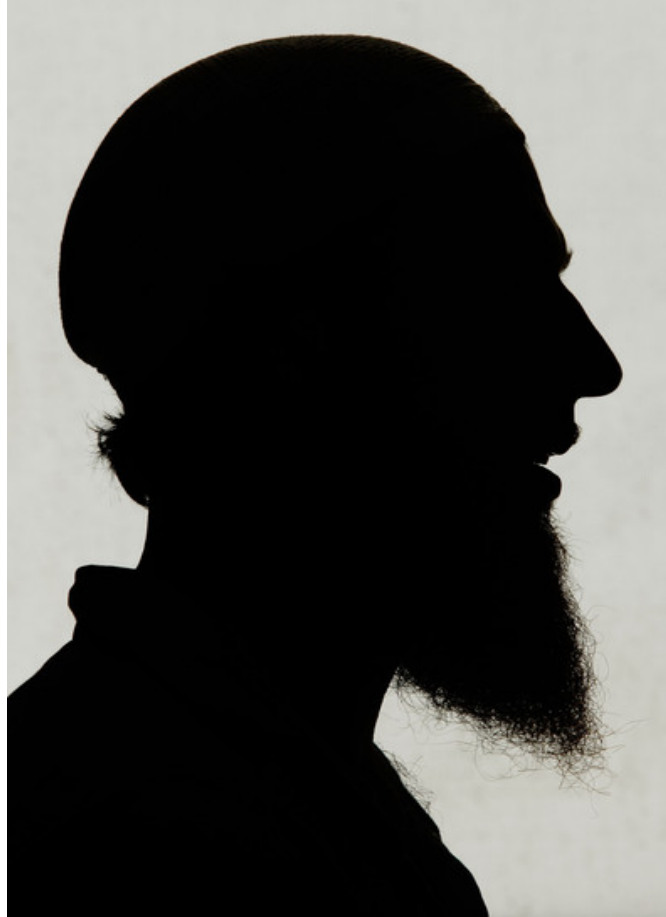# Mosques, Muslim Leaders and Social Cohesion

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Do Muslim leaders contribute to or pose a barrier to peace and social cohesion in the Australian context?

"I've often heard western leaders describe Islam as a 'religion of peace'. I wish more Muslim leaders would say that more often, and mean it." Tony Abbott, 2015

Who is the Muslim leader?

Methodology

- Recording of 48 mosque sermons
- 12 in the week immediately after the Martin Place Siege
- Access and ethical considerations
- Coding and analysis

Selection Criteria

Mosque	Number of recordings	Ethnic Orientation	Religious orientation	Reason for inclusion in the study
AB	3	Iraqi and Afghan	Shia	Religious orientation
AG	3	Turkish	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation - one of biggest mosques in Sydney
AN	4	Indonesian	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
AT	1	Mixed	Mainstream Sunni	Post Martin Place Seige
BT	4	Afghan	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
GF	1	Turkish	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
GV	5	Lebanese	Mainstream Sunni	One of the newest and biggest mosques in Sydney
LK	5	Lebanese	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation and one of the biggest mosques in Sydney
LKE	1	South Asian	Mainstream Sunni	Post Martin Place Seige
MNT	1	South African	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
PHST	3	Bosnian	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
PMT	4	South Asian	Mainstream Sunni	Location in a CBD attracting workers from the surrounding area
QH	4	South Asian	Mainstream Sunni	Ethnic orientation
RV	4	Lebanese	Salafi	Religious orientation
SF1	2	n/a	Salafi	Political orientation - Hizb Tahrir
UNSW	3	Mixed	Mainstream Sunni	University campus - students and workers from surrounding area

Findings

Findings

Calling for action	Number of words
Prophet Mohammad using Prophet Mohammad as a role model	19309
Reference to verses from the Qur'an	13184
Direct advice	8802
Asking for reflection through the use of a rhetorical questions	4303
Reference to a prophet mentioned in the Qur'an	3136
Sahaba as role model	2405
Reference to a scholar	1551
Imam Mahdi	186

Calling for action	Sources
Prophet Mohammad using Prophet Mohammad as a role model	37
Direct advice	30
Reference to verses from the Qur'an	29
Asking for reflection through the use of a rhetorical questions	18
Reference to a prophet mentioned in the Qur'an	13
Reference to a Scholar	9
Sahaba as role model	8
Reference to Imam Mahdi	1

Calling for action	Number of references
Prophet Mohammad using Prophet Mohammad as a role model	113
Reference to verses from the Qur'an	105
Direct advice	78
Asking for reflection through the use of a rhetorical questions	34
Reference to a prophet mentioned in the Qur'an	20
Sahaba as role model	15
Reference to a Scholar	13
Reference Imam Mahdi	1

Nature of the content

	Source	References	Percentage	Words
Interpersonal social relations	37	133	44.3%	22524
Spiritual	31	114	38%	18859
Political	16	37	12%	7938
Economic	7	14	4.7%	2435
Environmental	0	0	0%	0

Reference to non-Muslims

Reference to non-Muslims	Sources	References	Words
Blaming	7	11	955
Community relations	5	10	1103
Living in non-Islamic environment	11	16	6761
Anti-terror laws	2	2	3407
Other religions and ways of life - focus on difference	7	12	8883
Tolerance	8	12	4228

Martin Place Siege

- 7/12 condemned the perpetrator
- The position of Islam with regard to the killing of innocent life

Theoretical Conceptualisation

- Durkheim's functionalist view of religion
- Performativity
- Communication theories