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(Continued on page 2)

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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

The picture on the cover is that of the famous Court of the Lions in the Palace of al-Hamra (the world-famous Alhambra) at Granada, Spain. The Palace was begun by a Moorish King, Ibn al-Ashmar (1248 C.E.) and completed by his grandson, Muhammad III, about 1314 C.E. The principal decorator was Yusuf I, who rebuilt and repainted the Palace. Traces of his work are preserved in the Palace as it stands today.

The picture of the Court of the Lions brings out forcefully the lightness and elegance of the columns and arches and the richness of ornamentation, which are truly unsurpassed and for which it is so deservedly famed.

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Abdul 'Aziz Shara, Esq., Editor, Roshni, Srinagar, Kashmir.
Morocco's lead in enacting laws governing the personal Status of Muslims

The confusion in the world of Islam on matters relating to personal status

Morocco, although the last in the list of Muslim countries to shake off the yoke of Europe's colonialism, has to its credit of being the first Muslim country to introduce a legislation governing the personal status of Muslim Moroccans which is not repugnant to the Qur'ân and the Sunnah. The new law, of which details are given below, plays a keen acumen on the part of its rulers, headed by His Majesty King Muhammad V, into the spirit of the laws of the Qur'ân. It also points the way in which the Muslim world can keep abreast of the changing conditions of the modern times.

It is common knowledge that the Muslim world of today suffers acutely from a sense of a divided personality which is responsible for a great waste of its energy which would be usefully employed in so many spheres of life. This fact also accounts for the hesitancy which one notices in its attitudes to some of the pressing social and economic problems. Having a glorious past has not made its task any the lighter. Modern conditions demand of it at times to break loose from its traditions. But it reacts rather nervously when it comes face to face with such vital problems as interest, the zakat, whether the zakat should be levied on the capital or on the income, marital life involving the issues of polygamy, the veil, divorce, to name but a few. For it thinks, in taking decisions, it might be disloyal to its past. This confusion has led to the emergence of a considerably important section of men and women who hold that many laws of the Qur'ân and the Shari'ah cannot very well fit into the framework of modern life. As against this there is an even stronger section represented by the religious scholars who wield a great sway over the minds and views of the Muslim peoples at large that rejects categorically any such suggestion. This silent mental struggle for supremacy, to say the least, over the minds of peoples of Islam, offers a bewildering phenomenon to the non-Muslim observer.

Modern trends in Moroccan countries in regard to matters of personal status

Of the many obstacles which beset the path of a non-Muslim in appreciating the religion of Islam and its social system, peculiarly its own, one of the principal ones is to be found in its laws and customs that govern the life of Muslims in all their countries. The palpable stagnation of Muslims in all fields of life has not helped to make matters any the easier either. The laws of the Qur'ân governing family life, marriage, divorce, polygamy, are in apparent clash with the trends of social reforms in some Muslim countries. The confusion becomes worse when one sees the glaring contradiction between the dictates of the Qur'ân and what the people and their governments do and enact. For instance, the Qur'ân definitely permits polygamy, although it hedges it with many provisos so as to make it a virtual impracticability. But in the Muslim world, not only has it been held and preached by eminent jurists and religious scholars and authorities that a Muslim can take unto himself at his sweet will more than one wife under the plea that it is a privilege granted him by God Himself and that he alone is the sole and ultimate arbiter in this matter, but also the modern tendency in the modern Muslim States has been to abolish it by law altogether in open defiance of the words of the Qur'ân. Turkey was the first country to legislate against polygamy in the twenties of this century. Tunisia introduced a similar legislation last year. In countries like Pakistan and Egypt, although there is no definite legislation as yet against polygamy, there is a clear expression of opinion demanding
legislation to regulate the personal status of Muslims of these countries. Only very recently a very eminent jurist of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Z. H. Lari, a Judge of the West Pakistan High Court, in the course of a speech which he delivered on the occasion of inaugurating the Sir Syed Girls' College Union at Karachi, advised women voters to make sure in the coming elections of Pakistan that they voted for those who gave a solemn pledge in their election manifestos to protect women's rights and privileges. Mr. Lari admitted that men had taken undue advantage of Islam's permissive law about polygamy. He told the students that Islam gave this permission for limited purposes and that it was therefore necessary that a law should be enacted in respect of polygamy and courts should be allowed to decide as to when a man could take advantage of this law. He added: "Unless the court gave the verdict that a man was justified to contract a second marriage, because the circumstances as envisaged in Islam existed in favour of such a marriage, nobody should be allowed to indulge in polygamy."

In the midst of this confusion, it is refreshing to find that the Government of Morocco has taken a step which not only has the unique distinction of interpreting the law of the Qur'an on polygamy to suit the requirements of modern life, but also rehabilitates the position of Islam as a social system.

The Moroccan decree on personal status

The Dahir (Decree) of 22nd November 1957, which came into force as from 1st January 1958, makes radical changes in the institution of marriage in Morocco. The prime concern of the legislative body which drew up the new reforms was to abolish certain abusive and outdated practices. The main features of the Dahir are:

1. For the first time the women of Morocco will have the right to choose their husbands. Parental compulsion is no longer permitted. The marriageable age is set at over 15 in the case of the girl and 18 in the case of the boy.

2. In the past, the man had the right to take a second wife even without the consent of his wife. Now the first wife can, by law, secure a guarantee from the husband against a second marriage. She can also, contrary to traditional practice, sue for divorce.

In the event of a remarriage, the law stipulates that the prospective wife should be informed if her suitor is already married so that her consent is given with the full knowledge of the facts.

Princess Zahra of Morocco's explanatory observations

In conclusion, we believe we cannot do better than quote the words of Her Royal Highness Princess Zahra, wife of His Royal Highness the Moroccan Ambassador to Great Britain, from a speech on the "Social and Cultural Life of Moroccan Women" which she made on 19th February 1958 before the Barnet Townswomen's Guild, Barnet, England. In developing the theme of the Royal Decree she said:

"1. MARRIAGE. A Royal Law has been recently passed in Morocco which limits the age when persons may marry. It is now decreed that no man may marry under the age of eighteen years and no woman under the age of fifteen years. Hitherto, young girls were often forced into marriage contracts at a tender age with tragic results. This law, also, gave a woman, for the first time, the right to choose her husband herself. Hitherto, this was usually decided by her father without prior consultation with the girl concerned. This law, in addition, defines the rights and duties of both parties entering into the marriage.

"2. POLYGAMY. This was one of the great problems which Moroccan women have always had to face. In the past, the man had the right, without question, to enter into matrimony with more than one woman. However, this right has now been drastically restricted. Where a wife is incapable of bearing children, the husband may take to himself another wife, but only with the prior consent and full agreement of his first wife. If this is withheld, he then has the choice of continuing to live monogamously with his wife, or instituting proceedings for divorce. However, as an extra precaution, all such cases are weighed on their merits in a court of law before any definite decision is reached.

"3. DIVORCE. In the past, a husband had a completely free hand to divorce his wife under any pretext or whim without obtaining judgment. In addition, he was not responsible for her maintenance for longer than three or four months after the separation. This power has now been taken from the husband, and vested in the official court of law. Again, the court will weigh up impartially the pros and cons of such a dispute and make a fair and equitable decision. Therefore, now, in the eyes of the law, men and women stand on an equal footing. For the first time, women are completely protected from their previous victimization."
ISLAM'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS AND RELATIONS WITH OTHER FAITHS

Universality of Divine Revelation the exclusive contribution of Islam to the Religious Thought of Mankind

The First Chapter of Human Rights granted by the Qur'an

Unification: Co-operation: Co-existence

By MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN

"This Qur'anic declaration of La Ikraha fi al-Din (No coercion in the matter of religion) may justly be described as the first Magna Carta of intellectual freedom that was given to humanity. That in this age of enlightenment the United Nations should make freedom of thought and conscience the corner-stone of its Charter is understandable. But to have proclaimed the sanctity of the human personality and the birthright of the individual to follow the light of his own conscience in an age when despotism and social tyranny were at their height could be possible only through the light of revelation which the Qur'an brought."

Sources of all religions are one

Islam's attitude towards other faiths covers three alternative levels. At the highest level, Islam tells other revealed faiths:

"We are, in essence, all one. What your Founders taught was exactly what constitutes the sum and substance of the Qur'anic revelation, viz., doing God's will, which is Islam's literal meaning as well as the burden of its message. The Qur'an is no new message, it only recapitulates the teachings of all the previous scriptures in their pristine purity" (The Qur'an, 5: 48; 98: 3).

Hence in accepting the Qur'anic revelation, you will, in fact, be recapturing what your Founders really taught, but was lost through the ravages of long ages. This is the basic attitude of Islam towards other faiths, which needs greater appreciation than it has hitherto received.

Islam invites all religions to co-operate for a common objective

Before, however, I pass on to a fuller treatment of this basic Islamic philosophy of religion, I would dispose of its two other less alternative attitudes. One of these calls other revealed faiths towards mutual co-operation on the basis of the common factor of faith in God with a view to promoting the cause of truly spiritual values, and combating the forces of materialism and Godlessness. This attitude has been laid down in explicit words in the verse:

"Say: O people of the Book, come to a proposition which is common between us and you, that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that some of us shall not take others for gods besides one God" (The Qur'an, 3: 63).

On this verse were based the epistles which the Prophet addressed to three neighbouring rulers of the day and despatched them by special emissaries. The one addressed to Makauksis of Egypt, unearthed in the original in recent times, contains this verse word for word, which, incidentally, establishes the authenticity of the Qur'anic text that has been handed down to us. It is thus obvious that Islam, from its very inception, has aimed at bringing all the religions of the world closer together, and extended a hand of fellowship towards them.

The attitude of hostility that, unfortunately, came to mark the relationship of Islam and its immediate neighbour-
ing revealed religions — Judaism and Christianity — was certainly not of Islam’s seeking. It was thrust on it, in spite of itself, by the political exigencies which, inevitably, entangle religious movements.

Islam’s friendly attitude may be judged from the well-known historical event when a Christian deputation from the Province of Najran (in the Yemen) called at Medina to examine the Prophet’s credentials to the claim of being God’s messenger. The deputation was received with all honour and hospitality, and, for want of better accommodation, was invited to put up in the Prophet’s mosque at Medina. When Sunday came and the visitors expressed anxiety as to where they could hold their service, the Prophet told them they were welcome to hold it in the mosque itself.

Co-existence between religions is necessary

The last and not the least decent relationship which Islam wants to subsist between man and man, whether following some revealed religion or not, is one of co-existence. Since perhaps it is a counsel of perfection for all faiths to appreciate Islam’s high-level exposition of religious truth as consisting in its principle of the universality of revelation and the basic identity of the message of all revealed religions, and since co-operation in a common cause is also too high an objective for popular appreciation and response, the only other practical proposition possible is that of co-existence. And this Islam offers to all others in no uncertain terms in the verse:

“Say, O disbelievers! I worship not that which you worship, nor do you worship Him Whom I worship. You follow your religion, I follow mine” (The Qur’an, 109:1-6).

Universality of revelation

To revert to the main current of inter-religious relationship indicated in the beginning, it stems from these two principles which constitute the very foundations of Islam. These are: (1) universality of revelation; and (2) complete freedom of conscience.

Universality of revelation itself flows from the concept of the unity of God. The Divine Being, as pictured in the Qur’an, is the Creator, Sustainer and Upbringer of the whole of mankind — indeed of the whole of the universe. It follows as a logical corollary from this basic concept that God must be equally interested in the moral and spiritual well-being of all nations, irrespective of race, colour, time or location, even as His bounties meant for the physical sustenance and nourishment of man make no discrimination between man and man. Revelation, which is indispensable for man’s spiritual development, according to the Qur’an, was, therefore, vouchsafed for man’s guidance from the very dawn of human life on this earth. Says the Book:

“There has not been a nation but a warner was sent unto it” (35:34).

Faith in the fact of universality of revelation is thus the cornerstone of Islam. The very first chapter of the Qur’an after the Fatiha, which in a way is the preamble to the Book, lays down faith in this truism as the basic element in a truly religious attitude. This Book purports to be a guidance, so run the opening verses of this chapter, for those who, among a few other basic things, believe in the Qur’anic revelation as well as in all the pre-Qur’anic revelations.

All these revelations are considered to have been the vehicle of one and the same message — viz., faith in God and doing His will. In fact, complete self-surrender to God’s will is the literal significance of Islam as well as the sum and substance of its message. That was the message brought by all the Founders of religions in their day to their respective people in their own languages. In other words, Islam in the sense of doing God’s will was the common message given to mankind age after age through the various prophets. Of Abraham, for instance, it is said that when God said unto him Aslîm (surrender thyself to God’s will), he said: “I do surrender myself to God’s will” (The Qur’an, 2:131). The words aslîm and aslantu used here are derivatives from the same root as Islam. The same is the description given of other religious teachers mentioned in the Qur’an.

Islam, in this broader sense, is thus as old as mankind — Judaism, Christianity and other revealed religions being so many of its manifestations in different epochs of history. The Qur’anic revelation was the last link in the same chain.

Faith in all world prophets is enjoined by Islam

In keeping with this basic outlook on the relationship between God and man, religion, in its basic significance, is considered to have been one and the same throughout the ages, the various prophets being just so many channels for that same light. A Muslim is therefore enjoined to profess faith in Divine origin and mission of all the world prophets (The Qur’an, 2:136), of whom some are mentioned in the Qur’an by name, while all the rest have been referred to in a general way in the words:

“And certainly we sent messengers before thee — of them are those We have mentioned to thee, and of them there are those we have not mentioned to thee” (The Qur’an, 40:78).

The Qur’anic teaching on the point does not stop short at this. Mere acceptance of all world teachers, including the Prophet Muhammad, is not considered enough. Carried to the logical conclusion, the principle of universality of revelation connotes that all the world prophets were but one family, and so far as their acceptance is concerned, a Muslim has been enjoined not to make any discrimination between them. A Muslim, according to the Qur’anic conception of the term, cannot be a Muslim unless he accepts Abraham, Moses, Jesus and all other world prophets as much as the Prophet Muhammad (The Qur’an, 2:136). The reason advanced for this attitude of non-discrimination is specially noteworthy. We are to accept all without any discrimination because, it is argued, what we are concerned with is the Divine light they brought, which was one and the same.

The emphasis on non-discrimination between the Founders of world religions shows a profound psychological insight releasing a tremendous force for goodwill between the followers of various religions. An incident from the Prophet’s life should give an idea of the importance this principle carried in the Prophet’s eyes as a potent factor for promoting inter-religious goodwill. An argument between some Jews and Muslims as to the comparative greatness of Moses and Muhammad led to a fracas between the two parties. When the news was brought to the Prophet he deprecated this kind of invidious comparison between prophets and prophets: al-Anbiya’u Ikhwatun (all prophets are brothers) he declared.

Identity of moral teachings

Besides this basic significance, which concerns man’s relationship to God, another aspect of religion concerns man’s relationship to man. Here again, all revealed religions, according to Islam, are agreed on the need of right conduct. Faith in God and right conduct (Iman and Amaal al-salihah) are the two rails, as it were, on which man must steer the course of his life if he is to attain the state of bliss known by different names in different religions. Self-surrender to God and kindness towards fellow-man sums
up the essence of religion in Islam. That is how the Prophet himself, in reply to a question to give the substance of religion, put in a nutshell the whole of the teaching of Islam: Al-'Azamato illah, wa Shukrata tala Khala 'illah (a sense of God’s majesty and kindliness towards His creation) was the brief answer he gave. In this aspect of religion pertaining to what may be called man’s moral behaviour, the teachings of all religions, according to Islam, were essentially the same. All enjoined the need of right conduct and love of fellow-man.

Diversity in devotional practices is recognized by Islam

There is a third aspect of religion, however, which, though perhaps the least in the scale of importance, is commonly taken by the multitudes of the faithful to constitute the whole content of religion. These are the devotional practices prescribed by various religions. The Qur’ān takes good care to draw a line of demarcation between these and the real essence of religion. Time and again has it been emphasized. God Himself, says the Qur’ān, does not force an end, not the end in themselves, and unless the real purpose underlying these is achieved, these observances carry little value. This is how the Qur’ān deprecates ritualism devoid of the moral and spiritual content these devotional observances are supposed to underline:

“It is no virtue that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but virtue consists in this that one may have faith in God, in the Last Day, the angels, revelation, and prophets, and give away wealth, out of God’s love, to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and to those who ask for help, and to set slaves free” (The Qur’ān, 2 : 177).

Likewise about animal sacrifice it has been made perfectly clear that unless it induces a mental attitude of self-surrender and self-sacrifice in the path of God, the act of sacrifice, as such, is of little value.

In respect of devotional practices, Islam recognizes diversity. Different religions, it teaches, prescribed different devotional practices for their followers, and in their day, all were equally good and valid. The Qur’ān describes these as manasik, which took different forms in different dispensations, as declared in a clear verse:

“To every people We prescribed practices of devotion which they observed” (The Qur’ān, 22 : 67).

The implication that follows from this recognition of diversity in religious forms is of far-reaching value for inter-religious harmony. It is mostly the forms of worship that divide followers of various religions in mutual understanding and sympathy. Recognition of the scope of diversity in these forms should naturally remove one big cause of division between religion and religion. Muslim mystics have throughout the ages sung of the underlying unity in the diversity of forms and rituals observed by all religions. In their spiritual flights they go to the extent of seeing no difference between the Ka‘bah and the temple of idol-worship. What they meant to emphasize was the underlying urge in both, viz., the quest after God.

Freedom of thought and conscience is a basic thought of Islam

The other basic teaching of Islam which determines its attitude towards other religions is complete freedom of thought and conscience. La Ikraha fi al-Din (No coercion in the matter of religion) is the categorical declaration of the Qur’ān. Freedom in the choice of religion is repeatedly emphasized. God Himself, says the Qur’ān, does not force a choice on man. He just shows the right way through the light of revelation, and leaves it to man to accept it or reject it (The Qur’ān, 76 : 3). From this fundamental concept spring the virtue of tolerance, and the right of freedom of profession, worship, preaching and conversion.

Differences of opinion must not only be tolerated; they must be respected. If on the one hand there can be no compromise in the matter of Truth, and notions of religion which Islam considers wrong must be rebutted, it is urged on the other that the rebuttal must be free from all sting of bitterness. Argument with other faiths must be couched in the best of taste, and the approach to convince others must be in the best of forms. There is a specific verse to lay down this rule of inter-religious argument:

“Call (people) towards the path of God with words of wisdom and goodly exhortation, argue with them in the most good of manners” (The Qur’ān, 16 : 125).

A minaret exists by the side of a church belfry at the Monastery of Mount Sinai, Egypt.

This is no solitary example of the tolerance of Islam; for it teaches its followers to accept the prophets of God as their own. “We make no distinction between a prophet and a prophet” (The Qur’ān, 2:285).

The first Charter of Human Rights granted by the Qur’ān

This Qur’ānic declaration of La Ikraha fi al-Din (No coercion in the matter of religion) may justly be described as the first Magna Carta of intellectual freedom that was given to humanity. That in this age of enlightenment the United Nations should make freedom of thought and conscience the corner-stone of its Charter is understandable. But to have proclaimed the sanctity of the human personality and the birthright of the individual to follow the light of his
own conscience in an age when despotism and social tyranny were at their height could be possible only through the light of revelation which the Qur'ān brought.

