

Muslim Communities in Europe and North America: Contemporary Developments and Challenges

On September 27, 2019, the 48th Annual Conference of the North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies (NAAIMS) was held at Boston University (BU) Boston, MA. It was cosponsored by BU's Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs (CURA) of the Pardee School of Global Studies. The theme focused on "Muslim Communities in Europe and North America: Contemporary Developments and Challenges." The Conference Program Chair, Timothy P. Longman, director of CURA welcomed the panelists and guests, and introduced NAAIMS Interim President, Malik Mufti, Tufts University, Medford, MA. In his introductory remarks, Mufti spoke of the recent passing of NAAIMS President, Jon Mandaville (August 5, 2019), and briefly highlighted the major challenges that transpired under his tenure (2011-2019) beginning with (1) formalizing the long-awaited and frequently-discussed official name-change of the former Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) to NAAIMS in 2013; (2) upgrading its website; and (3) launching its successful bi-annual publication (May 2016), published by Indiana University Press: the *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies (JIMS)*, among other developments. As a side note, our name-change was revisited by previous boards over the past decade for the following reasons: (1) its conference themes and topics addressed the humanities, not just the social sciences, as indicated by its former name AMSS; (2) its broad appeal called for a name that reflects more accurately the identity of, and the true legacy of AMSS by establishing a forum for annual conferences held in academic settings; and finally it created (3) a unique space for academics specializing in the study of Islam and Muslim societies.

This event drew a crowd of seasoned and junior scholars, and doctoral students. Its four panel sessions focused on Law, Religion, and Immigration; Religiosity of Western Muslims; Western Muslims in Culture and Higher Education, and Self-Positioning of Western Muslims. The first panel session "*Law, Religion, and Immigration*" was moderated by the Panel Chair and Discussant, Ibrahim A. Warde (Tufts University, Medford, MA). The first presentation by Sharmin Islam Sadequee (Kennesaw State University, Atlanta, GA) examined the "Prosecution of Muslims and Discourses of Islamic Jurisprudence in U.S. Courts." She explained that after the "War on Terror," Muslims were prosecuted through "Preventive measures in U.S. courts," and that lawyers and legal experts used liberal legal categories to define Islam and Islamic law. She argued that based on "pre-established liberal legal categories, the trial process reproduces and constructs a monolithic understanding of Islam and Muslim in U.S. Law." Her presentation, which highlighted court cases concerning Islam and Muslims "within the larger colonial and historical context" actually provided the basis for her argument that the "use of 'Islam-related evidence' against the accused in these trials ... regulated Muslims and [gave] rise to paradoxes in the liberal, secular legal order" which opened a venue through which "Euro-American societies maintain[ed] imperial hierarchy and power over minority racialized religious groups."

This was followed by Sultan Doughan's (Boston University, Boston, MA) talk on "Conditional Tolerance and Muslim Aspirations for an Institutional Islam in Germany." Although there have been Muslim communities in Europe since the Middle Ages, they became a sizable part of the population of modern Western Europe after the 1950's. After World War II, Europe experienced a shortage of labor during the 50s, which resulted in a call to Muslims from Pakistan, the Maghreb, and Turkey to help stimulate Europe's economic recovery. Beginning with the 1960s, Western Europe (especially Germany, Britain, France and Belgium) began experiencing a large wave

of Muslim immigrants from Turkey, the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia), and South Asia (India and Pakistan) seeking employment opportunities and better education.

According to Doughan, “The presence of guest-worker migrants in Germany since the 1960s triggered the question of how to accommodate Muslim religious practices in the absence of Islamic institutions. With the acknowledgment of migration as an enduring political reality in the late 1990s a different governmental task emerged vis-à-vis former migrants now mostly construed as Muslims.” Due to the growing number of asylum seekers from the Muslim world, immigration was placed at the top of their debate platform during the recent 2018/19 elections in France and Germany. An issue of concern is that Muslims are not a homogeneous group, as they consist of various ethnic, racial and cultural identities, and therefore, many Muslims do not want to integrate into Western societies.

