



# A GLOSSARY OF ISLAMIC TERMS

Sher Nowrooz Khan

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## FOREWORD

The glossary compiled by Sher Nowrooz Khan is very useful tool for those students and researchers who are not well versed from direct access to primary sources of Islam. The work is also useful for those western scholars who are engaged in doing research on Islam and related fields. Without such authentic reference tool, it is very difficult for the students and researchers to find and understand the required terms.

The terms listed in this glossary are in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages covering almost all areas of Islamic studies. The included words in oriental languages, have been transliterated following the system of *Islamic Studies*, the journal of Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan. A bibliography of the sources used for this glossary has been given at the end of the book. Mr. Sher Nowrooz Khan, Ex-Chief Librarian has made a commendable effort to prepare this glossary. I do hope this work will be considered one of the best glossaries on Islamic Studies. May Almighty Allah accept this humble effort.

**Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tahir Mansuri**

Ex-Vice President (HSR)

Professor of Shari'ah & Law

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## PREFACE

The compilation of the present glossary is in response to the need of those students and researchers who are not sufficiently versed in traditional Islamic knowledge and do not have direct access to primary sources of Islam. The second object of this work is to develop better understanding, interactions and communication with western scholars who are doing their research on various dimensions and field of Islam.

The terms collected in the glossary pertain to the areas of research in Islamic studies including the Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth*, *Sīrah*, *Kalām*, *Fiqh*, Islamic law, Islamic economics, Islamic polity, Religion. Most of the terms listed in this glossary are in Arabic language, since the primary sources of Islam and related subjects are in this language. However, some terms in Persian and Urdu have also been included as these are found relevant to the field of Islamic studies. The terms of Arabic, Persian and Urdu version have been arranged alphabetically with transliteration into English with a broad, general and clear explanation. In transliterating, the system of *Islamic Studies*, the journal of Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University Islamabad has been followed. A list of the sources used for this glossary has been given at the end of the book.

Professor Dr Muhammad al-Ghazali is to be thanked for providing help and guidance to make the work useful. Mr Tufail Hussain Jadoon, deserves thanks for the final type-setting and formatting of the text. To all these and to many others who assisted me in this work, I express my profound thanks.

I hope this glossary will serve as a useful reference tool for those who are studying and doing their research in the field of Islamic studies and the related areas. Best efforts have been made to provide authentic and accurate meaning and explanation of the terms. However, if some readers find any lapse and error or have some useful comments or suggestions to make, their input will be greatly appreciated for further improving the subsequent editions.

**Sher Nowrooz Khan**

**Ex-Chief Librarian**

**International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan**





## A Glossary of Islamic Terms

آثار	<i>Āthār</i>	Traditions reported from the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).
آدم	Ādam	The first man, the ancestor of humanity. According to the Islamic creed he was the first prophet (AS).
آل عمران	<i>Āl ‘Imrān</i>	The family of ‘Imrān. The expression from the Qur’ān means the “family of Mūsā and of Hārūn”, the name ‘Imrān corresponds to that of the biblical Amran, father of Moses and Aaron.
آل فرعون	<i>Āl Fir‘awn</i>	Pharaoh’s people, this includes the members of the Pharaonic family the aristocracy of Egypt at that time and the followers of Pharaoh in general.
آل محمد	<i>Āl Muḥammad</i>	The “family of Muḥammad” in the broad sense of the Hāshimites.

آية	<i>Āyah</i>	Singular of <i>āyāt</i> , sign or token, that which directs one to something significant. In the Qur'ān the word has been used in five different meanings: (1) sign or indication (2) the phenomena of the universe (3) miracles performed by the Prophets (4) God's major acts of punishing the wicked (5) the individual units of the Qur'ān.
آية الكرسي	<i>Āyat al-kursī</i>	The Qur'ānic term <i>kursī</i> signifies sovereignty, domination and authority. This verse is generally known as the "Verse of Throne".
آية الله	<i>Āyat Allāh</i>	'Sign of God', also a title given by the Shī'ite Twelver Imāmis to the supreme interpreter ( <i>mujtahid</i> ), the visible representative of the hidden Imām.
أبابيل	<i>Abābīl</i>	The abābīl were a race of birds, mentioned in the Qur'ān, that protected Makkah from the Yemen army by dropping red clay bricks on the Yemen's army

