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## Editorial notes

### Transliteration

Arabic names and titles are transliterated broadly as suggested in *The Chicago Manual of Style (15th Edition)*. We have tried to simplify the transliteration as much as possible, using no diacritical marks, except for the *hamza* (') and the *'ayn* ('). We have kept the definite article *al* joined to the noun with a hyphen and without indication of the elision before the sounds *d, n, r, s, sh, t,* and *z* (e.g. *Tarikh al-Sudan* not *as-Sudan*). Since the Arabic alphabet does not distinguish between capital and lowercase forms, we have only capitalized proper nouns and the first word in a sentence or in a transliterated title of a book or manuscript. Personal names in African languages are spelt in a way that approximates to their actual pronunciation when it is known, or as they have been vowelled in the manuscripts. Muslim names of Arabic origin are transliterated accordingly, though local pronunciations vary considerably (for example, Amadu for Ahmad, Usman for 'Uthman). We have tried to maintain consistency in spellings but have also included spellings as commonly used in Francophone Africa, thus the Ahmed Baba Institute is spelled thus because of its usage in Mali but we have used Ahmad Baba to refer to the scholar as this is consistent with our transliteration method.

### Dates

Correspondence of *hijri* and Gregorian dates was calculated using Faik Resit Unat's *Hicri tarihleri miladi tarihe cevirme kilavuzu* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1994). If unstated, the date is from the Gregorian calendar; we have only indicated both dates when the original date in a manuscript is *hijri*. Some minor divergences might exist since months are set according to the sightings of the new moon. The order of the months in the *hijri* year is as follows: *Muharram, Safar, Rabi' I, Rabi' II, Jumada I, Jumada II, Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, Shawwal, Dhu al-Qa'da, Dhu al-Hijja*. The months are of either 29 or 30 days, and a complete year is 355 days. A *hijri* (lunar) century is approximately 97 Gregorian (solar) years.

## Glossary

<i>'abid</i>	a devout servant of God
<i>abu shibbak</i>	a thick brown or cream-coloured paper
<i>adab</i> (adj. <i>adabi</i> )	etiquette or literature
<i>'adil</i>	a just person
<i>'adl</i>	justice; fairness
<i>aflak</i>	astronomy/astrology; the study of celestial bodies
<i>ahl-al-kalam</i>	scholars of theology
<i>ajami</i>	non-Arab, i.e. Turk, Persian, African etc; non-Arabic languages written in Arabic script
<i>akhira</i>	afterlife
<i>'aqida</i>	dogma; creed
<i>askiya</i>	title used by the rulers of the Songhay Empire
<i>awliya</i>	saints; friends of Allah
<i>balad</i>	village or town; district
<i>baraka</i>	blessings, supernatural powers
<i>bihari</i>	from Bihar; a distinctive calligraphic style used in India
Bilad al-Sudan	the Saharo-Sahelian land across middle Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea
<i>dajjal</i>	anti-Christ
<i>diwan</i>	register or poetry collection
<i>dhikr</i> (pl. <i>adhkar</i> )	remembrance of Allah; repetition of a prayer
<i>dunya</i>	earth; refers to the world as lower and temporary and deceptive
emir (pl. <i>umara</i> )	prince; commander, political leader
<i>falsafa</i>	philosophy
<i>faqih</i> (pl. <i>fuqaha</i> )	jurist
<i>fatiha</i>	opening chapter of the Qur'an
<i>fatwa</i> (pl. <i>fatawa</i> )	legal opinion, response
<i>fiqh</i>	Islamic substantive law, jurisprudence
<i>hadarat</i>	a Muslim person of high spiritual status or an elderly person; any person who is present; a manner of addressing a respected person
<i>hadith</i>	prophetic tradition
hajj	the ritual pilgrimage
<i>halal</i>	that which is wholesome and permissible
<i>hamziyya</i>	A poem where each stanza ends with the letter hamza
<i>haqiqa</i>	truth, divine reality (used in Sufism)
<i>haram</i>	that which is prohibited
<i>hijra</i>	migration
<i>hijri</i>	The Muslim calendar
<i>ifta</i>	the act of issuing religious-legal verdicts
<i>ijaza</i> (pl. <i>ijazat</i> )	teaching authorisation
<i>ikhlas</i>	sincerity

