Excerpts: His Highness the Aga Khan on identity

Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation: [Y]ou yourself are, one has to say, you are cosmopolitan.

Aga Khan: I am Muslim.

LBC: You do not have another identity? None whatsoever?

Aga Khan: No, none, none!

LBC: You do not have an attachment to your country of origin?

Aga Khan: You tell me my 'country of origin'. I wouldn't even be able to define it for you, because I am born in Switzerland, I have parents who are from the Muslim World and from the Christian World, I have had my initial education in Africa then Switzerland and then in the United States, I have travelled all my life. And the only guideline that I have in my life, the dominant one, is the religion in which I was raised.

LBC: How can a man live without [a country of origin]? That is, not have a place, a precise geography?

Aga Khan: But on the contrary, I am freer! I am much freer!

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 2001 Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation Interview (Aleppo, Syria and Lebanon) [Translation]
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/6073/
John Tidmarsh: You were saying that it's very much an international Community, you yourself, what about you, I mean you were born in Switzerland, you went to school there, then you went to Harvard in the United States, your mother British, so was your former wife, do you have a nationality?

Aga Khan: I don’t think of myself as a person with a nationality. I was brought up since my youngest age as a Muslim. My university studies were in Islamic studies. So that is -- if I have any sense of identification -- that would be it.

Geoffrey Barker: Do you regard yourself as an Eastern or a Western man?

Aga Khan: I would hope as a world citizen in the sense that I have no problems with the East or West. Really, I think that one's dealing in my position with humanity. You see humanity, you are aware of humanity. You know the problems are different but the basic issues are the same.

Geoffrey Barker: I’ve been told that you seem a different personality in the East. Are you aware of any change in your mental attitude when you are in the East?

Aga Khan: No. I think there is certainly more empathy with the East emotionally, culturally, historically. That is natural. I was brought up in the West but I don’t always understand the West.
See also: His Highness the Aga Khan on globalism - Part 7/7: the hazard of a superficial, homogenised mega-culture


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See also: His Highness the Aga Khan explains his intellect is in the West but his heart is in the East


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