

man yuridi 'Llahu bihi khayran, yuaffiqhu fiddeen (hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim)



faqihun wahidun ashaddun alashshaytani min alfi 'abidin (hadith reported by Tirmidhi)

The Development of Deen Intensives

Hakim Archuletta

In 1991 Dar al Islam conducted a survey of issues crucial to Muslims and the development of Islam in America. The education of Muslims in the Deen of Islam emerged as an important issue. Education of non-Muslims was also seen as a primary necessity. Subsequent gatherings of various kinds and surveys by other organizations have confirmed these findings.

This newsletter is intended to assist those who hear this call to raise their understanding and practice of their Deen. The process of study, reflection, and dhikr that results in increased knowledge, understanding, and practice of the Deen is such that it requires personal commitment. No newsletter, no teacher, no program can serve as a substitute for individual commitment. Our intent is simply to broaden and strengthen the network of those who share this interest. We would announce activities and list useful resources. From time to time we will publish pieces from texts. We will try to direct you to books, tapes, classes and teachers from which you may derive inspiration and guidance. We welcome articles and material from all who want to participate in this endeavor. The future development of this newsletter will depend substantially upon the information and material you provide for the purpose of increasing our common access to useful resources and to keep each other informed of what is happening or planned. And Tawfiq is from Allah alone.

A golden opportunity for taking a meaningful step toward meeting the first objective presented itself in 1994. In June of that year Dar al Islam held the second Annual North American Muslim Powwow in Abiquiu New Mexico. The theme for the gathering was "Knowledge Based Islam." Present at that gathering were three figures who were to play key roles in the new wave of the study and practice of Islam spreading with such vitality among students in America and else-

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where in the world. Zayd Shakir, Hamza Yusuf and Nuh Keller, together with Abdullah Al Qadi and a growing number of others represent the embrace of Islam which is based on a solid, traditional, mainstream scholarship. This, of course, is nothing other than authentic Islam informed by knowledge and wisdom as it has been articulated and practiced by its great scholars for 1400 years.

In the week following the 1994 Powwow Dar al Islam began to carry out the programs we call Deen Intensives with Sh Hamza Yusuf and Sh Abdullah Al Qadi as the core faculty. The Badr Foundation in New Jersey conducted a Deen Intensive in December 1995, with the same core faculty and spearheaded by individuals who had attended the Abiquiu Deen Intensive. As word of the programs spread among young Muslims across North America and England, the demand for more of these intensive programs quickly grew. Very soon there were not enough Hamzas' and Sh Abdullaha to meet the demands.

By the summer of 1996 the concept of Deen Intensives had spread far and wide. The basic idea is a brief but total immersion in the study of sections of traditional texts under the direct guidance of scholars who have a deep understanding of each text, an ability to convey its meaning to contemporary students, and whose exemplary character make them outstanding role models.

In the summer of 1996, The Ibn Abbas Institute in England organized the first month-long deen intensive, which they called a Rihla. The instructors included Sh Hamza, Sh Abdullah Al Qadi, Sh Nuh Keller and Besa Krasnigi. In december 1996 and December 1997, Deen Intensive Programs were organized by individuals who had attended the previous Institutes.

In 1998, the Zaytuna Institute of Sh Hamza Yusuf took more than a hundred students for a month-long Rihla to Fez, Morocco. This Rihla was sponsored by Dar al Islam and the Moroccan government, with organizational support from Nazim Baksh and others from Toronto. It included students from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

By the end of 1998 Deen Intensives had already taken place in New Mexico, Toronto, New Haven, New Jersey, England, Michigan, and California. The impact of Deen Intensives is so significant that organizations with very dissimilar goals and methodology have adopted this designation for their own programs.

For anyone keeping a finger on the pulse of Islam in America it has become obvious that this represents a new trend. Muslims, mainly youth from both the immigrant and the African American community have, alhamdulillah, awakened to a very basic principle of Islam. That principle is that deep knowledge and understanding of the Deen of Islam coupled with Dhikr, in the traditional sense of the word, are a necessary foundation for personal development if they are to withstand the forces of the cultural hurricane of the modern age. Students see that the scholarship of centuries past is not merely of historical interest. People like Hamza Yusuf, Abdul Hakim Murad, Nuh Keller, Abdullah al Qadi and others have demonstrated that the traditional approach provides not only the knowledge to practice Islam in a clear, authentic manner despite the complex circumstances in which we find ourselves, it also provides the impetus to engage in the crucial process of transforming one's own character. It is the realization that knowledge can lead to making one a better human being, that is a large part of the appeal of Deen Intensives.

