

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

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Laxity, Moderation and Extremism in Islam

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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE of ISLAMIC THOUGHT

CONTENTS

The Occasional Papers Series	v
Introduction	1
Definition	1
Manifestations of Extremism	9
Causes of Extremism	11
The Remedies for Extremism	15
Thoughtfulness: A Basic Value	19
Allah's Sunan	24
Honoring and Respecting True Scholarship	25
<i>Da'wah</i>: A Question of Tact and Wisdom	26
Idealism, Daydreams and the Immediate Task	27
Belief in Human Goodness	28
Extremism: An Impediment to <i>Da'wah</i>	29
Status of Western Languages	34
Correcting Evil-Doing	36
Publications of the IIIT	42

THE OCCASIONAL PAPERS SERIES

The publication program of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) has already addressed important issues in the field of Islamic thought and the Islamization of knowledge. In this respect a number of books have already appeared in several languages under thirteen main series: *Assessing the Islamic Intellectual Heritage*; *Dissertations*; *Human Development*; *Indices*; *Islamic Methodology*; *Islamization of Culture*; *Islamization of Knowledge*; *Issues in Islamic Thought*; *Lectures*; *Occasional Papers*; *Perspectives on Islamic Thought*; *Research Monographs* and *Studies in the Islamization of Knowledge*.

The *Occasional Papers* series, published by the Institute's London Office, covers a number of research papers, articles and lectures from the Institute's world-wide program as well as from Muslim scholars willing to make contributions. These are presented individually in the form of booklets that can be easily read or referred to. It is hoped that the booklets will reach students, scholars, and specialists as well as major sections of the world's Muslims alike in order to generate a fruitful debate on the vital issue of Islamization, and to create an awareness of the intellectual crisis in its various shapes and forms, while encouraging an active role in the proposed course of action and solution. This series is also translated into other languages.

Much of this paper is a summary of Shaikh Yusuf al Qaradawi's *Islamic Awakening between Rejection and Extremism*. The paper has effectively covered the topic and brought to light many useful references from the Qur'an, the Hadith and various historical sources.

The use of Islamic terminology in transliteration is a policy of the IIIT. Some of the terms used are untranslatable, while others are so important that the Institute felt that familiarity with them is necessary for a better understanding of Islamic issues. These terms have been footnoted once or sometimes explained briefly between brackets. All those which have not yet been accepted in Anglo-Saxon dictionaries are in italic. As many of these occur

more than once, readers are advised to refer to the relevant footnotes whenever necessary.

When mentioning dates the Islamic one comes first separated from the Gregorian one by a slash. When an Islamic date is mentioned alone, it is followed by AH.

The translation of the Qur'an used in this series is that of Yusuf Ali (Amana Corporation, revised, 1989). However we made changes to verses quoted from it whenever we deemed it necessary for the sake of elucidation and precision of meaning.

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ON THIS BOOK

Although this is a very important issue for us Muslims to address, paradoxically, it is an issue we seldom address. Why is it so important, and why do we seldom address it? It is important because it affects our relationship with one another as well as with non-Muslims, and thus the spread of Islam—all crucial concerns for the future of the Ummah. Why then do we seldom speak about it? Because to do so is to run the risk of being abused, misunderstood and quoted out of context by people who cannot tolerate any opinion other than their own, even if that other opinion has a sound basis in Islamic teachings.

Brief as it may appear, and dealing with such a topical subject, this book is quite comprehensive. The author shows motives which produce the lax and the extremist types of people. Speaking the language of *hikmah*, but making use of cogent arguments, she addresses committed Muslim youth with an open mind and suggests wise and efficient solutions to remedy laxity and extremism in society.

Easy to read, brief, balanced and enjoyable, this book is the first of its category to deal with the burning issues of laxity, moderation and extremism. It is a must for and a companion to every responsible Muslim involved in da'wah work.

Even non-Muslims, can greatly benefit from such illuminating insights on what a true Muslim's attitude should be when fulfilling his obligation of transmitting the Divine message to his fellow human beings.

