# THE MYTH OF THE GOLDEN OCTAGON: RE-THINKING THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

HAMIED N. ANSARI

FIRST PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND CIVILIZATION (ISTAC), INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM), 2006. 205A JALAN DAMANSARA, DAMANSARA HEIGHTS, 50480 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA. Tel: 603-2080 2900 Fax: 603-2094 8343 E-mail: istacbooks@yahoo.com Website: www.iiu.edu.my/istac

### © Hamied N. Ansari First published in 2006

All rights reserved. The copyright of this publication belongs to the author, Dr. Hamied N. Ansari. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form whatsoever including but not limited to photocopying, recording or by any other means or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without the prior written permission of the author. Full acknowledgement of the author and source must be given. This publication may not be resold, hired out or otherwise traded in any form whatsoever or in any cover other than that in which it is published except with the prior written permission of the author.

#### Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

#### Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Ansari. Hamied N.

The myth of the golden octagon: rethinking the history of islamic civilization/ Hamied N. Ansari Includes index Bibliography: p. 797–808 ISBN 983-9379-43-7 1.Civilization, Islamic. I. Title. 909.097671

## THE MYTH OF THE GOLDEN OCTAGON: RE-THINKING THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

HAMIED N. ANSARI



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND CIVILIZATION (ISTAC), INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM), KUALA LUMPUR 2006

### Contents

Pı	st of Illustrations reface cknowledgements	xi xiii xv
Part I		xv-310
In	troduction	1–13
	LASSICAL ISLAM IN THE IMAGINATION OF THE ISTORIAN	
1	Revelation and Mission The Era of Ignorance 17, The Messenger of God 27, The Foundation of the Political Community 34	15–50
2	The Plurality of One From Caliphate to Kingship 53, Dissolution of the Political Community 71, Monarchical Absolutism 92	51–99
3	The Classical Age The Shadow of God on Earth 103, Turning Back to Fundamentals 118, The Conservative Response 133	101–147
4	The Periphery in Revolt The Sunni-Shī'i Polarization 151, The Shī'i Imamate 165, The Sunni Caliphate 174, Conciliating Mind and Soul 185	149–197

5 Parting of the Ways Eclipse of the Center 200, The Religion of Salvation 212, Rationalization of Tradition 226, The Ancestral Path 239	199–250	
<ul> <li>6 In the Shadow of Natural History The Changing Order of Things 252, The Rural-Urban Divide 269, The Dialectics of Nature and Culture 286, The Science of Culture: A Final Appraisal 295</li> </ul>	251-310	
Part II 311		
THE POLITICS OF FAITH IN THE MODERN WORLD		
7 The New Empires The Ottoman Monarchical Absolutism 315, The Advent of Shi'ism in Safavid Iran 337, The Last of the Timurids in India 354	313–369	
8 The State of Notables Eclipse of the Imperial Center 372, Sectarianism and the Shī'i Revival 383, Traditionalization of Modernity 394, Political Orders in Tribal societies 410	371–428	
9 The Colonial State British Imperialism in India 430, French Colonization of North Africa 449, Muslims Under the Russian Domination 474	429–493	
10 Redefining the Canon The Rise of the Clerical Order 496, The Liberal Impasse 510, The Conservative Reaction 524, Mysticism and Statecraft 538	495–547	

11 The Geography of Ethnic Identity The Sovietization of Central Asia 550, The Idea of Pakistan 572, The Clash of Ethnic Nationalism in Palestine 593	549–619
12 The New World Order The American Century 622, The Rule of the Imam 634, A Fateful Alliance 646, Islamic Liberalism in Crisis 656, The First Gulf War 665, Radicalization of Tradition 672	621–685
Conclusion	687–707
Illustrations Notes Glossary Bibliography Index	709–717 719–783 785–795 797–808 809