The great possibilities inherent in the principle of universality of revelation and the common fraternity of all the Founders of revealed religions rest on a special point in the present era of nuclear energy and the Sputnik, when humanity finds itself driven to the edge of a precipice where it must either explore the emergence of a new world based on universal human fellowship and spiritual values or take the inevitable plunge into total extinction. One-world and one-world State are no longer themes for academic literature. Day by day they are becoming humanity's essential need for its very survival. The latest of these new concepts to dawn the intellectual horizon of modern man is that of World Religion. It is now being increasingly realized as, in the domain of the conquest of nature, man takes one startling stride after another, that if these newer and newer demons that are being unleashed from the scientific lamps of modern Aladdins are not to turn humanity in the present-day authors and smash this civilization to pieces, humanity must pray that they hearken back to the voices from on High that were raised by the world's spiritual luminaries throughout the ages, and rediscover and rehabilitate the spiritual basis of existence.

The threat posed by the modern weapons of total destruction are a challenge to all the revealed religions of the world to pool their spiritual resources to combat the forces of materialism and reconstruct society on the foundations of God, and doing His will, which was the burden of the messages of all the Founders of the revealed religions. That is the conclusion which the leading and most impelling exponent of this new cry of a universal world religion, Professor Arnold Toynbee, has arrived at in his latest book, Civilization on Trial, London, 1930.

An historian's approach to Religion

After surveying the rise and fall of civilizations, religions and cultures, he spotlights one central failing as the cause of the decline and decay of all of them, which he describes as self-centredness. Revealed religions themselves, which have been the last hope of humanity in the present-day international problems and threats, he regrets, suffer from the same failing of self-centredness in so far as they confine the gift of Divine revelation to their own particular people whom they regard as the Chosen People of God. This is how he describes this weakness of revealed religions in his above-mentioned book (pp. 132-33):

"The historian's point of view is not incompatible with the belief that God has revealed Himself to man for the purpose of helping man to gain spiritual salvation that would be unattainable by man's unaided effort; but the historian will be suspicious, a priori, of any presentation of this thesis that goes on to assert that a unique and final revelation has been given by God to my people in my time, on my satellite or my sun in my galaxy. In this self-centred application of the thesis that God reveals Himself to His creatures, the historian will espy the Devil's cloven hoof."

And he goes on to postulate:

"If an historian ever did come across any such rationally unself-centred application of the belief that God has chosen some particular people to be the recipient of His revelation, the disinterestedness of his findings would be a strong ground for investigating them very sympathetically and seriously."

In plain words, the historian says that it stands to reason that God should reveal Himself to man, but what an historian will not concede is that God should do that favour to any chosen people to the exclusion of the rest of humanity. Any student of the Qur'ān will bear out that this is exactly the stand on the phenomenon of revelation which Islam takes. What has dawned on the mind of one of the world's foremost thinkers in this twentieth century of enlightenment and universality of outlook was proclaimed repeatedly fourteen centuries ago in the words:

"And every nation had a messenger" (The Qur'ān, 10: 47).

"Indeed, Thou art only a Warner, and unto every people there has been a Guide" (The Qur'ān, 13: 7).

"There has not been a nation but a Warner was sent to it" (The Qur'ān, 35: 24).

Universality of Divine Revelation the exclusive contribution of Islam to the religious thought of Mankind

Universality of Divine revelation is, indeed, the exclusive unique contribution of Islam to the religious thought of mankind. The Qur'ān specifically deals with the Chosen People idea, and deprecates it as a man-made myth. Says the Book:

"And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of God and His chosen ones. Say: Why does He then punish you for your sins? Nay, you are (as much) human beings as the rest of His creatures" (The Qur'ān, 5: 18).

Indeed, no idea is more repugnant to the whole tenor of the message of Islam which conceives of the whole of humanity as something like one family under the common Fatherhood of God. The Qur'ān makes it a point to eradicate this tendency of the human mind which makes all good the monopoly of one's own people and sees no good in others. Citing the Jews as saying "that the Christians have no good in them" and the Christians as saying the same of the Jews, the Book generalizes and describes this frame of mind as being born of ignorance. This is how it deprecates this self-centred attitude:

"Even so said those who have no knowledge like what they (the Jews and the Christians) say" (The Qur'ān, 2: 113).

Apart from the narrow religious sense, in the general sense of human behaviour as well, the Qur'ān thus deprecates the monopolistic frame of mind:

"O you who believe, let not one people mock other people: maybe they are better than themselves" (The Qur'ān, 49: 11).

The Qur'ān goes much further, and recognizes good in others wherever it is found. After enumerating certain iniquities committed by the Jewish people, it hastens to add that the Jews are not bad, saying:

"They are not all alike. Among the People of the Book there is an upright section who recite God's messages at night time and who adore Him" (The Qur'ān, 3: 113).

By unsparing denunciation of the Chosen People idea and the monopolistic attitude and by inculcating the universality of the gift of revelation, Islam has indicated the only path along which, as visualized by Toynbee, it becomes something within the realm of practical politics for the world's revealed religions to merge themselves into a universal world religion, thereby supplying one of the most crying needs of contemporary civilization. Even if that consummation is a counsel of perfection and is destined to remain a distant ideal, these twin principles of Islam — universality of revelation and faith in all the world prophets — constitute the only practical basis on which the world's revealed religions can meet together as friends and colleagues in a common quest, and pool their spiritual resources to combat the forces of Godlessness.
ISLAM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

By AHMAD ‘ABD al-WAHHAB al-GHANDOUR

Righteousness and a strong sense of social justice were the main characteristics of the early Muslim leadership.

The Shari‘ah of Islam was never intended to be a collection of theoretical sermons or abstract sermons or discourses on theology. It was, and still is, a practical code of conduct and behavior aimed at making those who follow it better citizens in every sense of the word.

The political and other leaders of the Muslims in the early days of Islam had perceived the fundamental conception that the strength and solidarity of the Muslims were the only means by which they could safeguard their freedom and integrity, and that weakness and discord amongst the Muslims were the forerunners of their national degradation and doom. These early leaders of Islam spared no effort to preserve and protect the religion of Islam from its enemies, because they believed that the Shari‘ah of Islam was the only guide or policy which guaranteed for the Muslims the strength and prosperity which they sought.

History records that the main characteristics of the men who assumed the leadership of the Muslim peoples during the early days of Islam was their righteousness and strong sense of justice. These men sought little for themselves and were preoccupied solely with the desire to serve their people faithfully and zealously. They ruled by the will of their people and strictly in accordance with the tenets of the religion of Islam. Their primary aim was to make justice and social equality prevail in their community. Ever present in their mind was the illustrous example of the Prophet Muhammad who had always consulted his Companions and the representatives of his people before he made any decision on any political, military, economic or social matter of importance.

The principles that govern democracy in Islam

It is one of the attributes of the greatness of the religion of Islam that it did not lay down any hard and fast rules regarding the exact pattern and constitution of national bodies to represent the people. The reason for this is that Islam recognized the fact that social habits and ideas change constantly with the times. Had the Shari‘ah laid down a rigid pattern for the composition and organization of national representative bodies, its provisions would not have kept in harmony with the development in democratic ideas in various countries and at various stages in history. Islam contented itself merely with laying down the most fundamental idea of democracy and left the detailed application of this idea to the people themselves.

God says: “And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and whose affairs are (decided) by counsel among themselves…” 1 This means that in Islam the people must be consulted about their own affairs and that their destiny must be decided by their own representatives.

Islam demands justice from the rulers and obedience from the ruled. God says: “Surely God commands you to make over trusts to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice.” 2 The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said in this regard: “The one who is loved most by God on the Day of Judgement, and the one who is most near to me, is a just Imam (leader); and the one who is hated most by God on the Day of Judgement, and who is punished greatly, is an unjust Imam.” Again, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: “He who sees the authorities (Sultan) transgressing the Laws of God and traversing the Traditions of His Prophet and judging amongst men in evil and aggressive ways, and does nothing, either by word or deed, to induce such a ruler to change his ways, will not be admitted to God’s Paradise.”

In Islam a ruler does not possess any heavenly or holy powers by virtue of his office. He is regarded merely as a person charged with the enforcement of the Laws of God. His power and authority are derived solely from the people he rules, and he holds office at their pleasure. Hereditary rule is not recognized in Islam, nor does Islam recognize any religious or other organization that can exercise dictatorial powers over men and lay down new laws as to what is right or wrong. In Islam the people select their rulers, and these rulers must discharge their office by the light and guidance of the Shari‘ah of Islam.

The religion of Islam is characterized by the fact that it looks upon the whole of mankind as one indivisible unit. There are no class or other distinctions between man and man in Islam. If one man is distinguished from another, it is not on grounds of birth, riches or social class. Of this God says: “O mankind! Surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with God is the most dutiful of you.” 3

The rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic State are guaranteed in full

All men are equal in the eyes of God, whatever be their race or colour. The rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic State are guaranteed in full. There is an interesting example of this in the life of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab, the first Caliph of Islam. It is related that the son of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘As, the Muslim Governor of Egypt, entered a race with a young Copt. The Copt won the race, and this angered the son of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘As, who whipped the Copt, saying: “How dare you win a race with me when you know that I am the son of the most noble.” When news of this incident reached ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab, he immediately summoned ‘Amr Ibn al-‘As and his son and the young Copt. He then gave the young Copt a whip and said: “Now it is your turn to whip ‘the son of the most noble’!” The Caliph then turned to ‘Amr Ibn al-‘As and said to him: “Since when have you enslaved people who are born free?”

There are many episodes in the life of the Prophet Muhammad which illustrate this conception of equality. It is reported that one of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad was having a heated argument with a Negro in the presence of the Prophet. During this argument the Companion addressed the Negro contemptuously as “the son of the black”, and when the Prophet heard this he promptly admonished the Companion and said: “The son of the white woman is not preferred to the son of the black woman except in virtue and piety.” The Companion then prostrated on the floor and touched the Negro’s foot with his cheek, to show to the Prophet Muhammad his repentance for the grave indiscretion which he had committed.

There could be few examples of the practice of absolute
equality and justice to match those which abound in the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions. The Prophet set for his people an illustrous example of how the teachings of the religion of Islam on the equality of man should be applied. At no time was the Prophet of Islam a despot, for he always consulted his people on important matters.

A ruler of a State cannot accept personal gifts

The Prophet Muhammad has also set for his people a wonderful example in the way in which a ruler of a State should discharge his duties. He appointed as governors of Muslim territories men of proved ability and integrity, and kept a constant vigil on them to make sure that they kept to the right path. He also made sure that men who held public office did not utilize their position to extract personal gain or profit from the people. It is reported in this respect that the Prophet Muhammad had sent a man on a mission to collect the zakat (poor-rate) from the Muslims. The man returned with a lot of money and property and gave the Prophet only part of what he brought, saying that the rest was given to him as personal gifts. The Prophet Muhammad then exclaimed: “We sent this man on a mission to serve the Muslims, and when he returns he says, ‘This was given to you and that was given to me personally as a gift’. We would ask the man whether, if he had stayed in his home and had not been sent by us on this mission, he would have been given such presents by the people . . .?” He then asked the man to hand over the money and property which he said had been given to him as personal gifts during his mission. Could there be a better example of the way in which corruption amongst public servants should be treated?

TWO LIVES AND TWO DEATHS

Commentary on some verses of the Qur’ân on the nature of Life after Death

By S. M. AHMED

Almost all modern and ancient philosophers have accepted the existence of the soul and God. Revelation alone can unravel the mysteries of metaphysics

It was, I believe, Aristotle who first coined the word “metaphysics” in contrast with physics — the discussion of objects which our senses perceive and mind conceives or, as Kant would say, all things to which practical reason could be applied. Metaphysics deals with things the mind conceives, but does not perceive. Take, for instance, space and time. Mind perceives its limitation, that is to say, it exists, but cannot conceive what is prior time and what is beyond space. Similar is the case with the First Cause or God the Creator. The mind easily conceives that every object of nature which it sees and perceives has a cause of its existence, but it is unable to determine what has caused the cause. When we say it is my hand and it is my foot, we know what we mean. But when we say this is my soul, we know what soul is, though nobody has seen or perceived it. Empirically we have found that when a man dies his body gets disintegrated and putrefaction sets in, and if he dies by drowning his body does not sink but comes up. We can only draw the conclusion that there is something in the body which once parted from it makes the body a remains which is best burnt or buried. We use electricity, which brings us so many comforts and light, but what is electricity? No mind can explain. So Aristotle is quite right in saying that the mind’s one function is to conceive what it does not perceive. Conceive it must: whether rightly or wrongly, that is a different question. With the exception of Hegel, none of the ancient and modern philosophers of Europe has denied the existence of the soul and God. A denial of soul and God involves a difficulty which is worse than admission. The ancient and modern philosophers have in their own way discussed their nature and written treatises on the subject. Two of them, both ardent Catholics, Thomas Aquinas of Italy and Descartes of France, have approached the subject not anagnostically but scripturally; as both are indebted to Saracen philosophers, al-Ghazzali and Ibn Rushd, who were necessarily guided by the Qur’ân, we can conclude that the Qur’ân, which Muslims accept as a revelation from God Almighty, is the only answer to their philosophic or sceptic speculation. It is revelation alone which can unravel all the mysteries of metaphysics, known to us by name but not by nature. God, the Soul, Good and Evil, the death and the resurrection, angels and Satans, heaven and hell, all these the Qur’ân aptly calls al-Ghayb, a word which cannot be easily translated but covers the range of things which are unseen and could be described as the mysteries of religion — to use the words of the Qur’ân, Yumi‘inaa bi ‘l-Ghaib — those who believe the unseen, if we translate it literally. But how can one believe in things which one has not seen? Intuitively or empirically? How does the Qur’ân want us to understand the things we have not seen?

The answer is both. Empirically, because we can test the veracity of a reporter, intuitonally because what he has said is true. A Muslim has this facility. He has judged the Prophet Muhammad and the Message he has brought, not blindly through the eyes of faith, but critically with all the scientific means he had at his command, and he has found that the Messenger was a man of truth and what he has delivered is true. And this truth is not confined to the Qur’ân, but echoed and re-echoed before. Take for instance heaven and hell.

Conception of Heaven and Hell as generally understood is not correct. God does not intend to burn the most glorious of His creation. It is contrary to His attributes of Beneficence and Mercifulness

The Old Testament excepted, heaven and hell is a verity of all religious books of the world. Even the Old Testament, which lacks the description of heaven and hell, is fully supplemented by the Jewish apocryphal writings, and Jesus, if he has described the afflictions of hell, which is fully corroborated by the Qur’ân, has certainly not invented them. Heaven and hell are known and must have known to his people before; at least nobody can question the character of Jesus Christ — he was like all the prophets of God, a sinless and truthful man. Some of his sayings might be hyperbolic, impractical, erroneous or wrongly reported, but that he was an impostor few reasonable men from Christianity could assert. The same is the case with Muhammad. So if two most truthful and honest men agree with each other in describing hell, we can only conclude that their sources of information must be the same, inspiration or revelation.

Hell is a fact, but what is hell? Here we are confronted with a difficulty. That God should burn men, His most glorious creation, in fact His own vicegerents on earth, for-
ever in the fire of hell, not a minority but a huge majority at that, would be repugnant to all feelings and reasons which God Himself has created in us. Who is after all responsible for the sins of man? Who made the first man or satan responsible for the sins of man? An answer to these questions would hardly justify the punishment meted out to man. O God! how can we escape Thy wrath? Through the blood of Thy only begotten son, as the Christians believe, or through the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad as the Muslims have been made to believe through traditions? And hell! How dreadful to think that a living man is to burn after just a few years of life in this world. It is the most depressing picture of life and eternal life too! If a tyrant burns us in this world for our crimes, and does not even let us die, we would call him a monstrous and hateful being. Will God, who is described in the very first verse of the Qur'an as the Merciful and Beneficent, choose to do it? Let us step aside and the Qur'an answer it. In describing the tortures of hell, the Qur'an has left two things unsaid, and it gives us some hope that whatever be the consequence and punishment of our bad deeds, the burning in the fire is either spoken of metaphorically but with the psychological effect of threat or terror on the mind of man and restraining him from evil deeds, or the fire will not be the fire of our experience. Secondly, the Qur'an has not said what will be the effect of burning the body of the man. Will the fire consume it to ashes, or is the mere result of the fire we know, or if this result is not the outcome of burning in the hell, will the inmate of hell feel the same excruciating pain we feel when our skin is burnt? What the Qur'an has said, on the contrary, is that neither here nor there is man to receive any punishment beyond his capacity of endurance. So he will have the capacity of endurance, and this simply means that the suffering of hell fire is only a relative term in relation to man's capacity of endurance. In other words, the hell fire will be endurable, but not a pleasant experience like heaven. This puts the fire of our experience out of court. Then we are told that the skin of man is liable to be changed by the hell-fire, to be corrupted again and again. This certainly is not the effect of the brand of fire we know. Only an internal skin disease would do it, a painful thing like our eczema or syphilis, and burning sensation is felt by a desert wind or fever internally or externally, endurable but by no means a happy or pleasant state. “No cooling shade or cooling water to quench his thirst.” Why the water? Does a man burning in a fiery furnace need water to quench his thirst? And there are sinners and sinners: how about men who arc by nature just but without faith, and what about a son disobedient to his meek parents? Will they all suffer burning indiscriminately? No, certainly not. In the chapter “Mary” God has provided the hell for every human being as a first step to his reaching heaven, and in another verse He appointed stages of man's physical and spiritual progress (Lattarkabunnan tabaqan 'an tabaquin; 84:19). This supplements Jesus's hell of fire and brimstone.

The Qur'an has not refuted a venerable and truthful Prophet's statement. It only supplements it. Both Muhammad and Jesus have credited God alone with the knowledge of the Day of Judgment. Did Muhammad copy Jesus? Only a daring person would assert it. Jesus is reported to have spoken many things which people faintly remembered, and when the generation a century later came to record it, they left out many things which he had said and badly recorded what they had heard in oral tradition. Many of his alleged sayings need glossing, especially his parables, which are often erroneous, highly impractical, and if left in the present mutilated condition, inexplicable. How can one believe that Jesus has condemned all rich men absolutely to hell, when he has not set himself an example for them? He toasted with rich men, was compliment to women who would waste their money or morals, and when he comes to denounce the Pharisees, his own kith and kin, then who is it who deserves to go to hell? No, Jesus must be absolved of all this unintelligent talk. The responsibility lies at the door of his narrators. Could any seer or prophet, let alone one who is divine in the eyes of his disciples, be such a fool as to mistake John the Baptist for Elijah, a thing which John himself denies, and make such an illogical statement that all born from women are inferior to John, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he? Is the least in the kingdom of heaven born without woman? His sharing the common superstitions of his contemporaries in demonology would discredit him for good, and to say that Muhammad borrowed from him would be the height of gross misstatement, apart from the fact that the borrower would not be a chooser and would not deny the Christian dogma of the Trinity and Crucifixion, the very basis of Christianity. Mark how the Qur'an ignores his miracles concerning the demons or evil spirits but confirms the rest.

Two lives and two deaths of the Qur'an

That was by way of introduction. Now I come to the main subject. I quote the Qur'an:

“Verily who disbelieves shall be cried out to. Surely God's hatred is greater than your hatred of each other when you were called into the faith and disbelieved! They shall say, Our Lord! Thou hast killed us twice, and thou hast quickened us twice and we do confess our sins: Is there a way for getting out?” (40:10-11).

Mr. E. Palmer, from whose translation I have quoted, and which is a very fair and liberal one, has appended the following note below this verse. "Referring to absence of life before birth and the deprivation of it at death, and to be quickened at birth and raised again after death." This is of course the substance of al-Baidhawi's Commentary. But how does that explain the two lives and two deaths? I cannot see. Where is the man before his birth; his identification comes only after birth. He can then live and die, and not before his birth. I consider it to be what is very plain and obvious. His first living and death is in this world, and his second living and death in the next. How can one reject the Hindu Transmigration of Soul on the very ground that one does not know what one was and what one was doing to justify one's reward and punishment before one was born?

