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THE MUSLIM BOOK SOCIETY
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The Need for an Islamic International Court
The Role of the World Muslim League of Mecca

One of the important functions of the institution of prayer in Islam is to bring together peoples of different countries and races in the true Islamic spirit of brotherhood. Islam has rendered a unique service to humanity by emancipating at least one-fifth of its population from racial and colour prejudices. Although Islamic history is not free from intestinal rivalries and wars, there is no instance of any movement in Islam based on xenophobia or racial fear.

Finality of prophethood

In the realm of theology one does find various schools of thought at variance with one another in matters of detail and interpretation, but Muslims are the only people who are in unanimity on the fundamental articles of faith. Any attempt by a splinter group to tamper with the basic principles of Islam has always been opposed fiercely and jointly by all Muslims. For instance, belief in the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad has always been considered by the Muslim theologians as the pivot of Islamic solidarity. During the past fourteen centuries, whenever anyone tried to take liberties with the prerogative of the Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet, the Muslims shelved their domestic differences and spontaneously put up a common front against it.

Had the Muslims not guarded the tenet of the finality of prophethood so zealously, there would have sprung up by now various national or regional prophets under one pretext or the other. The highest designation which Muslims are prepared to give to their reformers within the faith is that of Muiaddid or Renovator. The very use of the title "prophet", even in a metaphorical sense, is objected to by the generality of Muslims.

Muslim resurgence

The fact that Islam does not permit of professional priesthood has shifted the priestly responsibilities, including those of missionary work, over to individual Muslims. This sense of individual responsibility has helped the Muslims in keeping the flag flying under many a difficult period. During the period of domination by colonial powers, when the religious institutions and missionary organizations were disrupted in the Islamic countries, it was the individual Muslims who rendered these services.

Today we see a miraculous resurgence in the Islamic world. In every country Muslim young men and women are busy organizing themselves in the service of Islam. Even in Great Britain, wherever there is a justifiable concentration of Muslim residents, one hears of a house converted into a prayer-house. These activities are not the result of isolation-
ism. In such Islamic centres one never notices any national or racial awareness. They are being run in the Islamic spirit of fraternity.

Politicians’ arena

Unfortunately the same cannot be said of Islamic brotherhood on an international level. There is no doubt that desperate, and sometimes pathetic, attempts are being made to bring about international harmony. Religious leaders, social workers, educationists and other Muslims are hard at work in every Islamic country. The World Muslim League of Mecca, the Islamic Congress of Cairo and the Muslim World Congress of Karachi are but a few examples. All this activity in the Islamic world is highly commendable. But there is a limit to what the theologians and the missionaries can achieve without the co-operation of the politicians. They cannot, for example, render any service in the fields of politics and economics. These are the provinces of politicians and the Heads of State.

Religion is a science of successful living which cannot be achieved without co-ordination between science and religion. The present slow progress of some of the Islamic countries is not due to the so-called retrograde tendencies of religion. Religious leaders in such countries are as keen as the politicians to see their respective countries progressive. The real fault lies in the lack of understanding and co-operation between the religious leaders and the politicians.

Pan-Islamic movement has had its ups and downs since the beginning, but it has never been allowed to be forgotten. Nationalist movements in the Islamic countries have always been applauded by the Muslims in general in the hope that the strength of a limb would strengthen the whole body. Turkey, Egypt, pre-divided India, Tunisia and other Islamic countries are what they are today as a result of their respective struggles on nationalist bases.

All these pre-independence nationalist Islamic movements had to struggle for political liberation from foreign rule. The Western powers with vested interests in such countries could not possibly approve of them. Today, in spite of independence, things have not changed much. Instead of political bondage, we are still struggling against our economic dependence on the West.

During the period of foreign domination, Muslim dormancy was unavoidable. Taking into account human weaknesses, even the scramble for power which followed independence in the respective Islamic countries was pardonable. What is unpardonably criminal, however, is the part of the politicians is their failure to harness the Islamic sentiment of brotherhood to the common advantage of the Muslim world. Perhaps, like the Western politicians, the Muslim political leaders are committing the mistake of trying to separate religion from politics and economics. If so, they are forgetting the golden spirit of the Islamic teachings that what is not good from the moral standard is not good from any other standard.

Islamic International Court

Differences among the various States are bound to exist. In the past they used to exist between dynasties on hereditary grounds. Today they are existing among personalities on ideological grounds. As long as this world is run by human beings, and not by machine, such frailties will have to be put up with. No international organization is free from it. There is no reason why, then, the different Islamic countries cannot evolve a system of peaceful settlement of their differences, in spite of such weaknesses.

The absence of means of settling differences between two Islamic States has brought incalculable sufferings on all concerned. The dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia and the war-dances of the Arabs against one another might not be given bold types in the books of world history, but the Muslim historians will have to describe this phase of Islamic history as a period of foolish wars.

The Preparatory Committee appointed by the World Muslim League of Mecca has entrusted His Majesty King Faysal for the huge task of bringing together all the Muslim Heads of State under one roof. But the study of our common problems can only be beneficial if at the same time a common forum were established to settle disputes between Islamic States. Pacts like the Regional Development for Co-operation between Pakistan, Turkey and Iran are steps in the right direction. This one Pact, for example, through the efforts of His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Iran, resulted in settling the differences between Malaysia and Pakistan as well as between Afghanistan and Pakistan. But such Pacts are limited in their scope.

The only answer to our common problems is the establishment of an Islamic International Court based on the proverbial Islamic Social Justice.

The Holy Qur’an has laid down the broad principles of such a court when it says in chapter 49, verse 9:

“And if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them. Then if one of them does wrong to the other, fight that which does wrong, till it return to God’s command. Then, if it returns, make peace between them with justice and act equitably. Surely God loves the equitable.”

Judging from the sentiment of the Muslims in the past, it can be hopefully said that the defaulter States against the authority of such a court will have to face a great moral pressure. A Muslim, by virtue of his Islamic upbringing, does not believe in personality cult. All his loyalties are subservient to his loyalty to Islam. He indulges in nationalism and love of motherland only to the extent to which these sentiments do not come in conflict with the common interests of his religion.

A ray of hope

The Islamic world is looking up to the World Muslim League of Mecca to take the initiative in this work. Since its inception in 1962 it has rendered very valuable services in the fields of education, culture and missionary work. Its constitution promises still greater services, especially in the fields where the higher stratum of Islamic leadership is involved. It is a unique chance for the authors of this League to bridge the gulf between the Muslim theologians and the Muslim Heads of State.

While advocating a strong Muslim world bloc it is not intended that the Muslim States should lose their individual identity or that they should subordinate their national interests to pan-Islamism. It is also not intended that they should join the Muslim bloc at the cost of their respective pacts with the non-Muslim States. In this age of universal interdependence of all nations and countries, each country has to think in terms of a World League of Nations. No nation can survive today as an island by itself.

Continued on page 7
A Look at Islam in the Context of the Problems of the Modern World

By Dr. RASHAD MUHAMMAD KHALIL

Muslims face to face with problems created by modern civilization

Man in the modern world is passing through a series of crises which present a serious threat to his very existence. Despite the tremendous and dazzling progress achieved by modern civilization, and despite the great strides made in the spheres of science and technology which offer unlimited possibilities for promoting the happiness and welfare of mankind, modern civilization appears to carry within itself the sinister germs of its own downfall and collapse, and of the extinction of the human race as a whole. Over the world hangs the terror of power, and the threat of annihilation for man. There is, on the other hand, the threat of a population explosion and the prospects of hunger and privation. There is also a spiritual vacuum and a feeling experienced by man generally of being lost in the midst of conflicting currents. It is perhaps not correct to say that all these evils flow from modern civilization, or that this civilization is nothing but evil. But it would also be wrong to maintain that this civilization is unmitigated good.

The Muslims should endeavour to adopt in regard to modern civilization a balanced and objective attitude, and to assess the qualities of modern civilization, noting the positive and wholesome potentials as well as any negative, destructive aspects that it may possess. We must not be dazzled by the positive aspects of civilization or forget that it may have negative aspects which could be just as strong and important. These disadvantages and drawbacks in modern civilization could eventually lead to man’s doom, and end human life on earth in the most ugly manner imaginable.

For the Muslims, as for everybody else, modern civilization is something which cannot be avoided or ignored. It concerns the life of everyone and is directly connected with the present and future of human communities everywhere. The Muslims must therefore define their attitude towards this civilization and make a realistic evaluation of it. They must also determine the stand which Islam takes in regard to this civilization, and find out the extent to which Islam can play a role in rectifying any defects in modern civilization and helping it to promote the good of mankind in a genuine manner.

