from being poor, weak, and afraid, and ended up strong and brave. Once converted, the companions confronted any difficulty with persistence.³⁸¹ When ‘Ā’ishah turned towards *tawḥīd*, she experienced happiness and harmony (*rāḥah*). Ḥassān contrasts this to a worldly, disharmonic life, devoid of happiness.

The light of belief and *tawḥīd* started to touch (the pericardium of) his heart. If the hearts were to taste the sweetness of the faith, by God, if the light of belief were to reach the heart, the darkness

³⁷⁹ ———, “Āsiyah,” 30:00.

³⁸⁰ ———, “Muṣ‘ab b. Umayr.”

³⁸¹ ———, “‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd.”

of polytheism and idolatry would vanish. Indeed the state of the heart before Islam was like that of a very dark black room. [...].³⁸²

Adopting *tawhīd* is also closely connected to spreading hope among the audience. Those who convert see themselves as doing something for the Ummah, as participating in the project of Islamic revival and the rise of Islam. If people follow the example of the Companions, the Ummah will prosper and rise again. The past serves as a source of inspiration to tear out the root of what he describes as a psychological defeat that has filled the hearts of Muslims. “I want to renew the hope in the hearts of our children, our youth, our men, our women, our fathers, and our mother.”³⁸³

Ḥassān’s dichotomized world view gives the audience only two choices. Either one is with him, or one is out there in the dark with the pagans, the non-believers. Quoting Ḥudhayfā, Ḥassān affirms that there are three types of hearts. First, there is the incorruptible heart of the true believer. Second, there is the heart of those who will be damned—the non-believers. Third, there is the heart that fluctuates between faith and hypocrisy—that of the hypocrite.³⁸⁴ He thus leaves the audience to choose between binaries, such as belief/unbelief, light/darkness, and *tawhīd*/paganism.

The light and darkness metaphors are powerful tools that underscore this structure. Light symbolizes the revelation, knowledge, goodness, and *tawhīd*, while the dark alludes to paganism, the lack of belief, and evil. These oppositions are well illustrated by the visuals in the title sequence, and the whiteness of Ḥassān’s cloak leaves not doubt about which side he represents. If they follow him, they will see the light. The Prophet spread the light of *tawhīd* and the companions are described as glimmering, glittering lights, and stars. Inside the Ummah there is light, while the outside enemy forces of the West tries to insert obstacles between the Ummah and the shining, glorious past. Such metaphoric language seems a powerful tool in moving the audience in the desired directions.

³⁸² Muḥammad Ḥassān, “Khālīd b. al-Walīd,” in *A’immat al-Hudā wa-Masabīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ḥassān gives an example of hypocrites as those who straight after finishing his series switch channel to watch immoral programs.”———, “Ḥudhayfā b. al-Yamān.” 30:50.

Within this cosmological struggle, the human being becomes little, and Ḥassān's discourse may be seen at times to downplay the problems that people experience by zooming out from the trivial and focusing on the battle between good and evil that he sees as prevailing until the Last day.

For this world—how long it may be—it remains short; and this world—how great it may seem—it remains base, because the night—how long it may be—the day will break, because a lifetime—how long it may be—there is no escape from the entering of the grave.

In the end, all people will die and be judged for their actions. The shortness and baseness of this life requires that actions be done for the sake of the afterlife. The punishments of Hells and the delights of Paradise are implicit, but at times Ḥassān gives the audience insights into what awaits the faithful in Paradise. For example, he describes how the Prophet awaits the believers by his spring filled with water whiter than snow,³⁸⁵ and he asks them to imagine the delightful odors of Paradise.³⁸⁶ Conversely, he reminds the audience of the torments of Hell-Fire, such as in the episode about 'Ā'ishah he warns those who accuse falsely that they will face a painful punishment (Q24:11).³⁸⁷ Similarly he warns the youth that they will be tested referring to verses such as “All people will be put to the test; God will know those who are true from those who are false; If people lose their faith when tested, they will lose both this world and the Hereafter.”³⁸⁸ Muslims will not enter Paradise unless they have proven to God that they will struggle for his cause and remain steadfast (Q3:142). He warns Muslims of the punishment they will face, when their sins hang around their necks on the Last Day:

As for those who ignore God and His messengers and want to make a distinction between them, saying, ‘We believe in some but not in others,’ seeking a middle way, they are really disbelievers. We have prepared a humiliating punishment for those who disbelieve (Q4:150–1).³⁸⁹

³⁸⁵ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “al-Imām al-A'zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ.,” in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³⁸⁶ Ḥassān, “Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz,” 09:35.

³⁸⁷ Muḥammad Ḥassān, “'Ā'ishah,” in *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Hudā* (al-Raḥmah, 2008).

³⁸⁸ ———, “Mu'ādh b. Jabal.”s

³⁸⁹ Ḥassān, “Khālid b. al-Walīd.”

5 The Stories of the Quran by ‘Amr Khālid

The *Stories of the Quran* was filmed and produced in Prague, Czech Republic, starting in July 2008. According to Khālid, the motivation for choosing to film in Europe was to address European Muslims more directly.³⁹⁰ Khālid and his team organized trips so that Muslims from across Europe could feature as studio audiences. As *The Stories of the Quran* was more political than Khālid’s earlier series, the motivation could also have been to keep the content of the series secret and to avoid Egyptian security halting the production. Thus, Khālid chose not to produce the series within the production facilities of the Media City, but co-operated with the private company Ebonite Media and a Czech company.³⁹¹ Below, I will analyze the series based on the categories cohesion, mise-en-scène, ethos, logos and pathos, as defined in chapter one.

5.1 Cohesion

5.1.1 Series Structure

The Stories of the Quran is a series based on narratives found in the Quran and the Sunna, particularly Ibn Kathīr’s collection *Stories of the Quran*. Amr Khalid retells these stories in a manner that seeks to make them relevant to contemporary life and to lead audience members to identify with the narratives and characters, and accept a series of binary oppositions that to him define ideal Muslim behavior. The first program, “We will live by the Quran”, describes the goals and the main ideas behind the series. Khālid foreshadows what will happen throughout the series, and tempts his audience by telling them how much they will benefit from watching it. The structure is closely related to Ramadan. In every program, Khālid builds on the natural anticipation and excitement leading up the

³⁹⁰ ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Māhmūd, “bi-Qiṣṣaṣ al-Qur’ān .. ‘Amr Khālid Yaṭillu min al-Tshīk fī Ramaḍān,” *Islamonline* July 31 2008.

³⁹¹ Ebonite Media is a private company that has produced several of Khālid’s other series, such as *Paradise in Our Homes*, *A Call for Co-Existence*, and *A Trip to Happiness*. The company seems to specialize in Islamic popular productions, and has produced programs for other preachers such as the Yemenite preacher ‘Alī al-Jufri, and music videos for stars such as Tāmīr Ḥuṣnī.

Great Feast (‘Īd al-Fiṭr), after 29 or 30 days of fasting. He usually opens the programs by asking people how they are getting along with their fasting, their recitations of the Quran, their praying, and their asking for God’s forgiveness. Khālīd states that he has divided the series into three parts, corresponding to a customary tri-partition of Ramadan: during the ten first days of Ramadan the focus is on God’s Mercy, during the following ten days it is on seeking forgiveness, and during the last ten, he states that he will concentrate on becoming freed from the fires of Hell. The series’ structure reflects this: program nineteen marks the start of the last ten days of Ramadan, and focuses on salvation from Hell-fire, whereas program twenty-four centers on the Day of Judgment. Finally, program twenty-six focuses on God as The Forgiver of Sins. The synchronization with the Ramadan seems to lend coherence to the series. Perhaps for some viewers, the series becomes part of the religious practices that people engage in this time leading up to the feast.

<p>We will live by the Quran (1) Adam’s two Sons (2/3) People of the Garden (4) The People of the Trenches (5/6) Mary (7) Saul and Goliath (8) The People of the Cave (9/10)</p>	<p>Start of the Last Ten of Ramadan (19) The Incident of the Lie (20) Dhū al-Qarnayn (21) The Worship of Prayer (22) Luqmān the Wise (23) The Day of Tnād (24) The Family of ‘Imrān (25) God, the Forgiver (26) How to Remain Steadfast after Ramadan I (27) How to Remain Steadfast after Ramadan II (28) How to Remain Steadfast after Ramadan III (29)</p>
<p>The Stolen Armor (11) Korah (Qārūn) (12) Ezra, a Prophet of God (13) Bal’ām ibn al-‘Awrā’ (14) Ka’b ibn Mālik (15) Mu’min Yāsīn, the Hoopoe and the Ant (16) God’s prophet Moses and al-Khiḍr (17/18)</p>	

Illustration 5.1. Series Structure, Stories of the Quran.

Except the four programs just mentioned, the series is composed of twenty-five programs. Disregarding the three last programs in the series, which are mere summaries of earlier

shows, the thesis concentrates on the remaining twenty-two programs that contain the stories of the Quran. Of these, Khālid dedicates twelve programs to single stories, while he tells four stories, each over the course of two consecutive programs. Above is an overview over the composition of the series. Programs where Ramadan is the main theme are printed in bold. The numbers in the parentheses indicate which programs Khālid dedicated to the different stories.

5.1.2 Title Sequence

The title sequence is yet another important dimension that contributes to cohesion, both on the level of the series and the individual programs. The sequence combines music, vocals, and images into a multimodal expression that very effectively introduces the audience to many of the basic ideas of the program series. It marks the beginning and end of each program, and functions as a bridge before and after the commercial break. The title sequence begins by showing a frame of the *basmallah*: “In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!” (frame 1, Illustration 5.2.). The second frame shows a Quranic verse: “We tell you [Prophet] the best of stories in revealing this Qur’an to you. Before this you were one of those who knew nothing about them (Q12:3)”. Then, a third frame shows ‘Amr Khālid’s name on the screen, preceded by the title *Ustādh*.³⁹² In all three cases, the text, written in beautiful calligraphy on a black background, approaches the viewer from afar. Next, a rectangular shape inscribed with the logo of the series appears. This rotates sideways before it flies into an illuminated book. A longer sequence follows showing a quill writing the titles of the various stories on the pages of an ancient-looking book (frames 7–8). Finally, the camera zooms out, and frames the book from a distance, as it is put on a shelf amongst other older-looking books (frames 9–10). On their spines, the titles of Khālid’s former series are written.

³⁹² Ustādh is a title of respect usually used to address teachers, professors or intellectuals. Here it indicates that Khālid is a person of knowledge and a teacher.

Frame 1 (-01:02)



“In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!”

Frame 2 (-01:18)



“We tell you the best of stories revealing this Qur’an to you. Before this you were one of those who knew nothing about them.”

Frame 3 (-01:14)



“Ustādh ‘Amr Khālid” The music starts.

Frame 4 (-01:12)



The refrain just started. A rectangular shape is inscribed with the title “The Stories of the Quran”.

Frame 5 (-01:08)



The shape of the last frame disappears inside an illuminated book.

Frame 6 (-00:46)



A feather pen starts writing on the pages of the book the titles of the various stories of the Quran. The verse just started.

Frame 7 (-00:22)



The book closes and the camera pulls back. The book is placed onto a shelf of old books.

Frame 8 (-00:11)



The chorus has started again, the book approaches the stack of books in old bindings.

Frame 9 (-00:05)



We can clearly see the titles of Khālid’s former Ramadan series inscribed on the spines of the books.

Frame 10 (00:00)



The music stops, the overview frame is shown and Khālid sits by his desk.

Illustration 5.2. Title Sequence, The Stories of the Quran.

A theme song accompanies the title sequence. The song is a pop tune, in the same style as many of Khālid’s other series. It may be compared to a love ballad that does not focus on the love between people, but Muslims love towards Islam. The lyrics function as a tribute to the Quran. It describes it as a blessing for humanity, and a source of guidance that can save the world. Moreover, it relates the Quran with these stories and emphasizes them as sources of learning. Thus, the theme song metonymizes some of the basic premises and themes of the series. The catchy melody sets the beat and the rhythm of the programs:

Refrain:
The book of God
Lord of the servants made balanced/straight
You [the Quran], the demander of light
A blessing to the whole of life

Verse
The blessed Quran
Guidance for humanity and the world
A life buoy and guide for humanity
In every letter there is reward
Between the lines a miracle
In every story of the book a lesson
It is the guide on
the path of rewards we wander
Keeping it amongst us
in it we seek protection
On every inch of our earth³⁹³

Like in many earlier series, an up and coming artist, Muḥammad Siwīd, sang the title melody “The Book of God”. Earlier, singers such as Tāmīr Ḥusnī and Aḥmad Fahmī have introduced Khālīd’s show. This combination of soft Islamic pop and television preaching programs is part of ‘Amr Khālīd’s and other preachers’ effort to promote what they see as purposeful art. In my opinion, ‘Amr Khālīd is the Islamic preacher who seems to have most successfully combined religious discourse and pop-music. His promotion of a new movement of Islamic pop fronted by artists such as Sāmī Yūsuf, has not only benefitted them, but also increased Khālīd’s own fame.³⁹⁴ This demonstrates Khālīd’s creativity in terms of how he adapts, rather than discards formats originating in the West, and make them “Islamic”. The song plays an important role in giving the series its identity. It also has a similar mnemonic function as that of theme songs of TV-dramas, such as

³⁹³ This sequence is the same throughout the series. It has here been collected from ‘Amr Khālīd, “Qīṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Jannah,” in *Qīṣṣat al-Qur’ān* (Czech Republic: Qanāt al-Risālah, 2008), -01:21–00:00.

³⁹⁴ Hishām Abū Ḥadīd, “‘Amr Khālīd yakhtāru ‘Siwīd’ li-Ghinā’ Titr ‘Qīṣṣat al-Qur’ān “ *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, February 13 2009. Khālīd kept the song of the title sequence, but changed the visuals for the second part of the series broadcast Ramadan 2009. Usually one can find a collection of such artists on Khālīd’s website.

EastEnders, or the crime drama Miami Vice. After having listened to this song a couple of times, both my assistant and I found ourselves humming along to it.

5.1.3 Program Structure

At the level of the programs, the stories are the primary element that bind the programs together and create cohesion. The stories told over two episodes function much like a film divided into two parts—the first part builds suspense and creates a desire to see the conclusion. However, the narration of the stories is fragmented, and the length of the narrative varies greatly. Some stories are very short, like the story of Cain and Abel. Others are longer, with a large cast of characters, such as the story about “The People of the Trench”.

The programs are rather similar in structure. He starts with the *bismillah* (In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy), the *hamdallah* (Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds), and *ṣalla ‘ala al-nabī* (Prayers on the Prophet). Next, he greets and welcomes the audience. Before Khālid introduces the theme of the day, he usually recaptures some of the main points from earlier lessons by asking the audience questions, such as “do you remember?”, and “are you doing what we agreed on?” Then he starts on the main body of the program by telling the first part of the story of the day. Leading up to the commercial break, he builds up suspense to compensate for the loss of coherence caused by the commercial break.³⁹⁵

The breaks are between ten and fifteen minutes, and the package of commercials is the same for each episode, at least on al-Miḥwar and al-Risālah. This may indicate that the commercials follow the series and not the channel. In any case, they may say something about the viewers Khālid’s series seeks to attract. The commercials contain advertisements for companies that promote cars, shaving cream, a pastry shop, a

³⁹⁵ An example follows of how Khālid builds up suspense before the commercial break: “I will put all my money in a cultivated land [...] Its name will be “The Soil of Paradise”. Come (pl.), let us see the soil, let us watch it, but after the break. That is to say, we will enter the break and return to what the father did, before he died, how he spent his money, and how he helped the poor. I will go to Yemen to see after the break [...] what the sons did to their father. Let us enter the break and finish after the break!”

pharmacy, private hospitals, and real estate. However, the longest cut is dedicated to the series' main sponsor, "The Arabian Capital and Investment Company". Notably, this company has also had commercials on Khālid's webpage.³⁹⁶ Perhaps the TV-audience experiences the switch between Khālid's program and the commercials as abrupt. Still, the focus on success, a recurring theme of the series, makes it less so:

The platinum sponsor of this program is the Arabian Capital and Investment Company. This program is sponsored by al-'Arabī—providers of trust! Sakr, Toyota—the company of 'Abd al-Laṭīf Jamīl Limited! Royal Ceramics—a Kingdom of beauty! The Saudi-German Hospital Group [...].

The value of success comes from your determination, your persistence, your ambitions, and your open progressive vision. When all components of distinction are provided, you need an ideal work environment from which you can organize a successful administrative and profitable entity. Capital Business Park—the most exclusive administrative site for businessmen in Egypt!³⁹⁷

A cut of the title sequence marks the transition from the commercials to the second part of the program's main body. To ensure the flow, and to help new audiences, Khālid presents flashbacks from the session prior to the break, before he continues telling the story of the day. Khālid announces the end of the main body, and the start of a longer sequence of supplications, by pronouncing *in dā'in f-āminū* (I pray, so may you pray [as well]). The supplications function as a powerful and passionate ending to the lesson. The prayers last between one to five minutes, and finish as Khālid declares the end of the program: "Amen Amen Amen; peace be upon our Master Muḥammad; peace; Allāh's mercy and blessings be upon you". Khālid's supplications, which he performs together with the studio audience, are one of his trademarks. My assistant often wanted me to print him a copy of the prayers after we had written them down, so that he could use them when praying with his family. The supplications change content for each program according to the themes of the respective sessions.³⁹⁸ The figure below summarizes this structure:

³⁹⁶ The "co-operation" between da'wah and commercialism is not that new. According to Kepel, this was also a feature of the editions the Muslim Brothers' *Da'wah Magazine* (1977–81). Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 107.

³⁹⁷ 'Amr Khālid, "Sa-na 'ishu bi al-Qur' ān," in *Qīṣaṣ al-Quran* (Czech Republic: al-Risālah, 2008), 2:30.

³⁹⁸ The three last programs are exceptions from this structure.

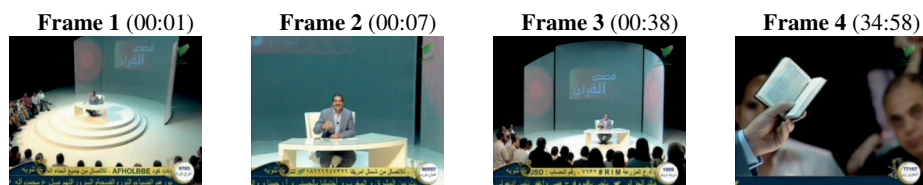
Title sequence.	Recap earlier episodes.
Introduction.	Main body.
Basmallah.	First part of story.
Praise to God.	Commercial break
Praise to the Prophet.	Recapture.
Greeting the audience.	Second part of Story.
Approximation to audience.	Long Supplications.

Illustration 5.3. Program Composition, Stories of the Quran.

5.2 Mise-en-Scène

5.2.1 Set³⁹⁹

The set of the series is simple. ‘Amr Khālīd sits on a white chair, behind a white desk on a raised platform in the center of the room, a few meters from an audience, seated around him in a half-circle (frame 1, Illustration 5.4). Khālīd faces the audience. Elegantly and somewhat casually, he wears a suit that he often changes from program to program (frame 2). With him is a pocket Quran that he reads from when quoting the Quran (frame 4). The in-studio audience usually numbers around thirty. They sit on bleachers, on a level somewhat higher than the preacher (frame 3). This underlines the informal atmosphere and the equality of participation between the preacher and his audience.



³⁹⁹ In episodes of *Light on Light* (Nūr ‘alā Nūr) featuring Muḥammad al-Sha‘rāwī from 1973, one can see al-Sha‘rāwī and the program host Aḥmad Farrāg sitting on an elevated podium side by side facing an audience of men and women who sit on regular chairs. For the most of the time, al-Sha‘rāwī fills the screen, but every two minutes or so, the producer frames the audience consisting of men and women. Cf. YouTube, *Muḥammad Mitwallī al-Sha‘rāwī 1973 (1 of 4)* (2008). [accessed December 2 2010, 45630 showings] (www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Kkzc-oAik4).



Illustration 5.4. Studio Setting, *Stories from the Quran*⁴⁰⁰

The average audience seems to be between fifteen and forty years old. Females and males are equal in number. Usually there are a few children in the audience. Whereas the women sit on the longer, more elevated, rear bench, the men sit in the front. That both sexes are present in the audience, in addition to their equal number, may indicate that the message is as much meant for women as for men (frames 5 and 8). The men are dressed casually, typically in jeans or a nice pair of trousers, a button-up shirt and sometimes a suit jacket (frame 8). Women are more elegantly dressed, in somewhat loose-fitting clothes. The great majority of women wear fashionable headscarves in different colors, but there are also some women without headscarves, especially among the young girls (frames 5–7). These colorful and fashionable dresses for women exemplify what people in Egypt call the “New Religious look”, a style promoted by channels such as *Iqra’* and *al-Risālah*. The setting makes several statements about dress code, in particular for women. These can of course be subject to differing interpretations, but at the very least we can gather that being beautiful is fine, wearing a colorful headscarf is fine, and not wearing it is accepted.⁴⁰¹

The setting above is dominant throughout the series, and although the in-studio audience changes, they wear a similar style of dress as described above. Yet, in a few programs, and in some important sequences, Khālid departs from the space of the studio in Prague. On two occasions, the nineteenth and the twenty-sixth episodes, Khālid broadcasts from a studio in Cairo. On three occasions, he leaves the non-narrative space

⁴⁰⁰ The first four frames are captured from ‘Amr Khālid, “Qīṣṣat Ḥādīth al-Ifk,” in *Qīṣṣat al-Qur’ān* (Czech Republic: Qanāt al-Raḥmah, 2008). The remaining frames are taken from Khālid, “Sa-na’ tshu bi al-Qur’ān.”

of the studio and “travels” to sites in Syria, Jordan, and Yemen to illustrate for the audience the places where some of the stories of the Quran took place. I will discuss this further at a later point.

5.2.2 Décor

The studio décor is very clean and simple and has “modern” design, devoid of any Islamic symbols. It features a green background on which the program’s logo is projected. This occasionally changes to show the logo of the series’ main sponsor. In fact, the sparsely decorated scene could serve as a scene for almost any talk show, or studio-based television program (frame 1, Illustration 5.5).



