

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . ."—  
HOLY QUR'AN, 33: 40. "There will be no prophet after me."— MUHAMMAD.

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# ISLAMIC REVIEW

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*Editors*

Maulvi Abdul Majid, M.A., B.T. (The Mosque, Woking),  
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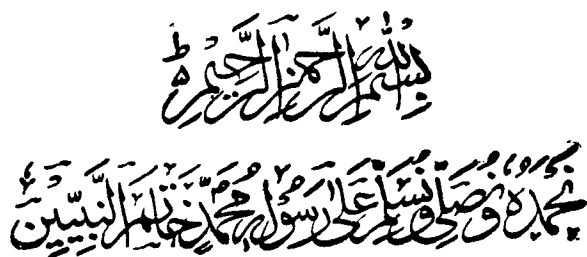
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# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## A DECLARATION

I, Mrs. A. E. Tatton of Benenden, Kent, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship one and only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others, and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

*Lá iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un Rasûl-Alláh.*

A. E. TATTON.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

## THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

### III

#### RAMADZAN

BY RABI'AL KARIM, M.Sc.

He who has seen the charming half-shaded sleeping earth bathed in moonlight—who has stood in the open and gazed on the silent still landscape lying stretched under the silvery beams of the full moon, may understand how beautiful is the Ramadhan. On one side is the sweet silvery smile on an unruffled, serene firmament and on the other the vast sleeping, as if meditating, stretchy landscape. It is a union of gravity with grace, serenity with delight, beauty with stillness. Has anyone found such a fine blend of all these qualities? There is no rustle in the leaves, no breeze in the air, no murmur in the ripples, no sound in the sky—silence, perfect and sweet, is reigning everywhere. The whole world is absorbed in deep meditation. What a graceful expression of delight—what a smiling flow of mirth! This vast, charming appearance, this solemn, serene expression is the characteristic of Islam. On one side of it is the solemnity of piety and virtue and on the other the blessings of festivity and joy. On the one there are meditation and devotion, on the other mercy and compassion. On the one perfect peace and on the other sublime happiness.

What is this delight for which the Muslim world feel such a great ecstasy in the Ramadhan? Why does every Muslim cheer in gaiety year after year at the call of the Ramadhan? Why is the pathetic farewell notes of *Haihat-haihat* (Alas! alas! read at the last Jum'a sermon of the Ramadhan) struck at the advent of the 'Id al-Fitr festival?

The Ramadhan is the fullest expression of the glory of the Creator of the universe—the greatest gift

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of, the All-Merciful,—it is the shade of His infinite mercy and blessings. Serenity and sanctity, peace and grace, sobriety and meditation, piety and pity, devotion and restraint, love and blessing, gaiety and festivity have filled it in such a way that it is without parallel in the life-history of the Muslim.

When the first evening of the Ramadhan comes down to the earth with the glow of the crescent on its forehead, then in every Muslim home candles are lit along with the glow of delight and all the tumult and chaos in and out of the Muslim calm down—and with the depth and stillness of the night, an all-enveloping solemn feeling of a super-existence pervades his mind.

This is that month of Ramadhan wherein the Holy Qur-án, the guidance for man in the true path and the highest symbol of justice, was revealed. This is the Ramadhan wherein the first gift from the Lord made man successful and beautiful. Like the refreshing shower in a hot, sultry noon, the first great message of the Qur-án came and it came like the first radiance of peace and salvation in a deep all-enveloping gloom. The Lord has intimated—Oh man! I exist, I am infinite, limitless, eternal and without any form. It is I who is thy Creator—thy Sustainer. Know Me. Read —“*Iqra’ bismi Rabbika*” in My name. (Recite in the name of thy Lord). That is why the Ramadhan has sounded such a sweet note in the Muslim mind. That is why such a grand arrangement to recite—to think—to feel about the One. This reverence-bathed all-encircling Ramadhan—this sleeping silent landscape, is the symbol of the Muslims’ life-long devotion. The *Lailatul Qadr*—the night of greatness, the night which is better than thousand nights is in its range. This is why the fasting of thirty days year after year—this

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deep solemn devotion to know the greatest Unknown—to gain His infinite grace, mercy and blessing. This is why the different worldly flows of a Muslim life are suspended—the wrangling sounds of self-interest are subdued—the various restless expressions of passions are controlled. Happiness does not rouse any feeling in the mind, taste does not bring any water in the palate, beauty does not brighten the eyes. Abstinence controls and pacifies every self-interest, every restlessness, every low feeling in man—and the fasting mind gets absorbed in the meditation of and devotion to the Supreme Being.

Herein lies the fulfilment of this long fasting month of Ramadhan and for this is the rigid abstinence day after day—this awakening and seeking night after night—this glorious devotion to dive deep down in the flow of the eternal elixir, in that glorious blessed radiance of the All-Merciful, Absolute and Eternal Being, by constant prayer and meditation in that night of all nights. As if the Lord is saying, “I am veiled and concealed. Just seek Me out. Curb down all your temptations and cravings, be calm and with all thy attention and keenness search Me. Come to Me leaving aside all thy hopes and desires, all thy dear and near ones only for this month. Be pure and serene. Be calm and content and try to have Me and thou wilt have that eternal concealed blessing and mercy in that glorious night—*Lailatul Qadr*.”