		of elephants as they approached.
أبدال	<i>Abdāl</i>	In taṣawwuf, the highest rank in the <i>ṣūfī</i> hierarchical order of saints.
أبرار	<i>Abrār</i>	The 'pure', plural of <i>barr</i> , one of the names given in the Qur'ān to the Elect on the Day of Judgement. It is used by <i>ṣūfīs</i> for a category of apotropaic saints.
إبقاء	<i>Ibqā'</i>	Preservation, the term was used by al-Ghazālī to indicate the positive or affirmative aspect of the purposes of law as compared to the defensive or protective.
أبكار	<i>Abkār</i>	Plural of <i>bikr</i> , which means virgin.
إبليس	<i>Iblīs</i>	Jinn banished to Hell for his arrogance and disobedience.
أبناء	<i>Abnā'</i>	Sons, plural of <i>Ibn</i> .
أبو	<i>Abū</i>	Father, the term, the <i>kunyah</i> , forms part of male personal name.
إتباع	<i>Ittibā'</i>	Following, to follow someone's opinion because

		one considers that opinion to have the best revealed support or legally valid.
إتفاق	<i>Ittifāq</i>	Agreement.
إثبات	<i>Ithbāt</i>	To witness, to verify and to establish the truth.
إثم	<i>Ithm</i>	The word <i>ithm</i> denotes negligence, dereliction of duty.
إجارة	<i>Ijārah</i>	Leasing or renting in Islamic finance. The <i>Ijārah</i> contract involves providing products or services on lease or rental basis for an agreed period, at an agreed price (rent). The owner retains the ownership of the assets.
إجازة	<i>Ijāzah</i>	The grant of permission or authority, the act of transmitting a <i>Ḥadīth</i> and attributing the same to an authority without actually having heard that person recite it.
إجتهد	<i>Ijtihād</i>	Authentic scholarly endeavor in law, the use of individual reasoning, exerting oneself to form an opinion in a case or about a

rule of law, achieved by applying the analogy to the Qur'ān and the ***Sunnah*** of the Prophet.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE									
ا	a	د	d	غ	gh	بھ	bh	Long Vowels	
ب	b	ذ	dh	ف	f	پھ	ph		
پ	p	ر	r	ق	q	تھ	th		
ت	t	ڑ	r̥	ک	k	ٹھ	ṭh		
ٹ	ṭ	ز	z	گ	g	چھ	ḡh		
ث	th	ژ	z̄	ل	l	چھ	ch	و	ā
ج	j	س	s	م	m	دھ	dh	و	ā
چ	ch	ش	sh	ن	n	ڈھ	ḏh	ی	ī
ح	h	ص	ṣ	ں	ṇ	ڑھ	r̥h	و	ū
خ	kh	ط	ṭ	ہ	h	کھ	kh	و	ō
د	d	ظ	ẓ	ی	y	گھ	gh	و	ē
								Short Vowels	
								ا	a
								ی	i
								و	u
								Diphthongs	
								او	(Arabic) aw
								او	(Persian/Urdu) au
								او	(Turkish) ev
								ای	(Arabic) ay
								ای	(Persian/Urdu) ai
								ای	(Turkish) ey
								Doubled	
								او	(Arabic) uww
								او	(Persian) uvv
								او	(Urdu) uvv
								ای	iyy

ٲ (ٲ), when it appears at the middle or end of a word, is transliterated as elevated comma (') followed by the letter representing the vowel it carries. However, when ٲ appears at the beginning of a word it will be represented only by the letter representing the vowel it carries.

ٲ is transliterated as elevated inverted comma (').

ض as an Arabic letter is transliterated as (d), and as a Persian/Turkish/Urdu letter as (z).

و as an Arabic letter is transliterated as (w), and as a Persian/Turkish/Urdu letter is transliterated as (v).

ٲ is transliterated as (ah) in pause form and as (at) in construct form.

Article ٲ is transliterated as (al-) whether followed by a moon or a sun letter, however, in construct form it will be transliterated as (l).

و as a Persian/Urdu conjunction is transliterated as (-o) whereas as an Arabic conjunction و is transliterated as (wa).

Short vowel (ٲ) in Persian/Urdu possessive or adjectival form is transliterated as (-i).

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About the Author: Sher Nowrooz Khan is the Ex-Chief Librarian at the International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan. He was born and completed his early education in Chitral, Pakistan. He obtained his Master's degree in Library & Information Science from Karachi University in 1987. He has been contributing to professional literature by writing books as well as compiling bibliographies and valuable indices. His two books have won awards in the National *Sīrah* book competition.

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