



Circuits of Faith: Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission (Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures)

By Michael Farquhar

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The Islamic University of Medina was established by the Saudi state in 1961 to provide religious instruction primarily to foreign students. Students would come to Medina for religious education and were then expected to act as missionaries, promoting an understanding of Islam in line with the core tenets of Wahhabism. By the early 2000s, more than 11,000 young men from across the globe had graduated from the Islamic University.

Circuits of Faith offers the first examination of the Islamic University and considers the efforts undertaken by Saudi actors and institutions to exert religious influence far beyond the kingdom's borders. Michael Farquhar draws on Arabic sources, including biographical materials, memoirs, syllabi, and back issues of the Islamic University journal, as well as interviews with former staff and students, to explore the institution's history and faculty, the content and style of instruction, and the trajectories and experiences of its students. Countering typical assumptions, Farquhar argues that the project undertaken through the Islamic University amounts to something more complex than just the one-way "export" of Wahhabism. Through transnational networks of students and faculty, this Saudi state-funded religious mission also relies upon, and has in turn been influenced by, far-reaching circulations of persons and ideas.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Michael Farquhar presents a must-read study of a critical Saudi institution and the role it plays in exporting the Wahhabi message. Thoroughly researched and analytically acute, this book incisively unpacks larger issues of religious dissemination and its links to wealth and authority, as well as the understudied but defining influence of religious intellectuals and changing social technologies." (James Piscatori *Australian National University*)

"*Circuits of Faith* is the definitive work on the Saudi-backed expansion of Salafi-Wahhabism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. With great subtlety and intelligence, Michael Farquhar explores how Saudi state interests, material capital, and institutional logics inform and harness a growing trans-local religious economy. A rich and impressive book." (John Chalcraft *The London School of Economics and Political Science*)

"Overall, this is an outstanding, engaging and very clearly argued work that goes a long way in putting the study of transnational Islam on a sophisticated theoretical footing. Farquhar does not neglect the important issue of power but manages to show that even a missionary project as lavishly funded as the IUM faces real limits to its global influence and is in no position simply to dictate a hegemonic discourse. The book's accessible style should make it attractive for students and specialists alike." (Simon Wolfgang Fuchs *Bulletin of the School for African and Oriental Studies*)

"Nowhere have I read a more lucid, accessible, and well-researched book on education, migration, and the Wahhabi mission. *Circuits of Faith* complicates our conventional wisdom with new interpretations and perspectives. Both critics and sympathizers with Wahhabiyya will find their stereotypes challenged." (Madawi Al-Rasheed, Middle East Centre *The London School of Economics and Political Science*)

"Michael Farquhar expertly traces the Saudi state's use of the Islamic University of Medina (IUM) to facilitate state-driven *dawa*, or proselytization, which he dubs 'fundamentally a political project' (p.9). While other writers, particularly those in the Western media, have tended toward the use of alarmist rhetoric about the systematic and targeted spread of Wahhabism by the Saudi government, Farquhar comprehensively details the history of the IUM and of the state's nuanced relationship with its mission of *dawa*...Farquhar's conclusion is an important contribution, both in terms of its academic and policy consequences." (Courtney Freer *Middle Eastern Studies*)

"*Circuits of Faith* expands the horizon of scholarship on Wahhabism, which often remains bounded by the nation-state in scope. In the process of posing the question of Wahhabism's material conditions, Farquhar transforms the possible answers that might be given. Instead of asking what Wahhabism is, he focuses his analysis on the intellectual relations that compose Wahhabism as a discursive practice (by no means singular or unified in its approach) and the material migrations that make possible its spread. This focus on actors, networks, institutions, and the forms of interaction that connect them allows for more nuanced engagement with such a complex historical phenomenon. In this way, Michael Farquhar's *Circuits of Faith* is a most welcome contribution to the field." (Micah A. Hughes *Maydan*)

About the Author

Michael Farquhar is Lecturer in Middle East Politics at King's College London.

Users Review

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Reading a e-book can be one of a lot of exercise that everyone in the world enjoys. Do you like reading book so. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a guide will give you a lot of new data. When you read a guide you will get new information mainly because book is one of a number of ways to share the information or their idea. Second, studying a book will make you more imaginative. When you examining a book especially fictional works book the author will bring one to imagine the story how the figures do it anything. Third, you could share your knowledge to other folks. When you read this Circuits of Faith: Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission (Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures), you could tells your family, friends in addition to soon about yours e-book. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a reserve.

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