The Muslim intelligentsia’s new approach to the problems of the world

It is unfortunate that instead of adopting such an attitude towards the concepts of modern civilization some Muslim ‘ulemas, in a rather hurried and superficial manner, have taken as representative of modern civilization certain negative and not very flattering aspects of it. In the name of Islam they have directed a fierce attack against modern civilization so represented, emphasizing only its dangers and its evils. As a result of this a barrier has arisen between the intelligentsia in the Muslim world and the leaders of religious thought; and the latter have progressively become isolated from the currents of modern life and thought generally and have begun to be labelled as reactionary. Simultaneously, a group of scholars began enthusiastically to underline certain progressive aspects of Islam and to emphasize these qualities as substitutes for what they described as “alien modern civilization”. These people advocated an attitude hostile to modern civilization, and their views are alleged to be based on Islamic doctrines. Whether this basis is or is not true, the fact is that this movement has resulted in isolating Islam to a large extent from modern civilization, and in creating an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility between the advocates of modern civilization and the champions of Islam. A barrier has also been created between the leaders of religious thought in the Muslim world and the modern generation of educated Muslims. At last, a new approach to the whole problem is appearing. It is based on a new understanding of the concepts of both Islam and modern civilization, with the aim of drawing up a new and more realistic plan of action which would enable Islam to make its proper contribution to the solution of the problems of the modern world in the various spheres. The advocates of this new approach maintain that Islam possesses tremendous potentials for rectifying the defects of modern civilization. It has a great wealth of standards, ideals and principles which, if properly evaluated and understood, could serve to rectify the errors of modern civilization, thereby enabling man to maintain the materialist gains brought about by modern civilization while enriching him in the spiritual aspect. Man would thereby regain a sense of security and of faith in his Creator, and would be able to grasp the meaning of his life and the purpose of it all.

In the words of the Qur’an:

“Do you then think that We have created you in vain, and that you will not be returned to Us?” (23 : 115).

“We did not create the heavens and the earth and that which is between them in sport. We created them not but with truth, but most of them know not” (44 : 38-39).  

1 Courtesy, the Editor, al-Hasy al-Islami, Beida, Libya.
Islam has always been receptive of wholesome and progressive ideas

The religion of Islam has been throughout the ages open to, and receptive of, new trends in civilization and culture. This attitude of Islam has always been an enlightened and practical one. Islam has been receptive of progressive and wholesome ideas, whatever their source and origin. It is this realistic and healthy attitude to change and progress which characterizes Islam and is the secret of its continued harmony with the needs of modern times. A religion which shuts out the influences of progress and development, and which instinctively opposes change, cannot survive for long. Islam was not destined to be the religion of any one social group at any one time. It was intended to be the religion of man in all places and at all times. On this the Qur'an says:

"Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian" (15 : 9).

"And We have not sent thee (Muhammad) but as a mercy to the nations" (21 : 107).

"Say: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of God to you all, of Him, Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He; He gives life and causes death. So believe in God and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet who believes in God and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided aright" (7 : 158).

"And We have not sent thee (Muhammad) but as a bearer of good news and as a Warner to all mankind, but most men know not" (34 : 28).

On the same theme the Prophet Muhammad says:

"I was sent to all people."

"I have been sent for the benefit of people of all colours."

Islam displays an understanding of the potentialities of man

A practical, realistic religion must also display an understanding of the potentialities and capacity of man, and must not impose upon man a burden heavier than that which could be shouldered — a thing which sets men against great odds and demoralizes him by constantly reminding him of his shortcomings. This kind of understanding is portrayed in the following verses of the Qur'an (among others):

"God desires to make light your burdens, and man is created weak."

"And mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling. And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child; and a similar duty devolves on the father's heir. But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to God and know that God is Seer of what you do" (2 : 333).

"God imposes not on any soul a duty beyond its scope. For it is that which it earns (of good) and against it that which it works (of evil). Our Lord, punish us not if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden which Thou didst lay on those before us. Our Lord, impose not on us (afflictions) which we have not the strength to bear. And pardon us! And grant us protection! And have mercy on us! Thou art our Patron, so grant us victory over the disbelieving people" (2 : 280).

"Say: My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of God; surely God forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forbearing, the Merciful" (39 : 53).

Islam has a deep understanding of human nature

A religion forever suitable for mankind must likewise have a deep understanding of human nature, and must view man within the framework of his intrinsic humanity, and pay no regard to superficial variations — in the colour of skin, in race, sex, wealth or similar consideration. Here are some of the verses of the Qur'an which portray such an appreciation of essential human qualities and recognize the dignity and worth of man:

"And surely We have honoured the children of Adam, and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We provide them with good things, and We have made them to excel highly most of those whom We have created" (17 : 70).

"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. Surely God is Knowing, Aware" (39 : 13).

These ideas are also reflected in the Sayings and the Traditions (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad. He is reported as having said, for example, that:

"No Arab can be held superior to a non-Arab except where he excels in virtue."

"People are equal, like the teeth of a comb."

Throughout its long history Islam has demonstrated its capacity to face changing circumstances and needs. The jurists of Islam have devised rules designed to adapt the theories of Islam to practical necessities and to the ends sought. The progress on these lines in the teachings of Islam appeared lost only when the Muslims themselves were stagnant in the social and other spheres. At no time, however, did Islam lose its identity or become submerged in transient cultures or civilizations. It always showed itself capable of meeting the change and of responding to the challenge made
by the new circumstances. The interaction between the theories of Islam and the practical changes in the life of man was at all times shown to be healthy and very beneficial to man generally. Islam came into close contact with Persian civilization, with Indian civilization, with Greek thought and with various other cultures and trends. It took some ideas, and it gave others, and in the end the process resulted in wholesome change and progress, and in the moulding of a new civilization that embodied the prolonged experience and wisdom gained by man with the new changes in physical and material aspects. All the while Islam retained its distinct identity and character, which remained entirely pure in essence. This was so, of course, because the basis of the religion of Islam, the Qur’ān, remained the same with not the slightest variation in any respect. The religion of Islam remains capable of fulfilling the same vital role in the life of man. This is summed up in one verse of the Qur’ān:

“Islam is the Baptism of God, and who is better to baptise than God?” (2:138).

The Need for an Islamic International Court—Continued from page 4

The need, and an urgent need, for a World Muslim League exists for the simple reason that the sentiment of universal Islamic brotherhood can be utilized not only for the benefit of the Muslims but also for humanity as a whole.

Since the First World War we have had two experiments of world organizations. Both these organizations were very noble attempts by the world leaders to bring about better international goodwill. But it is not possible for any political or economic union to create fraternal feelings in people, such as Islam has succeeded in doing irrespective of nationality and race. As far as the Muslim world is concerned, we have repeatedly experienced the limitations of the United Nations Organization in the settlement of international disputes. Palestine, Kashmir and Cyprus are but a few examples. In disputes where both the parties are Muslim States, the limitations of the UNO become more pronounced. Cases such as the squabbles in the Middle East, by virtue of being domestic troubles, fall outside the jurisdiction of international courts. As it is, there is no Muslim domestic court which can settle such disputes—disputes which lead to clannish and tribal wars on a much larger scale than those of the pre-Islamic period.

The History of The Miracle (Ijāz) of the Qur’ān—Continued from page 19

confined to Arabic literature, and has been used freely throughout the ages in the literature of the Western world and other parts of the world. Al-Khūlīfī seems conscious of this when he maintains that there can be no conclusive scientific, philosophical or logical proof of the Ijāz of the Qur’ān. But whatever may be the nature of the criticism levelled against the theories advanced by al-Khūlīfī, it cannot be denied that his study of the subject, though inconclusive, was thorough. It is particularly noteworthy for being the first serious work on the subject of Ijāz for a very long time. His views, and those of al-Rāfi‘ī on the spiritual and musical aspects of Ijāz, set a trend which invigorated the study of the theory of Ijāz and brought it in line with modern thinking in other spheres of knowledge.

(To be continued)
Compurgation in Islamic Law

By ZAKAUR RAHMAN KHAN LODI

Islamic and English jurisprudence

In penal jurisprudence there may be three views with regard to the weight of evidence that might be considered as sufficient for proving guilt. First Theory: If the person is accused of an heinous offence like murder, manslaughter, etc., then the prosecution should not be required to produce many witnesses, documents, etc., but even if a slight evidence is adduced, the accused should be convicted, solely because he is accused of an heinous offence. Second Theory: If the prosecutor accuses a person of an heinous offence, then because the punishment of such an offence would be very severe the prosecutor should be required to proffer very strong evidence. Third Theory: The weight of evidence legally sufficient for conviction should not be based on the nature of any offence — that quantum of evidence should be considered as sufficient which can inspire moral certainty, and by moral here is meant pertaining to the distinction between the guilt and the innocence.

Whereas on the one extreme absolute certainty (haqq al-yaqin) is unattainable in the mundane existence, on the other a mere possibility is suspicion (zann), and therefore it would be unreasonable and unjust to convict on it. Law, therefore, prescribes the minimum of moral certainty (ilm al-yaqin) which objectively connotes that degree of probability as can convince a prudent and practical man. In this regard Islamic and English criminal jurisprudences are similar.

Islam and circumstantial evidence

Now the evidence leading to moral certainty degree of proof may be of testimonial and circumstantial types. The question that confronts us is: “Is the Qur’ān averse to the admissibility of circumstantial type of evidence?” A learned commentator of the Qur’ān has remarked that:

“The evidence in the case of adultery must be, according to the law of Islam,ocular, not hearsay or conjectural, known in modern legal phraseology as ‘circumstantial’.”