But this success, this conquest, this glory cannot be achieved in a single day. The sceptic may declare fasting unnecessary. He may say that salvation of the mind does not come by way of fasting, that for this is needed the purity of mind. According to the man of Science fasting purifies the body and enhances vitality and enlivens the mind, but such a long fasting for thirty days, is not conducive to health, it weakens

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the physique. But such people are arrogant materialists. How will they understand what glory lies in fasting? The Western preceptors of modern intelligentsia have admitted the usefulness of fasting in the curing of many chronic diseases. Many an invalid scholar has got new life by fasting and by taking very small quantities of food, and has proclaimed its utility. In fact a fast for some days convinces us how light the stomach feels and we can easily understand that our mental energy has increased with the lightness of the body. But this long religious fasting has other objects than mere physical development. The glorious fasting which leads to the upliftment of hundreds of saints and devotees—its goal is not the development of the physical feature only—its aim is to uplift the soul—its ambition is to be able to lead a pious life. This Ramadan brings food for our soul, that is why we do not hanker after food that sustains our body. The All-Merciful Lord pours forth the eternal elixir in this month—and the soul is keen to drink deep from this fountain by concentrating the body. We ignore the demands of the body in order to entertain this blessed remembrance. That is why this complete fasting.

But this arrangement to develop the soul by starving the flesh can never be fulfilled by a fast of a day or two. The mind cannot be sanctified without devotion. The salvation and blessing of the glorious night cannot be achieved in a day's time. This frail world of self-interest and selfish motives beguiles us with its manifold charms and lures. There is no end to its temptations and illusions. Man's lifelong fight is to gratify his self-interest and self-craving and towards that end his whole life is an unceasing struggle. What a great charm in the tinkling of gold and silver coins! How attractive is the snow-white soft bed! What grace do fineries impart! How captivating is the feminine beauty! Man is mad after all these. This

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craving and anxiety for the satisfaction of the self have darkened man's life and has clouded his purity of mind. Restless passions express themselves on all sides. What a duplicity of mind, and what a diplomacy in thought surge about ! How many men are after money and land of their neighbours ! How many are roaming like wild beasts to satisfy their lust ! How many are engaged in hateful work for money ! What amount of lies and falsities, what meanness and temptations are filling the human life ! Religion, virtue, love, purity—where are these to be found ? Man tempted and passionate, allured and charmed, is floating and sinking in this world-ocean day in and day out. His glorious life, his sublime existence find no expression anywhere. He does not know, he does not think how high and noble he is ; and into what depth of degradation he has sunk. If the worldly person thinks in the deep still night about his doings and actions throughout the day, if he peeps into his inner self, he will see how mean is his life, how base is his mind,—what impurity and vanity have filled his mind. Impossible—it is impossible for him to rise. It is not possible to breathe in the pure mountain air lying in a dingy stuffy room, it is madness to expect muscular and sinewy hands and limbs while resting all the time on snow-white soft beds—such is also the case of a man who expects to gain the purity of mind while sinking deep in worldly interests. The mind absorbed in devising ways and means for earning money, practised in lies and tricks to fulfil self-interest, to satisfy the palate and passions with delicious dishes and exquisite fineries—cannot be expected to be bright and clear as crystals, filled with divine thoughts. This is simply impossible. Man is deeply engrossed in worldly affairs, he has no time to elevate his soul, he is incapable of feeling the sublimity of his soul and the divine qualities reposed in him. He is charmed and bewildered.

*(To be continued)*



# THE LOGOS AND THE KENOTIC THEORIES STATED AND EXAMINED

BY PROFESSOR M. Y. K. SALIM CHISHTIE

*(Continued from page 307 of October 1943 issue)*

Now I will quote the testimony of some well-known philosophical writers :

(a) Summing up the theological views of Tertullian, Dr. Ueberweg writes in his "History of Philosophy," Vol. I, p. 305 :

"It (the Logos) came forth from God, just as the ray breaks forth out of the sun. God is in it as the sun is in the ray. Spirit came from spirit, God from God, Light from Light without the source of existence being in either case thereby diminished. The Father is the whole substance of the Godhead while the Son is a derivative from and a part of that substance as he himself confesses, saying, "The father is greater than I." Reason always existed in God ; but there was a time when the Son did not exist. The Son came into existence when the Father had need of him as an instrument for the creation of the world."

(b) "By an act of free will God emits the Logos, who is an independent personality identical with God in essence, but not numerically—a second God, who has been eternally with God." (P. 141.)\*

"The intellectual leaders of the Church, in their endeavours to defend the faith against Gnostics and Pagan philosophers, were carried farther and farther into the speculations of the Greek schools, until they finally hellenized the Gospel." (P. 144.)

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\*Frank Thilly—"History of Philosophy."

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That the Father and the Son are two distinct persons is admitted also by Dr. W. Shedd in the following words :

“ An examination of the writings of the primitive Church Fathers will evince that they held the two fundamental positions of the Catholic trinitarianism, namely, unity of essence between the Father and Son and distinction of persons. The text, John, 10 : 30, enunciates unity of essence with distinction of persons—‘ I and my father are one ’ (being not one person). (John, 10 : 30.) ” (P. 268)\*

“ The Logos,” says Clement, “ is the face of God, by which God is seen. The Logos is superior to men and angels, but subordinate to the Father.”†

“ For this is not to be denied that there can be but one essence properly divine, and so but one God of infinite wisdom, power and majesty ; that there can be but one person originally of himself subsisting in that infinite Being ; because a plurality of more persons (than one) so subsisting, would necessarily infer a multiplicity of gods ; that the father of our Lord Jesus Christ is originally God, as not receiving His eternal being from any other. Wherefore it necessarily followeth that Jesus Christ who is certainly not the Father, cannot be a person subsisting in the divine nature originally of himself, consequently he must be understood to have the godhead communicated to him by the Father who is not only eternally but originally God.”‡

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\*“ History of Christian Doctrine,” by W. G. T. Shedd, Vol. I.