Today in Germany, according to Doughan, “the German government is engaged in institutionalizing Islam as compatible with liberal democracy and ... integrating Muslims as tolerant citizens.” She noted that although “Islam has no official legal status as a religion equal to churches in Germany ... religious freedom is a basic right, and in fact, granted when it comes to religious practices within designated spaces, [but] Islam as an equally institutionalized religion provides challenges for the German government and Muslim communities.” Based on her ethnographic field-research, and interviews with Muslim civil society organizations, including a case in point, taken from the “refugee crisis of 2015-16 in Berlin,” Doughan argued that “the notion of tolerance becomes a modality and a driver for achieving equal status and yet remains conditionally defined by state organizations.”

During a most dynamic Q & A session, Youssef Chouhoud (Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA) asked Doughan: Why doesn't Germany grant Muslim organizations the same legal status that it grants to a public corporation, and help establish an institutionalized German-Islam for closer security collaboration? He wondered whether this would facilitate surveillance issues. Doughan stated that “one challenge in institutionalizing Islam is that Muslims are not an ethnically homogeneous community in Germany, [although] they are in a way asked to homogenize and re-organize as German Muslims, who pray and preach in German.” She added that “The legal status of public corporation is akin to a diplomatic-sovereign status, whereas, churches for example, are legally exempt from being wire-tapped in addition to having certain autonomy over their financial management.”

This was followed by a presentation on the “Muslim-Indigenous Difference in a Secular Context: The Canadian Case” by Fachrizal A. Halim (University of Saskatchewan – St Thomas More College, Saskatoon, Canada). With extremism, global migration, and refugee crises painting a familiar theme globally, Halim noted that the mainstream media in Canada views the presence of Muslims in Canada as “an existential threat ... [because their values and practices are perceived to be] contradictory to the achievements of secular societies.” His analysis examined how “the incompatibility between Islam and Western values ... emanates from the [perceived] understanding that Canada is essentially Christian and secular in its political ethos and cultural values.” Although Halim spoke of current debates on political secularism while focusing on how “state-led politics [recognize] minority Muslims and Canada's indigenous community of secular Christians,” he added that “unlike many immigrant Muslims who wish to integrate into the mainstream Canadian society, the indigenous community seeks to end the perpetual cycle of oppression.”

The second panel session, which focused on the “*Religiosity of Western Muslims*,” was moderated by the Panel Chair and Discussant (Ayşe Parla, Boston University, Boston, MA). In defining Muslims as part of a group within a geographic cross-section, Parla noted that the three presentations “demonstrated a commitment to ethnographic fieldwork and thick description ... and contributed to the broader rubric of the conference in that they worked against reductionist understandings of culture as a bounded, homogenous and static entity. Instead, each demonstrated the diversity among different groups categorized as Western Muslims.” This session began with a presentation by Matthew D. Taylor (Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies, Baltimore, MD) on “Common-sense Idioms in a Shared Environment: Why do Salafis in America Sound so Much Like Evangelical Christians?” By using a comparative religion and discourse analysis methodology, Taylor argued that “Salafism’s inner adaptability - its lack of a single authority figure, interpretive tradition, etc. - has led many Salafis to adopt modes and idioms that are strikingly similar to those employed by another malleable scripturalist movement: American Evangelical Christianity.” He spoke about how Salafis guide and inspire their followers to go directly to scripture (Qur’an and Hadith) for clarification, and/or definitions of Qur’anic verses, and Islamic concepts, rather than rely on Qur’anic interpreters. Both groups, the Salafis and Evangelicals “encourage and empower laypeople to directly access texts [Qur’an/hadith and Bible respectively]. Their commonality is characterized by a rhetoric of common sense, affirming the innate, collective wisdom of the people over and against elite interpreters.” According to Parla, “Taylor’s exploration of the convergences between Salafis in America and Evangelical Christians underscored the importance of recognizing hybrid cultural forms as well as the emergence of novel patterns of interpretation even within traditions assumed to be the most resistant to change.”

Salua Fawzi’s (McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada) presentation “Righteous Guides: Muslim Chaplains on American College Campuses” is based on her ethnographic fieldwork in three separate Muslim Student Associations (MSA) located in the northeastern region of the U.S. In her analysis of the relationship between Muslim chaplains and American Muslim college students, Fawzi examined how Muslim chaplains “cultivate racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse American Muslim communities that are engaged in social justice while maintaining a sense of God-consciousness through self-reflexive hermeneutical techniques.” To fully understand the complex role between Muslim chaplains and students on American campuses, it is noteworthy that the discussant recommended further inquiry/research into the “gendered aspects of the relation between American Muslim chaplains and college youth, including the role that women chaplains play; the importance of legal status, and whether citizenship makes a difference in the way generational attitudes towards religiosity plays out.”