No authority has been cited here while adumbrating this view. However, it may be pointed out that al-Muḥīt declares that the four witnesses required in the offence of zinā (adultery, fornication) are to deposite that they actually saw the accused flagrant delicto (see p. 124). The Fatawā of Qazi Khan lays down that the evidence to the effect that the witnesses saw the accused only lying under the same quilt is not sufficient (see p. 411).

The erstwhile British rulers of India in 1831 (when the Islamic law of evidence was in force) to their fancy found that:

“The (Mahomedan) law seems to have been framed with more care to provide for the escape of the criminals than to founded conviction on sufficient evidence and to secure adequate punishment for offenders” (See Parliamentary Papers, 1831-32, Vol. XII, p. 696).

On conceding heartily the view expressed in the above texts on Muslim law, it seems permissible to argue that thereby a very valuable kind of evidence would be shut out, because while the eyewitnesses are susceptible to honest errors and misleading misstatements, as put by Paley, “facts or circumstances cannot lie.”

Islamic jurisprudence is dynamic

Before proceeding further, the suggestions put by some of the eminent and superior judges with a good deal of reason would make profitable reading. Justice Mubashshir Husayn Kidwai of India, in a Full Bench case on Islamic Law, observed that:

“Even the greatest of jurists was not a law-giver but only an interpreter of the law, and there was nothing sacrosanct in his opinion” (All India Reporter 1954, p. 362; see para. 66).

Justice Chagla of India, as he then was, referring to Hamilton’s English translation of the Hedaya and Baillie’s Mahomedan Law, said:

“Now there is no doubt that these ancient Muslim texts must be considered with the utmost respect. But it must also be remembered that Muslim jurisprudence is not a static jurisprudence. It is a jurisprudence which has grown and developed with the times, and the quotations from Muslim texts should be so applied as to suit modern circumstances and conditions” (All India Reporter 1947, p. 122).

A Full Bench of the West Pakistan High Court at Lahore held as follows:

“... We are really dealing with the interpretation of the Holy Qur’ān and on a question of interpretation we are not bound by the opinions of jurists. If we be clear as to what the meaning of a verse in the Qur’ān is, it will be our duty to give effect to that interpretation irrespective of what has been stated by jurists. Allu Allah wa allu al-Rasul is the duty cast on the Muslims and it will not be obedience to God or to the Prophet in case where our mind is clear as to the order of the Almighty or the Prophet we fail to decide in accordance with it. ... Similar considerations apply to the inter-

1 This refers to the Maulānā ‘Abd al-Majīd Daryābǎdī’s Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur’ān (see under 4: 15; fn. 576).
“Certainly, the spontaneous and independent observations of two or more honest witnesses to the same effect would carry more conviction than the observation of an equally honest single witness even in good faith, because the factors of honest error partly cancel out.” (All India Reporter, 1960, Madhya Pradesh, pp. 31-34).

Evidence Act of Pakistan

Section 134 of the Indo-Pakistan Evidence Act came under scrutiny before the learned Judges of India’s Supreme Court, who observed that:

“Section 134 of the Indian Evidence Act has categorically laid down that ‘no particular number of witnesses shall, in any case, be required for the proof of any fact’. . . . The section enshrines the well-recognized maxim that ‘evidence has to be weighed and not counted’. . . . Even as the guilt of an accused person may be proved by the testimony of a single witness, the innocence of an accused person may be established on the testimony of a single witness.” (PLD 1957 S.C. India 525, pp. 534-535; AIR 1957 S.C. 614).

About a century back, commenting on the same section, J. Phear said:

“The evidence of one witness, if believed, is sufficient, according to the law of this country, to establish any fact to which the witness speaks directly” (1868, Vol. X Sutherland’s Weekly Reporter, Civil, p. 236—Division Bench).

J. Jackson held that even the complainant’s testimony alone was sufficient, thus:

“There cannot be a doubt that a conviction upon the statement of a complainant is lawful, otherwise a person who committed an assault, first taking care to ensure the absence of witnesses, could never be punished” (1874, Vol. XXII Suth. W.R. Criminal, p. 32-D.B.).

In this behalf, the saying of the Prophet of Islam cannot be ignored, which was to the effect: “The word of wisdom is the lost property of the believer: so he has a better right to retrieve it wherever he finds it.”

Nature of evidence

The next question posed earlier concerned the nature of evidence to be adduced. In the annals of legal history we find that one of the forms of defence in criminal and civil cases at the English Common Law was by what is termed compurgation. The party on whom the burden of proof was adjudged had to find respectable people, usually twelve, to support his oath. It was called wager of law or making one’s law. About the party and his compurgators (oath-helpers), Professor F. W. Maitland remarks that:

“They have not come there to convince the court, they have not come there to be examined and cross-examined like modern witnesses, they have come there to bring upon themselves the wrath of God if what they say be not true. This process is known in England as ‘making one’s law’ . . .”

Theodore Plucknett calls wager of law as “essentially an ordeal . . . its principle was more rational”. He goes on thus:

Number of witnesses

With respect to the first question, it has been commented upon generally by legists that the requirement, in any law, for plurality of witnesses, for an offence which is of a casual nature and perpetrated clandestinely, impedes the administration of justice, inasmuch as on the one side it puts a premium on crime, whereas on the other it induces a temptation to subornation. In the case of adultery and fornication, unless the malefactors are surprised in the direct act, which is a remote possibility, it is anything but easy or convenient to prove it by direct ocular evidence. The Law Giver in His wisdom created easiness by the doctrine of Li’ân (imprecation) enshrined in verses 6 to 9 of chapter 24 (vide supra).

S. C. Sarkar in his Law of Evidence (7th edition) comments thus:

“Undoubtedly there are many advantages where there is a plurality of witnesses, and the most important among them is that an opportunity is afforded for weighing the evidence, and finding out the discrepancies between the stories given. But it would be unwise and against public policy to insist on the production of more witnesses than one in every case. Each case must be judged on its own peculiar circumstances.”

The rule of plurality of witnesses is advantageous besides in dovetailing facts, to eliminate mistakes and reasonable doubts. A learned Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court of India has remarked as follows:

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"In other words, the court calls upon the accused to produce a specified number of people . . . who are prepared to swear that in their opinion his oath is trustworthy. They do not swear to the facts of the case, but merely to their judgment that the accused is a credible person. Wager of law, therefore, reduces itself to a character test; in the earlier period when there were strong religious sanctions surrounding the oath it is clear that a disreputable person would have difficulty in finding compurgators."

It can be argued that compurgation is not suitable in a state of society where inducement to tell the truth is small and threat of perjury is insignificant, thereby reducing the value of the oath to nil, then the following provision regarding the fásiqn (which term includes perjurers; see 24:4) is one of great caution and effectiveness:

"O you who believe, if an unrighteous person (fásiq) comes to you with a report, look careful into it, lest you harm people unwittingly and afterwards be sorry for what you have done" (49:6).

Circumstantial evidence

The Qur’anic provisions relating to the well-known incident of Zulaykha (wife of ‘Aziz, the then Governor of Egypt) and Yusuf (Joseph) are worthy of note in this regard. The Qur’an relates in 12:25-27 thus:

"She (Zulaykha) said: ‘What is the punishment of him who intends wrong to your wife save that he be imprisoned or (given) afflictive chastisement?’"

"He (Yusuf) said: ‘It was she that solicited me.’"

"And a judge from her household bore judgment (wa shahida shāhidun min ahli-hā): ‘If his shirt be rent from before, then she is truthful and he is a liar; but if his shirt is rent from behind, then she is lying and he is truthful.’"

Evidently in this context the Qur’an uses the term shahādah to include a judge. The Imam Raghib Ispahani comments:

"And occasionally shahādah connotes adjudication and order, as said wa shahida shāhidun min ahli-hā (12:16), i.e., one adjudicator amongst her tribe ordered."

So it is found that exoneration of Yusuf was solely on the basis of circumstantial evidence. This amply bears out that corpus delicti cannot only be proved or disproved by direct evidence, but also by circumstantial evidence. As seen above, the rule as to the plurality of witnesses is a salutary rule in jealously giving security and protection to the innocent individuals, but it does not appear to be the invariable rule.

Conclusions

1. The Islamic Li‘an is analogous to compurgation of the English Common Law.

2. There is no reason why the evidence of witnesses of opinion, and of facts and circumstances, be not admissible in a Shari‘ah court.


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**THE ISLAMIC REVIEW**
Monetary Conditions of Economic Growth and the Islamic Concept of Interest

By PROFESSOR SABRI F. ULGENER

Is there a Solution to the Open Conflict between Law and Practice in the Muslim World?

The Qur'anic distinction between Interest as a Surplus and Interest as a Factor in Computing the Overall Efficiency of the Economy

The question to answer

Do the Muslim countries, mostly looked upon as underdeveloped areas, face any obstacles of a religious nature in their efforts to reach the Western standard of living and, more specifically, to adopt the monetary instruments and institutions of the West?

As far as monetary conditions of economic development are concerned, the main fact to be considered is, I think, that the Qur'an prohibited usury (riba'), which according to the traditional interpretation should also cover interest. For those Muslim countries that, instead of adopting a sharp separation of religious and economic (as well as political) matters as in the case of Turkey, intend to evaluate and judge modern institutions in the light of the shari'ah, the problem becomes a most critical one: Should Muslims as sincere Muslims still banish interest by following the old interpretation and then search possibilities elsewhere, say within an interestless economy, or try to re-interpret Islamic Law so as to confine riba' to usury and then have complete freedom in accepting economic institutions based largely on interest taking.