† “ History of Christian Doctrine,” by Dr. Hagenbach, Vol. I, p. 165.

‡ “ Exposition of the Creed,” by Dr. Pearson, D.D., p. 197.

## LOGOS AND KENOTIC THEORIES

Bishop Pearson deserves my hearty thanks for the following admissions :

- (i) Only the Father of Jesus (who is Logos incarnate) is originally, really and truly God.
- (ii) Jesus, the Son of God, the Logos, the Second Person, is not the Father.

Therefore, Jesus is not originally God.

- (iii) Godhead was communicated to Jesus by the Father, *i.e.*, the Father is God *par excellence* and the Son is God by communication.

Thus Christianity teaches two gods—one by nature and the other by communication.

Now recall the verse in question. Interpreted in the light of Pearson's exposition, it means that the Logos was with the real, original God—the Father—and the Logos was also (second) god.

“ This peculiar relation of the Father to the Son is that which has authorized the Church, while she confesses an equality of nature, to admit also a priority of order in the persons of the Trinity. The Father hath this pre-eminence. that He is not only uncreated but unbegotten too ; He derives His essence from none, being Himself the fountain of life and the Source of Being.\*

“ The Son, too, is uncreated, but he derives His being from the Father. Yet in this He is subordinate to the Father ; not that His attributes are lower or His nature is inferior, but that both are derived. The Father begat ; the Son is begotten. The Father hath life in Himself, so, too, has the Son ; but the Father hath life not only in Himself, but *from Himself*. The Son hath life in Himself but from *the Father*. On this account, therefore, ‘ the’ Father is greater than the Son.’ (John, 14 : 28.)’

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\* “ Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles,” by Bishop E. H. Browne, p. 67

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Read the verse in question again :

“ The Logos was with God (the Father).”

The Father is God (*ho Theos*).

The Logos is God (*Theos*).

Thus there are two distinct gods.

The Father is unbegotten.

The Logos is begotten.

The Father derives His essence from none.

The Logos (Son) derives his essence from the Father.

The Father is subordinate to none.

The Logos (Son) is subordinate to the Father.

These distinctions prove beyond doubt that the Father and the Logos (Son) are two distinct beings who can never be numerically one.

To add further weight to my argument I quote from the “ History of Christian Doctrine ” by J. F. Bethune-Baker.

“ Justin speaks of the Logos in relation to God before creation as “ numerically other ” or distinct and as ‘ being with the Father,’ *i.e.*, as an individual person. All his highest titles, LORD, SON, WISDOM, and WORD are His, by virtue of His serving the Father’s purpose and being born by the Father’s will. Yet he is not the absolute God, who is unoriginate. The Logos has come into being.” (P. 124.)

“ It is for this very purpose of revealing God,” says Origen, “ that the Logos exists, and for this reason he has a personal subsistence side by side with the Father.” (P. 147.)

This is what I am trying to prove, *viz.*, that the Logos is not the God (Father) but a second god subsisting side by side with God—the Father.

Having demonstrated that St. John’s Gospel postulates two gods—one superior (Father), the other inferior (Son) I am in a position now to accuse Christianity of teaching Ditheism. That this verse posits

## LOGOS AND KENOTIC THEORIES

belief in two distinct Divine Persons is admitted by all the leading commentators of the Gospel. Theophylact, for instance, says :

“ Being with the Father, the word was a different person from the Father, and being God, he is co-equal with the Father.” (Quoted by Dr. Wordsworth in his “ Commentary on the New Testament,” Vol. I, p. 270.)

This abominable error of Ditheism was perceived by earnest Christian writers and theologians as early as the Second Century. For instance, the Alogoi, the Monarchians, the Patripassians, the Arians, the Apollinarians and the Sabellians.

Origen, too, felt its pinch, so he tried to solve the difficulty by inventing the theory of subordination. “ When God in the absolute sense is intended, like Philo, he prefixes the article ‘ ho ’ to *Theos* ; but leaves it out when designating the divinity in a derived sense,” that is, God proper is ‘ ho theos ’ and Jesus is simply ‘ theos,’ meaning thereby a Divine Being, but not God.\*

The Alogoi went straight to the root of the evil and rejected as spurious the Gospel of St. John which treats of the Logos ; while Arius, Sabellius and others rejected the dogma of Christ’s Divinity on the ground that God cannot be more than one ; but as these theologians and thinkers were condemned as heretics, I do not consider it necessary to quote their arguments here and ask the upholders of the dogma of the Divinity of Christ to come forward with their arguments to rebut the charge of Ditheism. The charge cannot be brushed aside or explained away by taking shelter in the bosom of “ mystery.” They should prove that the Father is none other than the Son ; and the Son is none other

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\* Neander—“ History of Christian Dogma,” Vol. I, p. 146.

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than the Father and that both these terms apply to one and the same being.

The history of the Church shows that many writers from the age of St. Augustine down to our own times have attempted to avoid the charge, but all in vain. The Father and the Son are two distinct individuals, having nothing in common but the Godhead (which, according to Tertullian, they share equally) and it is as impossible to prove that these two individuals are numerically one as to prove that a horse, and a cow, and a donkey are numerically one being.