<i>'ilm</i>	knowledge	<i>sajda</i>	prostration
<i>imam</i>	religious or political leader; prayer leader in a mosque	<i>salah</i>	ritual obligatory prayers five times a day as well as superogatory ones
<i>isnad</i>	chain of narrators in prophetic traditions	<i>shairi, mashairi</i>	intimate, dialogic and polemical poetry
<i>jahiliyya</i>	pre-Islamic era	<i>shari'a</i>	Islamic law
<i>jama'a</i>	congregation	<i>shaykh</i> (pl. <i>ashyakh</i> )	male scholar of Islam or head of the tribe
<i>jihad</i>	exertion in the way of God; in certain contexts it refers to holy warfare in support of Islam	<i>silsila</i>	chain of mystical transmission
<i>jinn</i>	spirits	<i>sira</i>	biography of the Prophet; the study of the life of the Prophet
<i>kalam</i>	theology	<i>Sunna</i>	prophetic normative tradition
<i>karama</i> (pl.)	miracle, holy act	<i>sura</i>	Quranic chapter
<i>khalifa</i>	caliph; deputy, successor	<i>tafsir</i>	Qur'anic exegesis
<i>khalwa</i>	mystical retreat; seclusion	<i>takhmis</i>	a classical Arabic poetic process rather than a genre per se; its a five-line verse amplification of a pre-existing couplet by a master
<i>khatib</i>	one who delivers sermons on Friday and other occasions	<i>tarikh</i>	chronicle
<i>kitab</i>	book	<i>tariqa</i>	brotherhood
<i>madhhab</i>	school of jurisprudence in Islam, of which there are four in the Sunni world	<i>tasawwuf</i>	Sufism; spirituality
<i>madrasa</i>	school	<i>tawhid</i>	Islamic theology; the concept of Oneness; the unity of Allah; unity; monotheism or unity of; Islamic creed
<i>Maghrib</i>	north-west Africa	<i>tendi</i>	epic poetry writing
<i>mahdi</i>	the Guided one; refers to the saviour who will come to fill the world with justice and equity	<i>'ulama</i> (sg. <i>'alim</i> )	scholars; intellectual authorities
<i>mallam</i> (pl. <i>malamai</i> )	minor scholar	<i>umma</i>	nation; the Muslim global world
<i>mansaya</i>	monarchy	<i>urjuza</i>	poem in the rajaz metre
<i>mantiq</i>	logic	<i>usul al-fiqh</i>	source methodology in jurisprudence
<i>mufti</i>	jurisconsult	<i>wa'azi</i>	genre of literature; admonishing talk, exhortation to do good and discard bad
<i>muluk</i> (sg. <i>malik</i> )	kings	<i>waqf</i>	pious foundation, endowment
<i>murabit</i> (pl. <i>murabitun</i> )	tenth-century Muslim movement that established a state in North Africa and Spain	<i>waqfiyya</i>	case concerning a waqf
<i>murid</i>	disciple, follower	<i>wazir</i>	minister, vizier
<i>nafs</i>	ego, self	<i>wird</i>	litany
<i>nasihah</i>	advice	<i>zakat</i>	alms
<i>nisba</i>	ascription to place, tribe etc.	<i>zawiya</i>	place of residence of the saint or his spirit; Sufi centres
<i>qabila</i>	tribe		
<i>qadi</i>	judge		
<i>qasida</i>	ode		
<i>qutb</i>	chief of saints; learned man (lit. 'magnetic pole')		
<i>ra'iyya</i>	the masses		
<i>rashidun</i>	rightly guided; refers to the first four caliphs of (Islam after the Prophet's demise (632–660)		
<i>ribat</i>	religious school		
<i>ridwan</i>	satisfaction, pleasure		
<i>rihla</i> (pl. <i>rihlat</i> )	journey; account of one's travels		
<i>risala</i>	the message of Islam; treatise; correspondence		

# Index

Given the difficulty of alphabetising Arabic names, the following conventions are used: people who have clear family names such as al-Kunti, al-Arwani, etc. are listed under their family names; and people whose names do not give full lineage, are abbreviated, or contain titles by which they have become known, are listed according to their first name, for example, Ahmad Baba, Nana Asma'u, Sonni 'Ali.

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