It seems from the verses of the Qur'an that man will have to do another death in the next world

So the plain and simple meaning of this verse is that man must live and die here as well in the next world. This is two lives and two deaths. Living in the next world is when he leaves this mortal body and takes another form in the abode called in the Qur'an Barzakh, an Arabicized Persian word of "Pardah", veil or screen. The spiritualists are trying to remove this veil and they have succeeded to some extent, and if Swedenborg, who created a cult in Europe, could be believed and also William Blake, they both had communicated with the dead while living. Has not the Qur'an said elsewhere:

“And think not of those who are killed in God's way as dead. Nay, they are alive, being provided sustenance from their Lord. Rejoicing in what God has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they have no fear, nor shall they grieve.”
They rejoice for God’s favour and (His) grace, and that God wastes not the reward of the believers” (3: 168-170).

Then again:

“And do not speak of those who are slain in God’s way as dead, they are alive, but you do not perceive” (2: 154).

These verses are plain; no figurative or spiritual meaning could be given to them. They are not only living but have a body needing sustenance. Perhaps it may be thought that this is an exceptional case of those who died or were killed in the way of God and it does not apply to the rest, but 2:154 does not admit of this exception.

Despite the materialistic aspect of the Old Testament, the story we are told is that Saul called the spirit of Samuel through the witch of Endor and communicated with him. One instance is mentioned in a tradition where a will was accepted of a dead man which he communicated to his friend in a dream. The history of the Sultan Nureddin of Syria, the one who preceded Saladin in the Crusading days, is another instance. He dreamed the Prophet, telling him and showing him the face of two Christian monks who were digging his grave to steal away his body. Sultan Nureddin went post-haste to Medina and there inquired all the people to a banquet, but could find no trace of the like one he was shown. It was found that two holy men were living near the tomb of the Prophet who would not stir from their cell, and when they were apprehended they were the ones whose image was shown to the Sultan. They had tunneled to the Prophet’s grave from their cell. They were disguised as Crusaders.

From that time the tomb of the Prophet has been fortified by an iron enclosure dug deep down into the earth. That story may be apocryphal, but in our day, newspapers reported a dream of the late King Feisal of Iraq; the Tigris was dangerously cutting the ground at Ctesiphon and the grave of a holy man, a Companion of the Prophet, was in danger of being swept away. King Feisal dreamt in time to save it.

So, according to the Qur’an there is a life after death, and I will give my own personal experience at the end. What I want to say here is about the second death. That comes, according to the Qur’an, when the trumpet will be blown which causes the death of every individual, either living here in this world or in the next. Then they will be raised after the second trumpet to be judged. That is the only possible explanation of the verses of the Qur’an quoted by me.

**My personal experience of those who have passed away**

I now relate my own experience. In 1935 I was working as a Sub-Divisional Magistrate in the district of Gorakhpur, India. Our District Judge was a very good man, named Mr. Hanuman Pershad. He died suddenly of heart failure. Some months after his death a spiritualist from Bombay visited our club. To test his claim that he could communicate with the dead we asked him to call the spirit of Mr. Hanuman Pershad. Immediately he went into a trance and the voice of the spirit spoke through his mouth. The spirit said: “Could anybody communicate with my son, who is a lawyer in Moradabad?” In giving the name and address of the lawyer the spirit said that the son should be told that he would find the papers he was searching for in his desk. Next day I communicated with the man, although we all thought it was a huge joke. But to our surprise the man turned up with the same name, thanked us for our communication which helped him to discover his father’s papers.

Here is another case. My wife died in October 1948. She suffered from phthisis for about three years. When the doctor told me that her case was hopeless, I was sad and gloomy. My father was then alive; he was a very pious Muslim and often dreamed things which came true. Seeing me gloomy and sad, he said: “Do not worry, your wife will recover. I have seen in a dream that she has come to me from hospital after one month quite hale and hearty and fully recovered.” I never doubted my father’s dreams but this was too much. This occurred in July. My father died on 6th September 1948, and on 6th October 1948 my wife died. Then I understood what was the meaning of her meeting my father healthy and happy. That was not a casual and accidental thing. Since his death I have met him several times in dreams, telling me that so and so among his friends had joined him in the next world and had told him that I was well! It is an amusing personal experience; difficult to believe but most certainly true.

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12 **THE ISLAMIC REVIEW**
THE QUR'AN AND THE TRADITIONS OF THE
PROPHET MUHAMMAD ON KINDNESS
TO ANIMALS

By M. de LON

Arabic Text

Al-Qur'an
Bismi Allahi al-Rahmani al-Rahim.

Suratu l-An'am.
Wa ma min Dabbatin fi al-Ardi wa la Ta'irin yatiru bi-Janayhai-hi 'illa 'Umamun Amthalukum. Ma farratna fi al-Kitabi min Shayi'n thumma 'ila Rabbi-him yuhsharan (6:38).

Suratu al-Isra'.
Tusabbihu la-hu al-Samawatu al-sab'u wa al-Ard' wa man fi-hinna wa in min Shayi'n ila yusabbihu bi-Hamdi-hi wa lakin la taqahuna tasbihahum. Inna-hu kana Haliman Gha'afu (17:44).

Suratu al-Nahl.
Wa al-'An'ama khalqa-ha lakum fi-ha Dif'un wa Manafi'u wa min-ha ta'kulan.

Wa la-kum fi-ha Jamalun hina turihuna wa hina tasrahun.

Wa tahlimu Athqala-kum 'ila Baladin lam takumu Balighi-hi 'illa bi-Shiqiqi al-Anfusi. Inna Rabbi-kum la-Ra'ufun al-Rahim.

Wa al-Khayla wa al-Bighala wa al-Hamira li-tarkabu-ha wa zinutan; wa yakhuqu ma la ta'lamun (16:5-8).

Wa li 'Ilahi yasjudu ma fi al-Samawati wa ma fi al-Ardi min Dabbatin wa al-Mala'ikatu wa hum la yastakbirun.

Yakhafuna Rabba-hum min faqyi-him wa ya'aluna ma yu'marun (16:49-50).

Suratu Yasin.
'A wa lam yarau anna khalqna la-hum mimmna 'amilat Aydi-na 'An'amun, fa-hum la-ha Malikun?

French Translation

Le Koran
Au nom d'Allah, Le très Miséricordieux, Le Compassionnaire.

Sourate : des Bestiaux.
“Il n’y a pas de bête sur la terre, ni dans le ciel d’oiseau qui vole avec ses deux ailes, qui ne forme comme vous un peuple : ils seront réunis auprès de leur Seigneur” (6:38).

Sourate : Le Voyage Nocturne.
“Les sept cieux et la terre, ainsi que tout ce qui y s’y trouve, célébrant Ses louanges. Il n’y a rien (au monde) qui ne célèbre Ses louanges. Mais vous ne comprenez pas leurs louanges. En vérité, Allah est Doux et Il pardonne” (17:46).

Sourate : L’Abeille.
“Il a créé pour vous le bétail : en lui est chaleur et profit, et vous en nourrissez.

“Il y a en lui de la beauté pour vous, quand vous le ramenez le soir, et quand le matin vous le conduisez au paturage.

“Le bétail porte vos lourds fardeaux dans des pays que vous ne pourriez pas atteindre autrement, si ce n’est au prix d’un pénible effort de votre part. En vérité, votre Seigneur est Bon et Miséricordieux.

“Dieu vous a donné des chevaux, des mulets et des ânes, pour vous servir de monture et pour l’apparat ” (16:5-8).

“Devant Dieu se prosternent ce qui est dans les cieux et ce qui est sur la terre, bêtes et âmes ; et eux (alors) sont loin de s’enorgueillir ;

“Il is craignent leur Seigneur au-dessus d’eux, et il sont ce qui leur est ordonné ” (16:49-50).

Sourate : Ya Sin.
“N’ont-ils pas vu que Nous avons créé pour eux, parmi ce que Nos mains ont fait pour eux, les animaux domestiques? Et eux en disposent à leur gré.

English Translation

The Qur’an
In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Chapter : The Cattle
“No kind of beast is there on earth nor fowl that lieth with its wings, but is a folk like you ; then unto their Lord shall they be gathered” (6:38).

Chapter : The Night Journey.
“The seven heavens praise Him, and the earth, and all Who are therein ; neither is there aught which doth not celebrate His praise ; but their utterances of praise ye understand not. He is Kind, Indulgent” (17:46).

Chapter : The Bee.
“For you He hath created cattle : in them you have warm garments and gainful uses ; and of them you eat :

“And they beseech you well (there is beauty in them for you) when ye fetch them home and when ye drive them forth to pasture.

“And they carry your burdens to lands which ye could not else reach but with travail of body : truly your Lord is full of goodness, and Merciful :

“And He hath given you horses, mules and asses, that ye may ride them, and for your ornament” (16:5-8).

“And all in the Heavens and all on the Earth, each thing that moveth, and the very angels prostrate themselves in adoration before God, and are free from pride.

“They fear their Lord who is above them, and do what they are bidden” (16:49-50).

Chapter : Ya Sin.
“See they not that We have created for them among the things which Our hands have wrought, the animals of which they are masters?

MARCH 1958

13
Arabic Text
Wa dhallalna-ha la-hum fa-min-ha Rakubu-hum wa min-ha ya’kulun (36:71-72).

French Translation
"Et Nous les leurs avons rendus dociles : et ils se servent d’une partie d’entre eux comme montures, et d’une autre partie ils tirent leur nourriture" (36:71-72).

English Translation
"And that We have subjected them unto them? And on some they ride, and of others they eat" (36:71-72).

Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad

Les Traditions du Prophét Mahomet

Titre 41, Chapitre 1
Du merite de celui qui a semé ou plante des choses quand les produits en auront été mangés.

D’après Anas Ibn Malik, le Prophète a dit : "Chaque fois qu’un Muslim quelconque plante un arbre ou sème un grain, il aura à son actif comme aumône tout ce qui aura été mangé du produit de cette plante par un oiseau, un homme ou un quadrupède."

Titre 42, Chapitre 9
Selon ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar, l’Envoyé de Dieu a dit : "Une femme avait martyrisé une chatte en l’enfermant et en la laissant mourir de faim. A cause de cela cette femme est allée en enfer." Et il ajoute : "Dieu, si je ne me trompe luit dit : Tu ne lui as pas donné à manger, ni à boire quand tu l’as enfermée, et tu ne lui as pas laissé la liberté d’aller chercher, pour se nourrir, de petite animaux sauvages."

Titre 42, Chapitre 12
Du fait pour les hommes et les animaux de s’abreuver de l’eau des fleuves.

Selon Abou Hurairah l’Envoyé de Dieu a dit : "Le cheval pour tel homme est une récompense : pour tel autre c’est une protection, et pour un troisième c’est un fardeau."

"L’homme pour qui le cheval est une recompense est celui qui le met au service de Dieu, qui allonge la corde à laquelle il l’attache dans un pru ou dans un jardin. Tout ce que l’animal atteint, grâce à sa corde, d’herbe du pru ou du jardin est compté comme bonne oeuvre pour son propriétaire. Si la corde vient à se rompre et que l’animal gambade sur un ou deux tercets, les traces de ses pas et ses crottins seront comptés comme bonnes oeuvres à son propriétaire. Si ce cheval passant près d’un ruisseau y boit, même alors qu’on n’a pas voulu l’y laisser s’abreuver, ce-la constitue encore de bonnes oeuvres à l’actif de son propriétaire. Le cheval est donc à cause de cela une recompense."

"The man to whom the horse is a reward, is he who put it to the service of God, who leaves a long cord by which he tied it up in a field or a garden. All that the animal can reach, thanks to the length of the cord — the grass in the garden or field — counts as a good work to the credit of the owner. If the horse breaks the cord and runs over several acres, the trace of his hoofs and his dung will be counted as good works of the owner. If the horse in passing a river, drinks from it, even if one does not wish it to do so, that also is counted as a good work of the owner. The horse is then on that account a reward."

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
Arabic Text
Wa Rajulun rabata-ha taghanniyan wa Ta’afufan. Thumma lam yansa Haqqa Allahi fi Riqabi-ha wa la Zuhuri-ha fa-hiya li-dhalika Sitrun wa Rajulun rabata-ha Fakhran wa Rya’an wa Liwa’an li-Ahli al-Islami fa-hiya ‘ala dhalika Wizrun.

Kitab al-Sulhi, Kitab 42, Bab 1
Haddathana ... 'an 'Anas (radiya Allahu 'an-hu). Qala qila li al-Nabiyiyy (salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallama) lau 'ataya 'Abda Allahi bni 'Ubayyi. Fa antalaaqa 'ilayhi al-Nabiyiyy (salla Allahu wa sallama) wa rakib Himaran fa antalaaqa al-Muslimuna yamshuna ma-a’hu (wa hiya 'Ardu sabikhatun).

Fa-qala Rajulun mina al-Ansari min-hum wa Allahi la-Himar Rasuli Allahi (salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallama) atyabu Rihan min-kâ.

French Translation
L’homme qui garde son cheval pour en tirer profit, soit comme producteur, soit comme gagnepain, et qui n’oublie pas ses devoirs envers Dieu en payant ses impôts et en ne surmenant pas l’animal, trouvera dans son cheval une protection. L’homme qui garde son cheval pour s’enorgueillir pour faire parade aux Musulmans trouvera son cheval une fardeau.

Titre 42, Chapitre 1
Anas a dit : “Lorsque on disait au Prophète : Tu devrais aller chez Abdallah Ibn Obayy, il s’y rendit. Il enfourcha un âne et se mit en route accompagné des Musulmans. La terre eût couvert par salpêtre.”

Un homme des Ansars qui se trouvait là dit : “Certes l’âne de l’Envoyé de Dieu exhale un parfum plus agréable que toi.”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION
The man who keeps his horse for profit, for protecting his honour, and who does not forget his duty to God in paying his taxes and in not overloading the animal, will find in his horse a protection in this world. As to the man who keeps a horse for pride and show and doing harm to Muslims, it will be a burden to him.

When the Prophet was asked about donkeys he replied: “There has been a special revelation concerning them: but for them the following would apply: Whoever does a good action will see its result, however small his action. Whoever does a bad action will see its result, however small his action” (The Qur’an, 94:7-8).

Book 42, Chapter 1
Anas said: “When somebody said to the Prophet: (It would be better) if you could go to see Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, he went. He got on a donkey and started off accompanied by Muslims. The earth was covered with salt petre.

When they arrived, ‘Abdullah said to the Prophet: “Get away from me. The smell of your donkey upsets me.”

One of Ansars, who was there, said: “Certainly the Prophet’s donkey smells more agreeable than you do.”

(To be continued)

WHERE IS GOD?
(Translated from the Tamil by M. Abdul Latif)

O Comrade,
You intensely ask me where God is.
Ask your heart where God is.

When He is dwelling in yourself,
Is it meet (for you)
To wander over unknowingly?
Polish the mirror of your mind:
You will find (the reflection of) His Light.

Though the eyes see the hand,
Can they see it when it is placed upon them?
Know this, and drive away your ignorance.

He is seated in the core of the heart;
He bestows His grace greatly to those who realize Him.

He is as is the oil in the sesamum seed;
He pervades the whole world abundantly.

Those who are pure at heart —
It is on these He bestows His grace
Daily, delightfully, and bountifully.
Those who wander unsettled,
Thinking the world to be eternal —
It is these He segregates and scorns as mere logs.

Polish the home of your heart;
Light it in a lustrous lamp.
If you (then) say, “Come and shed grace,”
He will grant you a great position
To which distress has no access.

Ibnu Jamaluddin

MARCH 1958
A Short Egyptian Story  THE FUGITIVE'  
By THARWAT ABAZA  
Translated from the Arabic by Abdullah Basheer

In its movement towards naturalism, the modern Egyptian novel, especially in pre-Revolutionary years, aimed at depicting the corruption of social and moral life. Social injustice, favouritism, and the struggle between classes were among the most popular themes.

Naturalism in Post-Revolutionary literary works still retains the picture of the Egypt the Revolution set out to destroy. The episode related in this article is a condensed version of the first chapter of a novel written by one of Egypt's most promising young writers.

Chickens for the 'Omda'

The Shaikh Zaydan Abu Rageh, 'Omda' of the village of al-Salam, moved lazily but contentedly in his bed as the first streaks of dawn peeped into his room. Slowly and with dignity, he left his bed. His voice, sleepy but still authoritative, with the tone suitable to his office, rang out calling for the maid, Fatimah. As swift as an echo was the maid's reply. "Yes, sir." The Shaikh called out again, this time a little impatiently: "Water for ablution, girl. It's late for the morning prayers."

The maid hurried in carrying a jar and basin. She poured the water. Slowly the 'Omda' washed: washed his hands to the wrists, his arms to the elbows; next his face; then he passed his wet hand over his head, three times; and finally down to his feet, muttering the appropriate words which he had learned and repeated for years. But the 'Omda' could not perform this ceremonial washing without asking the customary questions about every member of the family. The divine words were oddly mingled with bits of phrases of mundane affairs.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, I wash for the morning prayer . . .

"Where is Madam?"
"Down by the oven."
"God make me hold my Book in my Right Hand . . ."
"And Durriyah?"
"Preparing your breakfast, sir."
"God guard me from the evils of the day . . ."
"What have you got for breakfast?"
"We've got, sir, all that you like best, sir . . . cream and honey and . . . Praise be to God the Bountiful."

May God direct my foot on the Right Way . . . What is with God is better and more enduring.

"Splendid! Has anybody asked for me today?"
"No, sir."
"Hasn't Saleh Abu Sa'dullah brought any fowls?"
"It is too early for anybody to bring in anything, sir. It is still dawn."

The 'Omda,' a little annoyed, muttered: "But he is in debt, Fatimah . . . it is a debt, my girl. . . Does anybody forget to pay his debt?"

Fatimah, rather perplexed, asked: "Did Saleh borrow something from you, sir?"

The 'Omda' replied, pulling down his sleeves as he finished washing his arms: "Yes."

"Did he borrow chickens from you, sir?"

1 Courtesy, the Editor, The Bulletin, The Egyptian Education Bureau, London, for September 1957.
2 'Omda means the village headman.
daughter, when out of pity, she sometimes offered him food. He didn't ask for anything more than a glance that was the food of his soul. After all, even a human "thing" like Kamal had a soul. And this glance at the Omda's daughter stood between him and whatever evil ideas he worked out in his mind as he spent part of the night awake in his little hut.

So Kamal's foot would instinctively be drawn to the house of the Omda very early in the morning. His prayers would be the first call that reached the Omda's ears from the outside world... Kamal would pray "May God make you live long, reverend Omda... May God save you for our sake!". The Omda, pleased to hear such a prayer, said: "Is that you, Kamal? It's not day yet... Don't you ever sleep, you wretch?" Kamal in a flatterng tone answered: "May God save you, our Omda... May you remain in good health. I only came to you because you are the Mecca of our hopes. May God save you... and save the young lady, the decent, well-bred young lady... and Madam too."

"All right... all right—you can wait... Fatimah will bring you something to eat..."

Kamal went to the back door waiting for the food. Durriyah passed by. He at once said: "Good morning, lady."

"Good morning, Kamal. How are you? Hasn't Fatimah brought you some breakfast?"

"She will, lady. She will... You need not take the trouble. May God bless you... May you live long..."

Leaving him, Durriyah went into the house and he stood considering enviously all the comforts of the Omda's home. He saw the fowls, the geese, and the ducks... He threw a glance at the cattle: buffaloes, cows, oxen, donkeys and horses... How unjust. Why should all this be crowded in one home for the use of one family? And how was it obtained? Through bribery, theft, and misused authority. Ought that brute of an Omda to enjoy all this and Kamal be a beggar? Was it his fault if his father was a village drummer and the Omda's an Omda? Surely God would make his dream come true... Surely He would favour him... What he wanted was such a trifling thing... Could he afford to buy it... Could he find it... Could he steal it... Kamal's thoughts were interrupted by Fatimah and the breakfast.