The next presentation by Shreya Parikh (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC), focused on “Conceptualizing Generational Difference in Religion among Muslim-Immigrants in France.” Parikh’s analysis is based on ethnographic data collected through her interviews with first- and second-generation Muslims, and observation in mosques and immigrant-dominated spaces. She stated that many second-generation Muslim immigrants intimated that they felt a difference “between the ‘traditional Islam’ (practices associated with Islam in country of origin) of their first-generation parents, and their own religiosity ... focused on belief.” But, on the contrary, in her evaluation of *quantitative survey data*, Parikh noted that she found little difference in religious beliefs and practices between Muslim immigrants and their descendants. Her presentation was, therefore, a serious attempt to address the “discourse on generational difference in religiosity that is overlooked in the survey-analysis of shifts in religiosity.” She added that the “generational difference in religiosity, as described by first- and second-generation Muslims, represents a difference in identity-

construction between the two generations:[this includes] two types of attempts to unify ‘Frenchness’ and ‘Muslimness,’ which are often presented in mainstream political and cultural discourse as being in opposition to each other.”

The Q & A session began with a lively discussion about Parikh’s talk on generational difference in religious attitudes among Muslim immigrants in France, which focused on “instances of conflict and contestation” as noted by the discussant, Parla. Several questions were directed to Matthew Taylor about his comparative analysis of Evangelicalism and Salafism. In his response to the question *How Does Globalization Affect Religiosity and Structure?*, Taylor noted that “national boundaries do not encapsulate or hermetically seal religious communities, particularly not media- and internet-savvy movements like Evangelicalism and Salafism. . . . Many Salafi shaykhs and leaders are trained abroad (especially in Saudi Arabia), and they are deeply tied into conversations that are going on globally. [He argued that] in America, Salafis have developed some unique approaches and adaptations, such as institutions like Al-Maghrib that are not explicitly Salafi, but draw heavily on Salafi theological and hermeneutical approaches.” He added that he was “curious to see what impact those shifts in American Salafism might have on other strands of Salafism around the world.”

In his response to the question *How Did You Organize the Comparative Analysis of Religion Between Evangelical and Salafi perspectives?*, Taylor stated that he tries to “offer thematic comparisons, choosing a particular issue or aspect of the Evangelical and Salafi relationships with their respective scriptures.” He explained that in his parallel examination of the two movements he tries to “follow the principle that has become a watchword for contemporary comparative religion . . . [and] show the similarity in difference, and the difference in similarity [in order to] maintain a dialectical of similarity and difference [while never presenting] the two communities as being so distinct as to be absolutely incommensurable, nor so similar as to be indistinguishable.” Taylor felt that “this is the methodological wisdom that has come through a lot of false starts in the comparative religion endeavor in the past.”

This dynamic panel session was followed by the Keynote Address by Jonathan Laurence (Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA) “*After Political Violence: The State Regulation of Immigrant Religion in Transatlantic Perspective.*” According to Laurence, the “great westward migration of Catholics to the United States (1850-1930) and Muslims to Western Europe roughly one century later led to the unplanned and voluntary settlement of minority diaspora communities outside the religious heartland.” He spoke about how the development of religious communities in the West presented missionary challenges full of dangers and opportunities to Muslim-majority countries “with an operational monopoly over religion,” just as it did for “Roman Catholic hierarchies.” Laurence noted that “for centuries, the United States did not figure in the Catholic Church’s strategic growth plan, and Europe was considered an unlikely locus of expansion of Sunni Muslim communities. Suddenly, millions of Catholic and Muslim nationals lived permanently beyond ‘enemy lines,’ vulnerable to secularization, proselytism and doctrinal dilution within oases of free expression.”

