



## Iran Data Portal

Majma'e Mohaqeqin va Modarresin-e Howzeh-ye Elmiyyeh Qom  
The Assembly of Teachers and Researchers of Qom Seminary

The Assembly of Teachers and Researchers of Qom Seminary (*Majma'e Mohaqeqin va Modarresin-e Howzeh-ye Elmiyyeh Qom*) was founded in 2001 by a group of middle-ranking clerics. Prominently among the members were Ayatollahs Abayi Khorasani, Musavi Tabrizi, and Bayat Zanjani. Most other members of the Assembly were students of Ayatollah Montazeri. Before formally establishing the Assembly, members were mainly active in Khatami's presidential campaign headquarters in Qom. A testimony to their success was that Khatami was elected in 1997 in Qom with 59 percent of the vote, 25 percentage points higher than the regime-sponsored contender, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri. Khatami's headquarters in Qom did not only act locally, but sent clerics to campaign for Khatami across the country.

The Assembly has been the only reformist group in the Qom seminary. The Assembly believes in a modern reading of Islam and in reconciling Islamic and secular values. It emphasizes values such as freedom, pluralism, and rationality, and an interpretation of Islam that takes into account the imperatives of the time. Although the Assembly's activities have great political implications, it is first and foremost a cultural group. For instance, it has tried to reform some rules governing religious ceremonies and attempted to remove superstitious ideas from religious doctrine.

In the Qom seminary, the Assembly has good connections with two prominent Sources of Emulation [*Maraji'-e Taqlid*]: Ayatollah Sane'i and Ayatollah Ardabili, the Founder of Mofid University in Qom. Until his passing, Ayatollah Montazeri (d. 2010) was also a supporter of the Assembly. Politically, it can be considered part of the reformist camp. The current Secretary-General is Ayatollah Musavi Tabrizi, who was also their representative in the House of Parties. He became president of the group in 2004 after its first president Ayatollah Abayi Khorasani passed away. Additional

prominent members of the group include Mohammad Ali Ayazi, Mohammad Taqi Fazel Meybodi, and Seyed Abolfazl Musavian.

Official Website: <http://www.majmaqom.com/>