The Omda came out on to the terrace of his house and found the village chief-guard, of whom he asked: "Did you send anybody to plough the two acres?"

"Certainly, reverend Omda... 'Abdu 'Abdu Mas'ud went there right after dawn."

"Do you know how much he is going to charge?"

"You need not mention it, reverend Omda. We all live on your bounty."

"I can't accept that."

"Can't accept what, reverend sir?"

"Is Abu Mas'ud bribing me?"

"Who would dare say so? He just wants to offer you his service as an expression of his gratitude."

"If so, that's quite all right."

"He asks to see you tonight."

"What for?"

"Just to see you, worthy sir... and..."

"What?"

"He has a little complaint."

"What about?"

"His neighbour 'Abd al-Hamid won't let water pass through to his field."

"How dare he? I'll make him change his mind. Has not Saleh come yet?"

"I saw him on his donkey earlier in the morning riding to the neighbouring villages buying chickens."

The conversation was interrupted when the telephone operator hurried in.

"What's the matter, boy?"

"The magistrate, reverend Omda."

"What's the matter with him?"

"He's coming now."

"Now, boy?"

"Now, sir. He wants to meet the dignitaries of the village."

"Now?... How can I summon them?" The chief-guard at once said: "You need not worry sir. My men and myself will inform as many as we can..."

"And what are you waiting for?" exclaimed the Omda. "The guards, all in uniform, must stand on the main road to salute him."

The chief-guard hurried away and the Omda turned in to his wife, calling, "Safiyah! Safiyah!"

"Yes, what is it?"

Rushing up to her, the Omda very disturbed almost shouted: "The magistrate, Safiyah! The magistrate!"

"What's happened to him?"

"We've had a telephone message saying that he is..."

"Dead?"

"No... coming."

"Is it all that because a magistrate is coming? Is this the first time that a magistrate has come to the house...? You have been an Omda over twenty years. How many magistrates have called on you?"

"Yes, but he is new... and they say that he is very strict."

"They always say that about a new magistrate; then, once our chickens, our ducks, and our geese find their way to him..."

"You're right. You're right. Still, we have to be very careful. Now, get a really good breakfast ready... Remember, this is his first meal in my house."

"Oh, don't worry — I'll see to it."

The Omda left her and went out to see how his instructions were being carried out. He stood watching and waiting. How dreadful if the magistrate didn't meet the people he'd asked for. It might lead to all sorts of trouble. Which political party did he belong to? All magistrates support the party in power. What a blessing that the Omda belonged to the same party! And was he an honourable man? It would be a catastrophe if he were... Suppose that he was one of these young University graduates who still still stick to their foolish ideals of honesty and reform... Then his chickens, geese and ducks would be of no use. He could not co-operate with such a magistrate. He might be forced to resign his office. Would he lose the prestige he had established in twenty years?... Woe to the Omda if the magistrate were an honourable man!

A motor horn disturbed the peace of the village... What an ill-omened day! The magistrate had arrived, but none of the dignitaries. Not even a guard had stood to salute him on the main road!

The magistrate got down from his car... God be praised, he was old!!!
There's a great difference between him and yourself, your Excellency. ... But your brother—may God protect him—was a real gentleman. ... We were so sorry when he left us. ... God knows how sorry we were.

"You mean 'Abd al-Samih Bey?"
"Yes, your Excellency.
"I knew him. ... He was awful ..."

The 'Omda, relieved, went on: "Awful, your Excellency? He was unbearable. ... dreadful. ... Do you know him, your Excellency?"

"I do. ... he was my senior for some time. You are right, reverend 'Omda."

"Reverend again, thank heaven!

But the 'Omda's troubles seemed to have no end. His troubled eyes rested on Saleh, strolling towards the terrace carrying a basket full of fowls. He could hear them cackling. This was not the time for Saleh and his chickens! What would happen if the magistrate knew the story of the chickens?

Saleh came in, carrying the basket of well-fed chickens, feeling proud to be able to keep his promise. He laid the basket at the 'Omda's feet, saying: "The chickens, reverend sir."

"Which chickens, boy?"
"The chickens which. ..."

But the 'Omda would not let him finish. "You may go now, Saleh. His Excellency the magistrate is here. I'll buy no chickens in his presence."

The magistrate joined in, saying emphatically, "But they are really good chickens."

The words banished the 'Omda's anxiety. At last he had found the clue to the heart of the magistrate, and hurriedly he said, "Put the fowls in his Excellency's car, Saleh."

The magistrate in an artificially protesting tone said:

"No ... no reverend 'Omda ... that is impossible."

"By God, you must have them."

"You need not swear man ... you should not ..."

The chickens found their way to the magistrate's car as breakfast was laid on the table. The 'Omda, relieved, led his guest to the dining room.

Once they disappeared, there came the ever-envious, ever-praying voice of Kamal, who had watched the farce from its beginning until it ended in the 'Omda's dining room.

"O for a pistol ... grant me a pistol, God."

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THE LIFE AND THOUGHT OF
MUHAMMAD JALAL-UD-DIN RUMI

By AFZAL IQBAL

Pp. XI + 181 Price 7s. 6d.

"I recommend this book warmly; it is a pleasure to read and it holds the key to further delight for those many who will be encouraged to study further the immortal poetry of Rumi."

(Professor A. J. Arberry of Pembroke College, Cambridge, England)
AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN
The State Visit of His Majesty the King of Afghanistan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

The arrival of the King of Afghanistan at Karachi

On 1st February 1958, His Majesty King Muhammad Zahir Shah of Afghanistan left Kandahar Airport for Karachi, on his State Visit to Pakistan. Amongst those accompanying him on the trip were Mr. 'Ali Muhammad, First Deputy Premier; Dr. Abudzazah, Acting Minister of Health; Mr. 'Abdulrahman Pazhwak, Director-General of the Political Section of the Foreign Ministry; Brigadier Murad 'Ali, Aide-de-Camp to the King; and Mr. Shalizi, Vice-President of the Press Department.

Fifty miles out from Karachi the Royal plane was met by an escort of Pakistani jets, and as it landed the King was greeted by a 21-gun salute.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Major-General Iskander Mirza, accompanied by the Cabinet Ministers of Pakistan and M. Mauwandwal, the Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan, received him at the airport. There were also present other leading personalities of Karachi, to say nothing of the cheering crowds which gathered round the aerodrome.

In his welcoming speech the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan spoke of the age-old friendship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, two brother Muslim countries. Replying, His Majesty said:

"Your Excellency, I am happy that with your invitation I have found this opportunity of visiting Pakistan, and I thank you for your welcome and hospitality. I recall with pleasure your last visit to Afghanistan, and am very happy to meet you once again.

"In bringing the good wishes of my countrymen to the people of Pakistan I would also like to express those of myself personally, in line with the hopes and expectation of the Afghan people, for the welfare of the people of Pakistan."

To the accompaniment of both Afghan and Pakistani national anthems His Majesty then inspected a guard of honour representing the three armed forces.

At the conclusion of the introductory ceremonies King Muhammad Zahir Shah drove in a car to the President's Lodge. The whole of the eleven-mile route was gaily decorated with festoons and triumphal arches, and the flags of the two countries everywhere. Tens of thousand of cheering citizens lined the roadside. The atmosphere resounded with shouts of "Long Live King Muhammad Zahir Shah" and "Long Live friendship between Afghanistan and Pakistan".

Homage to Muhammad 'Ali Jinnah

On the evening of 1st February 1958 His Majesty the King of Afghanistan was the guest of honour at a reception given by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The following day he visited the mausoleum of the Founder of Pakistan, where he laid wreaths of flowers on his tomb.

From there he went on to Maripur, and after a welcome by Air Vice-Marshall Muhammad Asghar Khan, of the Pakistan Air Force, His Majesty watched a flying display staged over the aerodrome. At the end of the show, the Commanders-in-Chief of the sea, land and air forces presented their respective medals to the Royal visitor.

The same day the citizens of Karachi held a civic reception in honour of the visiting monarch at the Frere Hall Gardens, which was also attended by President Mirza and many other Government officials and Karachi citizens.

In a speech of welcome, a representative of the citizens of Karachi spoke of the long-standing cultural and religious ties between the two countries. His Majesty's visit was a great honour not only to the people of Karachi, he said, but to the entire population of Pakistan, and that as a result of his visit the present amity of Afghanistan and Pakistan would be even further strengthened.

The Governor of Karachi also gave a long speech of welcome to the King of Afghanistan. He remembered the many instances of cultural and Islamic heritage brought over to the people of Pakistan, directly or indirectly, by eminent Afghan scholars, philosophers and religious leaders such as Mu'inuddin Chishti, Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani, Muhammad 'Afi and others. He hoped that the auspicious occasion of His Majesty's visit to Pakistan would create further and even closer association in various fields of endeavour between the people of the two countries.

In reply His Majesty expressed his appreciation of the sentiments accorded him. He said that the Afghans had not forgotten the friendly sentiments and moral support rendered by the people of that part of the world during Afghanistan's struggle against colonialism; they would forever appreciate it. In concluding, the King said that his people had never failed to demonstrate their heartfelt sympathy for their friends and neighbours under foreign domination, who strove to achieve their national aspirations and that when independence came to this part of the world, no one was more happy than the Afghans.

"My countrymen hope, and are still hoping, that with the advent of independence to Pakistan the innate desires of the two peoples for a consolidation of happy relations, and complete comity, will be attained.

"In keeping with the heartfelt desires of my people," His Majesty continued, "I would like to express the lasting nature of those aspirations. I am sure that these same hopes exist with the people of Pakistan, for their lack would be abnormal. The religious and cultural links which have existed between the two peoples are in themselves confirmation of mutual aspirations.

"Afghanistan follows a completely independent and peace-loving policy, the basis of which is friendship with all the peoples and nations of the world. This policy is traditional in Afghanistan, and it is therefore impossible that there should be a hope for anything but friendship in the hearts of the Afghans for the people of Pakistan. Afghanistan has expressed its adherence to this policy to all the nations of the world, and I am sure that our Pakistani brethren are well aware of that.

"I pray therefore to God Almighty, for continued prosperity for the people of Pakistan, for the Islamic world, and for humanity at large."

On 4th February 1958 His Majesty visited the Pakistan Government Mint; the Naval College, over which the Royal Afghan flag was hoisted, and where he was welcomed by Admiral Choudri, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Navy, and other officers.

His Majesty inspected various sections of the College amid cheers from the students; and then watched a special
His Majesty King a State Visit
(1st February—

PAKISTAN
Area: 364,734 square miles.
Population: 75,842,000 (85% Muslim).
Flag: Dark green with a white vertical part at the mast; the green portion bearing a white cross in the centre and a five-pointed heraldic star.

Above — His Majesty the King of Afghanistan (left) and the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, General Iskandar Mirza, are taking the salute at Karachi Airport at a march-past of a detachment of the Pakistan Army, Navy and Air Force.

Below — His Majesty the King of Afghanistan is watching an air display at Maripur, near Karachi. Seated on his right is the wife of the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Begum Mirza. At his left are Air Vice-Marshai Muhammad Aghbar Khan, Pakistan Air Force, President Iskandar Mirza, and Mr. 'Ali Muhammad, Deputy Premier of Afghanistan.

The Degree of Doctor of Medicine in Science was conferred by the Governor-General of Pakistan, President Iskandar Mirza, on His Majesty King Muhammad Zahir of Afghanistan.

Education Programme 5-yea

In the educational field, 250 adult literate classes, 25 secondary schools, two university faculties are ready by the next five years in Pakistan.

To construct theTechological Institute for 250,000,000 Afghans, 50 million dollars equipment 10,000,000 beds, 313,800,000 Afghans to a higher level of education, and the construction of 203,800,000 Afghans to national progress in Afghan education.

Health plans include hospitals, dental clinics and clinics in districts. The main emphasis is on the prevention of disease and measures against disease. A national health budget is 92,970,000 Afghans.

Community development programmes account for some 241,000,000 Afghans.

1 47.04 Afghans = £1.
of Afghanistan on to Pakistan
(February, 1958)

AFGHANISTAN
Area: 250,000 square miles.
Population: About 12,000,000 (wholly Muslim).
Flag: Green, red and black with the white device of a mosque in the centre.

Above — His Majesty the King of Afghanistan is laying a wreath of flowers on the tomb of the late Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Below — His Majesty the King of Afghanistan is chatting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Feroz Khan Noon (centre), and Mr. Maiwandwal, the Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan.

and Health under the Plan

A field 160 new primary courses, more than 25 technical colleges and two to be established within Afghanistan.

New schools will cost and the necessary labora-000 dollars. A total of will be spent on educa-

The setting up of many hos- laboratories in various will be on preventive basis. The sum allotted to this.

Health programmes will 0,000 Afghans.
The King of Afghanistan is replying to an address of welcome presented by the citizens of Karachi at a reception held at the Frere Hall Gardens, Karachi.

March-past of the cadets and officers. Luncheon was served aboard the battleship Babur, during which toasts were drunk to His Majesty's health, and the prosperity of Afghanistan. His Majesty in his turn toasted the health and prosperity of the people of Pakistan. Admiral Choudri presented His Majesty with a Pakistani naval medal, and a model of another battleship, Badr.

Reception given by Premier Noon

That evening His Majesty received Mr. 'Abdul Wahhab, speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly, and members of the Pakistan Cabinet. He later attended another reception, given by the Premier of Pakistan, Mr. Feroz Khan Noon.

Visit to Karachi University

On 5th February 1958, the King of Afghanistan visited Karachi University, accompanied by his host, who is also Chancellor of the University. Once again the Royal visitor received a rousing welcome, and an honorary degree of

"Doctor of Laws" from the Chancellor. He then laid the foundation-stone for the new zoology department of the University, congratulating the people of Pakistan on the addition of yet another scientific institute to the list of institutes of learning in Pakistan.

On 6th February 1958 His Majesty the King and the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan flew to Rawalpindi for a march-past of the combined military forces. After a salvo of 21 guns in honour of the visiting monarch, General Muhammad Musa, the Chief of Staff of the Pakistani Army, greeted His Majesty the Afghan King, and presented various high-ranking officers of the Pakistani Army to him.

Cheering citizens thronged the route from the airport to the parade ground, and the way was decorated with flags. On arrival at their stands on the parade ground, the Afghan Royal flag and the flag of the President of Pakistan were hoisted overhead to the accompaniment of acclamation from the onlookers. Before the march-past His Majesty inspected the Army units from an open jeep.
OIL IN THE ARAB WORLD

Seventy-five per cent of the non-Communist World's Supply

Arabia has always fascinated Western minds for its riches. Today vast reservoirs of oil stagger the Western imagination.

In olden days, the fabled riches of the Middle East were celebrated in song and story — the spices and gold of Araby, the treasures of King Solomon and wondrous wealth of the Queen of Sheba. Western travellers to the Arab world brought back tales of camel caravans laden with precious burdens as they crossed lonely desert stretches, and these tales fired the imagination of European audiences.

Today, however, an even greater source of riches is travelling across some of the same routes once traversed by the tinkling camel caravans. For underneath the timeless desert sands which cover much of the Arab world, enormous hidden wealth has been unearthed during the past three decades. Vast stores of precious oil — fuel for the hungry industries of the Western world — have been located in the region of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The quantity of oil already discovered is so tremendous that once again Arab treasure staggars the Western imagination. In Su'udi Arabia, for example, an American oil company has found one enormous oil reservoir which spreads across the desert for approximately 200 miles — roughly the distance between New York City and Baltimore, Maryland. Some experts have estimated that this field alone probably contains more crude oil than the entire proved reserves of the North American continent.

This fabulous picture of oil wealth is multiplied many times in Su'udi Arabia and neighbouring Arab lands. Kuwait, with a total land area smaller than the State of Connecticut, may contain as much oil as the whole United States of America. Here oil wells lie so close to the coastline of the Persian Gulf that the precious fuel virtually runs downhill as it pours from the wells, on to waiting tankers which load at one of the world's largest piers. Adding up the sum total of oil wealth in the Middle East today, a report to the Congressional Joint Committee on Atomic Energy estimated potential reserves at 230 billion barrels, or 'seventy-five per cent of the free world's oil supply'. Other geologists have estimated that ultimate recovery of Middle Eastern oil, including future discoveries, will reach the 300-billion-barrel figure.

The significant fact about oil reserves in the Middle East is that estimates have continually been revised upwards, particularly in the past few years. In 1920 the potential reserves of the area were placed at only 5,820,000,000 barrels and by 1945 authoritative estimates had risen to about 18 billion barrels. But in 1956 the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineering estimated these reserves at 117 billion barrels, and the recent congressional report placed the total at 230 billion.

Day by day the share of the Middle East in the world oil production is increasing. Europe is becoming more and more dependent on oil from the Arab world.

In terms of current production as well as future potentialities, the Middle East looms large in the total oil picture. Prior to the Second World War, this area still played a minor role in oil production. In 1930, for example, the Middle East accounted for less than 4 per cent of total world production. With the conclusion of the war, however, and the rebuilding of European industry, major oil companies engaged in an extensive development programme throughout the Middle East. By 1955, when free world oil production rose to 4,973,000,000 barrels, the Middle East produced 1,167,000,000 barrels — almost one quarter of the total free world figure.

Before the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt in November 1956 severely disrupted oil shipments from the Middle East, this area provided Western Europe with 90 per cent of its crude oil imports. Since Western Europe must import 95 per cent of its petroleum requirements, the brutal war against Egypt created severe shortages for European industry. Prior to the invasion, Middle Eastern oil production had reached 3,800,000 barrels a day — one half of the total output of the United States. Since 3,500,000 barrels a day moved to world markets, the Middle East was by far the world's largest oil exporting area. More than half of this oil — 2,400,000 barrels — moved daily through the Suez Canal and oil pipelines to the Mediterranean, North Africa, Europe, the United States and Canada. When the Suez Canal and the Iraqi-Mediterranean pipelines were closed by war, Middle Eastern oil production was reduced by some 40 per cent.

Before the Suez crisis, European oil consumption was running about 10 per cent ahead of the previous year's total, with factories operating at peak capacity. After the Suez Canal closed, a bottleneck immediately rose in ocean shipping and European factories had difficulty in securing both fuel and raw materials. Two months after the invasion, despite emergency makeshift measures, Europe was still 15 per cent short of her oil needs.

A second measure of the current status of Middle East oil production is the enormous profit realized during recent years. Since profits from oil operations are usually fifty-fifty between companies operating on government concessions and the governments themselves, a rough estimate of total profits may be compiled by doubling the published amounts paid by the companies to various Middle Eastern governments. In 1948, these governments received approximately $100 million in oil revenues; in 1951 payments rose to some $250 million dollars; in 1955 government royalties passed $900 million dollars, and in 1956 — despite the curtailment caused by the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression — governmental oil incomes exceeded one billion dollars. Since the basis of calculating oil profits tends to favour the companies, not the governments, total profits from Middle Eastern oil production in 1956 may well approach the three-billion-dollar mark.

A brief history of the discovery of early oil-fields and their development in the Middle East

By the ironic twist of fate, the new-found oil riches of this strategic area were plainly indicated many centuries before their discovery by the Western world. For it was in the Middle East that many first used petroleum products, probably before the dawn of recorded history. Many of the area's prolific fields have been located by leaks of gas — the same type which composed the Bible's everlasting fires. In Genesis 6:14 there is a description of Noah sealing the seams of the Ark with petroleum, in accordance with the Lord's instructions to "make the Ark of gopher wood and pitch it within and without with pitch." However, the Middle East's rich reservoirs of oil lay undisturbed until latter years of the nineteenth century. In 1869, the history of modern oil development in this area began with an obscure discovery made in Egypt. The location of
this early oil strike was near Gemsa, on the Red Sea coast just south of the Gulf of Suez. After forty years of intermittent mining and drilling, oil in commercial quantity was first produced in 1909. Although the Gemsa field proved to be of minor extent, its discovery attracted outside attention of Baghdad. Despite this optimistic appraisal, exploration and development of Iraq’s oil potentialities was postponed for a quarter of a century because of the instability of the Turkish Empire.