Illustration 5.5. *Décor, Stories of the Quran.*⁴⁰²

In his suit, Khālid may be taken for a businessperson or a middle-aged professional. Moreover, he appears fit and healthy, and his appearance is not unlike that of an American televangelist. Thus, his style goes well with the environment. The absence of décor is perhaps a way of focusing on the actors in the scene, particularly that of the audience.

While perhaps, strictly speaking, not an element of décor, the TV-viewers can see some pop-ups on the screen. Just as the logo of its main sponsor appears on the scene decorations, their advertisement appears in the middle lower part of the screen a couple of times during each program (frame 2). Similarly, the address of Khālid’s website occurs a few times (frame 3). Moreover, towards the end of the program, there is an advert in the

⁴⁰¹ See Amīnah Khayrī, “‘Nyūlūk’ Dīnī li-Tilifzyūn al-Wāqī’ “ *Al-Ḥayāh*, 14. januar 2006.

⁴⁰² The frames are captured from Khālid, “Qīṣṣat Ḥādīth al-Ifk.”

top left corner of the frame for the following program (frame 4). An interesting feature that is a general trait of programs on al-Risālah is that TV-viewers have the opportunity to call in or send SMS to get their greetings on the screen. Hence, a strip runs across the bottom of the frame throughout the program. The circular shape at the bottom right hand side of the captures above contains a number that the audience can call to get their greetings on screen. Less frequently, there is a text line above the “greeting line”, to promote other programs on al-Risālah. These elements underline the series’ commercial profile, and strengthen the feeling of the series as part of a larger flow of different programs.

5.2.3 Framing



Illustration 5.6. Framing, *Stories of the Quran*.⁴⁰³

The main focus remains on Khālid throughout the series and the camera frames him from different angles and distances (Frames 5–8, Illustration 5.6). Close-ups of him create an

⁴⁰³ From ‘Amr Khālid, “Yaum al-Tnād,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (Czech Republic 2008).

intimate feel, while filming him from a distance underscores that he is at the center of the performance. However, Khālid is not the only person in the studio. Each day there seems to be new audiences. This means new faces of people that the producer can clip into the program, and use as foregrounds or backgrounds when Khālid is framed. Watching the audience and their reactions becomes an important part of the visual experience of the series. Close-ups of audience who listen attentively, look serious, laugh, are all effective instruments of identification and emotion (Frames 3, 9, 12).⁴⁰⁴ Particularly interesting is the switching between Khālid and close-up filming of the crowd with their changing expressions of attentiveness, passion and modesty,⁴⁰⁵ according to the moods that Khālid's seeks to produce. Moreover, the supplications at the end of the programs are highly emotional sequences showing images of the audience in prayer. In other words, the framing of the audience constitutes an important part of the series' visual expression.

5.3 Ethos

5.3.1 Initial Ethos

During the past ten years, Khālid has established a solid position in the field of television preaching. His *initial ethos* is closely connected to welfare projects, volunteer organizations, and campaigns. He has, for example, worked with the WHO to fight smoking and cancer. This activity has translated into discursive and perhaps also political power. However the criticism from the Salafi preachers and the seculars that he is too focused on earning money and that he preaches a new type of Islam may have damaged him. Still, particularly for his targeted audiences, who presumably are fairly wealthy, this criticism may not be so important. Many Egyptians consider him to be a person familiar with the modern world who knows how to solve the problems that Egyptian society suffers from, in contradistinction to the more traditionally educated preachers. Moreover,

⁴⁰⁴ It can also be noted that it is probably not a coincidence that women sit in the back, especially as Khālid finishes his programs with a prayer. The rationale behind this is that women may distract men from worship, while men are assumedly less distracting for women.

⁴⁰⁵ This is a feature that one can see in ḥabīb 'alī's lessons and also maṣābiḥ al-hudā

he has been engaged in intercultural dialogue, in particular regarding the Cartoon Crisis, in connection with which he travelled to Denmark with a group of young people. Many of those who are skeptical about Khālid's authority as a preacher, acknowledge his role as a social reformer who does a great deal of good for society and who has the competence not only to make a diagnosis but also to prescribe and promote the remedies that could put an end to the decline of Arab Islamic societies.

As a successful economist who has travelled widely abroad, Khālid is a model for those who are trying to negotiate the challenge of remaining Muslims while also living "modern" lives. This strength, however, is also his weakness. As he is not a trained religious scholar, many conservatives have criticized him for not having the necessary competence to speak in the name of Islam, as witnessed by the fact that he does not speak "real" (that is, Classical) Arabic. The more secular and leftist media have also been very critical, accusing him, for example, of being more interested in monetary gain than in preaching the message of Islam. In the West, however, he has widely been regarded as a new voice and a reformer, despite the fact that he still, from a Western standpoint, must be regarded as conservative on gender politics.⁴⁰⁶ In recent years Khālid seems to have lost some authority. At the same time he has become more political than he used to be, as is apparent from the series "Stories of the Quran" described here, as well as from its second part, broadcast by al-Risālah during Ramadan 2009, and his recent series *Renewers (Mujaddidūn)*, which seems to have motivated the Egyptian authorities to take measures against him.⁴⁰⁷

Khālid's authority derives from a combination of his knowledge of Islam and his knowledge of modern life. Like most television preachers, he has a team of people to help him put together his message. He takes care to mention his earlier achievements through welfare projects and the series he has previously presented, and he seeks to give the impression that he is contributing to bringing about a change. How he speaks about the

⁴⁰⁶ cf. 'Amr Khālid, *Makānat al-Mar'ah fī al-Islām* (2002).

⁴⁰⁷ Haytham Dabūr, "al-Amn Yujbiru 'Amr Khālid 'alā al-Raḥīl ilā Lundun... wa-Yamna'u Barāmijahu fī al-Faḍā'iyāt," *al-Maṣrī al-Yawm*, June 3, 2009.

world, picking examples from his travels and his discussions with “Orientalists,” businessmen, and others, reveals a picture of him as someone who knows and masters the “modern world.” His authority comes first and foremost from being able to fuse the world of business and success with Islam. By using examples from different spheres, such as sports, science and a life that lower segments of society only can dream about, he seems to establish his authority primarily by addressing the upper strata. The insertion of English terms, particularly business terms, is a dialectal feature one encounters in the speech of people from the upper classes. Some may see this as a lack of knowledge of the Arabic language, while others may see it as an indication of social position and educational level. Thus Khālid’s authority comes from his experience of the “mundane” as much as it comes from his knowledge of Islam. He is not among those who have memorized the Quran by heart, but, like many of the other television preachers, he has a personal narrative of piety that he at times brings up.

5.3.2 Derived Ethos

In *The Stories of the Quran* Khālid gives the impression of a businessman. His clothes and the studio design allow very few associations with anything Islamic. Everything has a very tidy and modern look. The persona he projects is of someone successful in the modern world but at the same time pious. His style is friendly and intimate, and he seeks to minimize the distance between himself and his audience. He is personal and addresses his viewers in a very direct way. His informal language and his frequent recourse to the interpersonal mode, in particular his use of the informal dialect pronouns “we” (*iḥna*) and “you” (*inta/inti*), as well as various other techniques of rapprochement (*taqrīb*), serve this purpose: “In front of me now is an audience consisting of my family, my loved ones, my brothers and sisters [...].”⁴⁰⁸ Khālid likewise tries to situate himself on the same level as

⁴⁰⁸ ‘Amr Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Miryam,” in *Qiṣṣat al-Qur’ān*, Qiṣṣat al-Qur’ān (Czech Republic 2008).

the members of the audience and establish a relationship of commitment and trust with them, as if he has known them for years:⁴⁰⁹

This year is the ninth of Ramadan, when we gather in our love for God. There is nothing that brings us together except for [...] these programs. We have great memories, eight years, imagine eight long years, and great programs, and Ramadan after Ramadan, we meet in submission to God and the path of the Beloved.⁴¹⁰

Khālīd is endeavoring to tell the audience that he is there for their sake. He praises them and shows concern for them. He is worried about them. But, he is there to help them to live their lives, and he has solutions. If they need to ask questions, they can chat with him on his Website after the program. He is their mentor and teacher. Close-up images of Khālīd further emphasize this intimacy, and the framing of the in-studio audience contributes to affirm his authority. The audience listens to him attentively, thereby creating a model that television audiences can emulate. Khālīd's speaking dialect diminishes the social distance between him and mass audiences, and the use of specifically colloquial expressions such as *ya-nhar abyad!* and *ba'a 'asharah 'ala 'ashara*,⁴¹¹ as well as popular jargon and slang, furthers this aim. His variant of Egyptian colloquial is not the Cairo dialect, but more rural, which gives amusing effects when combined with English terms such as "download," "business," "promotion," "weekend," "cash" and "teens".

But there is a downside to this, my assistant remarked several times. He said that it grated his ears to hear Khālīd speaking about the Prophet and his Companions in such an ordinary way, and he reacted strongly when Khālīd made a comparison between Mary and young girls today: "You know, romantic girls who love, who sit by the sea looking at the sea. Why? Because, they live in romanticism! Mary is like this, but overcomes it

⁴⁰⁹ Interestingly, many of the same techniques are identified by Jakob Høigilt in his study of 'Amr Khālīd's written rhetoric. Høigilt, "Writing Islamism: Rhetoric and Ideology in Contemporary Egypt", 128–58.

⁴¹⁰ Khālīd, "Sa-na 'tshu bi al-Qur' ān."

⁴¹¹ "*ya-nhar abyad*" is an exclamation, and can perhaps be translated as "Good Lord!". The expression "*ba'a 'asharah 'ala 'asharah*" literally means "He became ten out of ten", and implies that he became "a super guy/perfect."

through the love of our Lord; overcomes it through reflection on God's creation."⁴¹²

Khālid takes care to establish himself as a man with honest intentions. Particularly illustrative is his passionate style and focus on love for Islam, for the Prophet and for the Quran. In particular the final prayers of his programs play an important role in this respect. Khālid is careful to insert comments about earlier achievements as if they were random digressions. Interestingly, he also replies to accusations that he is more preoccupied with fame and earning money than with preaching the true message of Islam: "Why are you [Khālid] presenting this program? Is it because of fame? No, I put pressure on myself and on my heart. [...] I preach to make people love our Lord [...]." He also seems to answer directly the type of critique that I have showed that Ḥassān has directed towards him in sections 2.4 and 3.2.1.

Those who curse me and correct me, [what] they said about me; what is written about me: O Lord, make my heart forgiving (ʿāfi). O Lord, and to you and you and you too: everyone who sits here. [...] I am telling you now with sincerity, what they said about me, it didn't happen, they are looking for mistakes and to make them big. [...] O God, this is for You!

Khālid may also appear truthful because of his informal and intuitive style. He stutters, repeats himself, stops in the middle of sentences, and speaks at an extremely fast pace, thereby giving the impression that he is speaking directly from his heart, as if nothing were planned. Varying pitch, voice strength and pace, his register is impressive, and his apparent impulsiveness creates the illusion that the discourse is spontaneous, when in fact it is well-organized and planned in advance. This secondary orality also has the effect that Khālid appears knowledgeable and intelligent. Moreover, he appears enthusiastic. When he gets excited, he speaks faster and louder, so that his thin voice trembles and nearly cracks, he moves his body, and wrings his hands. This creates an impression of noble intentions and genuine enthusiasm.⁴¹³

⁴¹² Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Miryam."

⁴¹³ Compared to Khālid's voice in interviews, his voice in the series is of much lower pitch, probably adjusted by the sound technician.

5.3.3 Textual Ethos

The authority of the series, and of the stories of the Quran, is established in various ways, across the visual and verbal modes. In this respect, the title sequence locates the series in the discursive universe of Islam by presenting it in the name of Allāh and recalling that God gave these stories to humanity. The person who is going to tell these stories is *ustādh* ‘Amr Khālid. The old-fashioned books and writing connect the stories with the authority of the past. The agentless pen may underscore that they were revealed by God and not by any human being. The last scene, where the book is placed among ‘Amr Khālid’s other programs, connects *The Stories of the Quran* to Khālid himself and his former productions. This sequence is repeated before and after the commercials, as well as at the end of the program, and can be seen as a way of building up Khālid’s ethos, and the authority of the text. By opening the program with the customary locutions, Khālid’s discourse is placed within a format that gives the audience associations to the *khutbah*. What may cast doubt upon this authority are the long commercial breaks and the commercials on the screen during the program, something that also places in question the intention of Khālid’s text. The prayer may compensate for some of this, but I spoke to several Egyptians who explicitly criticized this series for its long commercials.

An important issue is that which is known as the stories of the Quran are only partially found in the Holy Book. The Quran does indeed contain references to these, but their status is debated among scholars, and the actual stories only exist fully in collections based on hadith, such as that of Ibn Kathīr. In Islamic *fiqh* these accounts are classified as *Isra’īlīyāt*, a term that refers to Jewish traditions about what took place before Islam. What Khālid does, in particular in the first program, is to relate these as closely as possible to the Quran. This move is reinforced by the ritual of reading the Quran by people during Ramadan. Khālid says that reading the Quran brings people closer to God and gives life meaning.⁴¹⁴ Such reading will solve all problems, and one must experience

⁴¹⁴ Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Bal‘ām b. ‘Awra’.”

the Quran to understand its beauty.⁴¹⁵ He makes the stories of the Quran into absolute principles. They are durable and solid and something that people can relate to in a time when the world is a chaotic place to live in. They are compared to a third dimension:

What happens when you ride a train? Sometimes another train is moving next to you, and you are confused about which is moving and which is standing still, isn't that right? [...] What do you do when you mix them up? [...] You look for the fixed third dimension [...] You look at the ground, or the trees, to know what is still and what is moving. Such are the stories of the Quran. When the world is mixed up like our lives are now, when the truth enters inside what is false, when goodness is mixed up with evil [...], these stories are the third dimension.⁴¹⁶

Khālid states that the Quran is the miraculous locus of everything. It is a source of personal and social change. He announces the slogan “We will live by the Quran,” and says that Muslims must live by and experience the Quran. It provides a new spirit that purifies, gives strength, puts lives right and distinguishes right from wrong. For those who find the Quran difficult, these stories are the solution. They are easy to understand and function as a “gangplank to the ship of the Quran.” Khālid claims that God collected thirty stories that represent a synopsis of the most important sequences in human life. He promises that all people can recognize themselves in them, as the stories deal with the lives of normal people. They not only present examples of good behavior, as do the stories of the Prophets, but they also include examples of wrong behavior. It is no coincidence, says Khālid, that a large part of the Quran was revealed in this form, since it is inherent in human nature to enjoy listening to stories. Because they are stimulating, exciting, and dramatic, they are clearly designed to influence people, he says. Moreover, they are fixed and eternal, and represent something stable in a world characterized by instability. Khālid says that his series will teach people to love and better understand the Quran.⁴¹⁷

What are the four things the stories of the Quran will teach you? Focus with me! One: how to love and understand the Quran. Really? I will tell you how now. The stories of the Quran will teach you how to improve your life and your morals, and how you can succeed, you and your family by

⁴¹⁵ ———, “Qiṣṣat Miryam.”

⁴¹⁶ ———, “Sa-na`īshu bi al-Qur`ān,” 00:33:03–45.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 35:20–45.

the Quran and through its stories. The stories of the Quran teach you how to apply God's ninety-nine names in life, and how to love our Lord. The stories of the Quran teach you this. And the fourth thing it teaches you is how to revive the Ummah, how it can stand on its own feet and be renewed.⁴¹⁸

As the quote also shows, the fourth thing the audience will gain from watching the program is that they will learn how to revive the Ummah and make it self-sufficient. This message of renewal and reform is combined with a strong focus on piety and on Ramadan as a period of personal change. Quoting a range of popular hadiths, Khālid reminds us of the great rewards for piety during this period, and presents this special time as an occasion to halt sinful behavior, to repent, be purified and start anew.⁴¹⁹ Ramadan is a period of improvement and personal change.⁴²⁰ He then focuses on God as a Forgiver and the renewal of one's self (*tajdīd al-nafs*).⁴²¹

Khālid takes care to reiterate the fact that these stories are true and eternal, often mentioning the place where they took place, as well as the year, which is often very exact. Sometimes he will also seek out the places where these stories are supposed to have taken place. By showing videos of himself at the various historical sites, it is as if he says to the audience, "See for yourself." In the episode of "The People of the Trench," he recites the chapter of al-Burūj, while showing a satellite picture of the place where it is believed to have happened.⁴²² Likewise, in the second episode of the "People of the Cave", Khālid shows a clip in which he appears near the cave where the group of youth supposedly slept.⁴²³ Khālid first acts as a reporter telling about the cave, then enters it, whereupon the audience hears a person reciting the actual passages of the Quran and engaging in very

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ Khālid refers to a number of hadiths and Quranic verses, such as Q2:183;185;186, Q17:9.

⁴²⁰ Khālid argues that all the important victories of the Ummah took place during Ramadan and refers to the Battle of Badr, the first conquering of Mekka and Andalus, as well as the war of October 6, 1973. Thus he connects personal improvement to military victories and the expansion of the Ummah.

⁴²¹ Amr Khālid, "Ism Allāh al-'Afū," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (Czech Republic: Qanāt al-Risālah, 2008).

⁴²² ———, "Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd (2)," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*, *Qiṣṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (Czech Republic: Qanāt al-Risālah, 2008), 39:50–40:24.

⁴²³ This can be connected to Barthes' reality effect, the textual device that seeks to make literary texts realistic. In the *Discourse of history*, he criticizes the discipline of using such uncritically. Roland Barthes, "L'effet de réel," in *Le bruissement de la langue* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1984).

emotional prayer:⁴²⁴ “We are now filming from the place of the cave, you will not see the cave yet, but we are in the place where the youths gathered, the place that is mentioned in the Quran, the place that we read about every Friday.” The way Khālid travels to see these places is also an element in building up his ethos, along with his already mentioned use of “we” to establish a fellowship with the audience.

As the present state is characterized by illiteracy, sectarian strife, poverty, nepotism, corruption, instability, injustice, unscrupulous capitalism, backwardness and lack of belief, the path to follow is self-criticism and self-development on the individual level. People must take social responsibility and develop themselves. Khālid desires growth, but does not want to follow a path where development comes by means of individualization and investment in unlawful activity. As he sees it, a combination of family values, strong faith, education, discipline, hard work, pro-activeness, and justice is the path out of the quagmire in which Arab countries find themselves.

5.4 Logos

The *logos* of Khālid’s series is based on the stories he tells from the Quran, and how he brings these up to date by relating them to the present. The stories function as authoritative premises for Khālid’s call. He creatively uses these stories as complex allegories for current social, and at times political, developments. The stories present ideal patterns for behavior, as well as their antitheses. The heroes of the stories are agents of reform, self-development and pious behavior, while their counter positions possess qualities such as being stingy, evil and unjust. Through these stories Khālid works on the audience to make them adopt the ideal subject positions, and avoid their counter positions. Khālid does not retell them exactly as written in the authoritative collections. Rather, he adds details and admonishes the viewers based on fragments of these stories. This is a complex process with important variations. Still, the general principles are clear.

⁴²⁴ ‘Amr Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Kahf (1),” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (Egypt: Qanāt al-Risālah, 2008), 39:40–51:30.

Khālid enters and exits the narrative at various points. This may take place as follows: he first narrates or quotes a short sequence from the story. Second, using the latter as a premise, he exhorts the audience. This movement that fills the present claim with the authority of the “sacred” text represents a move from the imaginary past to the actual present. Grammatically this is expressed in a change from the 3rd person referential to the 2nd person, interpersonal mode.⁴²⁵ This often abrupt switching changes Khālid’s role from a narrator to an admonisher,⁴²⁶ and is the basic intertextual mechanism in the series. This can be illustrated in the following that shows a series of successive statements:

Function	Khālid’s statements	Tense/Mode/Comment
Narrative Premise	the boy [in the story] started to do good deeds helping people, standing in line with them	narrative, referential, past
Relevance:	I am telling this story because I know that the youth [of today] is, that is...	an implicit critique of today’s youth referential, present
Admonishing:	Be good towards the poor!	Interpersonal, hortative, imperative
Admonishing:	Help people!	Interpersonal, hortative, imperative
Relevance:	This is how goodness is going to return to our country, this is the first step, so that the good returns to our country.	
Premise:	Take care! The whole way of the boy; there is not a drop of violence in it. The king will use violence against him, but he...	(narrative, referential, past and for foreshadowing future of past)
Admonishing:	Violence is not our path!	Khālid construes the “We”,
Admonishing:	No to the destruction of our country, no!	Referential, interpersonal, negative imperative.

First, Khālid narrates a fragment of the narrative in the third person past tense. This functions as a premise. In the successive incomplete sentence, he points to its

⁴²⁵ Referential mode refers to when Khālid functions as a *narrator* and tells the story from a third person omniscient perspective. The interpersonal mode refers to when Khālid directly speaks to his audience in second person, often in the imperative or appellative mood. He then primarily acts as an admonisher.

⁴²⁶ Prosodically, this switch is marked in several ways through tone, rate, intonation, pitch and so on. Another characteristic is a movement from referential to conative language, grammatically expressed through positive and negative imperatives, as well as vocatives.

relevance,⁴²⁷ and continues to call Muslims to help and be good towards the poor. He proceeds with a new argument of relevance and explains it as a strategy for goodness to return to the country. In the two last statements, he calls on the audience not to use violence. This example illustrates how Khalid creates a present meaning for the stories of the Quran, and how he constantly changes back and forth between the two roles of narrator and admonisher. In what follows, I will summarize these ideals and positions that he seeks to make his audiences adopt. Instead of presenting every story one by one, I have systematized them according to the segments in the audience I see him addressing these ideals to the most the most in the series. I have therefore ordered the story into six different categories: the young, leaders, the rich, the family, the citizen, and the personalities.

5.4.1 The Young

Most of the positive characters in the series are agents of reform in some way or another. Three of the younger characters distinguish themselves by being social and political reformers. In “The Story of the People of the Trench” the hero is a young boy. He grows up in a society ruled by a king who deprives people of their rights, tortures people and makes his enemies “disappear”. The boy is exposed to the ideas of both the state and religion, and feels torn between the two. On the one hand, he takes lessons from a monk, a symbol of the religion and the Truth. On the other hand, he is an apprentice of the king’s wizard who seeks to teach him how to delude the people and conceal the Truth, particularly through the media, to “keep the Ummah dancing”.⁴²⁸ The boy sways between his two teachers, but finally decides to side with the monk. He decides to live and sacrifice himself for the Message and the Truth. To earn their support, the young boy

⁴²⁷ Saying outright that the youth of today do not help the poor would be too strong a statement. By leaving the sentence incomplete, this is rather left open to interpretation.