The Father and the Son both are co-equal, so far as the Godhead is concerned but there is something in the Father which is lacking in the Son—something which makes Him the Father and not the Son and *vice versa*.

It was this destruction of Monotheism, which urged Swedenborg to revolt against the Nicene creed upheld both by the Catholic and the Protestant Churches. Below I quote a few pertinent passages from his work:

“The doctrine of the trinity, which the present Christian Church has accepted and admitted into its articles of faith, is that God the Father begat a son from eternity, then the Holy Spirit proceeded from both and that each separately is god. The mind cannot conceive this trinity except as a triumvirate or as the rule of three kings in one kingdom.” (P. 242.)

“A trinity of persons was unknown in the Apostolic Church, but was devised by the Nicene council and thence introduced into the Catholic Church.”

“From the Nicene and the Athanasian creeds has arisen a faith which has perverted the whole Christian Church.” (P. 248.)\*

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\* “The True Christian Religion,” by Swedenborg, pp. 242—48.

## LOGOS AND KENOTIC THEORIES

The truth of Swedenborg's assertion can be established by a perusal of any standard book on the history of Christian Church and history of Christian Dogma. It was in the Council of Nice in 325 A.C. that Jesus was transformed into a full-fledged God, not by the force of argument but by the force of *arms*. For a detailed account please read Dr. Draper's *Conflict between Science and Religion* and Dr. White's *History of the Warfare between Science and Theology*.

Now that I have clearly shown that the fourth Gospel teaches plain Ditheism, and the Church following in its footsteps makes *Jesus* 'real and true God' or in Dr. Liddon's words\* "Absolute God" I now proceed to show that St. Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians teaches something quite opposed to the Johannine doctrine, *viz.*, that Jesus was emptied of Godhead when he appeared in flesh. St. John says :

1. The Logos is God—"real God."
2. This very Logos—the real God—became incarnate in the person of Jesus son of Mary.
3. Jesus was God incarnate by virtue of the indwelling of the Logos.

St. Paul says :—

1. Jesus was in the form of God by virtue of the Logos which entered his body most probably in Mary's womb.
2. But when this Logos, who was in reality "in the form of God" entered the body of Jesus, he emptied himself of his Godhead, *i.e.*, was no more God for 33 years (*i.e.*, during the earthly sojourn of Jesus).

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\* Bampton Lectures "On the Divinity of our Lord," 1866.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

## THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

BY JULIAN HUXLEY

A MUSLIM'S COMMENT

BY S. M. HAFFAR

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the writer is to reinforce Islamic thoughts by an Islamic interpretation of Julian Huxley in his recent book *The Uniqueness of Man*. I have only chosen a few points to comment upon. The author raises in his chapter "Eugenics and Society" highly controversial subjects which I must leave alone. I recommend the book to my discerning fellow Muslims for, according to our Prophet, wisdom is like the stray animal of the faithful, who, wherever he finds it, seizes it.

### HUXLEY ON ANIMALS SHARING ETERNITY WITH MAN

(1) Huxley begins his book with discussing man's position in relation to the rest of the animals. Not aware of Islamic attitude on the subject he says : " Man saw himself as a being set apart, with the rest of the animal kingdom created to serve his needs and pleasure with no share in salvation, no position in eternity. (Page 1.)

### THE QUR-AN ON THE SAME SUBJECT AND BOSWORTH SMITH'S COMMENT

That the animal kingdom is made to serve man's needs and pleasure is confirmed by the Holy Book. (*vide* ch. xvi, vv. 1—6). But against these advantages Islam imposes corresponding moral obligations. These rest on the declaration in chapter 6, v. 38 : " There is not an animal on land (or water) nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end."



## THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

Bosworth Smith comments on this verse as follows :

“ And it is the common belief (among Muslims) that animals will share with man the general resurrection and be judged according to their works. At the slaughter of an animal, the Prophet ordered that the name of God should always be invoked, but the words “ The Compassionate and Merciful ” were to be omitted : for on the one hand such an expression seemed a mockery to the sufferers, and, on the other, he could not bring himself to believe that the destruction of any life, however necessary, could be altogether pleasing to the All-Merciful.”

“ In the name of God,” says a pious Musalman, before he strikes the fatal blow, “ God is most great : God give thee the patience to endure the affliction which He had allotted thee.” Then Bosworth Smith goes on to comment on these facts, which he quoted from Lane’s *Modern Egyptians* (1, 119) by saying :—

“ In the East, there has been no moralist like Bentham to insist in noble words on the extension of the sphere of morality to all sentient beings and to be ridiculed for it by people who call themselves religious ; there has been no naturalist like Darwin to demonstrate by his marvellous powers of his observation how large a part of the mental and moral faculties which we usually claim for ourselves alone, we share with other beings ; there has been no Oriental Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals ; but one reason of this is not far to seek. What the legislation of the last few years (writing in 1873) has attempted

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to do, and from the mere fact that it is legislation, must do ineffectually, has been long effected in the East, by the moral and religious sentiment, which, like almost everything that is good in that part of the world, can be traced back, in part at least, to the great Prophet of Arabia." (May the blessings of God be on him). *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* by Bosworth Smith, pp. 138, 139.

### HUXLEY ON RELIGION

- (2) "God has become more remote and more incomprehensible, and, most important of all, of less practical use to men and women who want guidance and consolation in living their lives. A faint trace of God, half metaphysical and half magical, still broods over our world, like the smile of a cosmic Cheshire cat. But the growth of psychological knowledge will rub even that from the universe." (P. 283). To console his religious readers Huxley goes on in the next paragraph to tell us: "However—and this is vital—the fading of God does not mean the end of religion. God's disappearance is, in the strictest sense of the word, a theological process: and while theologies "change, the religious impulses which gave them birth persist."

### SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN ISLAM

- (3) "Islamic culture embraced almost every field of intellectual activity—Theology, Jurisprudence, Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, Mathematics, Medicine, Astronomy, and Alchemy forming a synthesis common to all Muslim peoples. Natural science, far from being contrasted with religion, was included within its scope.

## THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

“Muslims who engaged in the pursuit of science, apart from a small minority did so to *discover in the wonders of nature, the signs and tokens of the glory of God.*” I quote the foregoing paragraph from the 13th chapter contributed by Nancy Lambton to the recent publication “Islam To-day,” to contrast the tendency in the West towards unbelief with that in Islam. She quotes Prof. Levy in his book “Sociology of Islam,” volume II, p. 346, to emphasise her point: “Even those, who were eager for abstract truth for its own sake, did not cease to remain true believers, so that the philosopher Abu Ali Bin Sina confesses in his Autobiography that he repaired to the mosque for prayer and inspiration, when he was at a loss in working out his problems.”<sup>1</sup>

We admit the confusion and even anarchy caused by the impact of Western materialism on some parts of Islam, but, as the editors of “Islam To-day” correctly observe (mainly referring to the New East): “Many of the most advanced Arab thinkers realise that without Islam the future holds barren prospects for those people, whose spiritual and intellectual greatness essentially depends upon their Muslim faith. They realise that to deprive an Arab or for that any Muslim of what has always been his chief spiritual font and to replace it by Western science or Western political doctrines means to place him in a spiritual vacuum.”<sup>2</sup>

No ! Muslims’ ultimate reaction to modern science is likely to be reinterpretation of Islamic principles in the light of Western sciences and learning ; for, after all, it is to Islam, mainly, that the West is indebted

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Qifti, *Tarikh-al-Hukama* Ed. Leipert (Leipzig) 1933, p. 415.

<sup>2</sup> *Islam To-day*—Arberry and Landau, p. 15.

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for its renaissance in the Middle Ages. Greek thought and philosophy is a common basis of both cultures.

HUXLEY ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GOD AND THE ASSUMPTION BY MAN OF THE TRUSTEESHIP OF LIFE'S FORCES AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES.

(4) "The disappearance of God means a recasting of religion, and a recasting of a fundamental sort. It means the shouldering by man of ultimate responsibilities which he had previously pushed off on to God." (P. 283.)

ISLAM AND THE TRUSTEESHIP OF MAN AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES

(5) The Qur-án has designated man "the vicegerent of God" and the allegorical story in chapter 2, vv. 30, 34, leaves us, Muslims, in no doubt either as to our trusteeship or our responsibilities. Unlike Huxley we need not dismiss God from His office as the Great Architect, the Evolver and Maintainer of the cosmos or "Rabb-ul-Alamin," in order to assure the trusteeship and responsibility on this earth. In fact, these are more realisable when man believes in God, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient, than otherwise. I even suspect in Huxley the desire of usurping the throne of God for himself and his like and worshipping themselves, instead of God, Whom he represents, on his own admission, under the title "Life's forces."

As to man's responsibility and potentialities from a Muslim point of view, we have the authority of the Holy Qur-án in chapter 45, v. 13 for accepting Huxley's assertion that "We are the trustees of the evolutionary process." This verse, preceded by several verses, calling man to study nature, reads: "And He has subjected to you (both actually and potentially), as from Him (Who is the source of all power) all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth."

## THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

With Trusteeship goes responsibility, hence accountability to God, ultimately, is the most fundamental teaching of Islam. "Every one of you," says our Prophet, "is a trustee and is responsible for his trust." In a solemn manner the glorious Qur-án (ch. 33, vv. 72, 73) refers to this concept : "We did indeed offer the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof, but man undertook it ; he was indeed unjust and foolish, (with the result) that God had to punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the unbelieving men and women, for God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful."

This is a parable meant to point to the uniqueness of man in creation. Deep and subtle truths cannot be expressed except in allegorical terms. Listen to Allama, (meaning the very learned) Yusuf Ali in his English Translation of the Holy Book : "The heavens, the earth, and the mountains, *i.e.* other creatures of God, besides man, refused to undertake a trust or a responsibility and may be imagined as happy without a choice of good or evil being given through their will. In saying that they refused, we imply a will but we limit it by the statement that they did not undertake it to be given a choice between good and evil.

"They preferred to submit their will entirely to God's will, which is all-wise and perfect, and which would give them far more happiness than a faculty of choice, with their imperfect knowledge. Man was too audacious and ignorant to realise this, and the result has been that man as a race has been disrupted ; the evil ones had betrayed the trust and brought punishment on themselves, though the good have been able to rise far above other creation, to be the *Muqarrabin*, the nearest ones to God." Further on Yusuf Ali says : Referring to man's generic covenant (with God), (see chapter 7, v. 172) which flowed from

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his exercising the option given to him,—choosing will, forbearance, love and mercy,—made it necessary that breach of it should carry its own punishment. Breach of it is here classed under two heads: those who betray their trust act either as hypocrites or as unbelievers. Hypocrites are those who profess faith but bring not forth the fruits of faith. Unbelievers are those who openly defy faith, and from whom no fruits of faith are to be expected.”