The Q & A session produced a vibrant discussion with many questions, including queries about the growth of “hotbeds of radical thought” linked to Muslim immigration in the U.S. and Europe. In his response to a question on whether there are any positive effects resulting from Muslim migration, given today’s new demographic situation in Europe and the U.S., Laurence’s in-depth historical evaluation stimulated a very dynamic and lengthy discussion. To capture the mood of the debate, including the disposition and intensity of his views pertaining to the *positive effects*

resulting from Muslim migration,” I list below his analyses and observations that explain his detailed outlook:

(a.) “It is still early-going, but something analogous has begun taking place thanks to the internationalization of the 21st century centers of Sunni Islam, thanks to immigrant-origin Muslim minorities in Western Europe. *Ulema* councils in the national capitals increasingly take the minority experience into account, with new personnel and new rulings that affect all self-identified believers in the community. The surprise emergence of a diaspora has introduced new feedback mechanisms and animated Islamic affairs ministries with new life and purpose. The process of maintaining ties, training imams and *ulema* in minority contexts has produced a range of compromise positions on previously immovable themes, from usury to prayer as well as on gender and minority rights.”

(b.) “Much like the United States did for the Catholic countries, Western Europe societies offered a mixed blessing to the states of the majority-Muslim world: an economy to absorb their unemployed and political liberties for their dissidents. There was no interval between the mid-20th century collapse of European overseas empires and the influx of millions of labor migrants and hundreds of thousands of refugees.”

(c.) “European Muslims faced the classic jurisprudential dilemmas that *ulema* had considered for centuries, e.g., which rules apply to Muslims outside of their usual environment? In terms of Sunni jurisprudence (*fiqh*) this meant defining Western Europe either as a place that required a war footing (*dar al Harb*) or as a home for Islam. The acknowledgment that the diaspora was no longer part of a missionary community and lived as a *permanent minority* meant they could act as a locally owned and operated, fully-licensed branch endowed with a degree of decision-making authority. This administrative-theological transformation goes to the heart of a host society’s understanding of separation of religion and politics.”

(d.) “The sensational acts [terrorist attacks] contributed to a view of Muslims as a potential fifth column, and revealed their communities as the object of extraterritorial influence. Yet they were also clearly the product of Western societies. Islamists in Europe were monitored but free to associate, assemble and circulate their publications. In the aftermath of attacks investigators asked the same set of questions that detectives posed in Paterson, New Jersey, after the assassination of the Italian king in 1900. How could the offending ideology spread so virulently and so unchecked? A city councilor from Molenbeek, the Brussels neighborhood of the cell that attacked Paris and the Brussels airport, wondered “Why did the government allow Saudi Arabia, with its simplistic and binary vision of Islam, to finance mosques and imams, and to exercise a near-monopoly on French translations?”

(e.) “Muslims living in Western Europe have already set centers of Islamic authority on a very different course than their original trajectory, and feedback through institutional globalization will increase in the coming century.”

Laurence’s comprehensive and thought-provoking Keynote Address was followed by the third panel session on “*Western Muslims in Culture and Higher Education*,” which produced an equally insightful and energetic period for discussion and debate. It was moderated by the Panel Chair and Discussant, Kecia Ali (Boston University, Boston, MA). As noted by the discussant, the three presentations clearly highlighted “the presence of rising anti-Muslim sentiment in Germany, the United States, and Canada.”

The session began with a presentation by Kenneth Garden (Tufts University, Medford, MA) “Navid Kermani: Identity beyond the Hyphen” where stereotypical constraints of identity were obvious in the way Muslim intellectuals were portrayed: indigenous Muslims vs immigrant Muslims. According to Garden, “Muslim-European artists and intellectuals often find themselves trapped on the Muslim side of their hyphens. While their European-born and descended colleagues can pursue the widest range of interests.” He explained how a German intellectual, Navid Kermani, born in Germany in 1967 to Iranian immigrant parents, fits this model because “his being Muslim rarely comes up” even though his scholarship includes writings on Muslim issues, the refugee crisis of 2015, publications on Egyptian Qur’anic scholar Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, including the aesthetics of the Qur’an. Garden added that “Kermani’s work is to carve out a promising new space for German Muslims that embraces German high culture, while demanding an embrace of refugees and Muslim German citizens in the name of Germany’s Enlightenment ideals.”