After World War I, when Iraq had achieved her indepen-

to the petroleum possibilities of Egypt and the rest of the Middle East.

At the time of the Gemsa discovery, bituminous deposits and oil seepages throughout the Turkish and Persian Empires caused only passing interest because of the confused political and legal situation prevalent in the area. After 1890, however, geologists penetrated into some of the seepage areas and tried to correlate oil indications and surface formations. Preliminary reports indicated that the most favourable combination of surface geology and seepage was 150 miles north
dence, the new Government signed the first oil concession negotiated in the Arab world with an international oil company. According to the terms of this concession, which was granted in 1925 and expires in the year 2,000, the Iraq Petroleum Company received exclusive rights to develop Iraqi oil in certain areas. The Company, composed equally of British, American, French and Dutch interests, immediately commenced explorations in the vicinity of Kirkuk. After six months of drilling, the famous Baba Gurgur well near Kirkuk came in with a production of 60,000 barrels per day. The
results of drilling have since proved the vast potentialities of the Kirkuk oil field, which is sixty miles in length, between one and two miles wide, and one of the biggest single oil structures in the world. In July, the Kirkuk oil field hit the 180,000,000 ton mark.

In the years since the discovery of oil at Baba Gurgur, more extensive exploration has uncovered oil fields at Ain Zalah, north of Kirkuk, and Zubair, close to Iraq’s Persian Gulf coastline. World War II postponed field work in both these areas, but post-war expansion resulted in still further discoveries. Late in 1953, the important Rumaila field was discovered just west of Zubair, and in December 1954 this field was brought into export production. Exploratory work in the summer of 1954 also revealed the existence of a moderate-sized field at Jamburg, some 35 miles south of Kirkuk. All told, crude oil production in Iraq had reached a peak of approximately 750,000 barrels daily in 1956 before output was cut back because of the November invasion against Egypt.

The Shaik of Kuwait.
His Highness Sir ‘Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah

The discovery of oil in Su’udi Arabia and the creation of Aramco

The second important oil-producing Arab nation—and the one in which American interests are most directly concerned—is the vast desert country of Su’udi Arabia. Su’udi oil in commercial quantity was discovered more than a decade after the lucky strike in Iraq’s Baba Gurgur, and Su’udi exploration was a direct result of previous discoveries made on the Persian Gulf island of Bahrain. On 31st May 1932 oil prospectors on Bahrain located oil in a new type of rock formation—gently curved domes in which the oil was held in several shallow beds, lying one below the other and separated by thin layers of rock. These formations had not suffered the rough bending treatment typical of the mountainous Iraqi folds where oil is retained in large limestone anticlines covered by a thick layer of impervious caprock.

Although further drilling revealed that the Bahrain field could not produce the large quantities of oil available in Iraq, the discovery of the geological dome structure led directly to exploration of similar structures in the Su’udi Arabian peninsula. In 1933, the Su’udi Government granted oil concessions covering large portions of Su’udi Arabia to the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco)—an American corporation representing the interests of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, the Texas Company, the Standard Oil Company of California and the Socony Mobil Oil Company, Inc. Under the terms of the original concession, which expires in 1999, Aramco specifically agreed not to interfere with the political or religious life of the country. This proviso was wisely inserted by the Su’udi Government to safeguard the nation’s independence against any possibility of indirect foreign domination.

On 23rd September 1933 the first group of American geologists arrived in Su’udi Arabia and established a camp close to the most promising location—the crest of Jebel Dhahran, commonly known to oilmen as the Dammam Dome. For the first few years, when ten wells were drilled in the shallow Bahrain zone, initial results were discouraging. But in March 1938, when Aramco decided to make a test of deep formations by drilling Dammam No. 7, oil in commercial quantities was discovered at a depth of 4,727 feet. The first shipment of Su’udi Arabian oil to world markets was exported by barge to Bahrain the following September, and the oil company promptly started construction of permanent facilities, including a marine terminal at Ras Tanura, a 10-inch pipeline from field to terminal, homes for oil workers and community services. By 1st May 1939 the first oil tanker loaded with Su’udi crude oil sailed from the new port at Ras Tanura.

The outbreak of World War II temporarily curtailed further development of Su’udi Arabia’s oil resources, but towards the end of 1943 the Allied armies encouraged Aramco to proceed with its oil processing. Accordingly, the company was granted the necessary equipment to build a refinery which went into partial operation at Ras Tanura in 1944. With the conclusion of the war, Aramco started a vast new expansion programme which called for prospecting operations on a large scale, development of new oil fields, establishment of new communities and industrial facilities, and the construction of oil pipelines to carry petroleum to oil tankers in the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea. A new oilfield at Abqaiq, south of Dammam, was developed in the post-war years, and in 1948 a new field was discovered in the vicinity of Ain Dar, south-west of Abqaiq. Further drillings disclosed that the Ain Dar field actually extended for more than one hundred miles, making it the largest known oil field in the entire country.

Because of the continual exploration and improvement of facilities, Su’udi Arabian oil production amounted to some 1,100,000 barrels per day before the Suez invasion.

Oil in the Arabian Shaikhdoms of Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain

In addition to the two sovereign nations of Iraq and Su’udi Arabia, there are three oil-producing Arab lands which have not yet achieved an independent status, namely, the Shaikhdoms of Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain—all located along the Persian Gulf coastline of the Arabian peninsula.

All of Kuwait’s oil is exploited by the Kuwait Oil Company (K.O.C.), an Anglo-American concern owned equally by the Gulf Oil Corporation and the British Petroleum Company, and incorporated as a British company. The company’s
The concession, which was granted in 1934, was extended in 1951 to run until the year 2026. The history of oil discovery and development in this small Shaikhdom at the head of the Persian Gulf closely parallels the experience of Su'udi Arabia, for Kuwait oil in commercial quantity was located in April, 1938, one month after the Su'udi strike at Damman No. 7. Kuwait's first successful field was discovered in the Burgan area, south of Kuwait bay, and an intensive drilling programme proceeded until the Second World War forced suspension of all field work in 1942.

In the post-war years the K.O.C. undertook major development and construction projects, including the completion of an eight-berth loading jetty and refinery at Mina al-Ahmadi, a tank farm on the Ahmadi ridge and a connecting pipeline system. The facilities at Burgan field were rapidly developed, and exploratory drilling in adjacent areas resulted in discoveries of new oil resources at Magwa and Ahmadi. Concession negotiations, similar to those conducted by the Su'udi Arabian Government, resulted in a 50-50 profit-sharing plan on 30th November 1951. Prior to the Anglo-French-Israeli war, small Shaikhdoms achieved an output of 1,200,000 barrels a day—approximately 100,000 barrels more than neighbouring Su'udi Arabia and roughly one third of total Middle Eastern oil production.

The two other oil-producing Arabian Shaikhdoms—Bahrain and Qatar—possess adequate, but less sensational, supplies of petroleum wealth. Since the discovery of its oil in 1932, the island of Bahrain has derived a sizeable income from oil royalties, but geologists have determined that the island's petroleum resources are of minor size. Bahrain's oil concession is held exclusively by an American group composed of the Texas Company and the Standard Oil Company of California. Obtained in 1925, this concession has been extended to the year 2024. In post-war years, the Americans have modernized a refinery on Bahrain, completed a 12-inch steel pipeline from Dhahran to Bahrain and constructed additional terminal and shipping facilities. Bahrain currently produces some 40,000 barrels of oil a day with known reserves estimated at about 300 million barrels.

Exploration for oil in Bahrain led to similar interest in the oil resources of nearby Qatar. In 1935, the same international group which owns the Iraqi concession (Anglo-French-American-Dutch) was granted exclusive rights to the exploitation of Qatar oil until the year 2010. The concessionaires struck oil with their first well, Dikhan No. 1, in 1939, but were forced to suspend operations during the Second World War. After the war, oil production rose steadily to a top figure of approximately 150,000 barrels daily, with total reserves placed at 1,600,000,000 barrels. In 1949, and again in 1952, the Government of Qatar also granted concessions to oil companies interested in the exploration of marine areas adjacent to Qatar.

An extensive search for oil is still being carried on throughout the whole area. There are hopes to find oil in the sea-bed of the Persian Gulf.

Throughout many areas of the Arab world today an intensive search continues for further deposits of the precious fuel which can magically transform national economies. On the Arab peninsula itself, oil companies are busy surveying Aden, Yemen, Muscat, Oman and the Trucial Shaikhdoms—all on the southern fringe of the great peninsula. In Aden, a British company has already placed a 100,000 barrels-per-day refinery in operation; further east, the American Cities Service Corporation is exploring the Dhofar concession granted to the company in 1953, and in Oman and Abu Dhabi Iraq Petroleum Company affiliates are (illegitimately, though) collecting preliminary operations. In the heart of the peninsula—Su'udi Arabia's vast Rub al-Khali desert—Aramco geologists have completed a deep stratigraphic test reaching down 14,875 feet in hopes of finding additional oil wealth.

The search for oil does not stop on the land mass of the Arabian peninsula, but is now extending to the surrounding coastal waters. For the 70,000-square-mile waters of the Persian Gulf have become the focal point of an impressive offshore oil operation which may eventually rival that in the Gulf of Mexico. The Persian Gulf has never been thoroughly explored, but oil discoveries on nearby land indicate that this body of water may contain more than the 15 billion barrels of oil estimated to lie below the Gulf of Mexico off the Louisiana and Texas coasts. Underwater drilling is more expensive than that done on land, but the depth of the Persian Gulf rarely exceeds 250 feet, making drilling operations feasible in virtually every sector. Off the northern coast of Su'udi Arabia, at Safaniyya, the Arabian-American Oil Company has already completed fourteen wells which have verified the existence of some 70,000 oil-rich acres. Aramco expects to place these acres in commercial production during the current year, pending completion of a pipeline and other facilities.

Moving westward from the Arabian peninsula, the hunt for oil has also returned to Egypt, site of the original Gemsa discovery in the nineteenth century. Under terms of a thirty-year contract with the Egyptian Government, an American oil consortium known as the Sahara Petroleum Company is conducting intensive exploration operations in Egypt's great Western Desert. Although no one knows whether there is a drop of oil in the 89,000-square-mile desert block covered by the contract (an area larger than the oil-producing State of Oklahoma), geological outcappings are similar to those which have pointed to oil fields in other parts of the world. The Sahara is believed to have marvellous oil and mineral resources. Obstacles of nature are a great hindrance at the moment in the exploitation of this wealth. Seven billion barrels of oil have been found in the Algerian Sahara.

Most fabulous—and most frustrating—oil possibilities lie further west of Egypt, in the vast Sahara Desert. Buried beneath some two-and-a-half million square miles of Sahara sand, experts believe that marvellous mineral and oil resources lie. But the practical handicaps involved in extracting such treasure as oil are tremendous; temperatures range from 11 to 135 degrees, sometimes in a single day; water supplies costing 12 cents a gallon which must be trucked across hundreds of desert miles, and summer heat which can melt tyres, explode radiators and even cripple aeroplane engines.

Nevertheless, great expectations now revolve around recent discoveries of oil in the Algerian Sahara. Some 450 miles south of Algiers, at an isolated spot known as Hassi Messaoud, geologists have uncovered an oil field which may contain reserves totalling seven billion barrels—a discovery which would put the area in a class with such titanic producers as Texas and Venezuela. Three hundred miles farther south-east, near the Algerian-Libyan border, prospectors have also made twelve oil strikes in the Edjele area, where reserves are estimated at 150 million barrels. Discovery of this oil on the Algerian side of the border has led to intensive prospecting in adjacent Libya, where the Government has granted concessions to numerous foreign oil companies, including six combines from the United States. Recent official reports confirm the discovery of an oilfield in Libya.
France is extremely unwise in continuing the war in Algeria. In addition to physical handicaps she is creating political obstacles in the development of Sahara’s hidden wealth.

In Algeria itself, the promise of new-found oil riches has unfortunately reinforced the grim determination of colonialist-minded Frenchmen to continue their bloody war of aggression against the Arab population. Ignoring the obvious fact that Saharan oil can hardly reach Mediterranean ports without active co-operation from the Algerian people, the French Government continues to pursue a grandiose dream of empire in direct contradiction to the hard realities of the current Algerian war. Thus, in addition to physical handicaps, there are outstanding political obstacles which threaten to postpone development of the Sahara’s hidden oil wealth.

Revenues from oil are changing the pattern of life in the Middle East.

Like Aladdin’s Lamp, the present and potential oil resources of the Middle East offer miraculous opportunities to transform the current landscape of the Arab world. Oil revenues have already accounted for notable improvements in those Arab States which possess the precious fuel. In some cases, oil wealth has been wisely invested in long-range projects like dams and heavy industry which will provide far-reaching benefits for future generations of Arab citizens; in other cases, the new riches have supplied immediate blessings in the shape of new hospitals, modern schools and low-cost housing.

In Iraq, for example, seventy per cent of the nation’s oil revenues are earmarked every year for the Iraq Development Board, which was established in 1950 to supervise the modernization of this ancient land. Currently engaged on a six-year national development programme, Iraq will spend more than one billion dollars on irrigation, agriculture, industry, communications, housing and education. Projects already completed include two new dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which have eliminated the annual fear of floods in the vicinity of the capital city of Baghdad. Two more dams, one of them 450 feet high, are now being constructed on tributaries of the Tigris.

The story of rebirth and rebuilding based on oil wealth is repeated in neighbouring Arab lands. In Su’udi Arabia, the most spectacular project has been a Su’udi Government Railroad stretching 357 miles from Riyadh to a new deep-water port at Damman on the Persian Gulf. Construction costs, including port facilities, reached the sum of seventy million dollars. Considerable sums have also been invested in the expansion of new industries, health facilities, schools, communications and many projects aimed at raising the living standard of the people.

And mindful of the country’s religious obligations as the home of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the Su’udi Government has undertaken major repairs and improvements to smooth the path of faithful Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca. A concerted programme is under way to combat illiteracy amongst desert Bedouin tribes. In health matters, too, the Bedouins are receiving special attention from mobile health units maintained and staffed at Government expense.

In the Persian Gulf shaikhdoms of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar similar programmes of social and civic improvement are taking place. Kuwait, with the largest oil income, has invested large sums in projects concerned with health, education and fresh water (Kuwait’s wells have only brackish water). Free health service is provided for the entire population. Education, like medical care, is also free of charge, with the Government providing student clothing, mid-day meals, health inspection and even transportation, when needed.

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This book is an excellent exposition of the moral aspect of the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

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MARCH 1958
A Study of the Nature of the Arab Mind before Islam

By AFZAL IQBAL

Views of non-Arabs on Arabs

There is an astounding difference of opinion among scholars who have investigated this field. According to some of the Shu'ubis (anti-Arabs) all non-Arab nations in every part of the world had kings to defend them, cities to shelter them, and laws to protect them. They produced philosophers whose speculative genius gave us the Theory of Creation and Law; whose creative genius gave us magnificent handicrafts; they produced silk textiles, invented chess and scale machines. The Arabs had no kings to unify them, to consolidate their scattered lands, to take the aggressor to task, and to offer an effective check to the insolent marauders from spreading mischief. They had no achievement to their credit in the sphere of arts or crafts nor had they any philosophy except that which was incidentally contained in their poetry. But even in this limited field they were outwitted by the Persians. The Greeks too had a great tradition of long poems which aimed at expounding a philosophy of life.1

Al-Jahidh and Ibn Khaldun on the Arab character

Al-Jahidh (d. 809 C.E.) does not agree with the views of the anti-Arabs. In fact, to him it is distasteful to indulge in odd comparisons in assessing the character of a nation. “Indians,” he says, “have produced great books, they have developed a philosophy of life, but it is divorced from life; they have simply inherited classics and have still to discover the value of human personality. The Greeks had their own philosophy and logic but the man of logic himself faltered for speech. The Persians had their traditions of a public speaker but every phrase he uttered was the result of a complicated process of thought and reason. But to the Arab it came naturally, as if by inspiration, without any conscious effort at strenuous thinking, without the mind having to wander restlessly and without artificial external aids. An Arab had only to concentrate on a subject. Once he had made up his mind he was never at a loss for words which came gushing forth in a flow of natural and simple spontaneity. He was illiterate. He could not read or write, but he was natural without affectation and expressed himself with a simplicity and a clarity which was the envy of all logicians. He was unlike those who committed to memory the thoughts of others preceding them in the field of ideas. The Arab turns instinctively to his own mind on which he freely draws without being weighed down by the burden of bulky and dusty volumes bequeathed to him by the scholars of the past.”2

Scanning the pages of Ibn Khaldun’s History one calls the following sketch of the Arab character: The Arab race is creative by nature and their nature indeed is conspicuously savage. They thrive on plunder. They loot what falls in their way. They bag the booty which comes to them without going out of their way to collect it or in any way endangering their life. And having completed the plunder they return to their camps in the vast desert. Only those living in the inaccessible terrain of the mountains are immune from their devastating raids. The people in the plains, particularly those who are not fortunate in having the effective protection of a Government, are thoroughly exposed to their devastating raids. Such people are a perennial prey to the Arab attacks till they are completely overrun and their civilization exterminated, both by the Arab infiltration and by the inherent weakness of their own Government.3 When the Arabs conquer a country they bring complete ruin to it. They are a savage nation. They destroy buildings because they use their stones as fire-dogs for their cooking pans. They demolish ceilings to use the timber pegs in order to pitch their tents. There is no limit to their loot. They do not know any law. They do not care to prevent people from committing crimes and maintaining order. Their only care is what they take from the people by plunder or by taxation. Once they have had what they want they ignore the welfare and the interest of the vanquished. Among themselves they vie with each other for the supremacy of the clan. Hardly would one of them suffer to remain under the domination of another man, no matter whether he is his own father, brother, or tribal chief; and they have many chiefs and princes. All of them impose taxes and laws on the people which no civilization can endure. Look at what they have done to the Yemen, their own country! It is a deserted place except for a few towns. Iraq also suffered the same way. Everything of consequence built by the Persians was destroyed. The same is true of Syria.4

No other nation could beat the Arabs in their lack of leadership, which accrues from pride, conceit, ambition, and endless rivalry for supremacy. They seldom agree. The result is that they do not rule unless it be in a religious way which was the case of the Prophet.5 The buildings made by them do not last for they do not know how to choose the site in view of essential considerations like the weather, water, fertility of land and similar factors without which no town or city can possibly prosper. The Arab simply does not appreciate these requirements. All that he cares for is the meadow for his camels. To him it does not matter whether the water is impure, whether the soil is barren or fertile. When the Arabs planned Kufa, Basrah, or Qayrawan, they considered only the pastures for their camels and their proximity to the desert and the routes of the caravans. Their civilization was not based on anything substantial and they had nothing to bequeath to posterity. Their civilization died with them. The superstructure which they built tottered with their death and is now but a heap of ruins.6

The Arabs had no knowledge of artisanship. They were deeply rooted in the desert life and were far removed from urbanity and the essentials that accrue from it. We find the Arab countries and those which they vanished lacking in handicrafts, and dependent entirely on imports. Again the Arabs lacked the technical skill which comes from a specially creative faculty in which the Arabs were wholly deficient. Knowledge and science were the monopoly of the civilized people who were considered foreigners (Ajami) or slaves (Mawali). Most of the philosophers and scholars of Islam were foreigners or brought up in foreign countries.7 Not withstanding all these drawbacks of character Ibn Khuldun concedes that the Arabs were simple and natural and adhered to the righteous path of true guidance. He ascribes to them the quality of courage which was born of the necessity of defending themselves in the vastness of an exposed desert. Courage and strength is their second nature. They were, and are, known all over the world for their eloquence and

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3 Ibn Khaldun’s History, p. 125.
5 Ibn Khaldun’s History, p. 127.
6 Ibn Khaldun’s History, p. 300.
7 Ibn Khaldun’s History, p. 478.
9 Arabia Before Mohammed.
volubility in expression. Eloquence has been their hallmark since their existence.