### HUXLEY ON MAN AS THE CULMINATION IN THE PROCESS OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION

“Man represents the culmination of that process of organic evolution, which has been proceeding on this planet for over a thousand million years. This process, however wasteful and cruel it may be, and into however blind alleys it may have been diverted, is also in one aspect progressive. Man has now become the sole representative of life in that progressive aspect and its sole trustee for any progress in the future.” (P. 32).

### THE QUR-AN ON THE EVOLUTION OF MAN AND ALL LIFE

(7) Muslims believe that the Qur-án has neglected nothing from its purview: “Nothing have We omitted from the Qur-án.” (ch. 6, v. 38). So they expect and do receive valuable inspiration from the Holy Book in their pursuit of knowledge. Listen to such hints: “There surely came over man a period of time, when he was not a thing that could be spoken of.” (lxxvi: 1). In this verse the Holy Book confirms the long process of evolution during which man rose from insignificance to eminence, and in another verse (ch. 29, v. 20) Muslims are told, “Travel through the earth and see how God did originate creation.” . . . So as to understand the mysteries of creation and evolution.

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Faith and Reason are intended to work in harmony by Islam, and not to conflict against one another. Revelation only shows the direction, reason unravels the mystery and discovers the law regulating the process. "Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation) before We clove them asunder? And that We made from water everything living? Will they then not believe?" (Ch. xxi, v. 30).

What a grand revelation given in the early seventh century to an unlettered Prophet! Huxley would not likely become an atheist, had he been born into such rational traditions. We now know the implication of these marvellous assertions of the Holy Qur-án; and modern cosmogony confirms them. In water life had its beginning, as we understand life on this planet.

### HUXLEY ON THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC OF MAN

(8) I am here going to quote at length from Huxley, because of the richness of his observations; "The first and most obviously unique characteristic of man is his capacity for conceptional thought; if you prefer objective terms, you will say: His employment of *true speech*, but that is only another way of saying the same thing. True speech involves the use of verbal signs for objects, not merely for feelings. Plenty of animals can express the fact that they are hungry but none except man can ask for an egg or a banana. And to have *words* for *objects* at once implies conceptional thought, since an object is always one of a class . . . . *Words* are tools which automatically carve concepts out of experience. The faculty of recognising objects as numbers of a class provides the potential basis for the concept: the use of words at once actualises the potentiality.

"This basic human property has had many consequences. The most important was the development

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of *accumulative tradition*. The beginning of tradition, by which experience is transmitted from one generation to the next, are to be seen in many higher animals. But in no case is the tradition cumulative.

“Offspring learn from parents, but they learn the same kind and quality of lessons, as they, in turn, impart; the transmission of experience never bridges more than one generation. In man, however, tradition is an independent and potentially permanent activity, capable of indefinite improvement in quality and increase in quantity. It constitutes a new accessory process of heredity in evolution, running side by side with the biological process, a heredity of experience to supplement the universal heredity of living substance.

“The existence of a cumulative tradition has its chief consequence or, if you prefer, its objective manifestation—the progressive improvement of human tools and machinery. Many animals employ tools; but they are always crude tools employed in a crude way. Elaborate tools and skilled technique can develop only with the aid of *speech and tradition*.

“In the perspective of evolution, tradition and tools are the characters which have given man his dominant position among organism.

“And speech is as much the physical basis of conceptual thought as is protoplasm the physical basis of life. The essential character of man as a dominant organism is conceptual thought.”

### THE QUR-AN AND THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC OF MAN—TRUE SPEECH

(9) In an allegorical story, the Holy Book (ch. 2, verses 31—33), describes a scene in which the angels appear to object to man being made God's vicegerent or representative on earth, owing to man's early wicked behaviour as witnessed by them. To show the limitations of the angels and the progressive and limitless



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potential development of man, a test was made as to who can, of the two, angels and man, give names to objects. When the angels failed and Man or Adam succeeded, they owned their ignorance and limitations and bowed to the verdict. We now quote in full this episode from the Qur-án, ch. 2, verses 30--33.

“Behold, thy Lord said to the angels ; I will create a vicegerent on earth ; they said : Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood ? (How appropriate this description is of man in these war days !) Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy Holy Name. He said : I know what ye know not.

“And He taught Adam (Man) the names of all things, then He placed them before the angels, and said : Tell Me the names of these if ye are right.

“They said : Glory to Thee, of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us : In truth, it is Thou Who are perfect in knowledge and wisdom.

“He said : O Adam ! Tell them their names. When he told them, God said : Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of Heaven and Earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal ! ”

### HUXLEY ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH MAN MUST NOW ASSUME

[From his chapter on “Religion as an objective problem.]

(10) (i) “First, responsibility for carrying on in face of the world’s mystery and man’s own ignorance. In previous ages that burden was shifted on to Divine inscrutability : God moves in a mysterious way ! . . . Now we lay it to the account of our own ignorance and face the *possibility that ignorance of ultimates may through the limitations of our nature be permanent.*

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(ii) "Next, the responsibility for the long range control of destiny" . . . .

(iii) "Thirdly, and most urgently, responsibility for the immediate help and happiness of the species, for the enhancement of life on this earth, now and in the immediate future—poverty, slavery, ill-health, social-misery, democracy, kingship, this or that economic or political system—they do not inhere inevitably in a divinely appointed order of things: they are phenomena to be understood and controlled in accordance with our desire, just as much as the phenomena of Chemistry or Electricity."