In trying to find an adequate answer to the above questions it may well be to start reviewing the true nature of the Islamic concept of interest, and more specifically the set of conditions under which the objections against interest were born.

The Qur'an makes a distinction between "business" and riba' or interest as a premium

As is well known, interest in the present-time economies has a variety of functions. Over and above its simplest aspect as a premium paid to the lender, it serves as the most dependable discount factor in evaluating and comparing different investments, and plays in this capacity a major role in determining the overall structure of investment and production. We will later in this essay try to explain that the predominant role attached to the first aspect (interest as a mere premium that sometimes comes close to usury) declined in the course of economic development, while the other functions gained more importance with the rise of modern capitalistic practices.

It is needless to say that the sharp criticism of the great religions against interest was closely related to its first and simplest aspect, i.e., against interest as a premium that in many cases surpasses the paying ability of the borrower and accrues to the lender as an unearned, and therefore unjust, surplus. Hence the intolerant and even hostile attitude towards riba', a word denoting a premium or surplus which accrues to a person at an ever-growing percentage with no defendable reason. That is precisely where the interdiction starts from. So, for example, take the Qur'an, 3:15:

"O ye who believe! Devour not usury doubly doubled, but fear God, perchance ye may be prosperous; fear the fire which is prepared for the unbelievers..."

or for a more elaborate statement take the Qur'an 2:275:

"Those who devour usury shall not rise again, save as he riseth whom Satan hath paralysed with a touch; and that is because they say 'trading is only like usury', but God has made trading lawful and usury unlawful."

What is riba'? The distinction made in the above phrase between trade
and *riba* deserves special attention, and is most essential in understanding the true nature of *riba*. Following a widely accepted criterion, trade simply means the exchange of heterogeneous items such as money against wheat, and, furthermore, implies that the seller receives a benefit only by reselling in subsequent actions at higher prices the merchandise he might have bought cheaper. *Riba*, on the other hand, denotes the surplus that arises out of a single act of exchanging homogeneous items (wheat against wheat or money against money). Thus we have a pure act of *riba*, if a person gives a certain amount of wheat to his neighbour in need with the understanding that a surplus or addition be added on the return. This is unjust simply because the borrower will have consumed the wheat in the meantime, so that no surplus which can be transferred to the lender would have accrued to him. In other words, consumers' goods, over and above their capacity to satisfy a need, do not have any additional value for which a price may reasonably be charged. For a long time money was also considered as a consumers' good. In fact, as long as it was spent for consumption rather than for productive purposes, no one could expect any increase or surplus. Here we see the Qur'an in perfect accordance with reality:

"That which you give in usury in order that it may increase on people's property hath no increase with God" (The Qur'an, 30: 39).

**Why the Qur'an condemns *riba***

Following what has been said so far, the underlying causes of the prohibition of usury by the Qur'an may be, in their logical sequence, classified as follows:

1. To start with, loans are taken and used primarily for consumption purposes. The borrower, having therefore no feasible addition to his income, is very likely to be in difficulty even in the repayment of the principal. Therefore, paying a surplus over and above the capital would easily undermine his economic well-being and force him down to a sub-marginal position where insolvency and bankruptcy are inevitable. That is why the Qur'an explicitly urges, "And if it be one in difficulties, then wait for easy circumstances" (2: 280).

2. The lender, on the other hand, instead of acting in accordance with the above, would consider himself justified in charging the highest possible interest that would increase at a progressive rate ("doubly double," to use the words of the Qur'an), so as to make up for any loss incurred because of the insolvency of the borrower.

3. Finally, *riba* is also being spent on consumption rather than for productive purposes, or to use again the terminology of the Qur'an, "swallowed and eaten up", so that the surplus, although apparently growing at a progressive rate, diminishes and finally disappears. And here again is the Qur'an in perfect accordance with what actually takes place: "God shall blot out usury" (2: 275). Translated into the terminology of modern economic theory, this would read pretty much as follows: there is no addition whatsoever made by usury to the stock of wealth and to the productive capacity of the business community as a whole.

To sum up: we have been dealing with a surplus that seems to move in a circular flow the start and the end of which tend to the same stage of unproductive consumption. In other words, a surplus that, while consuming itself, causes innumerable difficulties and frictions. Therefore, it is quite understandable that, as long as the disadvantages outweigh the prospective benefits, such a surplus should be suspended or prohibited.

The facts mentioned above suggest that the objections raised are not so much related to loans and interest, as such, as to the nature of their underlying motives and purposes. The main target of the criticism is an economy based largely on unproductive consumption and exploitation. It is worth noticing that Islam, while from the outset is more tolerant towards consumption habits as compared with many other religions, very emphatically condemns any excess of consumption and spending (The Qur'an, 17: 26). Such an excess, one might argue, would force the individual to perpetual indebtedness, and the worst of all, to misery and mendicancy. So much for consumption from the individual's point of view. As for its social aspect, care should also be taken of a fair acquisition and consumption that would ensure the highest possible justice in distributive shares. Therefore, every surplus acquired and consumed in an unjust manner should not be tolerated in any way (The Qur'an, 17: 27). Except the profit mutually agreed upon in a normal trading act, all kinds of surpluses are to be looked upon as unjust. *Riba*, among other things, belongs to this category. Hence again, "God permitteth trading and forbidden usury" (The Qur'an, 2: 275).

To understand and appraise the historical trend it is essential to realize that the prohibition of usury dates from the years after the Hijrah. As a matter of fact, we have no evidence of explicit interdiction in the first years of Islam, except a few remarks in the Qur'an, ch. 30, revealed at Mecca. It is not a mere accident that the chapters openly prohibiting usury were revealed after the Hijrah at Medina. In fact it was soon discovered that a minority composed of non-Muslim (specially Jewish) people was deeply engaged in usury, whereby the interest increased more than double (The Qur'an, 3: 130). It is worth noticing that the more intricate social and economic structure of Medina brought about a set of problems (among other things also usury) awaiting immediate solutions and interference. This, at least partly, explains the fact that, while most of the chapters revealed at Mecca were rather confined to divine and moral matters, those revealed in Medina did establish concrete and explicit rules and regulations.

The reasons for this gradual change of attitude prevailed in the next few centuries and were even more accentuated by the emergence of an "intricate civilization", to use the terminology of Ibn Khaldun. More specifically, here we have to do with an economy of large-scale consumption and spending based on estates and farms of which, to speak with Farid al-Din 'Attar, the great Persian mystic poet of the 12th century, an increasing amount of loans along with the jealousy and hostility of the outsiders, endless troubles and lots of dependants are the main features.

The development outlined has been partly responsible for the growing intensity of the criticism against usury, with the result that even matters very loosely connected with usury were looked upon as unfair and unlawful. Hence the warning of the later days, "Suspecting usury is but usury itself."

**Open conflict between practice and law**

The growing intensity of the criticism did of course not provide a guarantee of a strict obedience. As is always the case, the effectiveness and operational capacity of the doctrine should clearly be distinguished from its logical content. Thus the following question arises: How far did the
interdiction succeed in abolishing the practice of paying and receiving interest?

Despite the efforts spent in sustaining the law, the history of many Muslim countries furnishes contrary examples. In fact, there is not a single period during which interest taking was actually prevented. Apart from a handful of deeply religious men, whose names sound like legendary heroes, by far the greatest majority has always been engaged in interest taking.

Here we have the evidence of an open conflict between practice and law. To bridge the gap, Muslim authorities as well as Christian scholars of the Middle East had a hard time searching ways and means of re-interpreting and legalizing at least the mild forms of interest without getting into explicit conflict with the established beliefs. The attitude of various Islamic schools with regard to this question did of course greatly differ. Time and space forbid a detailed and thorough explanation of the conflicting ideas and doctrines. However, leaving aside the subtle differences, one might say that in cases where interest taking was inevitable, the efforts of the lawyers were concentrated on reinterpreting actual contracts so as to convert an illegal act into a legal one, as for example the conversion of the riba' contract into an association (sharikah) whereby the interest is changed to or rather renamed as a premium risk (mukhatarah) which is legally quite permissible. A more common way was to affiliate the loan act with a trading contract that would supersede the former. In this manner the loan act had a chance of becoming a legal procedure. The common practice was as follows: the borrower sells to the lender a specific good which will thereafter be resold to him at a lower price, the difference taking the place of interest. By doing so, the loan act seems to have been completed without interest. This is a procedure which was in common use in some Muslim countries, for example, in Turkey before the Revolution (with banks called Eytam Sandiqi).

The reconciliation of the West to the institution of interest

To complete the above picture, I may also add that some of the measures taken or suggested were adopted, probably due to the impact of Muslim philosophy, by the Christian Middle Ages of Europe, with the ultimate result that, despite the resistance of the Church, the reconciliation in the West was a more systematic and fundamental one. From among the obvious factors responsible for this change, I would like to point out a specific fact that, although quite often overlooked, gives a clue to a better understanding of the divergence between the two great cultural areas since the end of the 15th century: this is the century of growing maritime trade in the West which because of heavy risks involved facilitated or even imposed the transition from loan contracts to various forms of associations whereby the interest could be integrated, as an invisible factor, with the premium of risk. On the other hand, due to the decadence of maritime trade, especially in the Mediterranean, a similar transition had no chance in Muslim countries of imposing itself to the same extent, and so interest kept being an open target for attacks and criticisms.