European writers on the Arab character

According to O'Leary, the Arab is materialistic in his outlook. He is very greedy. He has no imagination or passion. Religion seldom appeals to him. He jealously guards his personal prestige and revolts against every kind of authority. He does not care for anything except his own material benefit. He is suspicious by nature. On the very day of his nomination as a chief, the person so honoured, instead of feeling secure in the confidence given him by his people, expects on the contrary, hatred, grudge, jealousy, intrigue, and betrayal even from the sincerest friends. The Arab hates those that treat him kindly: for kindness raises in him feelings of inferiority and submission.

La Manse thinks that the Arab is an ideal democrat, but his is an extremely exaggerated democracy. His rebellion against all authority which seeks to limit his freedom, in his own interest, is an eloquent commentary on the series of crimes and revolts which fill the greater part of the history of Arabs. The Arab adores his freedom. If you try to limit his freedom or reduce it you simply provoke him to behave like a beast in a cage which rises in a fury to break loose his chains and return to his freedom. The Arab is very sincere and devoted to the tradition of his tribe. He is generous in entertaining his guests. He is essentially religious in spirit and faithfully adheres to alliances in war. He is a loyal friend. La Manse feels that these qualities are not the monopoly of any particular nation but characterize all nations in a particular stage of evolution. In his opinion if the Arabs had settled down to a city life and led an agricultural life their character would have changed accordingly.

We have cited a few representative instances where authors holding different points of view have clearly expressed their opinion about the same subject. The number of such authors is legion. There are those, particularly the Arabs, who ascribe every conceivable virtue to their race. This is not a scientific approach, for no nation could be represented as a Divine race. The approach of the anti-Arabs is as unscientific as that of the Arab protagonists who glorify their culture and traditions out of all proportion to reality. There is no reason why anti-Arab scholars should set out to discover Greek philosophy or a country like the Romans among the Arabs. There is a basic fallacy in this approach because a developed civilization cannot possibly be compared with pagan Arabia. Comparisons can be struck only between nations passing through the same stage of civilization and certainly not between a primitive and a civilized nation. It would be ridiculous to compare a child with a mature adult. Every nation, like the Persians or the Romans, passed through a primitive stage of society, and in that stage they had neither philosophy nor inventions like the silk textiles or the astrolabe of which the anti-Arab scholars talk so much. If, however, these scholars were to compare the Persian and the Roman civilization with the civilization of Arabia after it achieved its maturity, they would have no ground to complain if only they brought an unbiased mind to bear on the subject. In view of these considerations we do not propose to analyze the criticism of the anti-Arab scholars. From the different views we have quoted on the character of the Arab all that merit consideration are the views of Ibn Kaldun and O'Leary.

An analytical criticism of the views of Ibn Kaldun on the Arabs

Let us sum up these views before proceeding further to analyse them. Ibn Kaldun thinks that the Arab thrives on loot and plunder. He destroys the kingdoms he conquers. He is not law-abiding. It is difficult to make him subservient to authority. He knows neither craftsmanship nor science, and does not have the natural ability to master either. He is simple, benevolent and courageous. The essence of O'Leary's view is that the Arab is materialistic and has a limited power of imagination. He has no passion, is extremely conscious of his prestige and freedom. He revolts against authority, is generous and hospitable and is faithful to his tribal tradition.

Both Ibn Kaldun and O'Leary agree on the materialistic outlook of the Arab and his revolt against authority. The latter is no doubt true and O'Leary is right when he says that this trait of character explains a series of crimes and revolts which form the greater part of the "History of the Arabs". As for the other view of being materialistic, there are many modern Orientalists who agree with it. E. G. Browne is one of them. It is true that this trait of character could be discovered in many a dweller of the desert today, but can we generalize it to cover the Arabs before Islam? We have our serious doubts. Their literature which has come down to us tells many a tale of hospitality, fidelity, and self-sacrifice for the sake of traditions of the tribe; and if these accounts are true, we cannot possibly dub the Arab a materialist. One is, therefore, driven to the conclusion that both Ibn Kaldun and O'Leary have really not made any effort to define the Arab whom they have tried to analyse. We believe that the Arab before Islam differs in many respects from the Arab in Islam. Moreover, before Islam an urban Arab differed from a bedouin Arab and bedouins today are certainly not the same as those of the pre-Islamic era. Ibn Kaldun, precise as he is in his argument, does not give the exact definition of the Arab whom he analysed in his History. The statement is, therefore, confused and confusing. At some points he feels that he is referring to the bedouins Arab who demolished palaces in order to use their stones as fire-dogs and the ceiling beams as tent pegs. This obviously applies to the illiterate bedouin and not to be civilized Arab in the days of Umayyad or the Abbasside dynasties. One cannot possibly place the Arab referred to by Ibn Kaldun when he says that the Arab does not know how to choose the site for building cities. Ibn Kaldun has mentioned Basrah and Kufah as examples. But these cities, as we know, were not founded by the pagan Arab, but were the work of the early Muslim Arab who conquered Persia and the Eastern Roman Empire. The Arab who plans cities and chooses sites for them cannot be the same who demolishes a palace for the sake of his fire-dogs and tent pegs. Ibn Kaldun has stated that the Arab did not know any science and the foreigners took the lead in scholarship and learning. This does not apply, however, to the pre-Islamic Arab or to the Arab in the early days of Islam. It is correct, however, of the Arab during the Abbasside and the Umayyad dynasties. Ibn Kaldun clearly contradicts himself in another place. He says that the Arabs have a capacity for adjusting themselves to changing circumstances and that they make good use of their new environment. To quote him: "Until they conquered and governed Persia and Rum (Byzantium) the Arabs had no civilization. When they saw bread or pastry they thought it was paper! When they found camphour in the treasures of Kisra (Chosroes), they used it as salt in their food! This is a sad commentary on the level of civilization represented by the conquering Arabs. Soon after they settled down in the new territories they employed

11 E. G. Browne's History of Persian Literature.
12 Muqaddimah, p. 144.

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Roman and Persian youths as servants and artisans and made full use of them.” Ibn Khaldun concedes that they reached the peak of culture and were thoroughly civilized and knew the value and use of drinks, food, clothing, arms, furniture, and utensils. From this small quotation from Ibn Khaldun one can clearly see that he has inextricably mixed up the Arab in various stages and has chosen to make sweeping statements which contradict his own thesis that the Arab follows the evolution of society.

O’Leary credits the Arabs with little imagination and no passion. Neither imagination nor passion has, however, been defined by him. There is no doubt that the Arabs did not have epics like the Iliad of Homer or the Shahnama of Firdawsi. Their poetry lacks the romantic and the dramatic elements. They also lack the rich imaginative literature like fiction but a comparative absence of these forms in Arabic literature does not imply an utter lack of imagination on the part of the Arab. For is it not imagination which produces the poetry of pride, zeal and love? Is it not imagination again which finds the beautiful similies and metaphors so richly employed by the Arab poets? The Arab poetry which we know could not have been possibly written without the fire of imagination and live passion so necessary to produce literature.

The Arab displayed varying degrees of progress and civilisation before and after Islam

We must concede the fact that the Arab displayed varying degrees of progress and civilization before and after Islam. The Arab before Islam is a nervous man. He is easily excited at the slightest provocation. He is extremely sensitive of personal pride. His anger knows no limit when his own honour or the prestige of the tribe is involved. Such occasions witness the best and the worst qualities of Arab character. His hand instinctively falls on the sword, which is the sole arbitrator. Such feuds and quarrels were a daily occurrence in his life.

As a result of his nervous nature the Arab is intelligent. This is easily discernible from his language in which he often employs obscure hints and indirect references. This is also obvious from his ready wit which he employs as a weapon of defence. No sooner is he confronted with an issue than the witty answer is on his lips. His intelligence is, however, not of a deep and extraordinary nature. He often uses different words for the same object; his audience takes delight in his artistic way of putting words together and not really in the meaning which is sought to be conveyed. The form is more important than the matter or we might say that his tongue is cleverer than his mind. His imagination does not run riot and is indeed limited. He cannot conjure up a vivid picture of an ideal in his mind. In fact, he does not know an ideal because it is derived from lofty imagination. His language does not have any word for an ideal. It was never referred to by him. The flight of his poetic imagination is limited to a narrow sphere. It does on occasions pass these boundaries but does not quite feel at home in an atmosphere which is not consistent with his own inherent nature.

On the moral side the Arab loves unlimited freedom, personal but not social freedom. He bows in obedience neither to a chief nor to a ruler. His history before and even after Islam has been one long series of civil wars. Only the period of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab (d. 644 C.E.) was his golden age. ‘Umar was a gifted man and understood full well the mentality of the Arab whose attention he successfully diverted from internal strife to external campaigns of conquest. The Arab loves equality—equality within the boundaries of his tribe. Outside this sphere he feels in the heart of his hearts that his blood alone is of the best. That is why he was not afraid of the might of the Persians and the Romans even though he himself was steeped in utter poverty. The riches and civilization of the Persian and Roman Empires did not daunt him for a moment. With all his nomadism and the barrenness of his own soil the Arab felt infinitely superior to all other races. When he eventually conquered other countries he established himself as their master in his own right.

Rational life of the Arabs before Islam

We have seen by now that a great majority of the Arabs before Islam were bedouins. We have also established that all nations pass through a stage of nomadism in the course of their evolution towards civilization. In the primitive stage of society before Islam, the Arab did not understand the relation between cause and effect. He did not comprehend the value of reason and logic. When a man fell ill a medicine was prescribed for him. This was proof of an understanding of some sort of relationship between illness and cure but this understanding was indeed very shallow in the stage we are talking about. All that the Arab knew at this stage was that his tribe had a certain tradition which made it necessary to prescribe a certain medicine for a certain disease. He easily accepted, for instance, the idea that the blood of his chief cured hydrophobia (rabies). He was convinced that the cause of all illness was an evil spirit which had to be driven out before a man could be cured. He also believed that an insane man could only be saved by being polluted with filth and unless a dead man’s bones were attached to his body there was no hope of his recovery to sanity. The Arab did not disapprove of all such superstitions which were blindly followed by his tribe. The question of disapproval did not in fact arise, for the act of disapproval presumes capacity for examination and keen analysis of the causes leading to a certain disease. The human mind in that primitive period in Arabia had not developed to an extent where it could investigate into the causes of diseases with a view to remedying them through certain processes which needed careful study and thought. The poor understanding of the relationship between cause and effect explains why we find the literature of this period abounding in legends and superstitions of a hundred hues. We are told, for example, that the Dam of Ma’rib was situated between three mountains. Into it collected the waters of floods and from it flowed on three sides the water had only one outlet. The fourth side was also closed with stone and lead and strong gates were built to control the flow of water. The water was used for purposes of irrigation. The swarms of red mice, we are told, started using their sharp teeth and removed stones which could not be moved by a hundred men. They pushed them with their paws to close the water exit from one side while they made a breach on the other. The Arabs of this period were unable to appreciate that there was no relationship between the red mice and the destruction of the dam and that the real reason for its destruction was the negligence in maintaining it, and that it collapsed because it had become too weak to resist the pressure of the water in it.

Stories are also related of al-Nu’man Ibn Imru ‘l-Qays ordering a Roman mason, Sinimmaar, to build his famous palace at Khawarnaq. When the work was completed the mason is stated to have announced that there was one brick in the structure the removal of which would cause the collapse of the palace. The king asked him whether someone else also knew the secret. The mason answered in the negative. The king then ordered the mason to be thrown from the highest storey of the palace. The Arabs firmly believed in the superstition, although obviously it is impossible to make a whole palace depend on one stone only. The number
of such examples of superstition to be found in Arabic literature is legion. In particular the literature connected with the extinct tribes like 'Ad, Tasm and Jadiis, or with events far before the time of the Hijra like Jadaema or Zabbaua', is full of such stories.

It is quite clear by now that the Arabs did not know how to reason out a given event and find for themselves the exact relationship between cause and effect. This inability to connect cause with effect is nothing peculiar to the Arab. All nations, including the Greeks, passing through the same phase of evolution in their history, show the same symptoms. This is in fact the origin of what is called mythology today. In such a state of society the Arabs had perforce to depend on predictions, fortune-telling and other illogical means for the knowledge of the past and of the future. Superstitions were a rule and not an exception, and the entire nation believed in them. Predictions and fortune-telling was a recognized custom in nearly all the tribes of Arabia. In some of the pre-Islamic Arab poetry we may come across parables and stories, a flash of an original idea, but even these rare instances do not provide sufficient material to prove that the Arab had developed any power of thinking, analysing, and giving sustained expression of his ideas. Ibn Hisham in his Sirah relates that certain groups from the tribe of Thaqeef were frightened at the sudden appearance of a meteor and ran to a man called 'Amr Ibn Umayyah, from the tribe of Banu 'Ilaaj, who was known for his shrewdness. "O 'Amr," they said, "have you not seen these falling stars?" "Yes," he answered. "See if the falling stars are those which guide travellers on land and sea, or those by which we know the seasons like summer and winter, so that the people can lead their lives; then, by God, it is the end of the world and we shall have complete destruction of life: and if they are other stars, and not those which are stable in their places, then it is God alone who knows what He does in His creation."

Notice the keen observation of 'Amr, who distinguished the stars on which depends the law of this world from those which are not so important like the meteors. But this is not the philosophical analysis of stars and meteors nor is it a clear reasoning of the relationship between cause and effect. Some Orientalists have observed that the Arab mind does not and cannot look upon things from a general comprehensive angle. Some Muslim scholars have before them observed this fact. In his al-Milat wa'l-Nidal, Shahrustani, speaking about the learned men, says that the major part of their wisdom is composed only of fakes of natural sudden flashes of thought. In another place he remarks that the Arabs and Indians resemble each other in their way of thinking. Both confine themselves to the nature of things and judge them by substance only. They generally go by their instinct and nature. The Romans and Persians also resemble each other in one aspect. They consider the reasons of things and judge them by their quality. Their general feature is acquisition and diligence.

The limitations of the Arab mind

Unlike the Greeks, the Arab did not look at the world and ask himself how this world had come into existence! I can see it ever changing, ever inconstant. Is there no solid, lasting and constant basis behind it? If there is one, why is it there? Is it water, air, or fire? I can see all the world as a single entity, different parts of which are related to one another and are subject to special constant laws. What are these laws? How were they formulated and out of what were they made? The Greek asked himself these searching questions; and these questions form the basis of his philosophy. The Arab, however, did not adopt this course, not even after the dawn of Islam. He simply wandered in his surroundings and when he saw a scene which aroused his admiration he was content with being thoroughly impressed by it. His heart was touched and his feelings found expression in a line of poetry, a parable or a proverb. This is how he expressed himself.

"The inconsistence of the sun, and its rise from where it does not set has prevented our stay.

"And its rise, white and clear; and its setting Yellow as Wars (yellow perfume powder).

"It runs on the heart of the sky, like the death when it approaches the soul

"Today, I know what it brings, and yesterday has passed with its decided fate."

The Arab mind is incapable of reviewing an object as a whole. He only looks at a certain aspect. When he looks at an object of beauty he simply admires it but does not proceed to analyse or dissect it. If he stands before a tree, for example, he does not study it as a whole but he is impressed by one particular feature of the tree, say, the straightness of its trunk or the beauty of its leaves. If he happens to be in a garden, he does not wander through the terraces to have a general comprehensive idea of the garden as a whole. Instead he prefers to flit from flower to flower like a honeybee sucking the essence of the flowers. This characteristic of the Arab mind is the key to the imperfection and the beauty of the Arabic literature even in the days of Islam. By imperfection we mean that when we read a piece of poetry or prose, we do not discover any perceptible thread of logic running through it nor do we discover any conscious effort at reasoning out a thought, nor do we come across sharp sequences of ideas and a systematic relationship between them. This point will be forcefully brought out by a little illustration. Take, for example, a piece of poetry — specially from the pre-Islamic era — and omit one of its lines or change the places of a few lines and you will see that the deletion or the change has not made any material difference to the poem! It will be difficult even for a literary connoisseur to detect this unless of course he has known the poem by heart and, therefore, missed the lines which he probably liked. The same imperfection can be noticed also in Arabic prose. A comparison between what al-Jahidh, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih or Abu Hilal al-'Askari have written about public speaking with what Aristotle has written on the same subject will amply bring out the tremendous difference between the two approaches. Aristotle, for example, analyses the art of public speaking and shows its place in rhetoric and explains the different varieties and goes on to show how one can cultivate and develop the art. He does this so comprehensively and in such graphic detail that a reader can conjure up in his mind a complete picture of the art. The Arab writers on the same subject, however, write beautifully in elegant prose but they fail to convey effectively any complete idea of the subject as such. In making this generalization we have to exclude Arab writers like al-Sakkari, who were greatly influenced by Greek philosophy. The same traits of a similar imperfection are easily discovered in a literary book of the pre-Islamic era. Not a single subject discussed thoroughly and evaluated fully can be discovered in famous books like al-Aghani (Isfahani), al-Iqd al-Farid (Ibn 'Abd Rabbih), Kitab al-Hayawan and Kitab al-Bayan wa al-Tabyin of al-Jahidh. It is difficult to find in these books any continuity of thought. With the slightest justification a chapter ends abruptly and a new one starts. One gets many a jolt in going through these books. This spasmodic system, if it can be called a system, was natural to the Arab poet, who was short-breathed. He could not write full dramatic poems nor long epics like the Iliad or Odysseys.

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The result of the limitations of the Arab mind

These limitations have invested the Arab and his literature with a beauty of its own. For when he confined his study to a minor aspect of a certain subject he trod unexplored paths and avenues and came out with an exquisitely beautiful and original interpretation of his own. Meaning was sought by different persons from different angles, all without any assistance or scientific study. The Arabic literature is thus full of short beautiful parables and proverbs abounding in the richness of primitive wisdom, an art which the Arabs have fully mastered and which has enriched their mind and given a rare fluency to their tongue. An Arab speaker had only to stand up to address an audience and his eloquent speech flew unhampered by any impediment of expression — he was full of beautiful and arresting parables and proverbs which helped effectively to embellish his powerful prose. Every sentence was the essence which gave forth a million meanings like a cloud of vapour condensed in a drop of water! Much progress was made in the art of public speaking with the dawn of Islam. The Arabs acquired much of the wisdom of the Persians and the Romans, but this is a subject which we will deal with presently. Here it will suffice to say that the Arab mind was essentially roving in its nature and was incapable of concentrating on any object for any length of time. This was unlike the Greek mind, which set out to think laboriously in great logical detail about any subject which it analysed and studied comprehensively as a whole. The two attitudes offer a sharp contrast to each other and explain the difference between the national character of the two.

The two factors that determine natural character

We have made a brief effort to summarize the nature of the Arab mind. The question arises whether the traits we have explained are common to all nations in a particular stage of its evolution or whether they are peculiar to the Semitic race. This is an intricate subject worthy of great care and study. It does not, however, fall within our province and for our purpose it will be enough to record here that the attitude of the Arab was determined primarily by the social environment in which he lived. What is called inheritance is nothing but the result of the constant interplay of so many factors which go to constitute the environment of a nation. We are inclined to believe that if there were another nation which lived in a similar environment it would develop the same traits of character. One can find a strong resemblance in the character of nations living in similar or nearly similar conditions. The Arabs were inhabitants of a desert and they had, therefore, great similarity with the inhabitants of the desert in other parts of the world. Having established this we can now proceed to analyse the factors which helped shape the Arab mind.