(iv) "Finally there is the question of the immediate future of religion." Huxley considers the breakdown of religion in the West as "irremediable", but he holds the hope for humanity when science achieves real understanding and control of the forces and processes operating in human societies. "The applications of scientific discovery in this field will," in the opinion of Huxley, "have as their goal what we call the socialised state, in the promotion of which the religious impulse will find its outlet."

One of Huxley's prophecies is the future "subordination" or adjustment of nationalistic element in socialised religion "to the internationalist"; that the persecution of minorities "will give place to toleration; that the subtle intellectual and moral virtues will find a place and will gradually oust the cruder from their present pre-eminence in the religiously conceived social organism." Huxley then realises that the psychological problems confronting the development of the socialised state must be faced up and there also science, specially social psychology, will come into its own. At the end Huxley hopes that in the socialised state the relation between religion and science will gradually

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cease to be one of conflict and will become one of co-operation.

Muslims and Islam look upon the future of which Huxley speaks as a period of reintegration of nations after bitter and costly experiences. We believe that Islam without any detriment to its theistic elements will play a leading part in the realisation of Huxley's noble vision of society.

### HUXLEY ON SALVATION: A COMBINATION OF THE IDEALIST AND THE REALIST

(11) "If we translate salvation into terms of this world, we find that it means achieving harmony between different parts of our nature, including its subconscious depths--and its rarely touched heights, and also achieving some satisfactory adjustment between ourselves and the outer world, including not only the world of nature, but the social world of man." "I believe," Huxley goes on to say, "it is possible and valuable to achieve a sense of union with something bigger than our ordinary selves, even if that something be not a God but an extension of our narrow view, to include in a single grasp ranges of our outer experience and inner nature on which we do not ordinarily draw"! (Page 294).

### ISLAM ON SALVATION

(12) With some modification, which permits the reinstatement of God in our consciousness, we Muslims could agree with Huxley's ideas on salvation. "With Islam," says Sir Muhammad Iqbal, "the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces which cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists not in a total breach with the real, which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view eventually to absorb it, to convert it

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into itself and to illuminate its whole being. It is the sharp opposition between the subject and the object, the Mathematical without and the Biological within that impressed Christianity. Islam, however, faces the opposition with a view to overcome it. This essential difference in looking at a fundamental relation determines the respective attitudes of these great religions towards the problem of human life in its present surroundings. Both demand the affirmation of the spiritual self in man, with this difference only, that Islam, recognising the contact of the ideal with the real says "Yes" to the world of matter and points the way to master it with a view to discover a basis for a realistic regulation of life." ("The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," page 9).

In a tabloid form it can be put: Salvation is in realising peace and harmony internally and externally in "Islam" as the meaning of the word implies in Arabic.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

LHAKSAR JN.,

E. I. RLY.

To

MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD,

EDITOR, *Islamic Review*, LAHORE.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

I am a regular subscriber of *Islamic Review* and an ardent Muslim having full faith in Islam and in the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad; that is why I have taken the liberty of seeking your help in the following matters, *viz.*,—

- (1) My non-Muslim friends ask me as to why the Lunar System in the Islamic Calendar is observed which is decidedly defective

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as compared to the Solar System adopted by all other civilised nations of the world.

- (2) In what respect is Islamic Socialism superior to that of the theory of Karl Marx as practised in Russia ?

I feel no shame in disclosing to my brethren that I fail to satisfy my friends as referred above and detailed answers to my questions will greatly oblige me.

Thanking you.

Yours fraternally,

(SYED) ABUL KASEM,

*Malaria Inspector, E. I. Rly.,*

*Lhaksar.*

---

## THE REPLY

(1) Muslims have not been averse to measuring time with reference to the Sun. The times of prayers are fixed with reference to it. The fast commences and ends with reference to its rise and setting. The Akbari calendar, which is still in vogue, is based on the solar calculation. The reasons why the Muslims adopted the lunar calculation in regard to its era, are many. One is that all pre-Islamic religions had fallen a prey to sun-worship. The latest of these to appear, *i.e.*, Christianity, was very hopelessly lost in the sun-worshipping cult. If you want to go into the question you should do well to read that remarkable work, "The Sources of Christianity," by the late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamaluddin. The sun having so much to do with the life and vitality of animal life, the unsophisticated human mind naturally falls in prostration before it. This lesson of history was not lost upon Islam. It was, therefore, very careful in this matter. That is why it forbids prayer exactly at sunrise, midday and sunset and avoids the chances of its festivals taking place in any particular solar season.

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Incidentally, the lunar calculation makes our fasting month rotate through different seasons of the year, thus precluding the possibility of the believers grumbling about the rigours of any particular season and suggesting another season which would have been better for fasting. There is, however, a deeper and stronger reason for adopting the lunar calculation for religious observances in Islam. The moon in some respects seems to have a deeper action on the world than even the sun. The tides of the sea and the monthly changes in the physical constitution of women are evidences of this action. Even the Hindus, who are so particular about the solar system of measuring time, acknowledge this. The eleventh, the fourteenth and the last day of the lunar month are particularly recognised by them in certain religious observances. The Christian Easter is observed on a joint calculation of the solar month and the lunar day. There is something in this.

The thing is that the sun's action on the physical world is of a general nature, whereas the moon has, in some respects, a deeper action on the physical and the moral world than even the sun. The Islamic Calendar, being based on the revealed Word of God, cannot have failed to take into consideration those hidden factors of human existence that are connected with the moon in its spherical movements.