⁴²⁸ The fact that the king is the one who appoints the wizard to conceal the truth, may also point to a critique of the close relation between the media and the ruling power in Egypt. Moreover, Khālid says: “Indeed, the Media has its role: it may corrupt people, suppress people, lead people astray, or take people by their hand and set them right. The two are present in the story: the Media that corrupts and profits at the cost of the people and the Media that puts people right for the sake of goodness and how people have turned towards the purposeful media more than they have towards the corrupt media.”

starts to serve the people. He then infiltrates the king's power apparatus and confronts the king directly. Not once does he use violence. Because he has strong support, the king is afraid to kill him. Rather, the king makes several attempts "to make the boy disappear": he orders his soldiers to take the boy to a remote mountain,⁴²⁹ but miraculously, he is saved by God every time. The king then executes the boy in front of the people. This leads to a non-violent uprising, and people shouting out: "There is no god, but God". The king orders his soldiers to dig trenches filled with fire, where they throw those who refused to give up their faith. However, after a while comes the resolution. A Yemeni force defeated the king and the country became righteous again. The efforts of the young boy and those who gave their lives to fight injustice were therefore not in vain.

By praising the efforts of the boy and presenting him as an example to follow for the youth of today, Khālīd constructs a subject position of a political reformer for the youth to adopt. Khālīd moves in and out of the narrative, and re-actualizes its meaning by comparing the struggle between religion and the state to what is going on today. Like the boy, Khālīd exhorts the youth to choose sides, to engage themselves and to confront injustice. The youth must sacrifice themselves totally for the Message, even with their life.⁴³⁰ Still, Khālīd takes care to emphasize that violence is not allowed. Thus, the story becomes an allegory for the present and the desired future, containing a recipe for change and reform. Hence, the position Khālīd invites the youth to adopt is to choose religion over the politics of an unjust regime that deludes the masses. The proposed strategy is clear enough: help the people, win their support, confront the king without the use of violence, and be willing to sacrifice yourselves for the Message.

A similar narrative, but one that underlines the importance of patience in the work for reform, is re-actualized through the story about the People of the Cave. Here the focus

⁴²⁹ Khālīd speaks about "soldiers wearing casual clothing". This carries a clear connotation to the methods of the secret police in many Arab states, including Egypt.

⁴³⁰ 'Amr Khālīd, "Qiṣṣat aṣḥāb al-ukhdūd 1," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (Czech Republic: Qanāt al-Risālah, 2008), 6:50–7:04.

is more on striving for a moral reform through welfare work and *da'wah*.⁴³¹ Khālid tells the story of what he describes as seven normal youths living in Jordan under the rule of the unjust and pagan Roman ruler Diqyūnīs.⁴³² Monotheists were persecuted and murdered, and people suffered from poverty. Yet, a group of 15 years-olds decided that they wanted to change the country, and became bearers of the Message. These escaped the king's omnipresent spies because of their young age. They met by coincidence under a tree at the yearly feast. Each of them had retreated from the festivities during which people drank alcohol, prostrated to pagan gods and committed sins. Together, under the tree, the youths decided to reform the country, and decided on a strategy: they started to visit the poor, give them food and help people to start "projects".⁴³³ Then, they started teaching people about the religion. Furthermore, they worked day and night, and people started to like them more and more. At some point, however, the spies of the king learnt about their activities, and chased them. The youths fled. On their way they sought refuge in a cave where they miraculously escaped the king's soldiers. Inside the cave, God put them to sleep for 300 years.⁴³⁴ After their disappearance, people started to think that the king had killed a group of youths who were only 15 years old, and although Khālid doesn't explicitly say so, it is implied that the king was removed in some way. The youths became heroes and in memory of them people inscribed their names on a plate and celebrated a yearly feast. Three hundred years later, God awakened them, and the youths learnt that their effort had not been in vain, and the country had become Christianized. The Quranic passage that God does not let the reward of anyone who does a good deed go to waste (Q30:18) concludes the story.

Through the characters of the youths, Khālid calls upon youth to start working for reform. By comparing today's youths to those in the story, Khālid seeks to make the

⁴³¹ This story is based on the sura of the Cave, in particular verses 9–30.

⁴³² According to Khālid the story took place 150 years after the birth of Jesus, and finished around 300 years later.

⁴³³ Khālid does not specify this, but in his vocabulary 'projects' means to start welfare projects of small businesses to help others, fight unemployment and create economic growth.

⁴³⁴ 'Amr Khālid, *Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Kahf (1)* (2008).

youths in the audience identify with them and adopt their position. He tells the youths that they are the hope for the future. It is particularly important to take a stance. That the youths left the feast where sins were committed is presented as an ideal to follow. Khālid discourages youths from being in places where there are people who drink alcohol or engage in corruption.⁴³⁵ The overall strategy is to take a stand, engage in helping people, work hard and create projects for God's sake, so that people start believing in God:

Put things on earth right! Love people! Feel aware that you were created! Put things right! Make people love our Lord by way of helping them, giving them to eat, by making projects for them, in their villages, for their families, for their children. Teach the small children and improve their lives: this is the story of the People of the Cave.⁴³⁶

Thus, the subject position that Khālid proposes for his audience is similar to the former story. Several times he underscores that the youths abstained from using violence. Helping people, teaching them about religion and *da'wah* are the primary strategies towards reform. He calls on the youths to dream. At the same time, like in the story, one must realize that change may take time. In this respect, Khālid says that those who are in a hurry are of no use. Still, how soon there will be change depends on the youths' effort. Whatever happens, God will help them to reach their goal. Together, these two narratives sum up Khālid's message to the youth and the positions and the strategies he wishes them to adopt with regard to creating social and political change.

Khālid addresses the character of Mary to young girls today, and focuses on her life before the revelation. At the same time he concentrates on her piety, chastity, social participation and role as a mother. Khālid describes how God provided for Mary, how God chose her and thereby made her pure (Q3:42). Her chastity and moral character constitute an ideal to follow. By referring to how God told her to prostrate in worship and bow with those who pray (Q3:42–44). Khālid tells that she often reflected and wondered about God's creation. Moreover, she was full of passion, yearning and energy that she directed towards worshipping God. Also, she engaged in volunteer work, such as helping

⁴³⁵ "Tell me who are your friends, and I will tell you what your future looks like", he exclaims.

⁴³⁶ Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Kahf (1)," 27–8.

orphans and the weak. This ideal pattern of behavior is particularly addressed to young girls, specifically those between 15 and 23, who according to Khālid are full of the passion of love. He jokes that whereas a person normally has one hundred “entities” of love and passion, girls at this age have one thousand. This energy must be directed towards something positive, and the solution is to follow Mary’s example and direct it towards God and volunteer work.⁴³⁷

Khālid expresses concern for young girls as they confront the threat of boys. He calls on them to be like Mary so that their passion does not take the wrong path, which could lead to being ruined: “don’t let the boy fool you and take your “entities” (wiḥdāt),” he says. Girls are romantic by nature, and, as in the case of Mary, this should be channeled into reflection and worship, instead of staying up all night waiting for a phone call. He condemns the double standards of men, saying that if a boy goes out with a girl and she asks him how much he respects her, the boy will tell her that he loves her. However, if his sister does the same thing, the boy will not tolerate it. Khālid says that what he is most afraid of is inactivity, of girls doing nothing. His call to them to do volunteer work is paired with an attempt to discourage parents from forbidding their daughters from doing so. Thus, the episode about Mary both creates an ideal for young girl, and on for young boys who are warned against double morals.

5.4.2 Leaders

Khālid expresses a yearning for a different kind of globalization than the one of today. Through the narrative of Dhū al-Qarnayn he makes globalization an Islamic phenomenon,

⁴³⁷ Khālid’s presents the narrative in the sura of Mary in a very fragmented way, but the Quranic account can be reconstructed as follows: Mary withdraws with her family to a place in the East. God sends her a messenger who announces that she will give birth to a pure son. Mary objects that this is impossible, as no man has touched her, but God blesses her with a son. Pregnant, she withdraws to a distant place, and clings to a palm tree and cries out in despair when the pains of childbirth arrive. A voice from above tells her not to worry, that God has provided her with what she needs of food and drink. She pleads with God that she would not to talk to anyone that day. Upon her return to her people, she is accused of having done something terrible, but Jesus, the small child says: “I am a servant of God. He has granted me the Scripture; made me a prophet; made me blessed wherever I may be. He commanded me to pray, to give alms as long as I live, to cherish my mother” (Q19:16–32).

a system wherein all people will benefit. Presenting Dhū al-Qarnayn as a pioneer of “Development through faith”, he says that Dhū al-Qarnayn did not conquer other civilizations through use of violence,⁴³⁸ but through the strength of his ideology, built on values and knowledge. Globalization according to the model of Dhū al-Qarnayn did not favor only one society or one part, like the globalization of today, he claims. Dhū al-Qarnayn did not only guarantee his own success. He let others succeed with him, and nothing was achieved at the cost of the failure of others. Khālid says that this is the weakness of the West, which has great material resources, but lacks spiritual power. A successful globalization must be well-rooted in moral values. For example, Dhū al-Qarnayn never took a single penny (millīm) from the country’s wealth. He understood that God was the only reason why he had become a world power. Dhū al-Qarnayn relied on the Quran as a message for every place and time. Khālid calls on Muslims not to confine the Quran to themselves. I interpret this as an expression of a desire for an “Islamic” version of globalization to spread.⁴³⁹

Khālid envisages that such a global “Islamic” order be established in three stages. The first step is to establish justice. Second, he stresses the importance of economic development, and finally, in the third stage, one can confront the exterior enemy that attacks Muslim countries. The rule of Dhū al-Qarnayn is mentioned by Khālid as an ideal directly opposed to the actions of Korah, upholding his values and principles and avoiding corruption: “By God, he would have been the most corrupt [man] on earth, terrible corruption (fisād shidīd), if the values had not been established (raskha)”.

⁴³⁸ Khālid bases his account on the Sura of the Cave verses 83–100: God gives Dhū al-Qarnayn the means to achieve everything. He goes out travelling. He travels to the place where the sun rises, and finds the sun rising on a people unsheltered from the . Then, he travels to a place between two mountain barriers. There he finds a people that can barely understand him. These tell him that Gog and Magog are ruining their land, and they ask Dhū al-Qarnayn to build a barrier to protect them for a tribute. Dhū al-Qarnayn answers that the power of his Lord is better than any tribute, and with their help he would put up a fortification. Between two mountains, Dhū al-Qarnayn builds a barrier of metal that Gog and Magog are not able to penetrate (Q18:83–100).

⁴³⁹ Some imperialistic undertones here as Khālid makes a comparison between Dhū al-Qarnayn and the Khālid ibn Walīd, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and Saladin, all successful military commanders who contributed to the expansion of the Ummah.

In the episode “The Story of the Stolen Armor”, there are two accounts that I interpret to address leaders in particular. First, Khālid tells a story about the Prophet coming to Yathrib. What met him there was a number of disputing factions. Two of these had been engaged in warfare for over 30 years.⁴⁴⁰ By establishing equality before the law, the Prophet managed to reconcile the different factions of Yathrib. The result was that these came to live in peaceful co-existence. This stability became the reason behind a revival of their society, and eventually became the cause that led to the establishment of the Islamic Ummah.⁴⁴¹ The second story is the story about the Stolen Armour. This took place two or three years after the migration back to Medina. This was another key factor to the success of the Prophet. The Prophet managed to uphold justice despite the hostile environment of his adversaries. The Jews, for example, plotted towards the Prophet several times. The story about the stolen Armor is about a Jew who was wrongly accused of stealing a suit of armor, after a Muslim falsely testified against him in front of the Prophet. However, before the break of day the next day, the Archangel Gabriel came down from heaven and revealed the innocence of the Jew.⁴⁴² Khālid emphasizes that Gabriel came down from heaven before the break of day, and that justice was established.

Khālid puts these two stories up to date by contrasting the justice of the Prophet to the delay of 10–20 years that one experiences in the courts of today.⁴⁴³ The problem, he says, is that if there is no equality before the law, people feel insecure and do not know when to be afraid. If people do not know whether they will be treated justly in the courts or not, there is not security and people may be put to jail for now reason. Thus, Khālid sees the principles of the Prophet and the Quran as superior in establishing justice. He refers to the saying of Ibn Taymīya that “God protects and values highly the just state even if it is unbelieving, and [God] does not value an unjust state, even if it is Muslim.” Moreover, he rhetorically asks: “can you see our Quran, is there any constitution (dustūr)

⁴⁴⁰ Khālid here refers to the tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj.

⁴⁴¹ Amr Khālid, “al-Dir’ al-Masrūqah,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (Czech Republic: al-Risālah, 2008).

⁴⁴² Amr Khālid, “al-Dir’ al-Masrūqah,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

of the constitutions of Europe or in the world in which such words exist, show me a constitution in which there are such words!”

While sharia is one of the main sources of legislation in Egypt, this may be interpreted as a critique towards the Egyptian state lack of applying it. In an Egyptian context insecurity in front of the law is a serious problem. The story may therefore be interpreted as a critique against those responsible for justice and a system in which normal people have little legal security, while others are above the law due to their high connections. Khālid sees equality in front of the law as one of the main factors behind spurring a revival of the Ummah, thus it seems as if establish justice in the sense of Khālid is one of the most important step towards a revival. At the same time, maybe to downplay this critique, Khālid does advocate that justice must come from below. This will be addressed below in section 5.4.5.

5.4.3 The Rich

Two narratives are particularly addressed to rich people and businessmen. These are the stories about “The People of the Garden” and “The Story of Korah”. Both are formulated as warnings. Khālid’s overall claim is that the rich in the Arab world do not give the poor their share of the wealth. If the rich had done what they ought to, people would have enough to eat, and social justice would prevail. He claims that the rich of today take no social responsibility and close their eyes to poverty. Describing the life of people in the slums, Khālid expresses empathy with the poor.

In “The People of the Garden”, Khālid tells about a man who started from zero and gradually became a successful merchant.⁴⁴⁴ As his wealth grew, he gave more and more to charity. The more he gave to the poor, the more wealth God bestowed upon him. When almsgiving had become the most important thing in his life, he invested his fortune in a cultivated field. One third of the harvest went directly to the poor, one-third to his children, and one-third to investments in “development projects”. The fact that the more

⁴⁴⁴ ———, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Jannah,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

he gave the more he earned proved that those who give the poor their lawful share will prosper, something that should encourage rich people to give. However, the story takes a turn when the pious man dies unexpectedly and his sons take over the field. They did not want to give alms and meant to harvest the crops without granting the poor their third. However, when they went out to gather the harvest, they found the field desolate. God had inflicted his punishment on them for depriving the poor of alms. Seeing the divine fury, they repented and turned back to God (Q68:17–33).

Through this story, Khālid presents the ideal position of the father who gave generously to the poor. The more he gave, the more God gave him. The sons, who refused to follow their father's principle, become his antithesis. Khālid updates the story to the present by warning that factories and wealth may vanish in a moment. He warns that Hell-Fire awaits those who accumulate “gold and silver instead of giving in God's cause” (Q9:34). Khālid calls on businessmen and the rich to follow the example of the father and give alms to the poor. He warns not to invest in businesses that are not in accordance with Islam or are based on unlawful sources. Investors must also be humble and listen to their families and to the intellectuals. Khālid thus creates an ideal for businessmen to emulate, something we might label “the just capitalist.” The story may be read as a critique of and warning to the generation of wealthy persons who have inherited their wealth.

More addressed to the new rich, who started as poor and acquired wealth by their own effort, is the story about Korah (Qārūn).⁴⁴⁵ Khālid tells that “Korah was one of Moses' people (Q28:76)”. He was originally poor, faithful, ambitious, principled, and the bearer of a message. But as he acquired wealth, he gradually lost these values. He ended up betraying his people, his family and the Message [Islam]. Korah became corrupt, and sided with Pharaoh, a common term for any ruler. Khālid explains that people are weak and need guidance when confronted with the temptations wealth. This is why God only

⁴⁴⁵ Of the four Korahs mentioned in the Bible, one corresponds to the Quranic account. This is the son of Izhar who was leader of the famous rebellion against his cousins, Moses and Aaron, in the wilderness. El-Said M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Arabic-English dictionary of Qur'anic usage*, vol. 85, *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, 1. Abteilung, Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 730.

grants wealth in small portions (Q42:27). Khālid presents Korah as an unscrupulous capitalist—a selfish individualist who is only interested in money. He is haughty, and does not listen to anyone but himself, thinking of himself as superior to others because of his wealth. Moreover, he ignores advice both from his family and from the intellectuals. Khālid describes Korah as even more dangerous than “Pharaoh,” because the way he acts creates social struggle.

The Korah illustration seems addressed not only to the class of the new rich in Egypt, but also elsewhere. Khālid states that the Korahs of today are the capitalists who acquire their fortune from unlawful sources. To exemplify this, he mentions nightclubs, entertainment games, and channels that show video-clips, dancing, and bogus products. Khālid extends his attack to the non-Islamic media. He warns these media against arousing young people’s sexual instincts and calls on them to help move their countries forward.⁴⁴⁶ He also addresses another contemporary issue when he warns businessmen against monopolizing merchandise and raising prices. He sees this as a way of exploiting the poor. He warns them not to “be among the followers of Pharaoh” in order to enrich themselves.⁴⁴⁷

5.4.4 The Family

Another of Khālid’s focuses is the family. “The Story of Luqmān” and “The Story of the Family of ‘Imrān” are especially addressed to the various members of the family. In the episode about the family of ‘Imrān, Khālid focuses on the rearing of children. Giving birth and bringing up a child must be done for the sake of God and is an important component in creating revival. The family is the basic component of society, and maternal

⁴⁴⁶ He addresses the owners of channels broadcasting this directly: “O, Owners of satellite channels, God does not like the corrupted!”

⁴⁴⁷ In an Egyptian context the narrative of Korah is an evident critique of the class of the New Rich. Khālid does not alienate these by telling them that capitalism is wrong. Rather, he says that it is fine to be rich, but that they must be aware of their social responsibility. Pharaoh may be interpreted as a metaphor for the state, and the story can be read as a critique of the close ties between political and economic power in Egypt. How such nepotism has resulted in certain persons with close ties to the state apparatus having been granted exclusive rights to sell certain necessities, has been a recurrent theme in Egyptian news in recent years.

kinship (*ṣilit ir-raḥm*) is the glue binding the extended family together. The individual is first and foremost a representative of the family. Khālid calls on youth not to cast shame on their families by violating the path (*sikkah*) of their ancestors. Examples of such violations are betraying parents by marrying behind their back, what Khālid refers to as “making a mistake with someone,” engaging in unlawful relationships, and fighting over inheritance. The individual has a responsibility for upholding the name and the reputation of the family: “It is not about someone (male) marrying someone else (female). It is about a family marrying another family, two families appropriate for each other marrying.”⁴⁴⁸ This makes marriage into an alliance between two families rather than between two individuals. When a girl’s hand is asked for, the girl and her family must therefore look at their prospective relatives in order to find out whether the one who proposes is a good choice.⁴⁴⁹ The basic premise for this thinking is that the good breeds the good. Khālid warns of relationships that undermine the role of the family. He explains that the problem with [intimate] friendship⁴⁵⁰ between boys and girls is that it is primarily a relationship between individuals: “Even though they may think that they are going to marry, and know each other’s parents,” says Khālid, “the focus is on the individual and not on the family.” The story seems candidly addressed to young people in love contemplating marriage.

In the story of Luqmān, Khālid addresses particularly fathers. The main idea of the story is that there should be no contradiction between hard work and success, on the one hand, and taking care of one’s family, on the other. By referring to the character of Luqmān, Khālid calls on men to take greater responsibility in the home, stressing that they too are responsible for rearing children. Khālid starts the story of Luqmān reiterating that God gives wisdom to whomever he wills, and that whoever is given wisdom is given much good (Q2:256). Luqmān was one of these (Q31:12). Having emigrated from Egypt to Palestine, Luqmān started working as a hireling for David, who soon noticed his hard work, good character, and wisdom. David was building a state and a society and needed

⁴⁴⁸ Amr Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Āl-’Imrān,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān*.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Khālid talks about *al-ṣuḥūbīyah* that here implies a girl and boy who are more than regular friends.

wise people to guide the new generation, and Luqmān thus went from being a hireling to being an educator of the Israelites. He collaborated with David in creating a generation of revival. Referring to the examples of David, who went from being a shepherd to being a king, and Luqmān, who was originally a hireling and became a judge, Khālid calls on the audience to work, read, travel, and not to squander time. The main point is that on his way to success Luqmān did not forget his son. Khālid refers to the Quranic passage stating that Luqmān counseled his son not to attribute any partners to God, to keep up prayer and to forbid what is wrong and command what is right (Q31:13). On this basis Khālid demonstrates that fathers have a responsibility in the rearing of their children. Children today need their father. Parents should be examples and friends to their children. He emphasizes that parents must be good examples for their children through their actions. It is not good enough to tell them what to do. Khālid warns of the punishment that awaits those who say things but do not follow up what they say with actions (Q61:2–3). He also addresses children and calls on them to respect their parents. The condition seems to hold as long as the parents follow Islam’s principles. He refers to a Quranic verse stating that God commands people to be good to their parents, because they should be thankful to both God and their parents. However, if parents try to associate God with something that he is not, that is, if they are polytheists, children must not obey. God is aware of everything (Q31:12–20).

5.4.5 The Citizens

In several stories Khālid focuses on the civil society. Khālid emphasizes the importance of people acting as part of a larger society and it is individuals who are responsible for the well-functioning of society. Here I shall focus on the story about Ka‘b b. Malik, the story about ‘Ā’ishah (The Incident of the Lie) and “The Story of the Stolen Armor.” The story about Ka‘ab underscores the importance of acting as if one is part of a bigger collective. Khālid recounts that Ka‘b was one of Muḥammad’s companions. He participated in the battles at the time of the Prophet, but at the battle of Tabūk he failed to do so. Aware that the battle involved long travel in burning heat, Ka‘b started to look for excuses not to go.