The interest generated through Deen Intensives has carried with it the realization that the study of Arabic is also important and traditional texts and traditional to support this rising

This movement is not one thing more natural. This more of a "renewal" of the Deen. After all, this is promised to protect it till Intensives are intended to a global malaise which is more pronounced. For the this malaise, the purity of



that the study of foundational texts and traditional approaches is necessary wave.

of "reform" but some movement is, insha'Allah interest in the basics of His Deen and He has the end of time. The Deen provide a bulwark against becoming continually remedy to be effective for our Islam is essential.

The Methodology of Deen Intensives

By Anas Coburn

A successful Deen Intensive program, (and success is with Allah) is comprised of a number of elements. Each element supports the others, and each is important to the overall outcome of a program. The most important aspects of a Deen Intensive program are listed below.

- Good planning and administration
- A Retreat setting
- Time for plenty of *'Ibada*.
- Instruction based on well-accepted scholarly works
- Instructors who are inspirational to be around
- Instructors who learned what they teach from a teacher, not a book
- Material taught is set into context of the larger corpus of Islamic knowledge
- Serious effort at follow-up: both individually and collectively.

Let us look briefly at each of these.

Good planning and administration.

It takes a surprising amount of work to plan for running a successful program. Getting materials to those registered for a program ahead of time is crucial. Participants need to know what to bring, what is expected of them, what materials they are expected to have read ahead of time and how they can get hold of them, etc. The logistics for the program itself must be taken care of in detail: accommodation and food, participant work rotors, transportation, fees, weather, etc. The team running the Intensive must be clear about their responsibilities and suited for the jobs they have been assigned. All these details of planning and administration are necessary to make the program itself run smoothly.

A retreat setting.

Deen Intensive programs are ideally residential in nature and take place away from the workaday

environment in which the participants live. The setting of the program has a powerful effect on the participants. Cell phones and pagers should be excluded. A quiet setting in nature is conducive to reflection and serves as what has been called a “frame interrupt.” The idea is that we all have habitual ways of behaving when in the various settings, or “frames” of our daily lives. When you enter a university classroom, it tends to call into mind those associations you have with classrooms (which might include stress, reminiscences, boredom – or positive associations too). In any case, learning is maximized when one is in a fresh setting, that is, one’s ordinary “frames” have been interrupted. Successful Intensives *have* been held on University campuses and in schools, but the overall experience of the participants is certainly tied to the setting.

Time for plenty of *'Ibada*.

Deen Intensive agendas typically include about six or seven hours a day of instruction. Meals are kept simple, and some time is allowed for a morning walk. This leaves plenty of time for *'Ibada* – more time than most participants devote to it on a regular basis. In addition to the *Fard*, there is time for *Tahajjud*, for *dhikr* and *awrad* from *Fajr* to *Shuruq*, *Duha* prayers, recitation and *awrad* from *Maghrib* until *'Isha*. All this has a strong effect on participants, and helps to soften the heart so that the instruction given becomes not merely information, but imperatives for action.

Instruction based on well-accepted scholarly works.

The material taught at Deen Intensives is based on the work of our great *'Ulama*, whose level of understanding of the primary

sources is exemplary. The works used have been accepted as authoritative by the mainstream of our scholars for centuries. To put it simply, what is taught is the real goods – the understanding of Islam held by the greatest among our ‘Ummah. Tertiary sources, and recent interpretive works that disregard the traditional knowledge of the centuries, or are colored by colonial mentalities are not used.

Instructors who are inspirational to be around.

This is perhaps the most difficult of requirements for a successful Deen Intensive to characterize, yet arguably it is the most important of all the elements mentioned here. The instructors must be steeped in the knowledge they teach, dyed with it in a way that is perceptible to those with whom they come into contact. This is not just a matter of charisma, nor just a matter of scholarship, nor simply a matter of being articulate. They must, by their beings, inspire the participants in the Intensives to deepened commitment to study and practice of the Deen.

Instructors who learned what they teach from a teacher, not a book.

What is being taught at a Deen Intensive is not book learning. Rather, it is knowledge of an aspect of the sciences of our Deen that has been set down in writing. But the knowledge comes from the teacher, whose under-

standing must encompass and go beyond just what is said in the book. The instructor must know the author’s understanding of the statements made. How is this possible? By the chain of transmission reaching back from the current instructor whose permission to teach the work comes from their teacher whose permission comes from their teacher, and so on, back to the original author. This system of ‘*ijaza* is what ensures that the instructor comprehends the work taught sufficiently to teach it to others.

Material set into context of the larger corpus of Islamic knowledge.