The rest of the factors responsible for the divergent courses of development in the two areas, such as growing capitalism and developing monetary institutions in the West, are too well known to need any explanation. All the observations suggest that a conflict between law and practice continued to exist as an unsolved problem in the Muslim world up to the present time.

The above survey brings us to the problems of our day. The existing tension between Islamic Law and practice may cause a good deal of perplexity and doubt as to the nature of the way to be followed in the minds of people with strong religious feelings. On the other hand, we must guard ourselves against hasty generalizations in the opposite direction, i.e., in adopting the present-day practices of advanced economies. In fact, following the modern view, one would be inclined to argue that the Islamic notion of interest is but a rudimentary and medieval idea and has, therefore, no connection with what actually takes place in the modern world. This is not always true. To begin with, we have in the usury doctrine a system of coherent ideas, indeed, one of the most elaborate intellectual achievements of the past. As for its practical significance, we should bear in mind that usury continues to exist as a problem to be dealt with in most of the backward areas, and more specifically, in under-developed countries with a great will and high potentialities of growth. As repeatedly observed in history, the growth of money economies tends for a while to stimulate money demand to a greater extent than money supply, owing to the psychological stimulus for a disproportionate expansion of wants far beyond the limits of technical capacities. That is what in countries having insufficient monetary instruments and banking practices makes money, and hence the premium paid for its use, i.e., interest, always dear and usury very profitable (not to mention other obvious factors such as the greater risks involved).

Is “interestless economy” possible?

What is then to be done? Is an “interestless economy” the right answer to this question? And here again, even if the essential features of such an economy could be theoretically outlined in a pure model, to what extent could this kind of an experiment be successfully carried out? If not, shall we cease to be a good and sincere Muslim?

If I am right in my judgment, experimentations of this kind have been doomed to failure. The reason for this lies in the fact that interest is not always an easy target to shoot for. The crux of the problem is that, after allowance is being made for such elements as the premium of risk, the objections against interest reduces itself in the final analysis to what economic theory calls pure interest, i.e., to an intangible factor. Each time when attacked this factor could freely move in any direction, trying to disguise itself as a premium of risk or as a normal profit, with the loan act being changed to a trading act. That is why most of the experiments up to the present time focused attention on limiting rather than eliminating interest. To construct a model of an economy where interest does not exist while the premium of risk and normal profit are tolerated, and then to call it an “interestless economy”, would be too naive an experiment to rely upon seriously.

Yet, with this point in mind, one should note that at least in highly-developed countries the objection against interest has decreased to a considerable extent. Apart from a few exceptions, of which the German experience or rather doctrines of the 1930s, with the slogan “Breaking the slavery of interest” (Breachung der Zinsknechtschaft) was the chief example, recent history does not reveal any serious effort to combat against interest. There seem to be other questions that attract more attention than the problem of interest considered as a mere surplus. In other words, the focus of attention has been shifted considerably to different aspects of the same phenomenon. And here are the facts:
(a) Interest in the sense of a surplus, that under the circumstances explained above comes close to usury, is not a problem to be dealt with in the first instance. As a matter of fact, growing capitalism and more specifically developing banking facilities created a milieu where usury has been minimized. Thus, being reduced to a fair level, interest does not even seem to maintain the predominant position it used to have as the most effective factor in determining the individual’s decision as to saving or non-saving. And yet:

(b) With the growth of modern capitalistic practices, interest, in the sense of a discount factor used to evaluate and compare the efficiency of different investment and production projects, seems to attract more attention. That is why most of the modern economists who express doubt as to the significance of interest from the individual’s point of view attach a great deal of importance to interest as a factor indispensable in computing the overall efficiency of the economy.

The crux of the problem for under-developed countries is to differentiate between interest as a surplus and interest as a factor in computing the overall efficiency of their economies

Here is the crux of the problem for under-developed countries: While they still have to deal very rigorously with interest as a surplus, they lack the practice of using it in the second sense. In fact it is fair to say that the situation here is contrary to that in the highly-developed countries: the significance of interest as a basic element of calculation lags far beyond its usual aspect as a premium or surplus. It is essential that, while the struggle against interest in the latter sense should rigorously be carried on whenever necessary, interest in the former sense ought to be adopted, if Muslim countries are to reach the scale of efficiency of the Western economies. In fact, one of the chief obstacles retarding economic development is the fact that business firms as well as governments have a habit of making decisions in a rather loose and spontaneous manner, ignoring the criteria supplied by a sound cost accounting analysis.

It would have been too naïve a view to argue that Islam with its ribā doctrine did ultimately prevent the Muslim countries from adopting modern capitalistic practices. It is not so much the religious beliefs as such as the lack of entrepreneurial abilities and techniques that brought about the present situation. Introducing Islam into the chain of obstacles would but make the difficulties encountered at least twice as heavy as they really are. Muslims should not hesitate to adopt the Islamic concept of interest as an effective method to fight against usury wherever they see it in action. The Qur’ān maintains its freshness in this case as if it were revealed only yesterday. But such an approach, however justified in those cases, ought not make us forget the utmost importance of interest as an element of cost accounting in modern economies.

It seems to be that most of the difficulties stem from a too narrow interpretation of the Qur’ān with regards to usury. As explained before, the objections were chiefly directed against the underlying circumstances rather than against interest as such — to repeat the words of the Qur’ān already mentioned: “O ye who believe! devour not usury doubly doubled” (3 : 30). Finding examples that would exactly fit into the specifications of this phrase is in highly-developed countries, and even in the larger cities of under-developed areas, not always easy. To do justice to the Qur’ān, we must be aware of the fact that the Islamic concept of usury cannot be sought in or reduced to a single word, ribā, but must be understood in its entirety, i.e. in the phrase as it was literally revealed with the necessary qualifications such as “those who devour” and “doubly double”. As soon as we drop out these qualifications, we would face a phenomenon of an entirely different nature. It would, therefore, be a great mistake to insist on classifying events that may have undergone a substantial change and even become an entirely new phenomenon still under the old name. However, as far as terminology is concerned, we are better off with a pair of words — ribā (usury) and fajd (interest). It may be well to reduce the former, following the traditional approach, to those cases where a surplus, subject to the above qualifications, arises, whereas the latter may be used to denote the premium paid for the use of money. And here another difference immediately suggests itself: ribā (usury) may come into existence in a barter economy as well, whereas interest is to be conceived of as a purely monetary phenomenon.

All these facts, taken together, clearly indicate that we are dealing in the modern economy with a problem which by its nature differs from what has been envisaged by the Qur’ān. As referred to above, the exchange economy which was chiefly responsible in its early stages for a disproportionate rise of money demand and therefore, to a great extent, for usury, did furnish in the later stages of its development the necessary remedy, thanks to growing monetary instruments and banking practices. Instead of launching on a hopeless experiment of fighting usury as such, it seems far more desirable to plant the seeds of monetary institutions into the body of under-developed economies so as to make the adaptation a short and painless one, just as in medicine preventive measures against certain diseases are taken by injecting viruses of these same diseases into the organism.
THE HISTORY OF THE IDEA OF THE MIRACLE (I'JAZ) OF THE QUR’AN

The 14th century A.H.—20th century C.E.


Emphasis on the Scientific Aspect of the Subject

By NA‘IM AL-HUMSI

(XII)