The next paper by Krista Melanie Riley (Vanier College, Montreal, Quebec, Canada) on “Navigating Identity, Belonging, and *Laiïcité*: The Case of Muslim College Students in Quebec” is based on a three-year research project that included interviews with Muslim students in the (*cégep*) junior college system in Quebec. Riley noted that the experiences of those Muslim students demonstrated how they felt “targeted by the many political debates and media panics around the presence of Muslims in Quebec.” She argued that “Muslim youth have also faced particular scrutiny in discussions of ‘radicalization’ that often had the impact of demonizing and stigmatizing this population.” On June 17, 2019, it became clear how Quebec’s identity, culture and religion are being protected when Quebec’s provincial government passed a law banning employees in the Province of Quebec from wearing visible religious symbols in the workplace. According to Kecia Ali, the comment made by Krista Riley that “neutrality is not neutral” was clearly obvious when this supposedly secular law was passed in Quebec “restricting visible expressions of religiosity which often exempted Catholic-turned-Quebecois symbols.”

During the Q & A period, Krista Riley addressed questions that highlighted the impact of language and religion in Quebec from the time it was colonized by the British and French, including a question on why Quebec feels threatened, since multiculturalism exists in Canada. Riley stated that “ever since the British won over the French in the early days of colonizing Canada, people of French background felt marginalized and also felt (not without reason) that their language and identity were under threat. Different laws have been put in place throughout history as a way of protecting francophone culture and communities from being absorbed by English Canada. Although the discourse about the perceived threat has changed or expanded, ideas about needing to protect Quebec’s identity and culture are still strong and are part of what allows for so much support for laws like the most recent one [June 2019].” In her commentary on the presence of anti-Muslim sentiment in Canada, the discussant, Kecia Ali, added that in Riley’s presentation, discrimination and stereotyping were obvious “in actual instances of targeted violence against students who she interviewed, but more commonly, in the effects of the suffocating and limiting fear of such attacks for those young Muslims, mostly *hijabi* women.”

The last presentation in this session by Noor Hashem (Boston University, Boston, MA) “Muslim American Speculative Fiction: Feminist Bodies, Religious Histories and Genre Traditions” examined the role of literature on modern feminist sensibilities, multiple identities, and religious practice in secular spaces. Hashem examined how “science fiction genre, serves as an opportune discursive space that participates in youth culture and subcultures from which American Muslims

launch feminist critiques.” She spoke about the various ways such literary authors as S.A. Chakraborty and G. Willow Wilson merge or combine “Muslim historical, theological, and literary traditions with American ones as they center their narratives around the gendered body, the spaces it inhabits, and the material and technological manipulation of the world.” Her presentation focused on ways that these authors create an “ethical program based on the literal empowerment of the female Muslim body.”

During the Q & A session, the panel discussant, Ali, referenced Krista Riley’s point once again, that “neutrality is not neutral” when commenting on the three presentations that examined anti-Muslim sentiment in Germany, Canada, and the U.S. Beginning with Kenneth Garden’s presentation on German writer, Navid Kermani, Ali noted that “we saw the practice of marking the non-Germanness of immigrants and their descendants as having a ‘migration background.’ The racialized dimensions are clear here, as the term isn’t used for Russian and Polish immigrants who aren’t perceived to threaten German identity in the same way.” The discussant stated that “in Noor Hashem’s study of Muslim speculative fiction writers, the authors themselves explicitly grapple with their multiple identities as a way of expressing [miriam cooke’s term] ‘multiple critique’ [and added that] in fiction, including G. Willow Wilson’s Ms. Marvel comics, questions of identity can be pursued more freely, experimented with, asserted, and accepted, as Hashem shows.”

The discussant concluded that these three presentations “raise the question of who can claim specific identities, under what constraints,” by noting that Kenneth Garden underscored in his talk that Navid Kermani “insisted that he is a German writer, even if he is a Persian-speaker, [and that these aspects] are a vital part of the project of changing anti-Muslim sentiments - the ones that make it so perilous and fraught [as explained in Krista Riley’s presentation] for Muslim students in Quebec to do something as simple as riding the bus.”