Khālīd enters the psyche of Ka‘b and tells about Ka‘b’s inner struggle. Should he choose what he himself preferred, or should he act in the interest of the country and the society. Each time he was about to set out for the battle he found an excuse. Finally, the army left and he ended up not participating. For this he was punished with fifty days of estrangement during which no one spoke to him. In the end God forgave him and the two other believers who had been absent from the battle.⁴⁵¹ Khālīd makes Ka‘b the antithesis of a responsible citizen. He calls the audience not to live for themselves. They must live for society and one’s country. Collective thinking supersedes individual thinking, and Muslims must never forget their common challenges. He calls on Muslims to live together in a nation. If there are battles to be fought, everyone has to participate:

I know that in most countries today people live by the idea of individualism, and especially in our country. Are you [the audience] individualists? You are an individual, you have your desires, your ambitions, your own project and that is your right, and God will help you succeed, but take care: there is also something called the project of the native country.⁴⁵²

Ka‘b becomes the personification of people today who think only as individuals and not as part of a larger collective. Khālīd brings his example up-to-date by pointing to a number of contemporary examples. One concerns people who import bad food: When the food is stopped by the customs and disposed of, someone else picks it up from the garbage and sells it on the market. Another example concerns someone who gets a good deal buying valves for bottled gas cylinders from China. When they arrive, the valves do not fit the description. However, instead of being thrown away, they are sold. People end up with gas cylinders that leak, leading to the death of children. Similarly, people put the wrong specifications on iron and use it to set up buildings that collapse. Because someone follows his own personal interest, says Khālīd, children die. He asks the audience rhetorically: “What if all people were without a message and lived for themselves and

⁴⁵¹ “And to the three men who stayed behind: when the earth, for all its spaciousness, closed in around them, then their very souls closed in around them, when they realized that the only refuge from God was with Him, He turned to them in mercy in order for them to return [to Him]. God is the Ever Relenting, the Most Merciful” (Q9:118).

⁴⁵² ‘Amr Khālīd, “Qīṣṣat Ka‘b ibn Malik,” in *Qīṣṣat al-Qur‘ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

individualism? [...] Don't do this! Live for the Message! Live for people, serve people, help your village, help your country, help a family that needs money!"

In "The Story of the Stolen Armor," Khālid advocates the importance of justice coming from below. In an attack on nepotism, he poses a dilemma to the audience. What would they do if a close relative were guilty of a crime, but another person was about to be arrested or convicted for it? Khālid states that the Quran has the answer to this question and refers to a Quranic verse:

He who commits sin does so against his own soul – God is all-knowing and wise. And anyone who commits an offence or a sin, and then throws the blame on to some innocent person, has burdened himself with deceit as well as flagrant sin. You who believe, be steadfast in your devotion to God and bear witness impartially: do not let hatred of others lead you away from justice, but adhere to justice, for that is closer to awareness of God. (Q5:8)

Building on this quote Khālid focuses both on the punishment one will face in front of God as well as on how human beings are equipped with an inner mechanism that tells them when they commit injustice. He also calls on the audience to concentrate on their own mistakes and not on those of others. One should concentrate on being righteous in one's everyday life, as, for example, at home. He thus turns the story into an address to all those who obstruct justice, bear false witness in courts, or treat their wives unjustly at home, as well as to lawyers who know that their client is guilty. Justice must govern family relations and regulate hostilities between religious factions. Khālid argues that justice is valuable in itself regardless of the result and that all factions are equal before the law. Moreover, in the story "The Believer of Sūrat Yā-Sīn, the Hoopoe and the Ant," Khālid makes an interesting insertion that indicates that he is in favor of a new system subject to the principles of justice he describes below. His formulation indicates that such change is not to come from above, but from below:

We will set up a new constitution. We will not punish those who have made mistakes in the past. He who commits injustice will face a terrible punishment. Development for faith! The suitable person in the suitable place!⁴⁵³

In the “Incident of the Lie,” citizens are addressed with regard to a matter of a moral nature related to how society sees women. ‘Ā’ishah, one of the Prophet’s wives, is the main protagonist. Khālid tells that after “The Battle of the Trench,” when the Prophet was building a moral society and the disbelievers resorted to spreading rumors attacking the Prophet to split the people, the Prophet went out with his followers to confront an army that was to attack Medina. On the way back, ‘Ā’ishā, having gone to search for her necklace, was left behind. She was absent for a while, but later returned with one of the Prophet’s friends. Rumors that ‘Ā’ishā had committed adultery spread. One month later, God revealed a verse that proved the innocence of ‘Ā’ishah. Moreover, it affirmed that liars will be held responsible for their sins: “When you took it up on your tongues, and spoke with your mouths things you did not know [to be true], you thought it was serious but to God it was very serious ... (Q24:11–20).” Alluding to these verses, Khālid calls on his audience to take care not to accuse women falsely. He describes how women often are victims of untrue rumors. He particularly addresses the press and the media, as well as anyone speaking behind women’s backs:

Abstain, you of the press! Abstain, advertisers! I am directing today’s story to the press and the media? Abstain from exhibiting women! Abstain from spreading scandalous news [...] in order to earn from it, or to make an issue of it [...] without evidence.⁴⁵⁴

Thus an important part of creating a new morality is to refrain from speaking negatively about women, something which may be one of the reasons for Khālid’s popularity among them.

⁴⁵³ ———, “Qiṣṣat Mu’min Yā-Sīn, wa-al-Hudhud wa-al-Namlah,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

⁴⁵⁴ Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Ḥādithat al-Ifk.”

5.4.6 Personalities

While the preceding sections reflect Khālid's concerns for those he seems to address the most, this section comprises the stories and narratives that do not seem to be directed towards any particular segment of the audience, but rather address all people. The section deals particularly with the question of what kind of personalities Khālid is trying to create. This is Khālid's main focus, and this section comprises a total of five stories: the stories of Ezra, of Cain and Abel, of Saul and Goliath, of the Believer of Sūrat Yā-Sīn, the Hoopoe and the Ant, and of Bal'ām. All these center on developing the personalities of the audience as a step towards reform and revival.

The story of Ezra is centered on the importance of having a persistent self. It is also linked to Palestine and may be interpreted as expressing a dream of liberation. The events take place two hundred years after the reign of the Israelite king and Islamic prophet Solomon. The Ummah had prospered under Solomon, but after his death it declined. Upon his demise, the kingdom was split in two. Later, it was split into further factions, and finally burnt to the ground. Jerusalem was thus in ruins when God asked Ezra to go there "to set things right." Ezra lived "somewhere else" with his four children, his wife and his servant Ester. Still, he set off to Jerusalem (al-Quḍs). When he arrived, he found the place desolate. However he made an effort to rebuild it. One night, in the cave where he slept, he asked himself if it would be possible for God to revive Jerusalem after his death. Then God put Ezra to sleep for one hundred years (Q2:259). When he woke up, Bukhtunaṣṣar (Nebuchadnezzar), the king who had destroyed Jerusalem, had died, and people had started to liberate themselves and to return to rebuild the city. God sent Ezra a king, and the Ummah rose again. From this, Khālid concentrates on three messages. First, Ezra becomes a symbol for never giving up, for believing that reform and change are possible, when all hope seems lost. Second, he symbolizes how societies fall and rise, depending on the people who constitute them. Khālid says that Solomon had provided the people with great opportunities, but that the people did not care. He compares this to the situation today, mocking people who drive around in their cars for fun, wondering how the air-

conditioning works. Entertainment has taken over the current generation's lives and has deprived it of any seriousness, he claims. Thus, he makes a parallel between the decline and the eventual fall of Solomon's society, and that of today. He specifically brings in strife between factions, and gives the examples of Iraq, Lebanon, and Darfur.⁴⁵⁵ While this second point constitutes the warning in Khālid's message, there is a third message, one of hope. If only one puts one's trust in God, victory will eventually come. Here, the parallel to Palestine is most clear, and Khālid says that the darkest time of night is in fact just before the break of dawn. Khālid also expresses the love of Muslims for Palestine and the Aqṣā mosque in long passages.⁴⁵⁶ He mixes this with recalling Saul's men defeating Goliath's army⁴⁵⁷ and the victories of David and Solomon. In one passage, he calls on mothers to bring up a new Saladin (the sultan of Egypt who re-conquered Jerusalem in 1187, thus setting off the Third Crusade). A new generation must be brought up for the sake of the Aqṣā mosque, he says. Ezra, the hero who went to Jerusalem to rebuild and who never gave up, serves as a clear source of inspiration here.

The second story particularly addressed to the personalities of the audience is that of Cain and Abel. Abel represents the positive ideal, while Cain is his negative counterpart.⁴⁵⁸ The narrative is short: God accepts Abel's offering and rejects Cain's. God refused Cain's sacrifice because of his laziness, his unwillingness to learn and his failure to achieve results. The background was that Cain had lost faith in himself and in his abilities. Instead of working to improve himself, he came to envy his brother. He had developed the bad qualities of stubbornness, haughtiness, greed and stinginess. This is why he offered his poorest crop to God, and why he succumbed to the "severe illness" of

⁴⁵⁵ 'Amr Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Nabī Allāh Uzayr," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (2008), 10:30.

⁴⁵⁶ He gives the background in order to underline the importance of the Mosque for Muslims, and refers to various hadiths underlining the rewards of praying in the mosque. He also refers to Muhammad's midnight journey to the seven heavens ascending from the al-Aqṣā mosque, and all the prophets praying there (Q17:9). Moreover, he explains that the quarrel over Jerusalem is a religious conflict and that one can look at it as a thermometer of the earth, as an indicator of the level of equality (*musāwāh*) or racism (*'unṣūrīyah*), as well as reform (*ṣalāh*).

⁴⁵⁷ In the Quran the rout of Goliath's army by Saul's force is mentioned just before David's killing the giant. Q2:251.

⁴⁵⁸ In Arabic and in the Quran, Cain and Abel are called Qābīl and Hābīl.

anger and finally killed his brother out of jealousy (Q5:27, 30). Abel, on the other hand, was industrious and started early to improve himself and develop his talents. Thus, he ends up generous and offers God his fattest lamb.⁴⁵⁹ Moreover, Abel is portrayed as kind, affectionate, pleasant, gentle, diligent, eager to learn and hard-working. He is also a pacifist, a point that is underlined. Khālid does not omit to mention that before Cain slew his brother, Abel had made clear to him that he would not strike back if he tried to kill him (Q5:28).

Thus, Khālid creates two contrasting positions. The negative character of Cain is associated with laziness, lack of self-esteem, envy and conflict, and serves as an allegory for the decay of the Arab Ummah. Khālid concretizes this position by citing examples such as youth who sit in coffee shops instead of working. His diagnosis is that these youth have psychological disorders. Instead of developing themselves to break out of this negative spiral, they focus on the success of others and move in the direction of Cain. Khālid wants to move his audience in the opposite direction, that of Abel, so as to lead the Ummah towards revival. Again, Khālid exhorts his audience to adopt the position of the peaceful Abel, who tells his brother that even if he attacks him, he will never strike back. This encapsulates Khālid's call to Muslims to end conflicts so that the Ummah can prosper. He concretizes this by referring to situations in countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, Sudan and Palestine: "People of Iraq! You in Darfur, in Lebanon, desist from bloodshed between brothers!"⁴⁶⁰ Khālid's main argument is that no revival is possible, if Muslims do not stop fighting amongst themselves. Rather they must start to work for the development of their societies: "If there is going to be more strife than this in the Arab world, forget about any revival!"⁴⁶¹

In the story of Cain and Abel, Khālid also presents a strategy for the audience to help them become more like Abel and less like Cain. The aim is to rid oneself of, or at

⁴⁵⁹ Khālid here rhetorically asks if one can imagine that there are businessmen who believe that they can get the best while sacrificing less.

⁴⁶⁰ Amr Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Ibnay Ādam (2)," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (al-Risālah 2008), 4:45–53.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 16.10–15.

least reduce the negative qualities of Cain: arrogance, envy, stinginess, greediness, stubbornness, and anger. Khālid presents a strategy for each of these. Arrogant people must learn to be humble towards the poor, to visit those who are deprived and to take care of the weak. The stubborn must train themselves to be more tolerant and amenable.⁴⁶² Greedy people must deprive themselves of the things they love and crave for. The stingy must give a great deal of charity during Ramadan. When people get angry, they must perform ritual ablutions. Khālid thus proposes a variety of techniques people can employ in order to promote positive change in themselves and become more like Abel: “Train yourself, as the Prophet told you. Ramadan is the possibility of a new start,” he says.⁴⁶³ Here again Khālid suggests a strategy of individual change in order to come to terms with conflict and strife in the Muslim countries. The ideal position personified by Abel can be interpreted to be one of reconciliation, which again is a strategy aiming towards the larger goal of revival.⁴⁶⁴

The third story that is especially apt as a demonstration of how Khālid tries to shape the personalities of the audience is that of Saul and Goliath. This story is based on the Quranic passage describing the victory of Saul’s forces over the army of Goliath and David’s slaying of the giant (Q2:246–51). In the beginning of the program, Khālid announces that the goal of the story is to inspire young people to be brave, strong in their faith and loyal. He recounts that after God had saved the People of Israel from Pharaoh, God asked them to set off to the Holy Land. But the People of Israel feared the inhabitants of the Holy Land and refused. As a punishment, God ordained that they should wander aimlessly in the desert for forty years (Q5:21–26). Later Moses’ pupil Joshua (Yūsha‘ b. Nūn) defeated the enemy and conquered Palestine. However, after Joshua’s death, the

⁴⁶² Parents are also addressed. They are told to keep the youth from becoming lazy, by making them work during summers, do sports, and learn skills. Parents should help discover the abilities of their children, let them compete and encourage them. If problems occur, fathers should never beat their sons, but speak to them with love. Parents are also encouraged to give children rewards if they do as told. Still they should never judge between brothers and sisters.

⁴⁶³ ‘Amr Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Ibnay Ādam (1),” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008), 33:50–34:50.

⁴⁶⁴ Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Ibnay Ādam (2).”

People of Israel once again left their land. As a consequence God granted rule to the giants. It was at this point, at a time when the People of Israel were weak, that a group of strong people appeared, among them Saul and the sixteen year old shepherd David. The People of Israel's leaders asked God through one of their prophets to establish a king under whom they would fight for God's cause. God appointed Saul, who united the people of Israel, and set out with his forces. But God put these forces to the test, and most proved unworthy. Only a few faithful remained disciplined, while the majority withdrew, fearing the might of Goliath and his warriors. Still a few of the personalities remain brave, exhibiting both willpower and faith. Although outnumbered, they managed to defeat Goliath and his warriors. At the center of the battle is the scene in which David kills Goliath. This becomes the start of a new golden age.

Khālid's overall point is that "strong personalities" were the key to David's victory over Goliath.⁴⁶⁵ To achieve victory is therefore not a question of physical numbers, but of psychological power. Inspired by a passage in the Quran, Khālid says that only a few strong personalities are needed to defeat a large force.⁴⁶⁶ "The strong personalities, [...] willpower! [...] Personalities of iron! It is to these that victory will come, it is they who will create a revival!"⁴⁶⁷ On the other hand, there are those whom Khālid calls the "cowards," who in the story disobeyed God's order to re-conquer the Holy Land. They had no willpower or discipline and waited for a king to come, instead of taking responsibility themselves. Khālid is in search of a generation that possesses strong personalities. He argues that Muslims are passive and wait for others to fix their problems. Yet only the Muslims themselves can fix their problems, he insists.

Khālid thus calls on Muslims to adopt the qualities of the strong personalities. However, he also proposes a strategy for the audience to develop into to such strong personalities. A first point is that one must be self-critical in order to understand why their society is in such a poor state. Almost like a psychologist, he affirms that within in every

⁴⁶⁵ Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt," 11–2.

⁴⁶⁶ "a small force will defeat a large one".

⁴⁶⁷ Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt," 21–2.

human being there is a certain amount of bravery and cowardice; discipline and laxity; willpower and the lack of it; loyalty and egoism. Khālid's strategy is to make the audience train themselves so that they increase their proportion of the first quality in these pairs and lessen that of the second.⁴⁶⁸ He employs a reference to the Quran where it is said that purification of the soul leads to success, while corruption of the soul leads to failure.⁴⁶⁹ Thus moving towards the qualities of bravery, discipline, willpower and loyalty are endowed with an almost ritual character. The question is about purifying the souls of Muslims. This purification is Khālid's strategy to build "strong personalities". He gives a summary of how young people should acquire these qualities. First there is self-examination.⁴⁷⁰ This should be followed by a self-evaluation, in which people give themselves a score and write it down. Training for improvement and measuring one's progress follow. In other words, Khālid attempts to make his audience go through a process of self-emancipation, or more precisely, liberation from the dominance of qualities such as cowardice, laxity, lack of willpower, and egoism, because these are the qualities that lead to the decline of the Ummah. By means of traits personified in the characters of Saul, Joshua and David, Khālid wants the audience to develop themselves and create personalities that are serious, brave, disciplined and loyal. This will lead to victory and the liberation of the Ummah.

The fourth story that seems addressed especially to the personalities of Muslims is focused on the values of diligence and pro-activeness, the story of the "Believer of Sūrat Yā-Sīn, the Hoopoe Bird and the Ant." The program actually consists of three separate narratives that share a common theme. First, there is a short narrative about the Ant. As Solomon's army passed by, he sacrificed himself to alert his fellow ants. Khālid thus

⁴⁶⁸ Amr Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (al-Risālah, 2008), 3–4.

⁴⁶⁹ Khālid refers to the sura of the Sun, verses 9 and 10: "The one who purifies his soul succeeds and the one who corrupts it fails."

⁴⁷⁰ Khālid makes the point that whenever there's anything wrong with the human body, people run to the doctor. However, says Khālid, it is not the body that goes to Hell, but the soul, and people should therefore take more care to look after their personalities.

presents him as a positive ideal of pro-activeness and bravery.⁴⁷¹ Second, there is the fate of the hoopoe bird. He disobeys his master and on his own initiative tries to find out what can be done. Because of this initiative, relates Khālid, the hoopoe became the cause of the guidance of a whole society, that of Sheba.⁴⁷² Third, Khālid tells about the Believer. In the Sura of Ya-Sin, God puts forward an example: God sent three messengers to a town. However, the people there did not believe them and accused them of lying. They also threatened to punish them. Then, a man (from among the people) came running from afar.⁴⁷³ He told his people to follow the messengers, instead of punishing them, and declared his faith before them. But the people killed him. Hence the man became a martyr for the sake of *da'wah* (Q36:13–27).⁴⁷⁴ He could have sat still and watched, says Khālid, but instead the Believer exhorted the people with persistence and resolve. What unites these short narratives, then, is that they are all rich in initiative. Particularly, the Hoopoe Bird and the Ant personify the ideals of pro-activeness, while the Believer is an ideal associated with *da'wah* and sacrifice for its sake.

Khālid connects these stories to social reality when he refers to the problem of unemployment in Egypt. He states that there are 18 million people without work in Egypt—a number rapidly growing.⁴⁷⁵ Part of the problem, he argues, is that people are too

⁴⁷¹ Solomon's hosts of jinn, men, and birds were marshaled in ordered ranks before him, and when they came to the Valley of the Ants, one ant said, 'Ants! Go into your homes, in case Solomon and his hosts unwittingly crush you.' Solomon smiled broadly at her words and said, 'Lord, inspire me to be thankful for the blessings You have granted me and my parents, and to do good deeds that please You; admit me by Your grace into the ranks of Your righteous servants' (Q27:17–20).

⁴⁷² The story about the Hoopoe bird comes directly after the narrative of the ant: Here, according to the Quranic account, Solomon inspects his birds and finds the hoopoe absent, and subsequently threatens to punish him for his absence. But the hoopoe soon returned and informed him of a woman ruling over a people that "had been given a share of everything", but who worshipped the sun and had been "diverted from the right path". With the Lord's help Solomon then made her understand that she had wronged herself (Q27: 20–44).

⁴⁷³ Ḥalīm translates *yas'ā* as "running". Khālid relates it to striving or making an effort. He points to the example of Hagar and how she strived to collect water for her son (al-sa'ī) Naturally, he also relates it to the ritual during the Pilgrimage to Mecca (al-'umrah) when Muslims commemorate her effort by rapidly walking seven times back and forth between the hills of Ṣafā and Marwah.

⁴⁷⁴ This is according to the interpretation of Khālid.

⁴⁷⁵ According to the latest UNDP report, the rate is now at 22.6% of total population. United Nations Development Programme and The Institute of National Planning (Egypt), "Egypt Human Development Report 2010," ed. Hebba Handoussa (Egypt: UNDP, 2010), 150.

passive. They subordinate themselves to the circumstances, and believe that there is no use in trying ameliorate the situation.. Khālīd's message is that all people must be aware that they possess a God-granted intellect that gives them spiritual capabilities and extraordinary powers. He underlines the importance of being creative. Ideas generate money, but money does not generate ideas, he says. Referring to the Ant, al-Khiḍr, the Hoopoe bird and the Believer, Khālīd calls on the young people to work hard and learn: "learn computing, learn languages, learn every day a new skill, learn a craft, learn how to drive, travel, move around the earth."⁴⁷⁶ Thus, the position Khālīd creates for his audiences here is one that requires people to be rich in initiative, diligent and possibly pro-active. The purpose of this strategy is to come to terms with unemployment.

A fourth story that is primarily addressed to the personalities of the audience is that of "Moses and al-Khiḍr," which conveys the importance of learning and persistence. Khālīd tells how God told Moses to go to "where two seas meet". The purpose was that Moses should learn from the most knowledgeable man on earth. Moses proved persistent and did not rest until he reached the place, even though it took him years. He set off, and after travelling a long time, he and his servant met one of God's servants, al-Khiḍr, who possessed divine knowledge. Moses asked him if he could be his apprentice so that al-Khiḍr's knowledge could be passed on to him. Later, Moses tried to teach the Israelites the importance of knowledge. However, times were difficult and people didn't listen. The ideal position here is clearly that of Moses, who went out into the world to learn and persisted. As in the episode about Saul and Goliath, Khālīd proposes a way of developing the necessary skills:⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ Khālīd here quotes the Quran: "God presents another illustration: two men, one of them dumb, unable to do anything, a burden to his carer whatever task he directs him to, he achieves nothing good, can he be considered equal to one who commands justice and is on the straight path?" (Q16:76).