A distinguishing feature of the study of the concept of the i'jaz of the Qur'an in the 14th century A.H. (20th century C.E.) is the emphasis on the scientific aspect of this subject, and the endeavour to substantiate the i'jaz of the Qur'an by practical means. This course was first set by al-Alusi, and scholars like al-Ghazzali (d. 1111 C.E.), al-Razi (d. 923 C.E.) and al-Suyutii (d. 1505 C.E.) also engaged in this new trend. But the scientific study of the i'jaz did not become really active until the end of the 19th century C.E., and the beginning of the 20th century C.E. A quotation from the writings of the Egyptian scholar, the late Amin al-Khului, explains this: “This trend towards scientific exegesis continued, and it would seem that science became one of the proofs given for the i'jaz of the Qur'an and for demonstrating the fact that Islam suited the needs of modern life. This type of explanation is to be found in the writings of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi on the exegesis of the Qur'an. It is also subsequently to be found in books which were written on the subject of extracting scientific knowledge from the Qur'an and in explaining the various verses concerning scientific matter. This trend soon became widespread. A book entitled Kashf al-Asrār al-Nurāniyyah al-Qur'āniyyah fi ma Yata'allaq bil-Ajrām al-Samā'iyyah wa al-Ardīyyah wa al-Hayawānāt wa al-Nabūtāt wa al-Jawdih al-Mudāniyyah (The Exposition of the Enlightened Qur'anic Secrets regarding Heavenly Planets and Earthly Matters, the Animals, the Plants and the Mineral Treasures) by Muhammad Ibn Ahmad al-Ishkandarāni, a physician who lived in the 13th century A.H. (18th century C.E.). There was another book entitled Tibyan al-Asrār al-Rabbāniyyah fi al-Nabūtāt wa al-Mudāniin wa al-Khawās al-Hayawāniyyah (The Exposition of the Godly Secrets in Plants, Minerals and Animal Characteristics) by the same author. The first book was printed in Cairo in 1297 A.H. (1879 C.E.) and the second in Damascus in 1300 A.H. (1882 C.E.). Fikri Pasha, an Egyptian Minister of Education, wrote a book examining the scientific aspect of the provisions of the Shari'ah, and this was printed in Cairo in 1315 A.H. (1897 C.E.). This scientific trend in explaining the idea of the i'jaz of the Qur'an was strongly advocated by one of the leading champions of Islamic reform, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi. He extracted scientific facts which he said were directly or indirectly referred to in the Qur'an which was revealed thirteen centuries previously but which had remained undetected and unappreciated. The Egyptian scholar Mustafa Sādiq al-Rafi‘i also discussed this subject in his book I'jaz al-Qur'ān. He maintained that the Qur'an contained the outlines as well as the details of the sciences, and he relied on the views of al-Suyutii in his al-I'tiqān that the researchers had derived scientific knowledge from the Qur'an. Al-Rafi‘i also says that scientific discoveries in various spheres can be deduced from the Qur'an. One of the most recent scholars who studied this subject in detail was the Shaykh Tantawi al-Jawhari in his Tafsir (Exegesis). There were also other scientific publications in which the authors devoted special attention to the contents of the Qur'an. One of these is Muhammad Sidqi Tawfik (al-Tafsir—Ma‘ālim Hayāthi wa-Manāhih al-Yawm (Exegesis — Its Course and Trends Today, p. 20).

The increased interest in the scientific aspect of the i'jaz of the Qur'an was directly attributable to the reaction caused by the closer contact which the Muslim world had with the Western world and the fact that Arab-Islamic culture, which had to some extent been dormant, began to come into touch with the developing and vigorous culture of Europe. The scholars of Islam were fascinated by the scientific progress made in the West and by modern scientific discoveries, and they sought to revert to their Arab-Islamic culture to seek the basis of this scientific progress. They feared that if they did not do this the Qur'an would appear insignificant and irrelevant in the eyes of the Muslims, whose faith in Islam might be shaken in view of the glittering achievements of modern civilization. The Islamic scholars therefore tried to show that the Qur'an did in fact deal with scientific matters and that it contained knowledge about modern scientific discoveries more than thirteen centuries before the Western scientists had discovered them. To establish these propositions the Islamic scholars relied on various passages in the Qur'an which could be given wide and imaginative interpretation.

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1 For the previous installment in this series, see The Islamic Review for December 1966.
The Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh (d. 1905 C.E.)

The Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, the great Imam and reformer, studied the question of the i'jaz of the Qur'an and wrote about it in his treatise Risālah al-Tawhid (printed in Beirut) (p. 96). In his view the Qur'an is a mufridah by the Almighty as it was brought forth by a Prophet who was illiterate, and because it contained information about the unknown, and also because human beings of all capacities were unable to match the Qur'an. He maintains that the i'jaz of the Qur'an is implicit in its rhetorical excellence. In this respect he accepts the views of al-Baqlīnī.

Al-Raftī

Mustafa Sādiq al-Raftī, a literary man of great eminence, wrote a book entitled i'jaz al-Qur'an, in which he examined the various theories propounded on the subject at various times, and gave his comments on them. His treatment of the whole subject is characterized by great zeal and loyalty for Islam and by hostility to the detractors of this faith. He expresses in strong language his opinions about theories not exactly in conformity with what we perceive to be the traditional Islamic belief on any subject, and his language is at times excessive and not altogether proper. He likewise very enthusiastically supported all views which he felt were in line with traditional Islamic doctrine, although these may at times have been unscientific and illogical. His treatment of the subject of the i'jaz of the Qur'an can be summed up as follows:

1. A definition of i'jaz as “man’s inability to attain an objective, and the continuance of this state of affairs with the passage of time”.

2. A review of the first known criticism of Islam, by Labīd Ibn al-A'sam. Also a discussion on the theory of the creation (Arabic: khalq) of the Qur'an, and also of the mu'tazilite school of philosophy.

3. An examination of the theory of surfah and of the works of leading exponents of this theory, such as al-Nazzām, al-Murtada, Ibn Hazm, and al-Jahiz. He rejects this theory.

4. An examination of the various theories advanced on the question of i'jaz, such as the view that the Qur'an was a mufridah from the point of view of style which differed from that traditionally known to the Arabs, the view that the Qur'an’s i'jaz is evidenced in the purity of its language compared with the language current at that time, the view that i'jaz is demonstrated by the absence of any contradiction in the Qur'an and in the fact that the Qur'an contained very fine meaning and knowledge, and the view that the i'jaz is proved by the combination of all these characteristics. This is followed by a rejection in strong and sarcastic language of all these theories.

5. A reference to the views on i'jaz expressed by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, which is described as being adapted from the views previously expressed by al-Wasiti and al-Rummānī.

6. A reference to a theory about i'jaz which al-Raftī attributes to a recent school of thought on the subject but which in fact was advanced by Yaḥyā Ibn Hamzah al-Yamani, author of al-Tirāz. This theory maintains that the i'jaz of the Qur'an is in its rhetorical excellence and superb style.

7. An examination of the views expressed by some critics of the Qur'an and of arguments advanced against i'jaz. These are in the main extremely silly and of no consequence, and did not warrant a serious reply.

8. A mention of the views of some of those who did not believe in the i'jaz of the Qur'an, such as ‘Isa Ibn Subayh al-Miṣrī and al-Husaynīyah group.

9. An examination of al-Jahiz’s treatise Kitāb Nazzī al-Qur'ān and a reference to the criticism of this treatise by al-Baqlīnī. This is followed by a list of works on the subject of the i'jaz such as those of al-Wasiti (which al-Raftī considers to be the earliest substantial work on the subject), al-Rummānī and al-Baqlīnī (which al-Raftī criticizes on the lines adopted by al-Jahiz — see al-Raftī’s i'jaz al-Qur'ān, p. 152). Al-Raftī, however, relies on this work as an authority in several respects. He adds that al-Baqlīnī’s treatise is valuable as embodying the spirit of the time, and that al-Baqlīnī’s arguments were designed to suit that particular age and that although they succeeded in convincing people of the i'jaz at that time they could not be successful in a subsequent age. Al-Raftī also states that among the scholars who dealt with the subject of the i'jaz in the matter of rhetoric and kalam and allied subjects were al-Khattabī, Fāhr al-Dīn al-Raftī, Ibn Abī al-Isba’ and al-Zamalkānī. He says that these works borrowed from one another on an extensive scale, but adds that one book particularly impressed him — that written by Ibn Suraqah.

10. An examination of the theory about the gradation in the matter of the challenge made by the Qur'an to those who did not believe in it to match it. Al-Raftī maintains that the first challenge was in respect of a larger part of the Qur'an, and that in subsequent challenges there was a decrease. Al-Raftī quotes the views of al-Jahiz on the matter in which the challenge was made by the Qur'an and on the reaction of the Arabs to all this.

11. Al-Raftī examines the arguments put forward by the opponents of Islam and the Qur'an, reporting some of their actions and sayings. He mentions in this respect Musaylamah, al-Aswad al-'Ansi, Tulayyah Ibn Khawiyild and al-Nadr Ibn al-Hārith. He also says that among those who were accused of opposing the Qur'an were Ibn al-Muqaffa', Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Qabus Ibn Washmakir, Ibn al-Rawandi, al-Mutanabbī and al-Ma'ārī. Al-Raftī defends some of these against these allegations, maintains a neutral attitude to others, and attacks one in particular — namely Ibn al-Rawandi.

12. Al-Raftī mentions the fact that the Arabs were unable to match the Qur'an and realized because of this the supreme excellence of the Qur'an.

13. Al-Raftī finally puts forward what he considers his own personal view on the question of the i'jaz of the Qur'an. He says that the style of a literary work is a distinguishing feature of the writer, and the style of the Qur'an is not the style of human beings, and consequently it is a mufridah. Otherwise the style of the Qur'an could be compared to that of writers at earlier times or at a later date. But it has never been matched. It is noteworthy here that al-Raftī in this argument considers the cause as the effect, and that instead of seeking to prove that the Qur'an is the work of the Almighty by showing that it is a mufridah he seeks to demonstrate that it is a mufridah by saying that it is the work of the Almighty. He maintains that the style of the Qur'an differed from that of the Arabs generally at any time because it was not the work of a human being but came from God. His argument would have been more plausible if he were first to establish that the style of the Qur'an was beyond the capacity of mankind. Al-Raftī also holds the view that the i'jaz of the Qur'an is evidenced in the beautiful
music of its language, in the balance and equilibrium between its various parts, and in the fine rhythm connecting its various parts. He mentions in this context the effect which the recitation of the Qur'an had on the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab (d. 644 C.E.) when he embraced Islam. He also mentions that this musical characteristic of the Qur'an had great effect on the minds and hearts of people who otherwise doubted the Qur'an, and that one of the enemies of the Qur'an, Musaylamah, considered this a significant fact and in his attempt to imitate the Qur'an sought to introduce a similar characteristic in his work. See for this al-Rafi'i's 'Ijaz al-Qur'an, p. 222 et seq.