The fourth panel session focused on “*Self-Positioning of Western Muslims*” moderated by the Panel Chair and Discussant, Malik Mufti (Tufts University, Medford, MA). Youssef Chouhoud (Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA) opened this session with a presentation on “To Hell with Nuance?: Soteriological Belief and Socio-Political Attitudes.” In his discussion on the meaning of various visions of “salvation in the afterlife” he drew on a PEW survey (2008) of American Muslims and found that “the distribution of beliefs in salvation are fairly evenly spread between *Hard Pluralists*, *Soft Pluralists*, *Soft Exclusionists*, and *Hard Exclusionists* - designations that roughly accord with Mohamed Khalil’s (2012) typology. Higher levels of dogmatism and various modes of religiosity correlate positively with salvifically exclusive beliefs.” He argued that the data in the PEW survey indicates that “Muslims are mostly pluralistic in their view on salvation” in the afterlife. In his talk he stated how “It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe in the damnation of those with whom we have, with trust and confidence, long and fruitfully cooperated in maintaining a just society” (cited in Fadel 2013).

In addressing the impact and viability that theological intolerance, and exclusivist visions of salvation in the afterlife would have in a free society, Chouhoud argued that “these contentions may be operative among majority-populations ... [but in a Western society] minorities are more likely to compartmentalize religious and social attitudes given their more vulnerable position in society. That is the spillover from theological intolerance to social and/or political intolerance is hindered among minorities who see themselves as primary targets of the latter two.” He argued that “there is no relationship between views on salvation and social/political intolerance, [and concluded by]

discussing the theoretical and practical implications of this finding on current debates both within, and about the American Muslim community.”

During the Q & A session, the discussant, Mufti, noted that Chouhoud’s discussion was an “insightful analysis of tolerance in the American Muslim community through the prism of views about who can get into heaven.” He was particularly encouraged by the paper’s “empirical focus, which [took] the argument beyond the abstract speculation that too often characterizes discussions about the Muslim immigrant experience.”

This was followed by Charles L. Glenn’s (Boston University, Boston, MA) presentation “Can the Catholic Experience in America be a Model for Muslim Integration in Europe?” As an historian and comparative policy specialist, Glen participated for several decades in European discussions about “how best to accommodate the growing Muslim minority and to educate its children.” This presentation was built on topics that he developed for a recent meeting in Antwerp. He examined how the American experience could conceivably serve as a guide to European policymakers, due to the major differences between contemporary Muslim immigrants in Europe and the United States. Glenn’s presentation suggested that the “19th century immigrant Catholic experience of institution-building within a pluralistic environment may have more lessons than the contemporary Muslim experience in North America.” This paper drew on the “findings of a multi-year Boston University study which focused on character and citizenship development in seven Islamic secondary schools across the United States, and suggests grounds for optimism if Muslim immigrants in Europe experience supportive pluralism.”

The discussant stated that Glenn’s talk is thought-provoking in its analysis of the “lessons that the Catholic experience in America may hold for Muslim immigrants in the West today.” He added that this presentation made him think about “the thesis advanced by Alan Wolfe and Harold Bloom, according to which all religions that arrive in America – including Catholicism in the previous century and Islam today – eventually become absorbed into a collective ‘American religion’ that reflects the subjectivist liberalism of its political culture.”

Nancy A. Khalil (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI) provided the following presentation “Can an Imam Tell Her if She Can Fast?: The Politics of Professionalizing U.S. Imams.” She stated that with the “absence of a central religious body to authorize religious ‘clergy,’ along with the American secular conception of separation of church and state, there exists no regulatory source to vet Muslim religious leaders.” Khalil’s talk analyzed how “Muslim concepts of authority and transmissions of knowledge are deployed in an American context that centers around religious freedom, both preventing its establishment and assuring its free exercise.” She examined how “the politics around these issues surrounding Muslim religious leadership in the U.S. can impact practitioners, such as the case of ‘when to fast.’”

According to the discussant, Khalil’s presentation was a “fascinating investigation of how many American imams are finding themselves ill-equipped to answer questions relating to medical and psychological issues.” The discussant felt that her presentation “invited us to consider the relationship between jurisprudence and science in Islam more generally – a question as germane today as it ever was – and brings to mind Ibn Rushd’s treatment of the matter over 800 hundred years ago, according to which an imam must either be trained in the field on which he is asked to opine, or must refer the question to one who is.”

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