The sciences of our Deen support and complement each other. Too often today, Muslims have insufficient grasp of just how vast and comprehensive these sciences are. For example, among our ‘*ulama*, the understanding of a *hafidh* of *hadith* is one who has memorized by heart 100,000 *ahadith* with their chains of transmission. And even this vast knowledge does not make the *hafidh* a *faqih*, it merely qualifies him to testify as to the authenticity of *ahadith*. When participants at a Deen Intensive are made aware of depth and breadth of the sea of sciences of our Deen and the relations between them engenders humility in the student and gives them a sense of the qualifications of real scholar. This helps inoculate the student against so-called “*fatwas*,” misuse of *ahadith*, confusions between matters of *fiqh* and those of *aqi-*

dah, and those quick to make *takfir*.

Serious effort at follow-up: both individually and collectively.

No Deen Intensive, even a month-long *rihlah*, can teach the student all they need to know of the Deen. Deepening knowledge of our Deen is a lifetime pursuit. Rather, the Deen Intensives seek to give the student a taste of the sweetness of the knowledge of the Deen, to inspire them to deepen their own commitment to study, both individually and collectively. Deen Intensives often result in a deepened sense of brotherhood among participants. The inspiration provided by the Intensives must be used to strengthen local *halaqas*, to motivate the search for those in the community with knowledge to teach, and to encourage those who did not participate in the Intensive to take part. In the end, each student must make their own commitment to pursue knowledge, and the role of the Deen Intensive is simply to nourish their spirits along the way.

When we think of Deen Intensives, these are the important elements that come to mind. Our intention in stating them is to clarify the concept operationally for those who may wish to organize their own Intensives. Please let us know if you have suggestions for how we might improve this statement in order to make it as beneficial for others as possible.

Excerpt from the Blessed Burdah Poem
Of the Noble Imam Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Sa'id al-Busiri.
Translated by Hamza Yusuf

Section on the Nature of the Self

My self that commands to evil out of its ignorance has failed to heed the warnings of gray hairs
and old age.

Without shame it has failed to prepare a banquet of beautiful deeds for this unexpected guest
which has alighted upon my head.

Had I known I would not have honored such a guest that has appeared before me, I would have
concealed it with black dye.

Who can help me restrain its wantonness just as restive and fiery steeds are held in check with
bridles?

Do not hope to break its desires by indulging it in wrongdoings, haven't you seen how food
strengthens the gluttony of a gourmand?

The self is like an infant, if you neglect it, it grows loving to suck the breast, yet should you wean
it, it loses its breast-desire.

Thus divert its caprices, and beware of giving lust authority, for when lust governs the self it ei-
ther throws it to destruction or defames and defiles it.

Shepherd over it as it freely grazes in the field of actions. Yet, should it deem the pasture sweet,
then restrain its roaming!

How many times has it deemed some pleasure good, while in it was its own destruction, simply
from its ignorance that poison often lays buried in butter.

Beware of the two tricksters of hunger and satiety, and often an empty stomach is worse than indi-
gestion.

Draw out every last tear from an eye that has had its full of the prohibited, and stick to the regime
of remorse.

Oppose the self and shaytan and disobey them, and should they offer you sincere advice, be suspi-
cious!

Do not follow them should they argue or arbitrate, indeed you know the machinations of the arbi-
trator and the arguer.

I ask Allah forgiveness for words without deeds, as if I am attributing progeny to the impotent.

I have commanded you to good, yet I myself do not put into practice such commands, nor have I
been upright, so what right do I have saying, "Be upright."

Nor have I prepared for death with extra acts, I haven't even prayed or fasted beyond
what is incumbent upon me.

Arabic Study Programs in the Arab World

By Barbara R. von Schlegell & John L. Hayes, University of California, Berkeley

STUDENTS OFTEN INQUIRE about where to study Arabic in the Arabic-speaking world. Our purpose here is to offer information about some of the programs available and to encourage students to learn and enjoy using Arabic in daily life.

For years the best overall program for Americans has been the federally-funded CASA program at The American University in Cairo (see below). In the last ten years, several new programs have opened outside Egypt. Most of the programs use only Arabic in the classroom and offer cultural activities and field trips. Another pleasant feature of most programs is the international make-up of the student body.

These programs are set up specifically for foreigners to complete a short course of language study. Students who want to receive credit for their Arabic study abroad should check with their home institutions. For full university degree programs in Arabic Studies at Arab institutions, consult the Middle East Studies Association's "Directory of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs and Courses in Middle East Studies in the United States, Canada, and Abroad" (1993).