Al-Raafi'i's views on the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an can be summarized as follows:

1. It is demonstrated by the musical qualities of the words of the Qur'an.
2. It is evidenced in the spiritual content of the words, which capture the heart in a unique manner because of their material and spiritual qualities, all of which make an impression on the senses of man.
3. It is shown by the absence in the Qur'an of any superfluous words, a fact which makes the Qur'an in distinct contrast with all other literary works. There is not a single word in the Qur'an which can be considered unnecessary. They are all needed to give the meaning intended by the Qur'an.
4. It is proved by the fact that the Qur'an contained the elements of the sciences and the sources of many modern inventions and scientific theories. In this connection al-Raifi'i quotes the views of Ibn Rushd on the scientific proof of the 'Ijaz.
5. It is substantiated by the fact that the Arabs had found it impossible at any time to denigrate the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an, and that it was eventually sought to discredit the Qur'an by alleging that it was magic.

In my opinion, al-Raafi'i is reasonable in his attempt at a proof of the 'Ijaz in the first three arguments listed above, although I cannot accept these arguments as conclusive since some of the qualities he refers to can properly apply to the work of human beings. Al-Raafi'i's argument that the Qur'an is an encyclopaedia of religion and of all the sciences is not a reasonable one.

'Abd al-'Alim al-Hindi

A very interesting and comprehensive essay on the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an is that of 'Abd al-'Alam al-Hindi, which appeared in The Islamic Culture, Nos. 1 and 2, 1932., Hyderabad-Deccan, India. In this essay the author mentions the life and thought of the Arabs during the days of the Prophet Muhammad and describes how different the Qur'an was from anything known to the Arabs at the time. The author maintains that the Qur'an represented the experience which the Prophet Muhammad personally endured. He mentions the verses of the Qur'an which made a challenge to the Arabs to match it, and gives reasons why he considers the Arabs were at no time able to meet the challenge and match the Qur'an, and how this eventually was taken to mean that the Qur'an was beyond the capacity of human beings. The author also examines the various social and political factors which conditioned the Muslim's thoughts on the Qur'an, and mentions the origins of trends towards apostasy and of the theories about the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an which sought to counter these views. Al-Hindi examines three theories which have been advanced on the subject of the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an in earlier days. One was the theory of exegesis, the other the theory of kalim (dialectics), which requires that there should be a mu'minah to prove the prophethood of Muhammad, and the third theory was that of the mu'tazilite school. He examines the causes which led to the rise of these theories and the relationship between these various schools of thought. He also states that a fourth theory evolved from the interaction of these three theories, namely the theory that the Qur'an's 'Ijaz lay in the literary art of rhetoric and style. The theories on the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an, according to al-Hindi, appeared in this order: the theory of the Mu'tazilites, followed by the theory of the dialecticians, then the theory of the exegetists, and finally the theory of the scholars of rhetoric and literary style. The first dialectician to engage in the study of the 'Ijaz was 'Ali Ibn Raban al-Tabari, the first exegetist was Ibn Jarir al-Tabari. Al-Hindi examines the relationship between the activities of the exegetists, the dialecticians and the philosophers. He gives a list of scholars who dealt with the question of the 'Ijaz, and devotes attention to the treatise of al-Baqillan and gives an idea about the work's general scheme together with some quotations from it. He expresses regret at the loss of the main work of al-Sharif al-Radihi but expresses pleasure at the fact that some of his writings have been preserved to give an idea about his views on the subject. Al-Hindi discusses the effect which the idea of the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an had on the science of rhetoric, and says that since the very beginning of the discussion on the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an two schools of thought developed. One believed in the 'Ijaz on the basis only of rhetorical excellence, while the other considered the rhetorical qualities of the Qur'an as one only of several proofs indicating the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an. Al-Hindi refers to scholars who considered the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an evidenced in its rhetorical qualities, such as al-Jahiz, to scholars such as al-Jurjani, who was the author of two major treatises, al-Dalal'il and al-Asrar, and two works on exegesis, to Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Ibn Abi Isbaq al-Qarawani, al-Zamalkani and Hazim al-Qaratianni. Al-Hindi only mentions the names and the works of these scholars but does not examine them in detail.

'Abd al-'Alim al-Hindi examines the origin of the term 'Ijaz and traces its development from the verb 'ajiza (he was unable). He lists the views expressed by various dialecticians to prove the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an, and refers to the arguments nut forward by al-Nazzam, al-Jahiz, Ibn Raban al-Tabari, al-Rummani, al-Qummi, al-Khattabi and al-Baqillani. He says that the science of dialectics was perfected at the end of the fourth century A.H. (10th century C.E.) and shows that scholars at a later age relied mainly on the writings of the scholars of the 4th century on this subject. He maintains that the view about surah in connection with the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an has been resorted to more by dialecticians of the Shi'a school than other dialecticians of the Sunni school, the former being more in sympathy with the Mu'tazilites. Al-Hindi points out that the works of later scholars such as al-Qadhi 'Yad, al-Aamid and al-Shahrastani are merely explanatory of the works of previous scholars and in the main develop arguments originating in earlier works.

In this substantial essay 'Abd al-'Alim al-Hindi refers to the arguments advanced by those who were said to oppose the idea of the 'Ijaz of the Qur'an, such as al-Harith Ibn Nadir, Musaylamah, Ibn al-Muqaaffa and his colleagues. Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi, Qabus Ibn Washmakir and Abu al-'Ala al-Maarri. He gives the reasons why it was said at the
time that these people were opposed to the idea of ījaz or did not believe in it, and mentions the part which popular misconceptions played in developing accusations against these people, and assesses the value of these accusations. Al-Hindi then refers to the idea that the Qurān was created, which arose during the days of the Caliph al-Ma’mun, and to the effect which this had on the question of the ījaz of the Qurān. He also refers to correspondence between a Muslim addressing an invitation to join Islam and supports this call by referring to the idea of the ījaz of the Qurān, and a Christian who answers such an invitation by denying the validity of the theory of the ījaz. The author also examines the views of Ibn al-Rawandi in opposition to Islam, and to the replies made by leading Muslim scholars against those who cast doubts upon Islam and the Qurān. He refers to an important work in defence of Islam by Abu al-Hasan ‘Abd al-Jabbar al-Hamadani al-Asadabadi (d. 415 A.H. – 1045 C.E.) entitled Tanziḥ al-Qurān ‘an al-Maṭā‘in (Defending the Qurān Against Attacks). The author concludes his essay by understating the importance to the students of Islamic history and to the history of the Arabic language and literature of the systematic collection and study of the arguments that were current at various ages on the theory of the ījaz of the Qurān.

Amin al-Khulī

Among all scholarly studies on the subject of the ījaz of the Qurān are the works of Amin al-Khulī. He discussed this subject in three treatises: al-Baladghah al-‘Arabiyyah wa Athār al-Falsafah Fiḥā (The Influence of Philosophy on Arabic Rhetoric), al-Tafsīr – Ma‘ālim Havaṭṭiḥa wa Manḥāliḥi al-Yawm (Exegesis – Its Course and Trends Today), and al-Baladghah wa ‘Ilm al-Nafs (Rhetoric and Psychology), published in the Journal of the Academy of Literature (Kulliyyah al-Adab), Cairo, Vol. IV, No. 2, for December 1936. In the first treatise – on Arabic rhetoric and the influence upon it by philosophy – al-Khulī examined how the science of rhetoric was a means for discerning the ījaz of the Qurān. He mentioned the view held by al-‘Askari to the effect that a knowledge of Arabic rhetoric was essential for anyone desirous of appreciating the ījaz of the Qurān. He also referred to the views held by Yahya Ibn Hamzah al-Alawī, author of al-Tirāz, on this subject. He also discusses the influence which the theory of ījaz had upon the study of the science of rhetoric, and how many works on rhetoric carried in their title a reference to the subject of ījaz, and how many works were devoted to this topic. He also showed that there was the interest in the subject of ījaz, and so closely connected it was with the science of rhetoric, that many works on the subject of rhetoric at one time were unintelligible without reference to the current theories on ījaz. Al-Khulī refers to Ibn Kahlūn’s view that the best use that could be made of the science of rhetoric would be to understand and appreciate the ījaz of the Qurān.

Al-Khulī discusses in detail the theory that the ījaz of the Qurān can be substantiated in a practical manner, and that a knowledge of rhetoric would be the best means for this purpose. He rejects this view, and quotes as authoritative the writings of al-Sakkākī on the subject. Al-Sakkākī maintained that the ījaz of the Qurān could be discerned only by exquisite taste and by profound knowledge and long experience in literature and rhetoric. Such taste would be a personal matter and would require initial disposition on the part of the person concerned. Al-Khulī accepts the view by al-Sakkākī that the capacity to appreciate the ījaz of the Qurān would come through an intelligent study of the science of rhetoric, disregarding the dry or mechanical aspects of the subject. Only if the scholar develops exquisite taste and goes beyond the elementary aspects of the science of rhetoric would the scholar be able to perceive the ījaz of the Qurān.