⁴⁷⁷ 'Amr Khālīd, "Qiṣṣat Nabī Allāh Mūsā wa-al-Khiḍr," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*.

1. Read one book every one or two weeks.
2. Read a purposeful newspaper every day.
3. Subscribe to a cultural magazine.
4. Travel to see the world
5. Learn an industrial handcraft.
6. Visit ruins.
7. Accompany a successful person or someone with life experience.
8. Watch the Discovery channel.
9. Listen to the news on a daily basis.
10. Search for the history of your family.
11. Try to write a story, a poem, a song or any idea or memory.
12. Discuss and ask questions in college.
13. Play chess.
14. Visit cultural web pages on the Internet.
15. Go and visit the public library.
16. Work during the summer.

This narrative is adapted to the present as Khālid presents knowledge and education as two of the conditions for gaining self-sufficiency for Arab Muslim societies. Thus, like Moses, he calls on the youth to search for knowledge and to “stop playing around.” He points to an average illiteracy rate of 40% in Arab countries. Moreover, he criticizes the school system for its focus on theory and memorization instead of practical knowledge.⁴⁷⁸ He furthermore compares people today with the Israelites when they did not want to focus on knowledge, and he expresses regret that people find knowledge less important than putting food on the table. Specifically, he criticizes parents who take children out of school to work as mechanics. To support his arguments, Khālid quotes scholars, hadiths and the Quran. For example, he quotes the following from the Quran: “Read!” (Q2:31) and, “He taught Adam the names of all things” (Q96:1), “Say Lord, increase me in Knowledge” (Q20:114), “Our Lord, You embrace all things in mercy and knowledge” (Q40:7). Furthermore, Khālid calls on the audience to adopt the qualities of persistence and humility in their search for knowledge. But he also underlines that not all knowledge is useful, and that knowledge may be misused. Knowledge in his view must be associated with the goal of revival.

⁴⁷⁸ He points to countries such as Malaysia, where he says the public expenditure on education amount to 20% of the government budget. He also says that poverty is no excuse, since Brazil, Columbia, and the Gaza strip have a low rate of literacy.

The fifth story in this context is that of Bal‘ām, which is formulated as a warning. While the above narratives focus on the importance of developing oneself, Khālid seems to use the narrative of Bal‘ām to warn that he is not calling on people to become individualists. He relates that Bal‘ām was a scholar, a believer and a worshipper. The problem was that he did not seek knowledge for the glory of God, but for the sake of fame, rank, and leadership. After God had saved the Israelites from Pharaoh, Moses’ people passed through the land of Canaan on their way to Palestine. The Canaanites were allies of Pharaoh, and wanted to trap Moses. They knew that Bal‘ām was a man of religion and requested that he call on Moses to trap him. Bal‘ām, afraid of losing his position, complied. But Moses did not respond to Bal‘ām’s call. Then, Bal‘ām suggested a new ruse to get rid of the Israelites: The Canaanites dressed up and smartened their women, and handed out merchandise to sell to Moses’ people, and Bal‘ām thus betrayed the Message for the sake of worldly status.⁴⁷⁹ Khālid states that the moral of the story is that one should never strive for position for one’s own sake, but for the sake of God. For example, education leads to invention which, in turn, leads to reform and revival. Education is therefore not a question of self-realization, but a matter of contributing to the rise of the Ummah for the sake of God and Islam.⁴⁸⁰ The point is that whatever one strives for, in any area of life, one must strive for the sake of God and in the service of the revival of the Ummah. In this lesson, therefore, Khālid combines career aspirations and striving for success with belief. One should never strive for rank or position out of personal ambition. He reminds the audience that if they strive for worldly positions, this must not be because of personal preference. If it is done for the sake of God it is legitimate. In sum, Khālid works on the audience’s personalities to make them identify with the characters of

⁴⁷⁹ “[Prophet], tell them the story of the man to whom We gave Our messages: he sloughed them off, so Satan took him as his follower and he went astray- if it had been Our will, We could have used these signs to raise him high, but instead he clung to the earth and followed his own desires-he was like a dog that pants with a lolling tongue whether you drive it away or leave it alone. Such is the image of those who reject Our signs! Tell them the story so that they may reflect” (Q7:175–6).

⁴⁸⁰ Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Bal‘ām ibn ‘Awrā”.

the stories and the qualities they possess. He seeks to make people change themselves, and the change he proposes is part of the larger project of reviving the Ummah.

5.5 Pathos

5.5.1 Stimulation

How does Khālid with his collaborators work to hold his audience's attention across the three modes of discourse? The switch of camera angles as illustrated in the section and the framing of the audiences and their reactions are important elements. Khālid uses his upper body and his face to intensify and illustrate, and overlay his discourse with emotion. He rarely stands up, but he uses his hands, arms, and face actively. He moves quickly and gives an impression of being efficient and active. Primarily he uses his hands and fingers, but he also uses his face to illustrate moods, conditions, and states of mind. This *enactment* of the message (*actio*) is one of the keys to how Khālid manages to hold the attention of the television audience. Khalid is particularly skilled at using his face to create different moods. His pupils remain fixed staring towards the audience.

Khalid adjusts the tone and the pitch of the voice according to the moods he desires to create. In general, his mood is light, but he may abruptly change to angry expressions when he warns his audience of the pains of Hell-fire or the Day of Judgment. Moreover, he speaks at an enormous space. His style is spontaneous and seems intuitive. He stutters, stops, inserts digressions, and unexpectedly poses the audiences questions. When narrating, he uses the tone and the pitch of his voice to mark a change in roles. He may pose a question on behalf of one person, to shift his voice and reply on behalf of the addressed. The illustration below shows screen captures from the Story about Saul and Goliath, when Khālid calls on the audience to adopt strong personalities. He starts in the affirmative mode, and then starts asking the audience questions, before he enters the role of the audience switching to first person acting out both the voice that interrogates and responds. He speaks about four traits that he sees will make any person and society rise and fall in the program on Saul and Goliath: willpower, strong faith, bravery and loyalty.



Illustration 5.7. Gestures and Facial Expressions, Stories of the Quran.⁴⁸¹

Similarly, Khālid dramatizes and acts out the stories by switching person and entering the role of the stories' characters. As an omniscient narrator, he enters characters' minds, acknowledging possible counter-arguments and uncertainties. Sometimes he also actualizes these characters merely by giving them anachronistic attributes. Khālid speaks of soldiers wearing normal clothes, a description that for most Egyptians would call to mind the secret police. This helps the audience relate to his message. Khālid seeks to

⁴⁸¹ Approximately one screenshot every second, collected from Khālid, "Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt," 11:05–28.

make the audience imagine the scenes he describes. A good example is in “The People of the Trenches”. Towards the end of the story, there is a “revolutionary” scene when the young boy comes down from the mountain after having escaped the king’s soldiers with God’s help: “I want you to imagine this scene—the boy coming down from the mountain saying, “there is no god, but God”! He walks through the streets of the country, the people walking behind him.”⁴⁸² In the same story, before the scene above, the boy was exposed to the torture and the killing of the monk and the king’s former assistant:

Imagine then, imagine (pl.) the saw, I don’t want to hurt you but imagine, imagine the saw moving inside the head, imagine, imagine the blood and the pain, there is no god but God, there is no god but God, and you are not getting up in the morning, and you are still not able to leave a wrong relationship, and you are still alive, not knowing why you are alive?⁴⁸³

Such dramatic images not only produce an effect of empathy with the boy, they also contain a dimension of entertainment. Khālid often uses the contrasts between moods he evokes effectively, and the distance between suspense and humor is never far. Khālid frequently makes jokes and my assistant laughed wholeheartedly many times. For example, Khālid jokes about how parents always tell their children that they always came first, that they never made mistakes, and that they always did their homework. He makes the point that no one is perfect and that one has to admit one’s mistakes. Khālid acts it out in first person it becomes effective: “I never made mistakes, what are you doing, I was studying all the time, taking care of my future, I was the first: If our dads were always the first, then, who came last?”⁴⁸⁴

Finally, Khālid constantly seeks to engage his audience in various ways. He seeks to activate them, make them think, and do things. At regular intervals, he calls upon their attention through interjections or questions such as, isn’t that right, do you understand? Be serious (gad’a)! He encourages them to take notes, do homework, and contribute on his Internet site:

⁴⁸² Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd 2.”

⁴⁸³ ———, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd 1.”

⁴⁸⁴ ‘Amr Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Ka’b ibn Malik,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

Do (m. pl.) the homework for my sake and write six diseases [psychological sufferings], and write beside each disease if you have it strongly, not moderately, not mildly, or not at all. I wonder if you are haughty very much, not moderately, not mildly or you are not at all. Will you, is it possible, that you can do the homework for me? Every one takes out a piece of paper and a pen, the people who are watching us now, may be you sir, and we will write. [...] We may write on the PC and ornament it in some way, so we can put it in the room of our children and put it in our rooms.

5.5.2 Moving

One of the most powerful tools that Khālid uses to move the audience in the direction of his ideals is that makes analogies in order for the audience to identify with the various characters. While narrating “The Story of the Trenches,” for example, he repeatedly tells the audience “you are the boy, you are the boy”. He thus calls on the audience to see themselves as these characters and creates empathy for them in order to construe them as models for their own behavior. He frequently throws guilt on the audience to trigger a process of self-examination and introspection among the audience: “See how much people have suffered for Islam and you [the audience] are not even able to leave “a wrong relationship” or to get up in the morning!” Before commercial brakes, he may tell the audience to lower the sound of the television, and question themselves: “ask yourself the question: have I let the Prophet down? [...]. For how many years have I let down society, the country? (12:28).⁴⁸⁵ This type of self-questioning that often leaves the audience caught between a good thesis and an evil antithesis of behavior, is often triggered by very direct questions:

are you arrogant”; “are you jealous”; “are you stubborn”; “are you greedy”; “are you stingy”; “are you angry”; “may I ask you about your level of anger?”, “are you like Cain?”; “may I ask you a question: are you closer to Cain or Abel?”; “look yourself in the mirror! Say that you will cure yourself from these illnesses!”⁴⁸⁶

Similarly, in “The Story of the Stolen Armor”, Khālid calls on Muslims to become more just, and asks them straightforward questions, such as “How is justice doing in your house? How are you doing with your wife? How are you doing with fairness towards your

⁴⁸⁵ ———, “Qisṣat Ka’b ibn Malik.”

⁴⁸⁶ ———, “Cain and Abel.”

children? How are we doing with justice in our country?"⁴⁸⁷ These questions seem designed to make the audiences ask themselves whether they are good Muslims or not: Are you one of the Message or not? Take the decision now, or not?⁴⁸⁸ The examples are numerous and the negative option is often associated with Hell-Fire and the positive with Paradise: "This is a program about the strong personalities and the weak personalities, which of them are you? Who wants to be freed from Hell fire? Do you want to enter Paradise?"⁴⁸⁹

Furthermore, Khālid takes care to remind the audience that God is all-Hearing and all-Seeing. He reminds them that God sees and hears everything, that He will hold them accountable. He describes how there is an angel on each shoulder of every person recording their good and bad deeds. There is an Angel on the Last Day, the lawful and unlawful actions will be weighed against each other, and judgment will be pronounced. To arouse fear to prevent people from being corrupt, beating their wives or depriving the poor from money, he warns:

The drawer that was opened, so you could put the bribe in it. [...] The hand that rises against the wife to beat her. [...] The money that was in your hand and you could give to the poor but you considered it a waste turning away from a good deed.⁴⁹⁰

In addition to the more traditional techniques of arousing fear in the audience (*tarhīb*), such as warning those who bear false witness that they will be fuel for Hell-Fire (Q72:15),⁴⁹¹ Khālid shows a high degree of creativity. In one particular instance, in "The People of the Garden", Khālid warns the rich that if they fail to share of their wealth, their businesses will become desolate like happened to the rich soil that the sons who did not give the required portion of the harvest to the poor. He holds up a piece of vulcanized rock, that he argues comes from the soil where the story took place, up in front of the audience as a symbol of God's punishment saying: "this is a sign from God. Don't you

⁴⁸⁷ Khālid, "al-Dir' al-Masrūqah."

⁴⁸⁸ ———, "Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd 1."

⁴⁸⁹ ———, "Qiṣṣat Ka'b ibn Malik."

⁴⁹⁰ 'Amr Khālid, "Yaum al-Tnād," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*.

⁴⁹¹ Khālid, "al-Dir' al-Masrūqah."

dare deprive the poor of their rights!” He then walks around asking the audience to touch and pass the stone around as a warning.⁴⁹² Then he puts the stone his desk as a reminder, occasionally picking it up to show. Finally, he plays a recording starts of Khālīd in Yemen where he walks around in the middle of the devastated land. Dramatic music accompanies the video.⁴⁹³

Take care, your factory may be “cut off, closed down” (ṣarīm) tomorrow if you forget the rights of the poor. O businessmen, avoid “cutting off” your factory. O youth, you who have betrayed your fathers, happy with the money that he had left you, your money and your inheritance may be “cut off”.⁴⁹⁴

Furthermore, Khālīd calls on the audience to imagine post-mortem scenes. For instance, he tells them to imagine how it will be to meet the Prophet after their death and explain to him why they committed their sins. In the Story of the People of the Cave—the group of youth who became “saints” for their sacrifice of the message—Khālīd asks the audience to imagine a scenario where they are dead: They lie in a coffin. Four friends are speaking about their contribution to the world. Khālīd then addresses the audience: “What was your contribution?”⁴⁹⁵

Khālīd also plays on existential insecurity. He reminds the audience that they can die any moment. What if they die committing a sin? He describes people who die while committing sins, such as drinking, taking drugs or fornicating:

O young people, O little one, you still have a beautiful life in front of you, God willing, how do you want your life to end, like those of young people dying and committing fornication. He takes drugs, OOOOOOOOOO, and he dies inside the toilet, and he takes drugs and drinks alcohol. He dies with his face down in the toilet. [...] There are young people who died and films were made about them, true stories, and the films came to the Arab world as he was drinking and a car hit him.⁴⁹⁶

In contrast, pietism creates safety, stability and gives people meaning. Khālīd underlines that whatever one does, there must be a meaning behind it, and this meaning is to do it for

⁴⁹² ———, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Jannah,” 29:30–31:30.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 33:40–37:50.

⁴⁹⁴ ‘Amr Khālīd, “Qiṣṣat Qārūn,” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

⁴⁹⁵ ———, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Kahf (2),” in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān* (al-Risālah, 2008), 26:00.

⁴⁹⁶ Khālīd, “Qiṣṣat Bal’ām ibn ‘Awrā’.”

Islam. Thus, watching TV or pure entertainment becomes meaningless as these activities contribute with nothing to the Ummah. One has to live for something that is greater than life in itself: “May I ask you a question? Why are you alive? Youth, you who are sitting in front of me watching me, what is your mission in life? What do you want? Don’t live [only] to eat, drink, dance after songs, marry, and give birth”.⁴⁹⁷ Leaving the audience in a state of introspecting he seeks to attract them by promising that he through his message will teach the audience to solve big problems in their life. They will learn to love and to live by the Quran. As a result, they will go through a transformation and eventually become the reasons why the Ummah is revived. He argues that if everything one does is done for God—be that the striving for success; giving birth to a child; giving a lectures; earning money, or studying—a good Ending is guaranteed.⁴⁹⁸ Other times he describes the delights of Paradise calling the audience to imagine the gates of Paradise opening in front of them:

Can you see the noble hand of the Prophet, peace be upon him, imagine him taking water from his spring and purifies you cleans you, you getting water from the palm of the Prophet PBUH, can you hear the sound of the water while you are drinking it, can you feel the taste of it in your mouth, can you feel it.... (24: 35:55).⁴⁹⁹

A final but frequent technique of *moving* is the use of allegories or anecdotes to render a complex issue in a simpler manner. In the Story of the People of the Garden, for example, he describes a father who stands by the sea with his children. They see a man who is about to drown. Instead of going to save him, the father hides the view from his children, and tells them to look away. “This is what is happening to the poor in our country”, Khalid says.⁵⁰⁰ Moreover, in The Story about the Stolen Armor, Khālid speaks about justice and nepotism and connect the anecdote to situations that the audience can identify with: He asks the audience to imagine a burglary. The person guilty of this crime is one of their relatives. However, the person accused is the son of a person they dislike. Khālid’s

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Khālid, “Qiṣṣat Bal’ām ibn ‘Awra’.”

⁴⁹⁹ ———, “Yawm al-Tnād,” 35:55.

⁵⁰⁰ ———, “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Jannah.”

dilemma to the audience is what would they do? Is the family bond stronger than the principle of justice, or does one prefer justice? By relating the dilemmas of corruption and nepotism in such a manner, Khālid illustrates that people are confronted with these issues in their everyday life, and that they have to make a choice with regard to what kind of society they want. Metaphors are used both as illustrations of Khālid's main points and as arguments in their own right. In the Story about Luqmān, one of the main calls is that men must take responsibility in the upbringing of children. Khālid translates this point into a rhetorical question in the form of a metaphor: "have you ever seen anyone rowing on the Nile with one hand, going around in circles."⁵⁰¹

⁵⁰¹ ———, "Qiṣṣat Luqmān al-Ḥakīm," in *Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān* (al-Risālah, 2008).

6 Summarizing and Comparing

6.1 Cohesion

The two series studied are both broadcast during Ramadan, a period of piety and self-improvement for many Muslims. The series follow the course of Ramadan and are coordinated with the calendar of the holy month. Khālid makes greater use of this effect than Ḥassān in structuring his series: his series is structured into three parts, focusing respectively on God's mercy, seeking forgiveness, and being freed from Hellfire, according to a customary tri-partition of Ramadan. Both series have an introductory program that outlines the structure and provides a synopsis of what the audience can expect to learn from the series. At the end of the month, both have a denouement. Ḥassān seeks, through the example of 'Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz, who after a period of decline created revival, to infuse the audience with the hope that change is possible. Khālid, whose focus is much more on salvation from Hellfire, devotes the last programs to keeping up the audience's spirits. Accordingly, both structures are connected to Ramadan as a period of self-improvement and change and seem to build on the audience's excitement leading up to the end of the month. Another feature is that Ḥassān's structure reflects the hierarchical authority structure characteristic of Salafī preachers. He starts with the Prophet, then continues with the four rightly-guided Caliphs, and the ten who were promised Paradise. The five women are placed next to last, before the program about 'Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz. While both series dedicate one program each to Mary, Khālid has no other program dedicated solely to women. Ḥassān's structure may thus be interpreted as reflecting a primacy of patriarchal authority that underscores men's and women's separateness from each other. No such sharp distinction may be drawn based on Khālid's structure. In both cases, the structures are carefully planned.

The *title sequences* illustrate well the complexity of the communicative setting of the two Ramadan series: not only the preachers work to shape the audience as they are helped by a number of professionals possessing various types of know-how and skills.

The title sequences are powerful combinations of words, music and images and the professionalism in both cases is striking. The sequences function mnemonically, signaling to the audience the start of flow and functioning as an anchorage for key ideas in the series. Both Ḥassān's theme hymn and Khālid's theme song have been tailor-made for these television series and illustrate television as a meeting place for verbal, visual and musical arts. Yet the title sequences are very different. Ḥassān's sequence plays visually on the oppositions between dark and light and uses calligraphy as images of the Companions and the Prophet. Moreover, the rotating and turning silver constellation alludes to hi-tech. The visual design of Khālid's sequence is more colorful, with warmer tones. Khālid's pop tune and Ḥassān's hymn convey two different types of musical traditions, although their lyrics both seek to praise what is Islamic and advocate spiritual guidance. In form, the hymn may be seen as more traditionally "Islamic": it is based solely on the human voice, in contrast to the pop tune of *The Stories of the Quran*. The latter exemplifies a whole new genre of Islamic pop promoted by Islamic television channels such as al-Risālah and Iqra'. This genre adopts the form of pop music, while the content fits the conception of "purposeful" art (al-fann al-hādif) that does not break with Islamic values. Still, the Salafī preachers and the channels al-Nās, al-Raḥmah, and al-Ḥikmah do not share the idea of adopting such musical forms, deeming such music un-Islamic.

On the level of program structure, both *The Stories of the Quran* and *The Imams of Guidance and The Lights of the Dark* are highly narrative. Ḥassān's narratives center on the life stories of the Companions, while Khālid recounts the stories of the Quran. Ḥassān, who draws on his long experience as a khaṭīb, could be described as presenting khuṭbah in the form of a Ramadan lesson. His oratory is coherent and continuous, with a few rhetorical pauses to give his words time to sink in. Each program follows an almost identical structure with a high degree of predictability for the audience. Khālid uses some of these locutions, but the structure is different, giving, on the contrary, the impression of spontaneity and intuition. It is also highly repetitive, and Khālid typically spends a lot of time at the beginning of each program recapping the contents from earlier programs, as

well as recapping within the same episode, after the commercial break. The long commercial break in the middle of Khālid's individual programs is revealing in terms of the capital structures that underpin such discourses. In general Khālid's series seems to embrace commercialism, while there is no trace of this in Ḥassān's series. This also reflects the lower commercial profil of Salafi channels in general. The passionate sequence of supplications that ends each of Khālid's programs is an intense and powerful ending. These features of each discourse, discussed under the heading "cohesion," reveal that we are in the presence of two different types of discourses. Ḥassān attempts to seek out what he regards as the genuinely Islamic in both form and structure, and does not opt for the hybridization of genre that characterizes Khālid's style.

6.2 Mise-en-Scène

The visual organization of the two programs reveals further contrasts. Both sets are non-narrative and the overall studio design is simple and with the preacher in focus. Khālid has a studio audience whom he addresses and with whom he interacts. The framing of the audience creates models for identification, removing focus from the preacher and towards the audience. The equal number of women and men indicates that Khālid is addressing both sexes equally. Moreover, Khālid is on the same level as the audience, underscoring the equality of participation. Ḥassān's set, however, focuses solely on him throughout the series. He does not interact with an audience, which tends to signal that he is a teacher more than Khālid. Khālid's setting helps make his discourse more interpersonal and informal than Ḥassān's. Both settings, however, are intimate and seek to give the impression that the preacher is speaking directly to the television audience. Again, one may argue that Ḥassān seeks to adhere as closely as possible to the master genre of the *khutbah* and Islamic homiletics, whereas Khālid's setting is typical of the talk-show genre.