Persons interested in attending any of the programs listed here should contact the individuals and/or addresses given in each entry. The administrators of the program will provide students with visa information. Some US funding for these programs (e.g., Fulbright-Hays, FLAS) is available; students should check with their campus fellow-ship office.

We have done our best to check the status of each program but we cannot guarantee that all the information is up-to-date. A star (*) at the end of a listing means only that one of us has known at least one person who has studied in that program. This is not a rating; it is not our goal to promote any of these programs.

Center for the Study of Arabic Abroad (CASA) [Cairo]
Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University
1619 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: (202) 663-5751

Summer and full-year intensives. Modern Standard Arabic and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic. Qualifying examinations are given in early February at selected universities in the States. Two years of Modern Standard are recommended. Students selected receive fellowships covering international transportation, tuition, and a monthly stipend. Dormitory housing for summer available; locating year-long housing is the student's responsibility. Established 1967.*

Arabic Language Institute (ALI)
The American University in Cairo [Cairo]
Office of Admissions
The American University in Cairo
866 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Telephone: (212) 421-6320; Fax: (212) 688-5341

Summer and full-year intensives. Modern Standard and Egyptian Colloquial at all levels. Tuition for full year \$7900, summer \$1975. Housing available at the University. Housing, food, medical, other fees additional. *

International Language Institute (ILI)
Colin J. Rogers, Managing Director
3 Mahmoud Azmy St.
Madinet el-Sahafeyeen, Cairo, Egypt
Telephone: 3463087/3468597 Sat.-Thurs. 9 am- 8:30 pm
Fax: 3035624

Summer and full-year courses. Modern Standard and Egyptian Colloquial. Several options are available during the year. Modern Standard: Twelve weeks \$360. Egyptian Colloquial: regular eight weeks, intensive four weeks \$135. Summer four-week intensives (MSA and EC) \$350. Assistance in finding housing provided. Established 1975.*

International Summer Program (ISP) [Birzeit]
Birzeit University
Continuing Education Department
PO Box 14
Birzeit, West Bank, via Israel
Telephone and Fax: 972-2-956229

Six-week summer intensive. Modern Standard and Palestinian Colloquial at all levels. Students must have completed one year of study at an accredited college or university. Intensive course \$300. Housing available in dormitories, rented apartments and with families in Birzeit and Ramallah. Established 1986.

New program during academic year in "Palestine and Arabic Studies," instituted in 1993.

Hebrew University Summer Arabic Session [Jerusalem]
Office of Academic Affairs
American Friends of the Hebrew University
11 East 69th St.
New York, NY 10021
Telephone: (212) 472-2288

Seven-week intensive summer course. Students must have completed one year of study at an accredited college or university.
Literary Arabic - Elementary and Intermediate \$750;
Spoken Jerusalem Arabic - Elementary \$470.*

Summer Arabic Program [Irbid]
University of Virginia-Yarmouk University
Muhammad Sawaie
B027 Cabell Hall
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Telephone: (804) 982-2304 e-mail:
UVAYARMK@faraday.clas.virginia.edu

Eight-week intensive summer course. Intermediate and advanced Modern Standard and Jordanian Colloquial. \$2,600 tuition, room, and international transportation. Full fellowships available. Established 1983.*

Arabic Language Unit [Kuwait City]
Director, Language Centre
PO Box 2575 - Safat
Kuwait University
Kuwait 13026

Tel. (Kuwait Embassy, Washington, DC): (202) 363-8056 Year-long program in Modern Standard. Students must have completed one year of study of Arabic. Accepts limited number of students. All admitted students receive scholarships covering tuition, housing, and meals. Competition for scholarships is intense.*

Intensive Arabic Studies Program [Tangier]
King Fahd Advanced School of Translation
Abdelmalek Essadi University
US Contact:
Kevin Lacey, Director, Tangier Program
Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies
State University of New York at Binghamton
PO Box 6000
Binghamton, NY 13902-6000
Telephone: (607) 777-6120; (607) 777-6709

Intensive eight-week summer program. Intermediate Modern Standard (no elementary level is offered), with sessions on elementary and intermediate Moroccan Colloquial. Tuition \$2000. Fellowships available. Conducted in cooperation with CASA.*

Arabic Language Institute [Fez]
American Language Center of Fez
Stephen Casewit, Director
BP 2136
Fez, Morocco
Telephone/Fax: (212/5) 624850

Six- and three-week intensive sessions offered throughout the year. Modern Standard and Moroccan Colloquial at all levels including Survival Moroccan Arabic, Advanced Readings in Islamic Texts. Six week session (120 hours) 5,500 dirhams; three-week session (45-60 hours) 2,750 dirhams (\$1 = 19.6 dirhams). Housing assistance provided. Moroccan host families. Established 1983.*

American Language Institute in Fez (ALIF) [Fez]
Aida Bamia
Department of African & Asian Languages & Literatures
470 Grinter Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611
Tel: (904) 392-2110 or 392-2422; Fax: (904) 392-1443

Six-week summer intensive. Modern Standard and Moroccan Colloquial. Open to students with at least one year of college-level Arabic. Tuition, fees, room and board and transportation estimated at \$3200. Several housing options available.

