Excerpts: His Highness the Aga Khan on Din and Duniya

"I think one of the specifics of Islam is that you live your faith. And you are not one day in your faith and the next day out of your faith. It is a permanent presence. It is a presence which brings you happiness. It brings you objectives in life and therefore, I don't think that one can make this sort of dichotomy. It is a permanency of thought, of attitude, of ethics.... It's not that if you are in a meeting on a given issue, that you forget that behind these decisions you are taking are the ethical principles of your faith. And they have to be there all the time. Whatever you do."

His Highness the Aga Khan's 2004 DD TV (Delhi Doordarshan) Interview with Rajiv Mehrotra (New Delhi, India)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/7089/

Antonio Marujo/Faranaz Keshavjee: Does daily life carry the same importance as eternal life?

Aga Khan: In Islam, they are the same thing. One cannot separate faith from the world. This is one of the greatest difficulties that the non-Muslim world has, because the Judaic Christian societies developed with that notion of separation. For the Muslims, that separation is not possible. We are expected to live our faith every day, in every hour. [Emphasis added]

One of the difficulties that we are facing in the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds, is the articulation of the difference in values in a
comprehensive form. However, this does not mean that we are in conflict. They are just different values.

**Antonio Marujo/Faranaz Keshavjee:** One of the differences is locality, debated in countries such as Portugal, Turkey, and France. For many, faith should remain confined to a private space. You mentioned that Islam doesn’t separate faith from the world. How do you perceive this notion?

**Aga Khan:** I would like the non-Muslim societies to accept the values of Islam. If Islam says that we do not separate the world from faith, the Western world should accept that. I would go further and say: it is a wonderful way to live! It is an extraordinary blessing to be able to live our faith everyday! Making ethic the way in which you live your daily life, and not only in occasions such as death, a marriage or a birth. I am not criticising anyone. I am saying that secular society, by the nature of secularism and the demands of time, provokes in people the need to first place the world and faith after. This is not a part of Islam.

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**Aftab Ahmad Khan:** Some people are surprised that, as a spiritual leader, you are also involved in material and mundane matters of the world. What would you say?

**Aga Khan:** The answer to question which is asked especially in the Western secular world is that as Muslims, we have to be very careful not to apply to our lives a philosophy which is not Islamic. The division between the spiritual and the material is a concept which I consider essentially of the Western World and substantially linked to the name of St Augustine. My understanding of Islam is that it is a total faith, it does not only govern the way a man or a woman of the Muslim faith practises faith but it governs his relations with his family and with society. It has an all enveloping sense of direction. It
does not tell him you cannot have wealth but it does tell him you cannot be greedy. It does not tell him you cannot be active in business but it tells him to be ethical in business and, therefore, it has an extremely strong moral involvement in every aspect of man’s life. I think it would be completely wrong for me or frankly for any other Muslim leader, to restrict his effort and his endeavour simply to the spiritual aspects.

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1983 Pakistan and Gulf Economist Interview with Aftab Ahmad Khan (Karachi, Pakistan)
http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/2799/

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