National character is determined principally by two factors, viz., the natural environment and the social environment. The natural environment comprises the objects of nature surrounding a nation, like mountains, rivers, deserts, etc., and the social environment comprises the form of government, laws of family, religion, etc., prevalent in a given society. Neither of the two factors alone is capable of affecting a nation’s outlook. If natural environment alone were the decisive factor one could expect the Turks, for example, to acquire the national character of the Greeks while they lived in that country as conquerors. But this did not happen, for the simple reason that the Greek thought is the cumulative result of the interplay of a number of factors; the presence of one alone does not bring about the sum total which is the Greek thought.

The Arabs lived in a desert with a scorching sun and a barren soil in which water was a rare sight. These physical factors did not permit of rich vegetation. On trees which could resist the intense heat and dry weather could flourish. The deserts were impassable except by camels. It was difficult, therefore, for the neighbouring peoples like the Persians or the Romans to conquer the Arabian peninsula. All the cultural influences which filtered through the peninsula came from narrow and indirect channels. The glaring effects of the desert have left an indelible mark on the character of the Arab. Life in a desert is a small affair compared with life in a town, both in point of vegetation and in point of animal or human life. One can hardly see any trace of life in vast stretches of a desert which is bare and burnt. Huge buildings, vast farms and green trees are a rare sight. The son of the desert meets nature face to face — the sun rises without a shade, the moon and the stars appear in the clear blue sky with nothing to conceal or obstruct them. The sun sends forth its burning rays which penetrate the depth of his brain. The moon shines and sends forth its steady silver rays which fascinate him. The stars twinkle in the sky and dazzle him. The winds blow fiercely and ruin whatever comes in their way! In the face of such a beautiful, mighty and merciless nature souls will not naturally crave for someone who is most gracious, most merciful, someone who can offer an effective protection, can officiate as a helper, a giver of good tidings, as one who helps in keeping aloft the torch of hope in the surrounding desip of struggle which strains to the breaking-point the might of man. This is perhaps the reason why all the three important religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, sprang from the deserts of Sinal, Palestine and Arabia.

The quietness which pervades a desert helps arouse and awaken a dormant soul and gives a clarity of its own to the human mind which is baffled and confused in the noise of large cities, and yet there is nothing in a desert which the human mind can claim as its own. Everything belongs to God, like a gleaming sun, the whispering stars, the inspiring moon and the devastating winds. Here the sincere sensitive soul faces a situation in the vast expanse of the desert which can hardly ever be understood or appreciated by a people living in the cramped dwellings of a town. The desert has a music with a repetitive and a monotonous note. It is cruel, frowning, terrible, and grand in its conception. The dweller of the desert experiences a sort of uneasiness, a feeling of being unhinged, a consciousness of unlimited possibilities of romance, valour and courage. Their poets chant their poems with the same tone and tune, the desert plays a note for their soul and it finds inevitable expression in the eloquent poetry of the Arab. Everything is free and natural in the desert. The Arabs are free like their country. The winds of the desert are not stopped by any building, the sun is not stopped by any cloud, the rains and floods flow unhampered by any dams. Life proceeds in a natural, spontaneous way. The Arab, reflecting on the freedom of nature around him, is not tied down to any place. He moves where is wont will take him. He has no industries to occupy his time. He is free from the bonds of government and laws. There were, however, two bonds which he could not break — the traditions of the tribe, with the difficult duties which they imposed, and the bond of their pagan religion with all its rituals and sacrifices. Here again they were more loyal to their tribe than to their religion.

The atmosphere of the desert has limited the Arab way of living. They were nomads wandering from place to place for forage. They were poor. Their only riches comprised the cattle, which were at the mercy of nature. The cattle may die, the water of the well may get dry, the rain may not come
and the pastures may not be available to graze the cattle. Life is, therefore, uncertain, and living clearly dangerous. One of the many names which the Arab gave to rain was Ghaith, which means relief. Their mutual environment has substantially moulded their moral and mental outlook. Is it not poverty which created munificence? Is it not because of poverty that feeding the poor became a virtue and people began to light fires at night to attract guests? Is it not poverty which rendered tribal invasions necessary and made Arabs sing of their pride in the inviolability of their tribe and taunt those who failed to defend them and praise those who willingly gave up their lives for the sake of the tribe? If life is nothing but invading and getting invaded, if all highways are unsafe, if there is no government to punish the criminals or defend the routes, then it becomes essential to put courage, faithfulness and forgiveness at the top of the list of virtues. This is how the nature of the Arab can be explained. Justice, injustice, good, evil, praise and blame are all according to what they have laid down; and what they have laid down is according to their way of living.

The Arab language and literature reflects the life of the Arab before Islam

The Arabic language and literature before Islam amply reflects the life of the Arab during the time of the Jahiliyyah. Take, for instance, the objects of daily necessity in the life of a bedouin, and find the language rich in relevant vocabulary. The camel is the sine qua non of Arab life and the Arabic language is replete with words for it. No part of the camel, however tiny or negligible, will be found without a number of names for it in the language. You will find words for different kinds of camels, words for their pregnancy and young ones, words for their varying ages, words for milking, suckling and weaning, words for different qualities of camels, tall or short, fat or lean, words for their growing and hair, for their fodder and rumination, words for their grazing and the ways of their kneeling down, words for their movement of tails, for the different styles of walking and trotting, words for their saddlery and what is attached to the saddle, for the ropes, for fastening and unfastening them, words for the different brands of camels and their defects, their various races, their courtesies and other such things. In short, you will find several words for the minutest details of something connected with the camel. Arabs were not content with one word for an object and their language is famous for the richness in synonyms. This wealth of synonyms is, however, limited to objects which relate to the daily life of the Arab. If we take the ship as an object we will discover that the language is comparatively poor. Unlike the camel, it does not cover the different parts of the ship. There are some words for some of them, but the vocabulary is negligible when compared with the one devoted to the camel. Besides, most of the words used for a ship are not Arabic, they are Arabized like "anger" (Greek "angkyia", English "anchor"). Even here we have our doubts whether these Arabized words were used before Islam. This is one of the many examples which illustrate the poverty of the language which is otherwise extravagantly rich in its vocabulary. The same example applied with equal effect to the earth. The desert with its sands, plateaus and low grounds, with its pastures and insects and vermin caught the imagination of the Arab, who had a rich vocabulary to denote every aspect of the desert life. One comes across a variety of words for solid, rough and plain, waste and safe, fertile and barren, hilly or low ground. But on the other hand in the case of the sea, fish, shells, waves or waters, the Arabic language is comparatively poor. A glance through Ibn Sihah's al-Makhassis, which is famous for the synonyms, proves our point to the hilt. In this book 276 pages are devoted to the camel, while less than seven pages deal with the ship. The book has 17 chapters, of which a whole chapter is devoted to the camel. It will be no exaggeration to say that the camel monopolizes one-seventh of the entire Arabic vocabulary. It is a high percentage no doubt, but then the camel is the pillar of the Arab bedouin life.

If we pass from the material to the mental the same analysis holds good. Words for poverty, fight, sorrow and woe outnumber those for happiness, joy, play or pageantry. In fact the Arabs invented ingenious words for al-Dahiyyah (calamity). The vocabulary around this word became so exaggerated and cumbersome that some of the lexicographers rightly complained that the over-abundance of words for calamity is one of the calamities! A casual glance at the pre-Islamic poetry will substantiate the thesis we have briefly outlined above. Camel and she-camel figure prominently and fire the imagination of the Arab poet. The same is true of the desert. A picture of the Arab life could be drawn from the known morals of the age which found expression in poetry, Pride was taken in invading and defending. Generosity and courage were acclaimed high virtues. This conception of life found expression not only in prose but also in poetry and the popular proverbs and parables.

Science and philosophy had no place in the life of the Arab before Islam

To sum up, we have before us the language, poetry, proverbs and parables of the Arab before Islam which throw some light on the symptoms of the culture in evidence in that age. Science and philosophy had no place among these symptoms. It is true that the Arabs knew some genealogy, meteorology, astronomy, medicine and the art of stories, but it will be wholly wrong to suggest that they knew these subjects as a science. Some writers, like al-Alusi, talking of these symptoms, use the word "science" in mentioning them, but we feel that the description is misleading. What the Arabs really had was simple primitive knowledge and simple observation of facts, which cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as science. Ibn Khalidun is nearer the truth when he speaks about the knowledge of medicine among the pre-Islamic Arabs in his Musaddima. "Bedouins," he says, "have no knowledge of medicine. They base their knowledge on stray experiments by some person. They have also inherited some knowledge from the old folk of the tribe. Some of the remedies might prove effective, but it is certainly not the result of any rules; all this depended upon special cases and individuals. They had, for example, many known doctors like al-Harith Ibn Kaladah and others." The same could safely be said about meteorology and astronomy. They had some elementary knowledge based on experience, accurate in one case, erroneous in others, and in any case inherited through tradition. The Arab before Islam had no philosophic ideas or schools of philosophy. Some writers have made vain attempts to knit together scattered philosophic ideas with a view to proving the existence of a certain school of thought. When al-A'sha, for instance, says, "God has appropriated to himself faithfulness and justice and on man, He threw the blame," it was enthusiastically acclaimed the birth of a school of thought which absolved man of all responsibility! The same could have been said of another poet who says, "Life, then death, then resurrection; it is all a superstitious tale, O mother of 'Amr!" The same could be repeated with equal effect in the case of Zuhayr, for he says, "Through my own experience I found that death falls at random, whom it befalls it kills; and whom it misses lives till old age and decrepitude."

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There is a great difference between a philosophical school and a philosophic thought. The difference is so great and obvious that we need not dilate on it. It is wholly wrong, therefore, to pick up a philosophic idea and dub it representative of a school of thought. The pre-Islamic Arab was far from developing a school of thought which is the result of laborious organized research.

We can now proceed to examine each symptom of the rational life of the Arabs before Islam. We propose briefly to analyse the language, poetry, proverbs and stories of the pre-Islamic Arab with a view to analysing the contemporary mind. It is of the utmost importance that the literature on which we are going to depend for our analysis should be genuinely pre-Islamic, for the slightest doubt in the premises will wholly destroy our conclusions. This task is by no means easy. The pre-Islamic Arab poetry remained unwritten for about two centuries, and all that has come down to us today has come through narrators who were not entirely dependable. For reasons religious, political and racial these narrators had a tendency to indulge in plagiarism and it has been established beyond any doubt that the greater part of pre-Islamic poetry bequeathed to us is faked and fabricated. No one has, however, repudiated all the pre-Islamic poetry. Some scholars exaggerate their doubts, others their convictions, but a third party has adopted the golden mean. We have, therefore, to exercise the utmost care in examining the available material. Our task will be, in the first instance, to ensure the authenticity and integrity of the person who has passed on the material to us and simultaneously with this we will have to subject the text so passed to the minutest possible scrutiny. If the two corroborate each other then we have to accept that poem or proverb or even as really belonging to the pre-Islamic era unless of course it is proved to the contrary. Take poetry, for example. If a narrator of a poem is known to be unreliable and if the text is also doubtful, then the poem will be rejected for the purpose of our study. We can exclude narrators who have proved to be undependable. In this category could be included people like Hammad al-Rawiyah and Khalaf al-Ahmard. On the contrary people like Abu ‘Amir Ibn al-A’la and al-Asma’i have a reputation for integrity and reliability. Their material can be taken as genuine, unless of course it is proved to the contrary. After this initial and essential sifting we are in possession of a fairly good collection which can prove helpful in an assessment of the rational life of the pre-Islamic Arab.

But before we proceed further we would like to mention a point of view which although not puritanical is strictly relevant to the purpose of our study. We have been talking so far about the necessity of exercising the utmost care in avoiding forged and faked poetry. It must be mentioned, however, that even forged poetry can sometimes be considered representative of the period, especially when the person concerned is such a good poet that his forgery produces a close copy of the original. Ibn Sallam, while referring to Khalaf al-Ahmard, mentions that his friends were unanimous that Ahamar was the most learned man in poetry and that he had the most accurate tongue. If Ahmar forged a poem in which he cleverly imitated the pre-Islamic style and succeeded in deceiving his readers, then irrespective of the moral merits of the case, we can use the material produced by Ahmar, for is he not a great plagiarist of the pre-Islamic style? With these preliminary observations we can now take up the task of examining each symptom of the rational life of the Arabs.

*(To be continued)*

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**What our Readers say...**

IN APPRECIATION OF THE WORK OF A MUSLIM FOR ISLAM IN THE UNITED STATES

77 Dales Avenue,
Jersey City, N.J.,
U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

I am one of those fortunate people who have heard brother Muhammad Hasan Bey of Jersey City, N.J., U.S.A., give his enlightening message on Islam, and prove that there is but one Supreme Being, God; one faith, Islam; and one upright man, the Muslim.

Therefore, at his direction I am writing to you to disclose myself as one who bears witness that there is no god but God, and I also bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger. If this is not sufficient please send me the declaration form that I may be duly registered with your mosque. He has given me the name Muhammad al-Din, which I like very much, and wish to be recorded with you as such.

Brother Hasan Bay is the greatest teacher of Islam I have met. Even Christian ministers and freemasons are astounded at his answers and evidence, which is beautifully illustrated. Yet it is to be regretted that your organization could not sponsor his programme of lectures here, for he is so loved by the people who have heard him that if he had an establishment with a little financial support, we could work with him to carry the message of Islam to many people.

With this thought I close, trusting in God that I will hear from you soon.

Yours in Islam,

BENJAMIN CARTER.

* * *

THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC AND ISRAEL

8/29 Abercorn Place,
3rd March 1958.

Dear Sir,

On the occasion of the creation of the United Arab
Republic an invitation to Israel to join in a federation of the Arab States was made by President Nasir and President Kuwaity. The Egyptian daily, al-Ahram, and Radio Cairo in its Hebrew broadcast brought this extraordinary statesmanlike peace offer, under the condition that Israel should accept the 1947 United Nations decision on borders and refugees (see The Jewish Chronicle, London, for 21st February 1958). Peace-loving people inside Israel who have been hoping for an end to their tragic isolation may have to count with disappointment.

President Nasir's offer, which could be of far-reaching historical importance, was viciously and significantly withheld from the public by the British press. It may also be unacceptable to Ben Gurion's Government, who have to act on behalf of the interests of Jewish and non-Jewish financiers in London, Paris and New York, whose interests are in sharp contradiction with the needs of the people whom Mr. Ben Gurion pretends to represent.

Under the democratic façade of the "Socialist Little State" in the Middle East a colonial system of the worst order has developed. In order to serve the interests of the Jewish financiers overseas, the "Socialist" Government of Israel is not only permitted to be transferred abroad, while they simultaneously propose to increase the present 33 per cent tax on travelling tickets to 50 per cent plus an extra £30 as charge for exit visas.

This means that those Jews whom they enticed to come to Israel may — if disappointed — have no chance to leave the country. Four hundred Jews who recently arrived from Poland had to squat for days in Israel's Ministry of the Interior to force their repatriation.

Accusations made by Zionist leaders about the "persecuted Jews" in the Soviet Union and Muslim countries are made partly for the consolidation of the Jews inside Israel, who instead of "milk and honey" find a totalitarian military camp, unemployment and hardship. The accusations, which found such enormous publicity in the British press — because they serve the cold war — are also made to justify Israel's intransigence on the border question, and the necessity to absorb many more potential immigrants.

Zionism's link with French imperialism is particularly objectionable and deplorable, not from the point of view of the Arab only but also as it affects the native North African Jew. These Jews lived for 2,000 years peacefully along with their non-Jewish neighbours, with whom during the last century they had to bear all the indignities, diseases and poverty caused by French colonialism. In the present fight for liberation in North Africa, Zionist agitators have driven a wedge between the Jew and the Arab by tearing him away from the group to which by an ethnical and political point of view he belongs. They ship him to Israel, where he is forced to do the hardest work in remote desert spots, discriminated against on account of his colour and looked down upon by their "brethren" from Western Europe. These North African Jews, like many from Eastern Europe who constitute the "have-nots" of the Jewish people, are at the mercy of the foreign policy of a type like Abba Eban, Israel's representative at the United Nations, a Jew from South Africa.

The present very undemocratic social system in Israel can only be kept under control as long as the military emergency continues. Zionist leaders are quite aware of this fact, and this may be the cause why peace offers, however statesmanlike they may be, may be regarded as more dangerous to the present social set-up and to their own security than the status quo, i.e., the cold war.

I feel it is important for the people of the Middle East to be aware of these very sharp divisions within the Jewish people.

Yours very sincerely,

GERTRUDE ELIAS.

* * *

A NEWCOMER TO ISLAM ON THE BEAUTIES OF ISLAM

Rahway, N.J.,
USA.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter and the enclosed forms. In the questionnaire you sent me I was required to state the reason for changing my faith. The answer is simple. Islam is a sublime truth. The conception of the unity of God is very attractive and understandable. What better reason can I state than that through Islam I have found guidance and a better mental attitude? It was suggested by a Muslim brother that I should adopt the Muslim name 'Abdullah. I have accepted the suggestion and do hope I will be able to live up to its meaning. While closing please accept my sincere regards.

Yours sincerely,

R. BELL.

* * *

ONE OF THE MANY ENGLISH FRIENDS WHO IS VOCAL ABOUT THE MISUNDERSTOOD RELIGION OF ISLAM

31 Frencham Gardens,
Chippenham,
Slough, Bucks.

Dear Sir,

My main serious interest is in human brotherhood; my main hobby comparative religion. It would be of special interest to me to learn something about the religion in Pakistan. I have heard that religion in Pakistan is of a compulsory nature and very narrow and dogmatic. Is this true? Perhaps some pamphlets are available on the subject.

I would like to communicate with somebody in Pakistan in the interests of human brotherhood. Can you help me in this way?

Yours sincerely,

E. F. CROSSWELL.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We respectfully bring to the notice of our subscribers that they should please be very particular in intimating to their office or agent where they send their subscription of any change in their address as soon as it takes place. Lack of co-operation of our readers in this matter has been a source of many an avoidable complaint. Furthermore, we request them always to quote their subscriber number, which is printed on the wrapper along with their name and address.

The Manager, THE ISLAMIC REVIEW, Woking, England
FOLKLORE
OF
ASIA
MINOR
TURKEY

A representation of Khadjivad . . .
who is now the butt of Karaghooz and now his
accomplice, and the patter between them is extremely
proper.

A general survey of the Turkish folklore
The vast number of contacts with other civilizations
established by the Turkish peoples in the course of their
wanderings and conquests, their early adhesion to such
different religions as Manicheanism, Christianity in its
Nestorian form, and Islam, and their position midway between
West and East, have made their folklore exceptionally
interesting.

The folklore of Asia Minor deserves special study. It
has a rich vein of popular poetry. This is composed of
rhymed lyrics differing widely from the literary lyrics, which
follow Arabic and Persian models. These lyrics, elegiac or
religious, erotic or didactic, are sung or recited by itinerant
bards now known as Ashik. Among the Turks of the Muslim
religious order generally known as Kizil Bash, but more
correctly as 'Alawites, the Ashiks take the part played among
the pagan Turks by the Shaman (magician) in religious
services, which are marked by music and dancing as well as
prayer. When two bards meet before an audience, they
challenge one another and treat the public first to a match
of riddles and then to a battle of witscracks.