When it comes to décor, it is hard to find similarities, although both appear "modern" and professionally designed. Analogically to the title sequence, Ḥassān's series seeks to create a space that is genuinely Islamic: the calligraphic decorations, the lantern,

and the large poster behind Ḥassān all seek to create an “Islamic” space whose design is highly synergetic with the verbal message of the program. At the same time, like the title sequence, it has a high-tech look that sends a message of being technologically advanced. The way Ḥassān dresses in his cloak makes for an interesting combination of what Ḥassān sees as the genuinely Islamic and the contemporary. Khālid’s “clean” studio design and near absence of decorations creates a different feel. Apart from the fact that Khālid holds a Quran and most of the women who appear on screen are wearing headscarves, virtually nothing has any special “Islamic” symbolism. Imagine such a commercial in the midst of the décor behind Ḥassān. The difference between Khālid and Ḥassān bears witness to two different aesthetic regimes.

The preachers are shot from different angles and distances, and camera movements create visual dynamism in both series. The camera-eye moves around the set, focusing and changing the depth of field. Close-ups of the preachers, particularly of their faces, create a feeling of intimacy. One major difference is that when the focus is not on the preacher, Ḥassān’s producers focus on the calligraphic images of the Prophet and the Companions and the visual design of the studio. The calligraphic images of the Companions are faded in and through the image of Ḥassān in his cloak. When the focus is not on Khālid, however, images of each episode’s audience fill the frames. The audience consists of different people each episode. The images of the audience, as models of identification, become an important dimension of the series’ visual experience. The audience are of all ages, but most are young adults, and most women wear attractive, colorful headscarves. Such images of women and others create role models for how one should dress. This variant of “The New Islamic Look” represented by these women would be unthinkable on any of the Salafi-oriented Islamic channels. Moreover, close-ups of the audiences’ reactions to Khālid’s message may have an identificational effect on television audiences and trigger similar reactions.

6.3 Ethos

Ḥassān and Khālid clearly represent two different types of authority. Khālid is a former accountant, who now has a PhD from a Western university. He has little formal Islamic training compared to Ḥassān. His capital as a preacher stems more from his knowledge of the world, his many welfare initiatives, and his understanding of economic and global issues. This is reflected in the way he speaks and dresses; his appearance is close to that of a successful professional. Ḥassān, on the other hand, has studied under various Islamic shaykhs, teaches hadith criticism, and has worked as a khaṭīb for many years. In the course of the series, Ḥassān seeks to establish himself as belonging to a group of preachers who are scholarly, independent and truthful, and thereby distinguish himself from the image of “The New Preachers,” as construed by the group of Salafī preachers. Ḥassān thus makes it clear that he lives for da‘wah and sacrifices himself for it. Khālid, on the other hand, is willing to point to his earlier achievements in the course of his lessons, and relies as much on his enthusiasm as anything else to build up his authority. He underlines his love for Islam and for the Message, and seeks to establish a close relationship between himself and the audience. That he speaks in dialectal or colloquial form, indeed sometimes in a rather low variant of this, underscores the image he promotes of himself of being “just like” any one of his audience members. As concerns the textual ethos, both preachers make an effort to build up the authority of their respective series and the sources they use. Moreover, they seek to make their messages relevant and construct an exigency inside the text. Against this background, they are there to help the audience extrapolate themselves from this chaos and bring order to the world. Their analysis of the contemporary world reflects their messages. Ḥassān describes a world that lacks belief, in which the Ummah is threatened by inner and outer strife. They are thus coming to help restore order. Khālid, however, constructs the “need” for his series in a different way: instead of focusing on the lack of belief as Ḥassān does, he concentrates more on social issues such as illiteracy, sectarian strife, poverty, nepotism, corruption, and injustice. Both

preachers seek to create an image of themselves as possessors of the solutions to the troubles of society.

6.4 Logos

The solution to the problems and the rise of the Ummah are expressed in both series through narratives. Both operate according to the logic that if people adopt these characters' qualities they will experience change on an individual and social level. The characters they select and construct become agents as part of their special path towards revival. All the ideals of Ḥassān are therefore agents of tawḥīd, and this is the primary locus of the series. The majority of Khālid's characters, however, are reformers. Khālid emphasizes the stories of the Quran, taking the characters that appear in them as examples, whereas Ḥassān organizes the narratives biographically: each of his programs focuses on a person. Narrations of events occurring in that person's life serve to illustrate their character. One important difference between them is that Khālid presents several negative characters as warnings, constructing ideals negatively, while Ḥassān only uses the positive example of the Companions. There is another major difference in the way in which they establish these ideals. While Khālid constantly translates his characters and narratives to fit the present, indicating how these principles should be implemented now, Ḥassān's ideals are not inflected into the present in the same way. His eulogies present examples that are more elevated, so that the audience can only strive towards their examples, not be like them.

I have organized Ḥassān's twenty-four programs and Khālid's twenty-nine into the audience segments which I have interpreted as primarily targeted by the preachers. During this process, I have allowed myself to be guided by the question: "if I were a youth, a woman, or a preacher, which stories would I understand as addressing mainly me?" The result was three categories shared by Ḥassān and Khālid: "the young", "the rich", and "leaders". Two categories were different, however: while Ḥassān focused more

on “women” and “preachers” as a separate category, I interpreted Khālid as focusing more on addressing and trying to shape “the family” and “the citizen”.⁵⁰² Finally, both preachers had messages which I found addressed all segments of the audience, with no specific target subjects. I have put these into the category “personalities”.

6.4.1 Shared Categories

6.4.1.1 *The Young*

Both series primarily address *young* audiences—youth or young adults. Both preachers advocate the importance of the new generation in creating revival. However, the subjects they seek to create are different. Khālid directs his youth towards social reform. Both the group of youths in the story “The People of the Cave”, and the young boy in “The People of the Trenches”, stand up to unjust and pagan leaders. The boy in the story “The People of the Trenches” is caught up in the struggle between religion and the king who deludes the people, having employed a “wizard” to prevent the people from seeing the truth. The boy chooses religion and the Truth, and starts helping people to win their support. Then, when he is strong enough, he confronts the king non-violently. Similarly, in “The People of the Cave”, Khālid underlines that youth must choose to work for the Message and stand up against the unjust ruler. Both the group of youths and the boy undertake welfare work to win people’s support. In both cases, the strategy is non-violent. At the same time, Khālid underlines that these youths never gave up. He acknowledges that change may take time such as in “The People of the Cave”. However, at the same time he emphasizes that their message, ultimately, will never be in vain. “The Story of the People of the Trenches” is more revolutionary than “The People of the Cave”. Nonetheless, the message to youth is the same: work for Islam, spread the Message, win people over by doing voluntary work, challenge the unjust ruler non-violently, and never give up. Khālid also implies that women, too, play a role as reformers. In “The People of the Cave”, he

⁵⁰² This should not be taken as an indication that the family is less important in Ḥassān’s discourse. It may just as well indicate that these discourses target different types of audiences.

does not specify that these were young boys, but keeps repeating that they were youths. Moreover, through the character of Mary, Khālīd, in addition to presenting her as an example of purity and high morals, advocates her involvement in welfare work to help the poor, and how helping the poor is doing something for Islam. Thus, the subjects that Khālīd seeks to create to address youth are “social reformers” or activists.

The subject positions that Ḥassān seeks to make his audience adopt are different. As a parallel to the rise of Islam at the time of the Prophet, Ḥassān underlines the importance of youth in building the Ummah. He describes these youths and their states before and after they chose tawḥīd. After adopting tawḥīd, they underwent personal transformation. Once they had chosen tawḥīd, they became strong and were able to resist pressure and worked tirelessly to spread the Message. This is presented as the main strategy towards the rise of the Ummah. But adopting tawḥīd and spreading the Message are not easy. Many of the youths gave up their wealth and their bond with their surroundings to work for the Message. Sa‘d, for example, renounced the material and his family. Once converted, one should resist pressure from one’s surroundings and engage in da‘wah. Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd stands as a symbol of the cost of spreading the Message to non-believers. He endured the pain inflicted by the idolaters who beat him to blood. Moreover, there is young ‘Alī who was prepared to sacrifice his life for the Prophet, and who endured hardship with Fāṭimah for the sake of tawḥīd. They all were hard-working like Muṣ‘ab. Although one should engage in trade for the sake of the Ummah, because, indeed, da‘wah depends on trade, Ḥassān focuses on creating personalities who live solely for the Message in the sense of spreading it. His characters do not seek to overthrow any unjust regime. Rather, parallel to the rise of the Ummah under the Prophet, Ḥassān seems to see tawḥīd as decisive and this is also what he calls on youth to adopt. Ḥassān seeks to build strong, young personalities who can resist pressure from outside and be brave like the young Fāṭimah. This is closely linked to the building of a particular type of personality which I will return to below.

Thus, the major difference between the messages of the preachers is that Khālīd calls on youth to engage in society, while Ḥassān calls on youth to adopt a strict doctrine

of monotheism based on the examples of the Prophet and Companions which he presents. This harmonizes well with Ḥassān as a literalist Salafi preacher inspired by the thoughts of al-Albānī who advocated that the Muslims' creed must create revival. Khālid's message of social activism is more reminiscent of the social engagement of the Muslim Brotherhood engaging in welfare work as a tool to create a new social and political reality. This background makes comparing the ideals of rulers the two preachers present particularly interesting.

6.4.1.2 Leaders

Both preachers include ideal models for leaders. These represent political ideals that are contrasts to the authoritarian rule in Egypt today (see 2.1), which may be regarded as characterized by wide-scale corruption, nepotism and authoritarianism. One major problem is that large companies monopolize different industrial sectors. Egyptians who watch these programs are confronted with this reality every day. Both Khālid and Ḥassān's ideal can therefore be understood as a critique of these prevailing conditions. However, in Khālid's case this is explicit, while in Ḥassān's "de-contextualized" message it is more implicit. As part of transnational broadcasting, such messages do of course vary according to the context in which they are consumed.

The rulers in Ḥassān's series are invariably figures who promoted social equality and justice, and who were not corrupt. They are also leaders of an Ummah and seem to imply a dream of Islam spreading throughout the world. Ḥassān presents the image of the perfect *ruler* who guides society after the rule of the Prophet: 'Umar is at the level of the people, Abū Bakr is the symbol of justice, and 'Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz is the one to create hope. These all rule after sharia, are not corrupt, and are symbols of perfect leadership. They were all elected and acknowledged the right of the people to overthrow them for failing to rule according to God's and the Prophet's law. They also expanded the Ummah. In the lesson about 'Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz, Ḥassān emphasizes that all people, not merely leaders, are to blame for the decline of the Ummah. Still, tension is apparent between the current situation and the leadership model advocated by Ḥassān. The model of 'Umar

‘Abd al-‘Azīz, who rises through political offices and possesses a superior knowledge of Islam, for example, clarifies that the political ideal of Ḥassān is very far from the one that dominates in Egypt today. The character of ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz may also be interpreted as an ideal leader. He goes to Medina to learn, then rises through political offices and finally becomes a ruler of the Ummah. Ḥassān addresses this model directly to people and leaders today. Still, while Ḥassān presents this ideal, he does not call on the audience to adopt these qualities directly. Rather, he leaves it for the audience to decide. That Ḥassān does not connect these ideals to any particular context also means that it travels well across contexts.

Khālid, on the other hand, is more preoccupied with defeating the unjust ruler. He thus defines the ideal more negatively, for example through the ruler in “The People of the Trench” and the king in “The People of the Cave”. These are both the antitheses of the good ruler. The king in “The People of the Trenches” is corrupt, unjust, persecutes the monotheists, and “makes” his enemies disappear. In “The People of the Cave” the king is also unjust and an enemy of monotheism. However, Khālid does include two positive examples of rulers. The first of these is Dhū al-Qarnayn. According to Khālid, he is the first global leader. He creates an Islamic version of globalization based on firm principles from which all participants benefit. Khālid emphasizes his rule as incorrupt and just. The second example is that of the Prophet in the story of the Stolen Armor in which the principle of equality before the law is established. He ensured peaceful co-existence between different tribes and equal rights for all citizens. Khālid contrasts the rule of the Prophet with that of today in which people feel no security before the law and in which nepotism pervades. Khālid’s ideals are similar to those of Ḥassān, but while Ḥassān underlines that the ruler must have a solid Islamic foundation, Khālid connects these ideals to the present more directly. His address is more specific than Ḥassān’s who instead addresses the whole of the Ummah.

6.4.1.3 The Rich

Both preachers adhere to many of the same principles when it comes to wealth. Wealth is bestowed by God, so becoming rich bears a social responsibility. The overall logic for both preachers is that depriving the poor of their rightful part of the wealth of the earth is a great sin that God will punish. Conversely, those who give generously to the poor, and who are rewarded by God for this good deed, will only earn more. Those who become rich must uphold their values and be humble, generous towards the poor and lend ear to advice from the learned. At the same time, both preachers say that monopolizing is forbidden. Khālid formulates these principles as a warning by way of the stories of “The People of the Garden” and of Korah. In the first story, the sons who inherit wealth are punished by God for not giving the poor their share. Their positive counterpart is their father who prospered more and more as he gave a portion of his earnings to the poor. This story can be seen as addressing people who have inherited wealth. The story of Korah, however, seems to address those who started out poor and have since become rich. Khālid warns these against losing their principles and siding with Pharaoh, a message that can be read as a critique of the close relationship between capital and political power in Egypt. Again, Ḥassān does not direct his discourse towards civil society, but he does criticize the economic inequality of contemporary society. Moreover, he underscores the importance of money, and the importance of engaging in trade and working hard, through the characters of Ṭalhā and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. The example of ‘Uthmān is a portrayal of someone who uses his wealth for the sake of Islam, to build mosques, support struggles and ensure self-sufficiency. In sum, in addressing the rich, Khālid’s and Ḥassān’s messages are not very different. Social justice and combating poverty are important issues for them both, and they warn against accumulating money without sharing it with others. .

6.4.2 Disparate Categories

6.4.2.1 *Family and Women*

First, both characters emphasize the importance of the family as the fundamental institution of society. They also advocate how highly valued women are in Islam, and present moral examples of these as pure and possessing high morals. The major difference, however, is that Ḥassān treats women very separately from men, while Khālīd does not gender his stories in the same way. In Ḥassān's series, women are a separate category and appear only in the last programs. The ideals that women should strive for are typically defined in terms of their subordinate, supportive role: they must stand by and support their men and their families. Nothing is said about women's participation in public life. Their roles are within the family and at home. The ideal mother is caring, responsible, knowledgeable, and brings up her children according to tawḥīd. The ideal wife is loyal, pious, unconcerned with material gains, and stands by her husband in all matters. Thus, these ideals—a blueprint for which is provided by characters such as Khadījah and 'Ā'ishah—may be interpreted as very conservative, which comports with the fact that the Salafi channels have avoided broadcasting women. Khālīd does not single women out unless otherwise stated that he is addressing men only. For instance, when he speaks about youth, he does not normally specify which sex he is addressing. The difference between woman and man seems less absolute. In the programs about Mary and 'Ā'ishah, he speaks in defense of women, describing how he sees the media attacking them. The same point is made by Ḥassān in his story about 'Ā'ishah.

Khālīd seems, however, to present a less sharp distinction between the sexes and proposes a more active role for women in society, not only at home. On the one hand, in his account of Mary, she directs all her energies towards voluntary work. On the other hand, there is the story of Luqmān, who despite being successful and a reformer, was able to take care of his son. Khālīd thus emphasizes the importance of the role of men in bringing up children, just as he allows for women's participation in social reform: there is more crossover, and gender roles are less hermetically separate. As mentioned, he does

not address women and men that separately, but emphasizes that many of these stories are for women as well. Through the family of ‘Imrān, Khālid speaks about the importance of the family, bringing up children, and that one must not betray one’s family. In this way, he argues against individualism and in favor of a society where the prime entity is the family. Ḥassān seems, in contrast, to possess a more gendered view.

6.4.2.2 Preacher and Citizen

The choice of the categories “preacher” and “citizen” also reflects two focuses. Khālid addresses the audiences more as people who are responsible. Change and reform will primarily take place in civil society. Khālid turns doing something for one’s country into doing something for Islam. In the story about Ka‘b, Khālid speaks about the project of the country and focuses on the collective entity. Ka‘b is a character who lets down the collective. He does not take part in one of the battles of early Islamic society, but looks for excuses not to participate. On the one hand, this alludes to Khālid’s call for reform and that there is a battle to be fought. On the other hand, it is call to people not to work solely for themselves and for their own interests, but for the collective. The message is thus anti-individualistic. Khālid balances his focus on self-development with a message to the audience that one must never act purely out of self-interest, as I shall show in the next section. In the story about Ka‘b, the success of the country and the success of Islam become two sides of the same coin. With regard to justice and combating nepotism, Khālid calls on the audience to create responsible citizens. People must not witness falsely in courts, they must not let family relations be prioritized over the principles of justice, and people must act justly in everything they do as part of a collective.

Ḥassān does not operate within the nation state in the same way. He speaks about the Ummah and very rarely about the nation as such. Moreover, the most important agents of revival are those who spread the message of tawḥīd—the preachers. They are the ones to whom one must listen. Unlike other preachers, Ḥassān presents his type of preacher as independent and truthful. The preacher must be independent and have a solid foundation in the Islamic sciences. This may be read as a critique both of al-Azhar, and of “The New

Preachers". Scholars, too, play an important role in society. They must be independent and not guided by worldly desires or materialistic concerns. This focus also reflects the importance of tawhīd in Ḥassān's programs. While most of the characters in Khālid's stories are reformers, all of Ḥassān's characters are agents of tawhīd. It is not the citizen as such on who Ḥassān focuses on, but whether one has adopted tawhīd or not. The spread of tawhīd therefore becomes more important than seeking reform and this explains Ḥassān's emphasis on the preachers.

6.4.2.3 Audiences' Personalities

Both preachers call on their audiences to become more pious, but do so differently. Khālid seeks to create personalities that are open, pro-active, who take initiative, who in many respects are tolerant towards other cultures and Islamic factions. This position of reconciliation is well illustrated by the description of Abel who announced to Cain that he would not hit him back if attacked. Referring to this principle Khālid, for example, calls on Sunnites and Shiites to stop fighting. This is different from Ḥassān, who focuses on tawhīd as the only correct solution. Whatever other versions there are of the truth, these are in the dark. The West and other Islamic factions such as Shiites are negatively construed and the world is divided into one part that believes and another that does not.

Both preachers seek to create persistent personalities that work tirelessly and never give up. These are essential qualities to adopt if victory is to come in the end. Still, they are called to be persistent in different respects. In the case of Ḥassān, the young in particular are called on to persist in spreading the message and contribute to the rise of the Ummah. Ḥassān's personalities, once they have adopted tawhīd, are called no to resist any pressure from the surroundings to let go of tawhīd. They must therefore resist influence from the outside that could corrupt the perfection of tawhīd. These personalities may be seen as purists in the sense that they turn away from the material and focus on correct belief and practice. This may well be a message appealing to people who are materially poor. In this matter, the young Companions living in hardship are good models for identification, and if they adopt tawhīd and spread the message, they will participate in

Ḥassān's project of revival. Khālid's personalities are much more open to outside influence. In many of the stories, he advocates persistence in the struggle for reform, exemplified by Ezraḥ who never gave up. The story about Saul and Goliath communicates that Khālid is seeking to create a generation of strong personalities who can become carriers of his message of reform. The moral is that such personalities will win in the end, even though the enemy may seem superior. There is also Abel who, unlike Cain, is non-violent, diligent and hard-working. The ant and al-Khiḍr were rich in initiative, and Moses travelled far with al-Khiḍr in search for knowledge. The practical measures that Khālid suggests reveal a great deal about what kinds of personalities he seeks to build. They all witness to the idea that Khālid wants Muslims to seek knowledge abroad and travel. Much of this advice signals that Khālid is addressing the higher segments of society. Thus, there is considerable difference in the ways of thinking the preachers attempt to make their audiences adopt. With regards to the global, Ḥassān's discourse seeks to construct identities that can resist outside influence, building their identities on the "Islamic" that is superior and substantially different from everything else. These ideals work hard and strive ceaselessly for da'wah and for the Ummah. Adopting taḥḍīd involves a type of seclusion from the worldly. This is his recipe for creating strong personalities capable of making the Ummah rise. Khālid seeks to create personalities that are more open to influence from the outside. They should go out to learn, embrace the contemporary and create reform by engaging in society and never give up.

6.5 Pathos

Both series *stimulate* their audiences through advanced camera work and studio design. Both are highly advanced productions enwrapped in an impressive visual package. Professionalism across the modes of discourse creates a highly attractive multimodal package that works just as well as entertainment as for ethical formation. In Ḥassān's case, the decorations play an important role in this, while in Khālid's case, the audience is important. Both title sequences are impressive, full of motion, and activate the emotions of the audience. Moreover, both preachers are skilled at using their gestures, faces and

voices to express themselves. They are also both intimate and seek to establish a bond of friendship with the viewers, although this is a more explicit element with Khālid. They both make use of the narrative as a prime tool of argumentation, an important means to attract and stimulate their audiences. Their narrations are at times very exciting, consisting of dramatic scenes and elements of suspense. Still, the two programs express two different moods and feelings. Ḥassān speaks, gestures, and more or less sits with his upper torso still. His gestures are slow and controlled. The poetics of his language add to the visual environment of Islamic symbolism. He often speaks in rhyme in a flow of words that is carefully planned. Khālid, on the other hand, speaks extremely quickly and moves his body very enthusiastically while narrating his stories. He dramatizes more than Ḥassān and the interpersonal style makes him constantly throw out questions to the audience to keep them attentive, as well as activating them using various techniques. He uses humor and seeks to surprise the audience: this makes him unpredictable, contrasting with Ḥassān's more controlled, predictable style. The ways in which the two programs seek to entertain and stimulate the audience to sit through them to the end, therefore, may be said to be an expression of the series in general. However, they share advanced production, the title sequences, the advanced oratory, visual and musical expression, in addition to the classic repertoires of gestures and particularly facial mimicry to hold the audience's attention.