(2) As for the superiority of Islamic Socialism over Marxian Socialism. To start with, according to Marxism, human nature is too low to be trusted with private property. In other words, if you allow a person to acquire property and to use it to any extent and in any way he likes, he is sure to be selfish and dishonest and callous. He will exploit the ignorance and weakness of others to his own advantage. He will fatten himself at the cost of others. It is proposed, therefore, to kill this tendency of self-aggrandisement

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in him by closing the door against all acquisition. All property should belong to the state, all wealth should be in the control of the Government. The idea is splendid but the question is: What should be the incentive for an individual to put forth the fullest labour he is capable of? He is to receive only what every man or woman will receive for his or her sustenance and comfort. But he feels—and he may be right—that he is better than many others in producing wealth. Will he not be inclined to work or produce less than what he is capable of?

The Marxist would say that the individual should be an altruist. He should work to his full capacity in a spirit of benevolence. But how many are there who are able to exhibit this high quality of mind? There are, no doubt, persons who would come up to this standard, but their number must be very small. An average man of the world cannot afford to be so benevolent. Besides, if a man is inclined to be selfish with private property, he is bound to show a corresponding psychological reaction when you forcibly deprive him of the chances of acquiring such property. The fact is that a first-rate benevolent man will remain benevolent with enormous private property and a strictly selfish man will remain so even under the most thoroughgoing Soviet system. An enforced Socialism will take away from the average man the only incentive to efficient and vigorous action and thus reduce the national energy to the minimum. Nay, it may even bring about a national collapse.

The difficulty of our Marxist friends lies in their improper understanding of human feelings. They fail to realise that there is nothing fundamentally base and evil in human nature. All passions in the human mind, such as anger, greed, jealousy etc. are at bottom noble emotions in their crude form. Given a

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proper culture, these can be sublimated into noble creative faculties. What is called pious indignation is, for instance, a sublimated form of anger. Similarly, love of self, otherwise known as selfishness, given a proper training can be sublimated into the powerful moral quality of love for one's species. This is the view taken by Islam. It never tries to kill any passion. All its efforts are directed towards the regularisation and sublimation of passions. It does not believe that you can create any noble quality in man by killing any of his instinctive urges. Every urge must have its proper field of play. And all the noble qualities of human mind have invariably their roots in these so-called passions. The passion for the acquisition of wealth and property, being one of these fundamental urges of the human mind, Islam, rather than killing it, has sought to guide it along proper channels to see it sublimated into a noble creative quality. It is a truism that he alone can be sacrificing who is capable of being selfish. One who is incapable of working for himself is incapable of working for others. Altruism must have its start in selfishness. Islam, accordingly, stands for private property, so as to maintain the enthusiasm in the individual for the largest amount of work he is capable of. It knows that the two strongest urges that lie at the root of all vigorous and productive action in the average man are his desire for a control over the fruits of his labour and his anxiety for a provision against bad days and for his offspring. But it is also aware that these two urges may run amuck and create mischief. They may make a person inordinately inclined to hoarding and to exploitation. So, though not seeking to root the passion out, it confidently takes upon itself the rather difficult yet beneficial task of closing all the doors against their overflow. It allows the individual to acquire private



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property but only through lawful trade and commerce. It bans all sorts of monopoly. It is deadly opposed to all forms of unearned income and unproductive labour. In fact it is this stiff standard of productive labour set by it that has made this religion look puritanical in its attitude towards what is popularly known as "art." Usury has been condemned in the strongest language. And when a man of productive faculties has accumulated wealth by these legitimate means and is in need of guidance as to its proper use, he is required by the law of Islam to part with one-fortieth part of his savings at the end of each year as a religious obligation. The institution that demands this payment is called *Zakat*, which primarily means "purifying." The idea is that any property or wealth in which the rights of the poor and the needy are not recognised is impure. This conception of property goes a long way in creating softness in the minds of the 'haves' for the 'have nots.' It also removes the sting from the act of charity that injures the self-respect of those in need of help. The Qur-án clearly lays down that it is no charity but a duty which a rich man performs towards the poor in extending to them the hand of help. The actual Arabic word used in this connection is *haqq* which scarcely needs any elucidation. But *Zakat* is the minimum claim on the wealth of the rich. Apart from this obligatory alms, there are recommendations for optional acts of charity. The idea in Islam seems to be something like "the more you spend the nearer you are to God." Everywhere in the Qur-án you will find exhortations for spending in charity. And when, at the end of a life spent in charitable munificence, one is about to leave this world, one is served with the following notice :

"Bequest is prescribed for you when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for

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parents and near relatives, according to usage, a duty (incumbent) upon those who guard (against evil)." (2 : 180).

So to be a true Muslim one has to make a bequest for charitable purposes out of the property one has acquired. And lastly comes the distribution of the remainder among a large number of legal successors. Indeed the law of inheritance is so designed in Islam as to make a huge property or treasure acquired by any one scattered beyond recognition in the third generation. The distribution at each successive death proceeds in a geometrical progression. Thus, while leaving the individual economic genius to apply his talents to the full in the production of wealth and giving him the titular rights of possession over his own earnings, Islam so regulates the expenses and disbursements of a believer as to achieve the object of modern socialism without any commotion in the social life of humanity or any violence to human nature and its instincts. In brief, the difference between the plan of Islam and that of Socialism is like the one between an expert doctor with a scientific knowledge of the human body and of the properties of medicines and a quack who handles with rashness cases involving enormous risks to the lives of men. In a way, it is a challenge thrown out by human vanity to the beneficent guidance of God, Who is the only Being truly knowing the laws of human nature.

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