Many remains of popular epics are found among the
Turks of Central Asia. In Anatolia the legend of Keuroghlu,
who meets with an amazing number of exciting adventures,
is still popular, and folk-tales of Battal Ghazi and Sultan
Danishmend Ghazi preserve traditions of the early Arab and
Turkish invasions of Asia Minor. Fables and fairy-stories
are still told by the fireside and were recited by story-tellers
known as Meddah in village cafés. These are full of mar-
vellous animals, fairies, giants, and evil or beneficent genii.
They all have stereotyped introduction; they come the story
and then an epilogue in which the story-teller warns his
audience not to believe a single word of his narrative!

Orta Oyunu must also be mentioned. These are open-
air theatricals, played on a small stage set up in the centre
of the audience. Connected with these are the pantomimes
and playlets given at weddings, where the eternal mother-in-law
smiles, weeps, or scolds and the daughter-in-law is sad or
merry, petulant or as dumb as a lay figure, as the situation
requires.

Popular dances depict such village activities as washing
clothes or reaping harvests. There are also crude village
dramas where the principal characters dress up as a wolf
and the lamb, imitate camels or put up mock prayers for
rain.

The language of popular lyrics, stories, and proverbs is
surprisingly pithy and well-turned. Turkish proverbs are full
of savour. “God makes a nest for the blind bird” is beautiful.
Others, for example, “They chase the truth-teller from nine
cities”, or “They asked the camel which he liked best, uphill
or downhill; he replied, “When my load’s on my back, devil
take them both!” are full of the peasant’s shrewdness.

The shadow play of Karaghooz and the tales of Khoja Nasr
al-Din Efendi

Two particularly Anatolian institutions deserve special
mention. These are the shadow plays of Karaghooz and the
tales of Khoja Nasr al-Din Efendi. Karaghooz is a turulent
but ingenious scamp whose adventures are as far removed
from probability or current morality as those of the occidental
Mr. Punch. His associate Khadjivad, who is a “clerk” in
the sense that he can read and write, is now his butt, now his
accomplice and the patter between them is often extremely
proper. Had not ‘Abd al-Hamid to exercise some control over
the adventures and language of this cheerful and unregenerate
pair of scamps? Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, and other
foreigners figured in some of the pieces, and it was a very
good lesson for foreigners who fancied their Turkish to hear
mistakes being taken off.

Khoja Nasr al-Din Efendi

Khoja Nasr al-Din Efendi is a historical character. His
grave is near Ak Shehir, in the interior of Anatolia. He
is depicted as a plump, bearded personage with a gigantic
turban and spectacles. A common print shows him riding
on a donkey with the saddlebags on his own shoulders, with
the erroneous idea that he thus saved the poor beast from
the extra weight.

The stories of Khoja are legion. Some are well-known
in Turkey, and deservedly, for the Khoja, besides having
a strong sense of humour, is gifted with that quickness of
perception joined to muddled thinking which produces the
Irish bull. An excellent example of this is the story that he
looked out of his window one night and thought he saw a
thief moving through his garden. “Fetch my bow,” he said.

Continued on page 40
The Sixth Annual Congress of the Muslims in the British Isles

The Sixth Annual Congress of the Muslims in the British Isles was held on Saturday 7th September 1957 at the Caxton Hall, London, S.W.1, and on Sunday 8th September 1957 at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey. In all about 500 people attended the four sessions of the Congress. It was a pleasure to see Indonesians, Turks, Indians, Pakistanis, Algerians, Tunisians, Moroccans, Africans, British Muslims, Egyptians, Iraqis, Persians and some other nationalities, all taking part in various functions of the Congress.

First Session

The first session started at the Caxton Hall on Saturday 7th September 1957 at 10.30 a.m. Al-haji Abdul Malik, the Commissioner for Northern Nigeria, took the chair. After recitation from the Holy Qur'an, Mr. Iqbal Ahmad, of the Woking Muslim Mission and Secretary of the Congress, gave a report of the Congress of 1956. Mr. Iqbal Ahmad said: "The primary aim of the Congress is to devise ways and means of developing community sense amongst the Muslims living in the British Isles. Last week a British Muslim addressed a gathering of the Muslim Society in Great Britain. In his talk he complained of the apathy found in the Muslims of Great Britain. This need for a community sense was felt six years ago. The Congress came into existence as a result of such a feeling. The fact remains, however, that the need is still there — unsatisfied and unfulfilled. It means that the Congress has a lot to do yet before it can claim that it has achieved its purpose. It also means that there should be a greater demand on the effort, devotion and spirit of service for the cause of Islam, of every member of the Muslim community."

This was followed by an interesting talk by Mr. A. D. Azhar, Financial Adviser of the Pakistan High Commission, on "Secularism versus Islamic State". In his talk Mr. Azhar stressed the need to be proud of Islamic values of life and not to be swept away by the glamour of Western civilization, which he maintained was a Christian civilization. The next speaker was Mr. Muhammad Mowafy, an Egyptian research scholar. He read a paper on the "Problems and Attitude of the People in the Arab World". Major J. W. B. Farmer, an English Muslim and Chairman of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, then spoke on "Islam and the West". In his talk Major Farmer emphasized the point that there was a great need to reinterpret and reconstruct religious thoughts in Islam. As an illustration he referred to those verses in the Qur'an which advised Muslims to treat their slaves as equals. Major Farmer said that if the word "slave" was to be replaced by the word "employees", as there were no slaves in most of the world today, then those verses of the Qur'an would have a practical bearing on our life today.

Second Session

The second session started at 2 p.m. on Saturday 7th September 1957. His Excellency Dr. Sunario, the Ambassador for Indonesia, presided over the session. Mrs. Sharifa Akhtar recited a few verses from the Holy Qur'an in order to start the session. Then a very illuminating and scholarly talk was given by Mr. Afzal Iqbal, the First Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission. His subject was "An Introduction to Rumi". This was followed by a talk on a subject appropriate to the present political awakening of the Muslims, viz., "Relations Between Muslim States Today and Tomorrow". The talk was given by Mr. Kemal Faruki, a student of law from Pakistan and author of two books on Muslim jurisprudence.

The next part of the session proved to be the most interesting and lively part of the Congress. The Chairmen and speakers of the previous sessions formed a panel and answered questions from the floor. This led at times to heated discussions on a wide range of subjects.

Third Session

The third session was a film show about various Muslim countries. The maximum number of people were present at this session. The most attractive feature of this session was a film about the fighting in Algeria. People were touched by the scenes in the film. A collection was made for the victims of the Algerian struggle, in which rich and poor all took part. His Excellency Dr. Sunario, the Ambassador of Indonesia in London, took a keen interest in the collection.

Fourth Session

The fourth session was held at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, on Monday 8th September 1957. The meeting started at 10.30 a.m. In this session resolutions and suggestions were adopted for the future work of the Congress.

The Congress concluded with an excursion to Hampton Court.

Activities of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust Lectures

The following meetings were held under the auspices of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust at 18 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1:

On Saturday 12th October 1957 the Rabbi Elmer Berger spoke on "The Tragedy of Zionism". The Rabbi Elmer Berger is a prominent Jewish friend from America. He is the Executive Director of the Anti-Zionist Council for Judaism, and the author of two books, Judaism or Jewish Nationalism? and Who Knows Better Must Say So. Mr. Berger said that the State of Israel had created problems for Jews who were not Zionists, and that it pained him to see some Muslims supporting the State of Israel. He maintained that people usually liked to think that Zionism was a recent creation. He emphasized the fact that since 1917 Zionism had been gradually working its way through for its own selfish aims. He said: "I fear the tragedy (of Zionism) may deepen and intensify before it becomes better." He remarked that Israel was acting as a tool for French imperialism. Mr. Abdul Majid, Editor of The Islamic Review, was in the chair. Mr. Majid, while introducing the speaker, said: "We Muslims are ever interested in the problem of Palestine. The Arabs are only a part of the Muslim world. They know the pros and cons of the problem. They do not want to be told. Muslims as a whole are interested in the problem. The creation of the State of Israel is a tragedy, which we do not want to see continuing."

Mr. 'Abdul Majid, Editor of The Islamic Review, gave a talk on "Woman in Islam" on Saturday 19th October 1957.

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He said that there was a great disparity between the position that Islam gave to a woman and the status that she enjoyed in Muslim society today. Mr. Majid said: “This afternoon I am going to maintain that something should be done about it.” In his talk he illustrated the high position that the Prophet Muhammad intended to give to woman. He said that the summary of the Prophet Muhammad’s wishes were contained in his well-known saying: “Paradise lies under the feet of mothers.”

On Saturday 9th November 1957, Mr. Husein Rofé gave a talk on “Predestination in Islam”. Mr. Husein Rofé is an English Muslim and a student of languages. He has travelled widely in the Muslim world.

Syria has gained importance in the changing political situation of the Middle East. So a talk was arranged on “Syria and its Problems”. The speaker was Mr. Nuri Khyata, a Syrian Muslim student. The facts he explained about Syria were helpful in forming an idea about the situation in Syria.

Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt, the Assistant Imam at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, gave a talk on the “Necessity for Co-operation Amongst Religions Today” on Saturday 23rd November 1957.

Mr. S. B. Hasan, M.A., LL.B., a Muslim from India, gave a talk on Islam on Saturday 30th November 1957.

Shaikh Imaduddin Ahmad, a student of law from Pakistan, gave a talk on the “Foreign Relations of Muslim Countries” on 8th January 1958. Mrs. S. K. Jayyusi, wife of the Jordanian First Secretary of the Jordan Legation in Bonn, presided over the meeting.

Mr. Y. Hassan, a Muslim journalist from Somaliland who at the moment is studying at the London University, gave a very interesting talk on “Muslims in Somaliland”. Mr. A. R. Hunwick, an English Muslim who has spent a few years in Somaliland, took the chair.

Mr. Afzal Iqbal, First Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission, gave a scholarly talk on the “Principles of Diplomacy in Islam” on Saturday 8th February 1958. In his forceful style he impressed upon the audience that aspect of the life of the Prophet Muhammad which was exemplary as a diplomat.

On Saturday 15th February 1958 Mr. Umar Austin, a young English Muslim student of the London University, gave a talk on “Conditions for a Practical Revival of Islam”.

Mr. ‘Abdul Majid, Editor of The Islamic Review, gave a revealing talk on “Islam in the Cameroons” on Saturday 22nd February 1957. His talk was based on an article that had appeared in the Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Afrique Noire, Dakar, Senegal. The article was contributed by a French scholar, Paul Dubie. Mr. Majid told the audience that Islam was introduced to the Cameroons only fifty years ago, and in spite of having been there only fifty years it was now a strong competitor of Christianity in that part of the world.

Mr. Kemal Faruki posed a vital question on Saturday 1st March 1957 when he gave a talk on “How Islamic is Pakistan?”. Mr. Faruki is the author of Islamic Constitution and Jima’ and the Gate of Ijihad. In his talk he said that Pakistan had done the best she could in the circumstances and that her main obstacle towards progress was the bitter conflict between orthodox and progressive elements.

Six days before the month of Ramadan started Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt, the Assistant Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, explained “The Institution of Fasting in Islam”. His talk, which he gave on Saturday 15th March 1958, led to very interesting questions such as whether the times for fasting should be fixed at twelve hours.

Maccabi Association, London, E.C.4

Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt, Assistant Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, gave a talk on “Islam and its Contribution to World Religions” on Wednesday 5th February 1958 at the Maccabi Association, 2 Harcourt Buildings, London, E.C.4. Mr. Butt explained to the gathering that Islam advocated the use of reason with faith. He further said that the two outstanding contributions to world religious thought was Islam’s great emphasis on the universality of mankind and the equality of human rights.

Historical Association, Dorchester, Dorset

Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt, Assistant Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, addressed the Historical Association, Dorchester, Dorset, on Saturday 8th March 1958. The subject on which he spoke was “Islam and its Contribution to Humanity”. In his talk Mr. Butt said that the Islamic outlook on life was that human faculties should grow. He explained that the proper use of human faculties was righteousness in Islam, and the wrong use of human abilities constituted sin.

South Herts College of Further Education, Barnet, London

Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt addressed a group of the South Herts College of Further Education, Barnet, London, on Thursday 13th February 1958. The subject was “What I Believe”. The theme of Mr. Butt’s talk was that Islam is a religion of peace and its views if practised are the best means of establishing peace on this earth.

Joint meeting of the Cambridge Society for the Study of Religions and the Muslim Society of the Cambridge University

Mr. Iqbal Ahmad, of the Woking Muslim Mission, addressed a joint meeting of the Cambridge Society for the Study of Religions and the Muslim Society of the Cambridge University on Thursday 6th March 1958 at the Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. The subject was “The Idea of Immortality in Islam”. Professor Stratton presided over the meeting. Mr. Ahmad referred to various views of Muslim thinkers on the subject and said that his talk was based entirely on the verses of the Qur’an. In his talk he said that according to the teachings of the Qur’an it seemed that after human life, as we find it, suffered a bodily death, there was some part of this complicated system of a human being that continued to live in a state of Barzakh or semi-consciousness till the time of Resurrection when it entered a new existence of greater consciousness. Mr. Ahmad said that the Qur’an and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad made it clear that it was difficult for a human being in this life to understand exactly what took place after physical death. He continued that there was great emphasis in the Qur’an that man did not evaporate into nothingness after physical death and that life continued in various forms and states of consciousness making its way towards the sole source of consciousness and existence — viz., God Almighty, the Ever-living, the Nourisher of the whole universe.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
Inter-Religious Service at the Church of Growing Light, Holloway, London, N.7

Mr. ‘Umar Austin, an English Muslim and student of Arabic at London University, represented Islam on behalf of the Woking Muslim Mission at a well-organized Inter-Religious Service held at the Church of Growing Light, Holloway, London, N.7, on Sunday 15th December 1957. Mr. ‘Umar Austin read verses from the Qur’an on inter-religious tolerance and the majesty of God. He read the verses first in Arabic and then gave their translation. The Baroness Ravensdale gave the sermon at the service. Representatives of Buddhism and Judaism also participated.

Memorial Service to the late Agha Khan at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking

A Memorial Service to His Highness the late Agha Khan, Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, was held at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Wednesday 21st August 1957. A marquee was installed on the green lawns of the Shah Jehan Mosque in front of which the community flag of the Isma’ili group of Muslims was flying at half-mast. At the appointed time a printed copy of the prayers to be read at the service were distributed amongst the gathering. The simple Islamic service was conducted by Mr. Muhammad Yahya Butt, the Assistant Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque.

About 500 people participated in the service, including representatives of Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Princess Royal, the Duchess of Kent, and the family of the late Agha Khan.

The Queen was represented by the Earl of Scarbrough. The Duke of Edinburgh was represented by Mr. James Orr. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother by Lieutenant Martib Gilliat, the Princess Royal by Major Geoffrey Eastwood and the Duchess of Kent by Lady Rachel Davidson.

Among the congregation were: The Agha Khan, Princess Joan Aly Khan, Prince Amyn Agha Khan, Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan, Princess Sadruddin Khan, Prince Aly Khan. The High Commissioner for Pakistan, the Amir of Bahawalpur, Colonel Assad Shah Khalili (representing the Shah of Persia), Sir John Macpherson (representing the Secretary of State for the Colonies), Mr. J. M. C. James (representing the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations), Prince Safdar Khan, Mr. V. G. Low, Vizier I. E. Nathoo (Minister for Works, Kenya), Sir Eboo Pirbhai (representative of the Agha Khan in East Africa), Mr. K. K. Lokhandwala (President, Isma’ili Council in Great Britain), Major J. W. B. Farmer (Chairman, Muslim Society in Great Britain), Mr. G. C. Dawson, Mrs. Charles Waddington, Lady Grant, Mr. Geoffrey Cross, Captain P. Harbord, Major Cyril Hall, Mr. G. M’Veagh, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smirke.

The service concluded with the well-known Muslim funeral prayer, “O God! Forgive our living and our dead.


(Right to left) Mr. A. K. Lokhandwala, H.H. the Agha Khan, H.E. the High Commissioner for Pakistan, Mr. M. Ikramullah.

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and those of us who are present and those who are absent and our little ones and our full-grown ones and our men and our women. O god! whom Thou keepest alive from amongst us, keep him alive in submission to Your Will and whom Thou causest to die, make him die in (in Thee)"

Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday Celebrations in London

The Muslim Society in Great Britain celebrated the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad at the Caxton Hall, London, S.W.1, on Friday 1st November 1957. The speakers were Mr. ‘Abdul Majid, Editor of The Islamic Review, and Mr. R. A. Phillips, an English Muslim. His Excellency Dato Nik Ahmed Bin Haji, the High Commissioner for Malaya in London, was in the chair. Mr. ‘Abdul Majid spoke on “The Political Genius of Muhammad” and Mr. R. A. Phillips spoke on “Muhammad the Successful Prophet”. Mr. Hazim Satric, a Yugoslav Muslim, led the Salat in Arabic. Mrs. Olive Toto, an English Muslim lady, composed and read an appreciation of Muhammad.

The Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday was also celebrated in London by the Honourable Society of Muslim Youth at the Holborn Hall, London, W.C.1, and the Islamic Society of the London University at the Students’ Union Building.

Mr. Ghulam Rabbani Khan

*Khan Bahadur* Ghulam Rabbani Khan, Advocate, Mansehra, District Hazara, West Pakistan, has taken over charge as Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking. He arrived in England on 23rd March 1958. Mr. Khan graduated from the M.A.O. College of the well-known Muslim University at Aligarh, India. He secured a first-class degree in Law from the Allahabad University in 1918. He was a successful lawyer and life-long President of the Bar Association of his District till 1949, when he left his profession to join the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust as an honorary worker. His services to the Mission and the Pakistan Government in imparting religious instruction to the 500 Pakistani Air Trainees at the Halton and Cranwell camps in England are still remembered with admiration. He was selected by the Government of India as the sole member to represent the North-West Frontier Province on the “Distinguished Gentlemen Visitors’ All-India Delegation” to meet the Indian Army personnel serving abroad in the Middle East, Persia and Iraq. He has rendered valuable political services to his part of the country. He has now dedicated himself to the cause of creating a better understanding of Islam in the West.

Cyprus-is-Turkish Association, London

Eight thousand Turks, representing over half a million Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, Turkey and Britain, marched through London on Sunday 23rd February in a picturesque and well-behaved procession, headed by young ladies and men dressed in national costumes and carrying Turkish flags, banners, placards and posters.

Organized by the Cyprus-is-Turkish Association in London, the demonstration showed the whole world that Cypriot Turks did in fact believe that partition was practical, and that their demand for it was as genuine and strong as it was sincere and unanimous.

All the speakers at Trafalgar Square, London, emphatically pointed out that Cypriot Turks were now demanding that Taksim be applied without further delay. Mr. M. A. Abbas, M.A., the leader of the 500 Pakistanis who also joined the meeting, said, during his speech at Trafalgar Square, “Hundreds of millions of Pakistanis are supporting the just Turkish claim of partition.”

A black coffin carried by four pole-bearers, left at Trafalgar Square at the end of the meeting, was inscribed: “Enosis is Dead — Killed by the United Nations in the interest of world peace and security.”

The meeting was absolutely successful in every aspect, ended in roars of *Taksim* (partition), when the huge gathering of 10,000-12,000 took the solemn oath: “To continue the struggle until partition is achieved, not to refrain from any form of sacrifice in our efforts, and if need be, sacrifice even the last drop of our blood.”

Continued from page 36 to his wife, and the Khoja let fly at the apparition. It did not budge and Nasr al-Din shouted for help. The neighbours came to the rescue, only to discover that the Khoja missile had transfixed his shirt which hung on the line, but when they remonstrated with the worthy man for raising a false alarm he replied, “But I must thank God that I was not inside my shirt!”

Whether the real Khoja was or was not responsible for all the comic stories fathered on him, he remains a central figure of the folklore of rural Turkey, where he is continually quoted by the peasantry and furnishes the local wag with an inexhaustible fund of absurdities.
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