Having succeeded in holding the audiences' attention, the preachers work in various ways and employing different techniques to move the audience towards their proposals. To do so, interestingly both preachers use the characters in the stories and their move towards piety as tools. Their techniques of vividly describing scenes give the audience the feeling that they are there, experiencing this for themselves: accordingly, empathy for these characters is created. In Khālid's stories, the heroes work for the Message and God helps them: they move from uncertainty to having a meaning in life by working for the Message. His propositions create strong personalities. By adopting these positions, one may also participate in the revival of the Ummah. In the case of Ḥassān, all the characters that were not born into Islam experience total transformation. All problems

vanish as the light of tawhīd touches their hearts. In both cases, these transformations are associated with the hope of revival and a better future. In Ḥassān's way of representation, the hope of revival is close to the analogy of the rise of the Ummah during the time of the Prophet. Khālid, on the other hand, works for justice and Islamic ideals on a more local level. The most important point here is that both preachers underline the persistence of many of the characters and their hard-working nature, and underscore God rewarding them or their creation of change. At times, both preachers seek to create a feeling of guilt in the audience as they point out how much these great personalities have suffered for Islam and faith, contrasting this with people today who do not work or who are lazy. Furthermore, both preachers use metaphors. These, however, seem to play a more important role in Ḥassān's poetic language in which metaphors of light and dark are omnipresent. Khālid uses more anecdotes and stories to render complex matter more easily. Moreover, they both play on existential insecurity. Finally, both share a quest to make the audience aware that God is all-seeing and all-knowing.

Ḥassān's preaching, which is closer to a eulogy, tries to make his audience admire these characters by praising and elevating them. In Khālid's case, these characters are more like normal people with whom to identify. Ḥassān exploits the imagery of light and dark and his dichotomized discourse seeks to make the audience constantly choose side. Either you are a person of tawhīd, or you are out there in the dark. Khālid, too, plays on existential insecurity, but is more concrete, pointing out that one could die at any moment. While Ḥassān's discourse is rather sparse in terms of Quranic verses of tarhīb and targhīb, Khālid inserts these more arbitrarily, which fits with his more interpersonal style. Khālid also seeks to make the audience question themselves, thereby triggering a process of introspection that may often lead them to feel that they are inadequate. Then he presents a solution in the form of self-development, leading them towards the right goal that again is an element in contributing to the rise of the Ummah. Ḥassān simply presents the examples of the Companions as stable, unchangeable patterns which create security and who constitute the only stable thing in a world turned upsidedown. Both preachers establish

the chaos of the contemporary world, before presenting their solutions to emerge from this chaos, towards the truth, the revival, and rise of the Ummah.

7 Conclusion

Concluding this dissertation takes me back to when I first became interested in studying Islamic television preaching in 2004. As a student at The American University in Cairo, the influence of the Islamic preacher (dā'iyah) 'Amr Khālid on my fellow students roused my interest. Khālid became the subject of my Master's thesis in which I discussed how he mediated between the lifestyles of the urban upper classes and Islam by selecting and adapting Islamic texts. I focused on his discourse on reform, women, and dialogue. Khālid has been the leading figure in the group popularly called the "New Preachers". The rise of these "New Preachers" must be seen in light of the establishment of the Islamic channel Iqra' in 1998, the privatization of the Egyptian television sector, and a growing piety movement. Their simple and pedagogical style was adapted to mass audiences and television culture, and preachers such as Ṭārīq al-Suwaydān, 'Alī al-Jufrī, and 'Amr Khālid did not only call on their audiences to adopt a new morality, but also to cultural dialogue and social development. Women played an important role in this movement. "The repentant artists" served as symbols of piety and symbols of the success of several of the preachers, and female preachers and television presenters started to appear on screens.

However, as I was about to finish my Master's thesis in late 2006, there was a notable change in the field of television preaching. A number of Salafi preachers who were already famous mosque speakers drew a considerable audience, and new channels such as al-Nās, al-Raḥmah, and al-Ḥikmah emerged. These channels and their Salafi-oriented preachers, such as Abū Ishāq al-Ḥuwaynī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ya'qūb, and Muḥammad Ḥassān, challenged the authority of "The New Preachers". They particularly challenged the authority of Mu'izz Mas'ūd, Muṣṭafā Maḥmūd, 'Alī al-Jufrī, and Ṭārīq al-Suwaydān. The Salafi preachers accused them of promoting Westernization, and of being proponents of a variant of Islam too liberal in questions of creed, worship, gender, and identity politics. Roughly, the field of preaching became divided in two parts. There were

the Wasafī-oriented channels Iqra' and al-Risālah along with the “New Preachers” and “The Female Preachers” on the one hand. On the other hand, there were the Salafi-oriented channels al-Nās, al-Raḥmah, and al-Ḥikmah. Iqra' and al-Risālah promoted preachers from different Islamic factions, emphasized dialogue with the West, and frequently broadcast women. The Salafi channels fronted a more “conservative” type of da‘wah: instead of a liberal mix of elements external to “Islam” as found in the Wasafī trend, they sought to protect what they regarded as genuinely Islamic. The Salafi-oriented channels thus launched a new verbal, visual, and audial regime. For example, they were reluctant to broadcast women and music, and often portrayed the “West” negatively.

This new situation of two conflicting trends of television and preaching motivated me to change my PhD project: instead of continuing studying ‘Amr Khālid, I would compare him with one of the Salafī preachers. While performing fieldwork in Egypt in early 2008, my choice fell on the Salafī preacher Muḥammad Ḥassān whom I at that time understood to be the most popular of “The New Salafī Preachers”. These two preachers were therefore not only interesting in themselves: they could also be seen as representatives of two different trends within preaching, as well as within the wider Islamic field. In this respect, comparing Khālid and Ḥassān seemed interesting. In addition, I intended to fill a void in the academic study of television preaching. While there were some excellent studies of mosque and cassette preaching, Islamic television preaching had yet to be dealt with comprehensively.

I therefore recorded Ḥassān’s and Khālid’s prime-time Ramadan series in 2008. I decided to conduct the comparison between the two within the scope of their Ramadan series, defined as multimodal texts. ‘Amr Khālid presented *The Stories of the Quran* broadcast on al-Risālah, Miḥwar, and Abu Dhabi TV. Muḥammad Ḥassān broadcast his series on his “own” recently established channel, al-Raḥmah.

The textual fieldwork and initial coding of the primary material was the basis for my developing a more analytical approach. As discussed in Chapter 1, I developed a methodology by combining the works of Norman Fairclough and the Chinese discourse analyst Shu-xi. This approach, identified as a Cultural Approach to Discourse (CAD),

embedded a focus on the identities that these texts proposed for the audiences and the construction of these. At the same time, Fairclough's discourse model emphasized the importance of seeing such discourses not only as texts, but also as discursive and sociocultural practices. In Chapter 2, I thus discussed how sociocultural elements shape Khālid and Ḥassān's discourses. I underscored that the channels that broadcast such programs are far from neutral "spaces" for preaching. Channels have their own agendas. They are financed and select what is broadcast to people. In Egypt, Islamic television is constrained by the regime's efforts to control these new "spaces" of preaching. The recent closure of a number of Islamic channels well illustrates the power of the Minister of Information and the ERTU to sanction such discourses.

One of the strengths of discourse theory is that it allows the researcher to see the multitude of discourses competing in a discursive field. Different voices compete for relevance and truth. The first part of Chapter 3 therefore presents a reconstruction of the field of television preaching during Ramadan 1429AH/2008AD, to illustrate the diversity of such voices. The almost ethnographical description of the polyphony on offer gave the reader an empirical base on which to situate the series *The Stories of the Quran* and *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark* as part of the choice of programming with which television viewers are confronted. This overview then became the empirical basis on which I justified my selection of cases. I concretized the tensions in the field by referring to the debates that were taking place on YouTube. Balancing between specificity and generalization, I then introduced 'Amr Khālid and Muḥammad Ḥassān as representatives of two different trends of preaching. I also argued that these could be seen as parts of the more general trends in the Islamic field, *Wasaṭīyah* and Literalist Salafism.

The following two chapters presented the text analysis of Ḥassān's and Khālid's respective series. In order to be able to compare these series on the level of text, I developed a set of five parameters; cohesion, mise-en-scene, ethos, logos, and pathos. I analyzed each of the cases in Chapters 4 and 5. In Chapter 6, I summed up the results and compared Khālid and Ḥassān according to each category. This very final chapter, the conclusion, seeks to formulate the findings of the process and the study described above

in a concise manner, asking how did the preachers ‘Amr Khālīd and Muḥammad Ḥassān attempt to shape their audiences through their Ramadan series 1429AH/2008AD. First, my results show that Muḥammad Ḥassān and ‘Amr Khālīd represent two distinct styles of Islamic Television Preaching. Second, the study reveals that Ḥassān and Khālīd seek to shape two different types of identities. Third, they each construct these subjects as part of their distinct projects of Islamic revival.

7.1 Two Styles of Islamic Television Preaching

The multimodal analysis of the two preachers’ discourses illustrates how the verbal, musical, and visual modes interact. Meaning, and thus the shaping of identity, do not take place exclusively on the verbal level. Ramadan series are complex multimodal discourses authored by a number of professionals. My analysis illustrates how Ḥassān and Khālīd have two very different styles in their attempts to influence their audience, and that in this respect they may therefore be described as having two different styles of television preaching. The comparison through the focus on cohesion illustrated how meaning is embedded in the structure of the series and how it connected to the progress of Ramadan, and the natural focus on self-improvement during that month. Khālīd’s structure played more on this than Ḥassān’s, whose series structure demonstrated both a hierarchy of authority central to his creed, and alluded to the sharp gender boundaries that characterize his discourse. The comparison of the two preachers’ title sequences and mise-en-scenes illustrated two different types of visual and musical regimes. Ḥassan used hymns and the calligraphic images of the Companions as important symbols, while Khālīd used pop music and images of the audience depicting women wearing headscarves as important symbols and models for identification. Contrasting the way in which these two preachers build up their authority (ethos) reveals the fundamental differences between their authorities. Ḥassān seeks to construe himself in the image of the Prophet and his Companions and strives to imitate these in his manner of speaking, dressing, and acting. Both preachers seek to convince the audience that they possess the solution. They are the ones who can guide the audience out of the misery of the present. The visual language in

the *Imams of Guidance and The Lights of the Dark* seeks to make associations between Ḥassān and these perfect models. Likewise, Khālid creates an image of himself as someone who knows how the modern and the global world works. Through the way he dresses, speaks and acts, he creates the image of a dynamic character full of initiative. Both preachers' messages are constructed as absolutely true. Khālid underlines the eternal validity of the stories of the Quran and describes them as the only stable things in this world. Ḥassān does much of the same by underlining the absoluteness of tawḥīd. Preaching on television, both men are caught with the dilemma that they need both to stimulate their audiences while seeking to pull them in the desired directions. Both preachers stimulate their audiences by using narrative structures to create coherence, suspense, and entertainment. Further, the shooting of the calligraphic décor in Ḥassān's series and of the audience in Khālid's, along with the shifting angles and distances, create visual dynamism to hold the viewers' attention. They seek to make the audience identify with the characters of their personal narratives so they adopt these, and they use various techniques to move the audience in the direction of their propositions. Thus, with regard to 'Amr Khālid's and Muḥammad Ḥassān's formulation of their message through television, one may clearly speak of two distinct styles of Islamic television preaching.

7.2 Two Types of Muslim Identities

The comparison between 'Amr Khālid and Muḥammad Ḥassān reveals that the two preachers seek to create different types of Muslim subjects. While the ideals they present have many similarities, they function within two different projects of revival. Regarding similarities, both discourses have a special focus on the new generation of young people. They advocate the roles of the rich in contributing to social equality by sharing their wealth. Moreover, they present an image of the ideal ruler who is faithful and rules according to sharia. The preachers' positioning of their audiences reveals two different types of ideal personalities.

The personalities Ḥassān seeks to create adopt tawḥīd. This also means adopting the one and only correct Islamic creed. They will then see other Islamic factions as inferior and

enter the dichotomized worldly view of tawhīd which regards itself as the truth versus falsehood, goodness versus evil, Islam versus the West, and so forth. These personalities should resist any external pressure to depart from the straight path of tawhīd and should be prepared to sacrifice familial bonds, their material wealth, and live in hardship for the sake of the Message. Ḥassān seeks to attract the audience to follow the path of these characters by advocating the transformation which these characters underwent as they turned to tawhīd. These personal narratives of change represent a movement from chaos to order, from insecurity to confidence, from doubt to absolute certainty. Moreover, they went from being redundant in the dark, to becoming agents of revival. Adopting tawhīd, therefore, also implies participating in the rise of the Ummah, and going from lost to entering the path leading to Paradise.

The personalities that ‘Amr Khālid seeks to create are different from Ḥassān’s. Khālid seeks to create people who engage in society particularly through development projects. Doing something for society becomes doing something for Islam. Helping people is part of winning their hearts and their support so that the unjust ruler can be confronted. Khālid seeks to create strong, persistent personalities capable of carrying out such changes: they are pro-active, full of initiative, willpower, and bravery. Whatever one does, it must be done for Islam. This gives life meaning. Those who start living for the Message become reformers and, as with Ḥassān, they enter the path of Muslim revival. The rewards for persistence are always ultimately victory. The personalities he seeks to build are open to the world. He calls on them to travel out in the world and seek knowledge, warns against violence, and prioritizes dialogue over conflict. Khālid announces a type of training program to build personalities according to the values he asserts. He will help them to develop the qualities and skills they need to become agents of reform and enter the path to Paradise. Khālid sees the citizen as the prime agent of revival, while Ḥassān advocates the roles of the preacher-scholar as an agent of change. Ḥassān’s discourse is much more gendered than Khālid’s, and sees women as working less out in society for social reform than Khālid. Their contribution is supportive and

linked to the domestic. Thus, ‘Amr Khālid and Muḥammad Ḥassān seek to create two different types of Muslim identities.

7.3 Two Projects of Islamic Revival

In their respective series, Muḥammad Ḥassān and ‘Amr Khālid present two different projects of Islamic revival. Ḥassān seeks to make his audience adopt tawḥīd while Khālid seeks to engage his audiences in social reform. Adopting tawḥīd implies accepting Muḥammad Ḥassān’s version of the Islamic creed. This is a strict Sunni Islamic doctrine which, based on hadith criticism, argues that there is only one correct version of the Islamic creed. Islamic factions deviating from this are seen as splitting the Ummah, while what is outside Islam is often described as external threats to this unity. The idea behind this is that for the Ummah to rise, Muslims must return to the model of the Quranic society. If Muslims adopt the qualities of the Prophet, his Companions, and the first Muslims, the Ummah will rise as it rose under the leadership of the Prophet. Ḥassān thus construes the contemporary as an analogy to the period when Islam was just about to spread on the Arabian Peninsula. In this period, the young Companions worked night and day to spread the message of tawḥīd under the leadership of the Prophet. First, they operated in secret, and then as Islam established itself they participated in founding a perfect, balanced society, as well as expanding the Ummah. This movement from unbelief to belief, from polytheism to tawḥīd, from chaos to order, is the narrative of Islamic revival that Ḥassān seeks to imitate and apply to the present. The leaders of the Ummah were both scholars and preachers. They engaged in da‘wah of tawḥīd, but they possessed knowledge. Such guidance is also needed by the Ummah today.

‘Amr Khālid’s message fits well within the Islamic and Egyptian Wasafī movement, and he may be dubbed a social reformist. His message of Islamic revival is oriented towards contemporary society. Unlike the decontextualized message of Ḥassān, Khālid continually connects his narrative to contemporary social reality. Society must be changed and social injustice must be defeated. Khālid makes it clear early on in the series, through the stories of “The People of the Cave” and “The People of the Trenches”, that he

is seeking to create a new generation of youth which can act to challenge social and political injustice. These must change reality by all means, but without using violence. The social and political critique embedded in his discourse, in addition to the proposed strategies, justify speaking of his preaching as oriented towards social and political reform. The stories as he presents them put forward a range of character examples of people who create such a revival. The present is characterized by nepotism, inequality before the law, redundancy, and decay. The characters undertake welfare work to win people's support, they work hard, and they confront injustice. In the end, they succeed and always achieve victory. His narrative of Islamic revival thus reveals a strategy of social reform. At this level, it makes sense to speak of 'Amr Khālid and Muḥammad Ḥassān as representing two different projects of Islamic Revival.

Sources

Audiovisual

- Hāshim, Nawārah. "Episode 7." In *Sab'ah Yazullu-hum Allāh*: al-Risālah, 2008.
- . "Episode 20." In *Sab'ah Yazullu-hum Allāh*: al-Risālah, 2008.
- Ḥassān, Muḥammad. "'Ā'ishah." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Hudā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "al-Imām al-A'zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Khālīd b. al-Walīd." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- , Muḥammad. "Fātimah." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- , Muḥammad. "'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf" *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*, al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Abū Bakr." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "al-Imām al-A'zam wa-al-Rasūl al-Akram Muḥammad Ṣ." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*, 64 minutes. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "al-Ṣaḥābah." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "al-Zubayr b. 'Awwām." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Āsiyah." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Hudhayfā b. al-Yamān." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Khadijah." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Khālīd b. al-Walīd." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Lesson 10." In *Aḥdāth al-Niyāyah*. al-Nās, 2006.
- . "Manhaj al-Taghyīr."
www.mohamedhassan.org/alkhotab_wa_alдорos/video/SaveFiles.aspx?hAudViD=1917&hRateID=6.
- . "Miryam." In *A'immat al-Hudā wa-Maṣābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . "Mu'ādh b. Jabal." In *A'immat al-Hudā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.

- . “Muş‘ab b. Umayr.” In *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maşābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . “Şa‘d b. Abī Waqqāş.” In *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maşābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . “Sa‘īd b. ‘Umar.” In *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maşābīḥ al-Hudā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . “Ṭalḥā b. ‘Ubayd Allāh.” In *A‘immat al-Hudā wa-Maşābīḥ al-Dujā*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . “‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.” In *A‘immat al-Hudā*. Qanāṭ al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- Ḥusnī, Muşţafā. “Ep.19.” In *al-Kinz al-Mafqūd*, 30. Iqra’, 2008.
- Ḥijāzī, Şafwat. *Ep. 4*, Zamān al-‘Izzah. Cairo: al-Nās, 2008.
- al-Ḥuwaynī, Abū Ishāq. “Ep. 1.” In *Sullam al-Su‘ūd*, 37 al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- . “Ep. 3.” In *Sullam al-Su‘ūd*, 37 Minutes. al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- . “Ep. 5.” In *Sullam al-Su‘ūd*, 37 Minutes. al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- , Abū Ishāq. “Radd al-Shaykh Abī Ishāq ‘alā Muşţafā Ḥusnī.” In *Faḍḍaḥ İmānīyah*. al-Nās, 2009.
- Ghunaym, Wagdī. “Ep. 1.” In *Tafsīr al-Nās*, 29:30 minutes. South Africa: al-Nās, 2008.
- al-Jazeera. “al-Taqrīr al-Dawlīyah wa-al-Rasmīyah ‘an al-Fisād fī Mişr.” In *Bi Lā Hudūd*. Cairo, 2010.
- Khālīd, ‘Amr. “al-Dir‘ al-Masrūqah.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. Czech Republic: al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Bayna al-İndimāgh wa-al-İnghilāq.” 2003.
- . “İsm Allāh al-‘Afū.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Makānat al-Mar‘ah fī al-İslām”, 2002.
- . “Muqaddimah.” In *Şummā‘ al-Ḥayāh*: Iqra’, 2003.
- . “Qişşat Āl-‘İmrān.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān.*, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Aşḥāb al-Jannah.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Aşḥāb al-Kahf (1).” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Aşḥāb al-Kahf (2).” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Aşḥāb al-Ukhdūd 1.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān.*: al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Aşḥāb al-Ukhdūd (2).” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Bal‘ām ibn ‘Awrā’.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Dir‘ al-Masrūqah.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Ḥādīth al-İfk.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat İbnay Ādam (1).” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat İbnay Ādam (2).” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Ka‘b ibn Malik.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Luqmān al-Ḥakīm.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Miryam.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Mu‘min Yāsiīn, wa-al-Hudhud wa-al-Namlah.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Nabī Allāh Mūsá wa-al-Khidr.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Nabī Allāh Uzayr.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*, 2008.
- . “Qişşat Qārūn.” In *Qişaş al-Qur‘ān*. al-Risālah, 2008.

- . “Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Sa-na ʿīshu bi al-Qurʿān.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Quran*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Yaum al-Tnād.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qiṣṣat Aṣḥāb al-Jannah.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qiṣṣat Kaʿb ibn Malik.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Qiṣṣat Ṭālūt wa-Jālūt.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Yaum al-Tnād.” In *Qiṣaṣ al-Qurʿān*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- Ishāq, Abū. “Ep. 1.” In *Sullam al-Suʿūd*. al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- . “Ep. 3.” In *Sullam al-Suʿūd*, 37. al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- . “Ep. 5.” In *Sullam al-Suʿūd*. al-Ḥikmah, 2008.
- al-Miṣrī, Maḥmūd. “First Episode.” In *Yūsuf wa-al-Aḥlām*. al-Nās, 2008.
- al-Qarnī, ʿĀʿid. “Episode 1.” In *The Happiest Women*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- al-Qattān, Ḥanān. “Episode 1.” In *Tarāwīḥ*. al-Risālah, 2008.
- . “Episode 2.” In *Tarāwīḥ*: al-Risālah, 2008.
- Shūmān, Ḥāzim. “Ep. 1.” In *ʿAlā Fēn Yā Shabāb*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- al-Suwaydān, Ṭāriq. “Ep. 2.” In *Rawāʿi Ḥaḍārati-nā*. Iqraʿ, 2008.
- Yaʿqūb, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. In *Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh wa-Alladhīna maʿ-Ḥu* al-Raḥmah, 2009.
- . “Ep.1.” In *Ghadhāʿ al-Rūḥ*. al-Raḥmah, 2008.
- YouTube. “About Chanel Iqraa,” 2008.
- . “ʿAmr Khālid Yaruddu ʿalā Muḥammad Ḥassān,” 2009.
- . “Bidāyat al-Radd ʿalā Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī 1/9,” 2009.
- . “Mādhā Qāla al-Shaykh Kishk lil-Shaykh Abū Ishāq al-Huwaynī,” 2009.
- . “Shaykh al-Azhar fī al-Bayt Bayt-ak Ḥawlah al-Niqāb,” 2009.
- . “al-Shaykh al-Ḥuwaynī Yuwaddiḥu al-Mushkilah maʿ Fikr al-Ustāz ʿAmr Khālid,” 2007.
- . “al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān Yūjību: Limādhā Ḥājamtum ʿAmr Khālid?” 2010.
- . “Khadʿū-ka fā-Qālū dī Bidʿah Muṣṭafā Ḥusnī al-Ḍarbah al-Qaḍiyah,” 2009.
- . “Muḥammad Mitwallī al-Shaʿrāwī 1973 (1 of 4),” 2008.
- . “Radd Faḍīlat al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān ʿalā al-Madūʿ ʿAmr Khālid,” 2008.
- . “Raʿī al-Shaykh al-Ḥuwaynī bi-Shaykh al-Azhar,” 2008.