Special Arabic Sessions [Jeddah]
Dean of Admissions
Department of Islamic Studies
King Abdul Aziz University
PO Box 1540
Jeddah 21441, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Arabic Program [Riyadh]
Dean of Admissions
King Saud University
PO Box 2454
Riyadh II 45 1, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Since certain restrictions apply to foreigners travelling to Saudi Arabia, interested students should first contact the Cultural Mission at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, DC: (202) 298-8899.

Arabic Teaching Institute for Foreigners [Damascus]
Muhammed Kudeimi, Director
Damascus - al-Mazza
Villat Sharqiyah (Eastern Villas)
Damascus, Syria
Telephone: 963-11-221-538

Beginning and intermediate classes in Modern Standard. Winter eight-month course (October-May) \$400. Summer three-month course (June-Sept.) also \$400. Classes are conducted in the afternoon and evening to accommodate foreign workers. Assistance with housing available. Contact Embassy of Syria in Washington, DC [Tel: (202) 872-8406] early for entry visa.*



Deen Knowledge

is published by:

Dar al Islam

PO Box 180

Abiquiu, NM 87510

www.daralislam.org

www.islamamerica.org

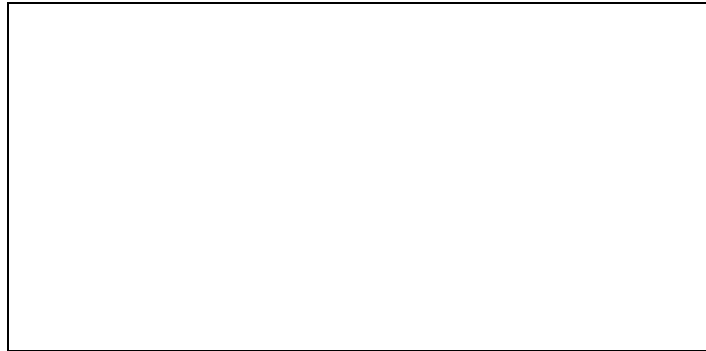
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Arabic Program
Institut Francais d'Etudes Arabes Damas (IFEAD)
PO Box 344 Damascus, Syria
Telephone: 412272; Fax: 247887

Contact Institute for information on terms of instruction and fees. Modern Standard and Syrian Colloquial offered. Limited dormitory housing in the Institute itself. French is helpful. Longstanding program.*

Bourguiba Institute of Modern Languages [Tunis]
University of Tunis
Kacem Ben Hamza, Director
47 Avenue de la Liberte
Tunis 1002, Tunisia
Telephone: 282-418; 281-923

Six-week intensive summer program in Modern Standard, all levels. 100 dinars (\$1 = 1.08 dinars). Dormitory housing available. Full and partial scholarships. Full year program in Modern Standard and Tunisian Colloquial also offered.*

Yemen Language Center (YLC) [Sanaa]
PO Box 16961, Sanaa, Yemen
US contact: Mohammad Rahawi
323 Grundy Drive
Falls Church, VA 22046
Telephone & Fax: (703) 534-3346

All levels of Modern Standard and Yemeni Colloquial. Half term: four-six weeks, US \$980. Full term: ten-twelve weeks, \$1800. Full year \$6850. Summer: ten-twelve weeks, \$1800. Fees include housing. Class size limited to six students. Program started 1985.

Specialist Language Training (Spectra) [Sanaa]
PO Box 16101, Sanaa, Yemen
US contact: Marc Moebius
169 S. Harrison Street
Princeton, NJ 08540
Telephone: (609) 924-5614; Fax: 967-1-414-627

Summer and full-year programs. Modern Standard and Yemeni Colloquial. Summer: twelve weeks, US \$2200. Financial assistance available. Students sign pledge to use Arabic at all times.

We welcome corrections, additions and feedback about the quality of programs. It is our intention to expand and update this directory on a regular basis.

- Reprinted from the Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, July 1994 (with changes in orthography to HTML standards)•
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