Literature

- al-ʿAwwa Salīm, Muḥammad. *Azmat al-Muʿassasah al-Dīniyyah*. Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2003.
- Abdo, Geneive. *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- . *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998.
- Abū Zayd, Naṣr Ḥāmid. *al-Khiṭāb wa-al-Taʿwīl: Sulṭah Siyāsīyah wa-Sulṭat al-Naṣṣ*. Casablanca, Marokko: al-Markaz al-Thaqāfī al-ʿArabī.

- Althusser, Louis, and Ben Brewster. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*: London, 1971.
- Andersen, Øivind. *I retorikkens hage*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget AS, 2007.
- Antoun, Richard T. *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: A Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Antoun, Richard T. "Themes and Symbols in the Religious Lesson: A Jordanian Case Study." *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 4 (1993): 607–24.
- Asad, Talal. "Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz." *Man, New Series* 18, no. 2 (1983): 237–59.
- . *Genealogies of Religion*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- . *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986.
- Badawi, El-Said M., and Muhammad Abdel Haleem. *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*. Vol. 85, Handbuch der Orientalistik, 1. Abteilung, Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- Baker, Raymond. *Islam without Fear*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Bakhtin, Michail, and Michael Holquist. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
- Bal, Mieke. *On Story-Telling: Essays in Narratology*. Sonoma, California Polebridge Press, 1991.
- Barthes, Roland. "L'effet de réel." In *Le bruissement de la langue*, 179–87. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1984.
- , trans. and ed. Stephen Heath. *Image, Music, Text*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacres et simulation*. Paris: Galilée, 1981.
- al-Bāz, Muḥammad. *Du 'āh fil-Manfā*. Cairo: al-Fāris, 2004.
- Berkey, Jonathan P. *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East*. Seattle, 2001.
- Bignell, Jonathan. *An Introduction to Television Studies*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Bonnefoy, Laurent. "L'illusion apolitique." In *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*, edited by Bernard Rougier, 138–59. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008.
- Borthwick, Bruce M. "The Islamic Sermon as a Channel of Political Communication." *The Middle East Journal* 21, no. 3 (1967): 299–313.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique*. Paris: Éditions Fayard, 2001.
- . *Sur la télévision: Suivi de L'emprise du journalisme*. Paris: Edition Raisons d'Agir, 2008.
- Brummett, Barry. *Rhetorical Dimensions of Popular Culture*. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1991.
- Burgat, François. "Veils and Obscuring Lenses." In *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, edited by John L. Esposito and François Burgat. London: Hurst & Company, 2003.

- Butler, Jeremy G. *Television: Critical Methods and Application*. Edited by Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann, LEA's Communication Series. Mahwah, New Jersey: LEA Publishers, 2007.
- Carbaugh, Donald. "Cultural Discourse Analysis: Communication Practices and Intercultural Encounters." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 36, no. 3 (2007): 167–82.
- Carothers, Thomas. "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5–21.
- Derrida, Jacques. "La structure, le signe et le jeu dans le discours des sciences humaines." In *L'écriture et la différence*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967.
- Eickelman, Dale F., and Jon W. Anderson. *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, Indiana Series in Middle East Studies. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- Ekman, Paul, Wallace V. Friesen, and Phoebe Ellsworth. *Emotion in the Human Face: Guide-lines for Research and an Integration of Findings*, Pergamon general psychology series PGPS-11. New York: Pergamon Press, 1972.
- Esposito, John L. "Modernizing Islam and Re-islamization in Global Perspective." In *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, edited by John L. Esposito and François Burgat. London: Hurst & Company, 2003.
- Fairclough, Norman. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- . *Critical discourse analysis*. Edited by Christopher N. Candlin, Language in Social Life. London; New York: Longman, 1995.
- . *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1992.
- . *Language and Power*. Edited by Christopher N. Candlin. 2nd ed, Language in Social Life Series. Harlow, England; New York: Longman, 2001.
- . *Media Discourse*. London: Hodder Arnold, 1995.
- Field, Nathan, and Ahmad Hamam. "Salafi Satellite TV in Egypt." *Arabic Media & Society*, no. 8 (2009).
- Foucault, Michel. *L'archéologie du savoir*: Edition Gallimard, 1969.
- . "L'ordre du discours." *Leçon inaugurale au Collège de France* (1970).
- . "The Subject and Power." In *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, edited by Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Flood, Gavin D. *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion*. London: Cassell, 1999.
- Foss, Sonja K. *Rhetorical Criticism*. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press Inc., 2009.
- Fulton, Helen. *Narrative and Media*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Galal, Ehab. "Identiteter og livsstil på islamisk satellit-tv: en innholdsanalyse af udvalgte programmers positioneringer af muslimer." Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Copenhagen, 2009.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Art as a Cultural System." *MLN Comparative Literature* 91, no. 6 (1976): 1473–99.

- . "Religion as a Cultural System." In *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, edited by I.M. Banton, 1–46. London: Tavistock, 1966.
- Gibbs, John. *Mise-en-scène: Film Style and Interpretation*. London: Wallflower, 2002.
- Gräf, Bettina. "The Concept of Wasaṭiyyah in the Work of Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī." In *The Global Mufti*, edited by Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, 213–33. New York: Colombia University Press, 2009.
- Hadden, Jeffrey K., and Charles E. Swann. *Prime Time Preachers: The Rising Power of Televangelism*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1981.
- Halldén, Philip. "Islamisk predikan på ljudkasset: en studie i retorik och fonogramologi." Published Doctoral Dissertation, Religionshistoriska avdelingen, Lunds universitet, 2001.
- Haenni, Patrick. "Al-Dā'iyah al-Ashar fī al-'Ālam Yasta'īdu 'an al-Jihād bi-al-Iḥsān wa-al-Ta'āḏud... 'Amr Khālid Ṣāḥirah Islāmīyah Ḥadīthah khārija al-Namūdhaj al-'Almānī al-Faransī." *Al-Ḥayāh*, June 16 2006.
- . *L'islam de marché: L'autre révolution conservatrice*, La république des idées. Paris: Seuil, 2005.
- , and Tjitske Holtrop. "Mondaines Spiritualités: 'Amr Khālid, 'Skaykh branché' de la jeunesse dorée du Caire." *Politique africaine* 87, no. Oktober (2002): 45–68.
- Hall, Stuart. "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power." In *Formations of Modernity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben, 275–331: Open University/Polity Press, 1992.
- . *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: SAGE in association with The Open University, 1997.
- Halliday, M. A. K. *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold, 1978.
- Hammond, Andrew. *Popular Culture in the Arab World*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2007.
- Ḥassān, Muḥammad. *Aḥdāth al-Nihāyah wa-Nihāyat al-'Ālam*. Manṣūrah: Maktabat Fayyāḏ, 2007.
- . *Khawāṭir 'alā Ṭarīq al-Da'wah*. al-Manṣūrah: Maktabat Fiyāḏ, 2006.
- . *Ḥaqīqat al-Tawḥīd*. 3rd ed. Manṣūrah: Maktabat Fayyāḏ, 2006.
- Hill, Charles A., and Marguerite H. Helmers. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 2004.
- Hirschkind, Charles. *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Huisman, Rosemary. "Aspects of Narrative in Series and Serials." In *Narrative and Media*, edited by Helen Fulton, 153–71. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Høigilt, Jacob. "Writing Islamism: Rhetoric and Ideology in Contemporary Egypt." Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Oslo, 2008.
- ICG. "Reforming In search of a Strategy." In *Middle East/North Africa Report*. Cairo: Bruxelles: International Crisis Group, 2005.

- Ismail, Salwa. "Islamism, Re-Islamization and the Fashioning for Muslims Selves: Refiguring the Public Sphere." *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights* 4, no. 1 (2007): Article 3.
- . *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism*, 2003.
- Jamieson, Kathleen Hall. *Dirty Politics: Deception, Distraction and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Jansen, Johannes J.G. *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1986.
- Kepel, Gilles. *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Kjeldsen, Jens E. *Retorikk i vår tid: En innføring i moderne retorisk teori*. Second ed. Oslo: Spartacus Forlag AS, 2006.
- Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel." In *The Kristeva Reader*, edited by Toril Moi. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Kristianasen, Wendy. "Islamic Sisters Advance." *Review of African Political Economy* 33, no. 110 (2006): 744–47.
- Lacroix, Stéphane. "L'apport de Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani au salafisme contemporain." In *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*, edited by Bernard Rougier, 45–64. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008.
- Lowry, Eugene L. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as a Narrative Art Form*. Louisville, KY Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- al-Majdhūb. 'Ulamā' wa-Mufakkirūn 'Arifū-hum, 3rd Edition. Riyadh: Dār al-Shawāf, 1992.
- Moll, Yasmin. "Islamic Televangelism." *Arabic Media & Society* Spring 2010, no. 10 (2010).
- al-Qaraḍāwī, Yūsuf. *Khiṭābu-nā al-Islāmī fī 'Aṣr al-'Awlamah*. Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2003.
- The Qur'an*. Translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Rabinow, Paul. *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Vintage Books, 2010.
- Ricœur, Paul. *Sur la traduction*. Paris: Bayard, 2004.
- , and Mark I. Wallace. *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Rock, Aaron. "Amr Khaled: From Da'wa to Political and Religious Leadership." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 15–37.
- Rougier, Bernard, ed. *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme*. Edited by Bernard Rougier, Proche Orient. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008.
- Roy, Olivier. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- . *La sainte ignorance: Le temps de la religion sans culture*, La Couleur des Idées. Paris: Seuil, 2008.

- al-Sa'īd, Sanā'. *al-Sha'rāwī bayna al-Siyāsah wa-al-Dīn*. Cairo: Dār al-Faṭḥ lil-I'lām al-'Arabī, 1997.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*, Penguin Classics. London: Penguin, 1978.
- Sakr, Naomi. *Arab Television Today*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007.
- . *Satellite Realms: Transnational Television, Globalization and the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2001.
- Salvatore, Armando. "Social Differentiation, Moral Authority, and Public Islam and Egypt." *Anthropology Today* 16, no. 2 (2000): 12–15.
- Shahba, Maha. "Iqra: Channel with a Mission." *TBS Journal* 14, no. Spring (2005).
- Shi-xu. *A Cultural Approach to Discourse*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- . "A Multiculturalist Approach to Discourse Theory." *Semiotica* 158, no. 1 (2006): 383–400.
- Sætren, John Erik. "Islamsk diskurs i nye medier: Predikanten 'Amr Khālid." Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Bergen, 2006.
- Tash, Abdul Qader. "Islamic Satellite Channels and Their Impact on Arab Societies: Iqra Channel – a Case Study." *TBS Journal* 13, no. Fall (2004).
- United Nations Development Programme, and The Institute of National Planning (Egypt). "Egypt Human Development Report 2010." edited by Hebba Handoussa. UNDP, 2010.
- Van Dijk, Teun A. *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Van Nieuwkerk, Karin. "'Repentant' Artists in Egypt: Debating Gender, Performing Arts and Religion." *Contemporary Islam* 2 (2008): 191–210.
- Von Stuckrad, Kocku. "Discursive Study of Religion: From States of the Mind to Communication and Action." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 5, no. 3 (2003): 255–71.
- Williams, Raymond, and Ederyn Williams. *Television Technology and Cultural Form*, Routledge Classics. London: New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Wise, Lindsay. "Words from the Heart: New Forms of Islamic Preaching in Egypt" Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Oxford, 2003.
- Wood, P.H. "Television as Dream." In *Television: The Critical View*, edited by H. Newcomb, 510–28. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Newspaper and Internet Articles

- ‘Abd al-‘Āl, ‘Alī. “al-Salafīyūn wa- al-Nās.” *IslamOnline*, May 7 2008.
- ‘Antar, Nuhā, and ‘Āyshah Bābīwī. “Šālūnāt al-Muslimāt al-Jadīdāt fī al-Qāhirah Tasta‘īdu ‘an al-Jihād... bi-al-Nadam.” *al-Ḥayāh*, 8. juni 2006.
- al-‘Arabīyah. “Al-‘Ayn al-Thālithah: Zāhirat al-Du‘āh al-Judud.” 2005.
- . “Nashāt Shabābī Mukaththaf li-Musā‘adat al-Aytām wa-al-Fuqarā’ wa-Tajhīz al-‘Arā’is: ‘Fā’il Khayr... Dūt Kūm’.. 250 Ḥarakah Khayrīyah Mišrīyah Warāqa-hā ‘Amr Khālid.” August 26 2005.
- al-Bannā, Jamāl. “Tarkhīš bi-al-Dhabḥ.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, 2008.
- al-Bardīnī, Shimā’. “Du‘ā’ ‘Āmir: ‘Ablah al-Kahlāwī Ta‘malu li-Wajh Allāh..wa-al-’Dīn wa-al-Ḥayāh:Wašala lil-Nās li-anna-hu Šādiq.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, September 29 2008.
- al-Buḥayrī, Aḥmad. “Ḥamdī Zaqqūq: Lā Ushāhid al-Faḍā’iyāt wa-Asma’ anna Mashāyikha-hā Yushshaghghilūna al-Nās bi-Umūr Tafīhah.2 *Ahl alQuran*, September 13 2009.
- Dabash, Ḥamdī. “Ijtimā’āt Mukaththafah bayna ‘al-Fiqī’ wa-Ašḥāb al-Qanawāt al-Mughlaqah li-Inhā’ al-Azmah.. wa-Anbā’ ‘an ‘Awdat al-Bathth Qarīban” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, October 20 2010.
- Dabūr, Haythām. “al-Amn Yujbiru ‘Amr Khālid ‘alā al-Raḥīl ilā Lundun... wa-Yamna’u Barāmīja-hu fī-al-Faḍā’iyāt.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, June 3 2009.
- . “‘al-Miḥwar’: ‘Adam ‘Arḍ Qiṣaš al-Qur’ān Yukabbidu-nā Khasā’ira Fādiḥah.” *Al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, June 7 2009.
- al-Dīn, Nabīl Sharaf. “Dalīl al-Dā’iyah al-Riwwish.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, May 25 2008, 13.
- al-Dīn, Sāmī Kamāl. “al-Dā’iyah al-Islāmī al-Ḥabīb ‘Alī al-Jufri li”*al-Mišrī al-Yawm*” Iqḥām al-Ṭā’ifiyah fī muqāwamat al-‘Udwān al-Isra’īlī ya’idd khiyānah.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, 2006.
- Ḥabīb, Rafīq. “al-Salafīyah wa-al-Wasaṭīyah.. Tabāyunāt wa-Mushtarikāt.” *IslamOnline*, April 25 2009.
- Ḥadīd, Hishām Abū. “‘Amr Khālid Yakhtāru ‘Siwīd’ li-Ghinā’ Titr Qiṣaš al-Qur’ān.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, February 13 2009.
- al-Ḥamīd, Aḥmad ‘Abd. “Bi-Fi’l Tadā’iyāt al-Azmah al-Māliyah.” *IslamOnline*, 2009.
- Ḥassanayn, Habbah. “Awwal Ḍaḥyā Wathīqat al-I’lām: 5 Faḍā’iyāt Dīnīyah Tuwājihu Shabḥ al-Ighlāq” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, 2008.
- Huwaydī, Fahmī. “Ilā ‘Amr Khālid: ‘Ud ilā Ahl-ak wa-Ummī-ak.” *Al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ*, March 8 2006, 1.
- IslamOnline. “al-Nās: Na‘m lil-Wa‘z lā li-al-Siyāsah.” 2006.
- . “Wathīqah ‘Arabīyah li-Iskāt al-Faḍā’iyāt al-Mustaḥqillah.” 2008.
- al-Ja‘ārah, Saḥr. “Amrāḍ al-Shuhrah.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, 2008, 2.
- al-Jazeera. “Mišr Tūqaf wa-Tundhir 32 faḍā’iyah.” October 20 2010.
- . “Mišr Tasmaḥu bi-Faḍā’iyah lil-Aqbāt.” September 14 2009.
- al-Khaṭīb, Aḥmad. “al-Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassān: al-Azhar lam Yamut wa-hunāk Mukhattaṭ Danī li-Isqāṭi-hi.” *al-Mišrī al-Yawm*, August 13 2010.

- Khayrī, Amīnah. “‘Nyūlūk’ Dīnī li-Tilifizyūn al-Wāqī’” *Al-Ḥayāh*, 14. januar 2006.
- al-Māḥmūd, ‘Abd al-Mun‘im. “bi-Qiṣṣa al-Qur‘ān .. ‘Amr Khālid Yaṭillu min al-Tshīk fī Ramaḍān.” *Islamonline* July 31 2008.
- Masrawy. “Wagḍī Ghunaym: Anā Ikhwānī ḥattā al-Nukhā’.” 2009.
- al-Mun‘im, Īmān ‘abd. “Rafīdah Ḥabash Tad‘ū li-Ḥayāt al-Qulūb” fī Ramaḍān.” *IslamOnline*, August 30 2008.
- al-Miṣrī al-Yawm, “Fūrbs: ‘Amr Khālid A‘lā al-Du‘āh Dakhlan fī 2007 bi-2,5 Milyūn Dūlār,” February 25 2008.
- . “6 Faḍā‘iyāt Jadīdah Yabda‘u Baththa-ha al-Rasmī fī ‘Īd al-Fiṭr.” October 25 2006.
- Muṣṭafā, Sulaymān. “‘al-Nās’.. min al-Salafīyah ilā al-Tadayyun al-Jadīd.” *IslamOnline*, 2008.
- Nomani, Asra. “‘Amr Khālid.” In *Time Magazine*, 2007.
- Sa‘īd, ‘Alyā’. “al-Faḍā‘īyāt fī-Sijn al-Aqmār al-Ṣinā‘īyah.” *IslamOnline*.
- Sanad, Sārah. “al-Nās: Kull Man Yantakhibu al-Baradā‘ī Yuḥāribu Allāh wa-Rasūla-hu.” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, April 6 2010, 3.
- Sandels, Alexandra. “Egypt Pulls the Plug on another TV station.” *Menassat*, April 3 2008.
- Sulaymān, Muṣṭafā. “al-Fiqī Akkada anna Hurriyat al-I‘lām lā ta‘nī al-Tajāwuz.” *al-‘Arabiyah*, October 19 2010.
- . “al-Salafīyah wa ‘Fitnat al-Takfīr’.. Hujūm Mu‘ākis li-Ṣūfīyat Miṣra.” *IslamOnline*, July 21 2009.
- al-Sanūsī, Muḥasin. “Usāmāh al-Ghazzālī Ḥarb ‘fī al-Mamnū’: al-Taghyīr fī Miṣr mundhu ‘Ām 52 Yatimmu fī al-Judrān wa-al-Dīkūr.. wa-al-Asāsāt kamā hiya.” *Al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, Desember 5 2005, 5.
- El-Sayed, Mohamed. “‘Screens to Heaven’.” *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, March 4–10 2010.
- al-Shāf‘ī, Muḥammad. “Wagḍī Ghunaym al-Muttahim fī Qaḍīyat al-Tanzīm al-‘Ālamī lil-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn.” *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ*, April 24 2010.
- Shapiro, Samantha M. “Ministering to the Upwardly Mobile Muslim.” *New York Times Magazine*, April 30 2006.
- al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ, Al-Sharq. “al-Tilifizyūn al-Miṣrī Yamna‘u Dhuhūr al-Mudhī‘āt al-Muḥajjibāt ba‘d Ḥajb al-Badīnāt? ‘an Shashāti-ha.” October 9 2002.
- . “Azmaḥ ‘Ghiṭā’ al-Ra’s’ fī al-Tilifizyūn al-Miṣrī.” 2005.
- . “Mudīr ‘al-Risālah’: 40% min Muqaddimī Barāmij-nā Fannānūn Mu‘tazilūn.” 2006.
- . “‘Iqra’ al-Faḍā‘īyah Ta‘idd Mushāhidī-ha bi-Barāmij Munawwa‘ah.” 2002.
- Shubkī, ‘Amr. “al-Ḥizb al-Waṭānī wa-al-Tadayyun al-Jadīd.” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, December 7 2006, 13.
- . “al-Tadayyun al-Maghshūsh.” *al-Miṣrī al-Yawm*, September 17 2009, 12.
- al-Tahhawi, Amira. “Al-Baraka TV, First Victim of the Arab charter?” *Menassat*, 2008.
- Tammām, Ḥussām. “al-Faḍā‘īyāt al-Dīnīyah wa-al-Du‘āh al-Judud wa-‘Almanat al-Tadayyun.” *IslamOnline*.
- . “As’ilah al-Zaman al-Salafī.” *IslamOnline*, May 15 2007.

Zāyid, al-Sayid. “al-Islāmīyūn - Muḥammad Ḥassān.. al-Salafīyah al-Miṣrīyah ‘indamā Tatashakkalu khārīja al-Ḥudūd.” *IslamOnline*, 2009.

———. “‘al-Salafīyūn’ bayna Azmat Iqtiḥām al-Aqṣā wa-Ghaḍbat al-Niqāb.” *IslamOnline*, October 26 2009.

Internet Resources

Various Preachers Websites:

www.mustafahosny.com.

www.suwaidan.com.

www.algarne.com.

www.abouammar.com.

www.daralansar.com.

www.muhammadhassan.com.

www.khelgendy.com.

www.moezmasoud.com.

www.khelgendy.com.

www.abdelkafy.com/ar/.

www.bagdouri.com/dourouss. All the programs from ‘Amr Khālid’s *The Stories from the Quran* is available from this site. This was also the site where I found most of the other programs broadcast on Iqra’ and al-Risālah.

www.forsanelhaq.com. All the programs from *The Imams of Guidance and the Lights of the Dark* are available from this site.

www.archive.org is also a valuable source.