In his second treatise, al-Tafsīr – Ma‘ālim Hayāthi wa-Manhāliḥi al-Yawm, al-Khulī devotes his attention to criticizing the idea of scientific exegesis which at one time was very popular with mutakallimīn and exegetists. Al-Khulī traces the origin of the idea that the Qurān contained all the human sciences, whether religious or physical. He shows that al-Ghazzālī was the strongest advocate of this theory, and that he had been the main authority on which subsequent scholars who believed in this theory had relied. Al-Khulī also mentions in this connection al-Fākhr al-Rāzī, Muhammad al-Iskandarani, Fikrī Pasha, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Kawākibī, al-Rāfī, al-Ṭantawi, Jawāhiri and Muhammad Tawfīq Sīdıq. Al-Khulī quotes from al-Shāṭibī in refutation of this theory, adding views of his own on the subject. The argument propounded by al-Khulī runs as follows:

1. That it would be wrong to attribute to words meanings which they did not possess when they were first used in the Qurān, and only the meaning which was current when the Qurān was revealed should be taken into consideration.

2. That the scientific interpretation of the Qurān would presume that the Qurān was in a form which was unintelligible to the Arabs at the time it was revealed. It would be unreasonable to presume that the Qurān addressed the Arabs in language they were unable to understand, because the Qurān was addressed to them. If the words of the Qurān were capable of revealing the secrets of scientific progress the Arabs would have immediately embarked upon a scientific renaissance.

3. The Qurān is a religious book, and the religious aspect is the most important one in it. It is not a scientific treatise, and science cannot be derived from it. Scientific works do not remain static, because scientific knowledge changes and advances with the time.

Al-Khulī argues that the scientific theory about the ījaz of the Qurān did much more harm than good. He maintains that from the scientific point of view all that is needed is that the Qurān should not contain matter in conflict with scientific knowledge, and that it should not contain any provisions which are uncompromisingly unscientific. The Qurān’s effect is intended to be on the mind in the spiritual sphere, and the effect of the Qurān is not to be assessed by the minute details of the scientific facts that it may contain. Al-Khulī also says that there may appear to be in the Qurān provisions which are incorrect by reference to scientific knowledge at any one time, and he says that this would not affect the Qurān in any way. The Qurān is not a scientific book, and there is no need therefore to endeavour to show that the contents of the Qurān withstand the test of scientific knowledge at any particular era.

Al-Khulī argues in favour of the ījaz of the Qurān being evidenced solely in the spiritual sphere. He maintains that the provisions of the Qurān should be interpreted from the spiritual aspect, and its value should be assessed by this measure. This theory is dealt with in detail by al-Khulī in his essay entitled “Rhetoric and Psychology” (to which I have already referred). He says that the relationship between his essay entitled “Rhetoric and Psychology” (to which I real understanding of the ījaz of the Qurān, although it may not provide tangible or conclusive proof of ījaz. Spiritual
factors such as the impression which the Qur’an makes on the mind of the believer would tend to prove the i’jaz of the Qur’an, though they would not be entirely conclusive or sufficient for this purpose. Al-Khulî, however, does not hold science of psychology would be useful to explain the i’jaz of the Qur’an, but he maintains that a knowledge of the science of psychology would be useful to explain the i’jaz of the Qur’an and to substantiate it. In his opinion the Qur’an is a mu’jizah from the psychological point of view because it manages to captivate the mind by approaching human beings in the manner which is most effective, and utilizes this knowledge of human nature to put across its provisions and to secure understanding and loyalty for them. Since the science of psychology was not known during the days of the Prophet Muhammad, and its rules were uncharted, the fact that they were used in the Qur’an shows a knowledge of the unknown, and this is a mu’jizah. Al-Khulî gives an illustration of the psychological i’jaz of the Qur’an by the frequent use of repetition of ideas. He compares what old scientists said about repetition with what modern scientists say, namely, that it is one of the most effective means of inducing conviction and of reaffirming and strengthening belief. He gives examples of how the Qur’an effectively used this technique. Al-Khulî gives examples of this theory. He refers to this quotation from the Qur’an: “And surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. The Faithful Spirit has brought it on thy heart that thou mayest be a warner in plain Arabic language” (26: 192-5), and says that prolonged controversy arose among exegesis as to the meaning of these verses. Some maintained that the Qur’an was revealed only in meaning and not in actual words, and that the words used were those of the Prophet Muhammad. This, of course, would deny the idea that the words of the Qur’an are illustrative of its i’jaz. He shows that al-Zamakhshari (d. 1144 C.E.) tried to solve this problem by interpreting these verses as follows: this was revealed to you by the Faithful Spirit, in plain Arabic language, so that you may warn others. The idea here being that the non-Arab would want to hear the words of the Qur’an and contemplate over them before he would fathom their meaning, while the Arab would appreciate the meaning by instinct without much concern for the words.

Al-Khulî adopts the view held by al-Sakkâkî to the effect that the i’jaz of the Qur’an cannot be explained or substantiated in a material manner, but could be perceived only through literary and artistic taste. He does not find any contradiction between the view that the i’jaz of the Qur’an is in the spiritual sphere and the view that the i’jaz could only be perceived through literary and artistic taste. He admits that in both cases the proof of i’jaz is a personal matter in the sense that its cogency and effectiveness should vary from person to person depending on experience and taste.

I strongly support al-Khulî’s views that the i’jaz of the Qur’an can be substantiated by reference to the science of rhetoric and the standards of this science which are mechanical and stereotyped. I also endorse his view rejecting the idea that the Qur’an is a mu’jizah because it contains the elements of worldly sciences. Al-Khulî, however, appears on one occasion to adhere to the scientific theory about i’jaz. In discussing the basis of the psychological excellence of the Qur’an al-Khulî says that the fact that the Qur’an sought to put across its message by the use of psychological techniques not known to scientists at the time of its revelation proves that the Qur’an was based on knowledge yet to be discovered, and hence it was a mu’jizah. This argument is rather similar to the general scientific theory about i’jaz, since it holds that the Qur’an contains scientific knowledge which was not known at the time the Qur’an was revealed. But al-Khulî does not mean here that the elements of the science of psychology could be derived from a study of the Qur’an, just as the believers in the scientific theory of i’jaz maintained that scientific knowledge could be extracted from the Qur’an. What he wanted to prove was that the reason why the Qur’an made such a great impression on the people when it was revealed, and why the Arabs could not match it, was that the Qur’an relied upon psychological factors unknown to the Arabs at that time. In other words, the knowledge of the Creator, Who brought forth the Qur’an, was not available to the Arabs, and consequently they could not match the Qur’an. In al-Khulî’s view, therefore, the i’jaz of the Qur’an lay in its psychological qualities, and that these psychological qualities are connected with the rhetorical sciences. But he strongly rejects the old theory about scientific i’jaz.

It may be argued in this respect that if this theory of psychological i’jaz is evidenced in the skillful use by the Qur’an of psychological tactics in addressing itself to the people and seeking to sway them, it is now possible to produce another book which can achieve a similar purpose and effectively influence the minds of people. In that case it can be said that the Qur’an is being matched. The answer to this question is that the i’jaz of the Qur’an is valid because the Qur’an made use of these psychological theories and tactics before they were known to mankind. In other words, the i’jaz of the Qur’an is evidenced by the fact that it is based on knowledge of things unknown at the time of its revelation.

A further proof of the i’jaz of the Qur’an is that it used these tactics in a manner so very successful that it cannot be matched today. But it must also be noted in this respect that proof of the i’jaz of the Qur’an on these lines would require that it be compared with literary and other masterpieces to determine the extent to which the Qur’an excels in the psychological sphere. Here one would encounter the same difficulty as that encountered by those who maintained that the i’jaz of the Qur’an lay in its rhetorical excellence. It is the idea, which was first put by al-Sakkâkî, that the i’jaz of the Qur’an could not be substantiated in a material manner but could be proved or perceived by taste and through a refined artistic sense. Taste and artistic sense cannot be gauged precisely or in any uniform manner, and the standards vary extensively with time and place and could not be held uniform for purposes of comparison. For this reason it would be difficult to find objective criteria by which to determine the aspect of i’jaz. Furthermore, it must be pointed out that all excellent literary work possesses strong psychological appeal and portrays understanding of human nature and of the manner of influencing people. This being the case, it would be impossible to prove the i’jaz of the Qur’an except through comparing it with other literary works and showing how these works failed to utilize psychological tactics employed in the Qur’an. This would be a very difficult thing indeed.

The example about repetition and the frequent use made by the Qur’an of the psychological effect of repetition — a theory which only recently was formulated by scientists — would not be sufficient to prove the i’jaz of the Qur’an, because the Arabs in pre-Islamic days were in the habit of using repetition for greater emphasis, and many examples of this can be quoted from pre-Islamic poetry. It should also be noted here that the art of emphasis through repetition is not

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Israel, created with the help of the Western Powers, has neither right nor place in the midst of the Arab lands.

One day there will be peace between Arab and Israeli. But that day will not dawn until the State of Israel, as we know it today, has become a de-Westernized and de-Zionized entity, and hence capable of absorption into the wider background of a broad Semitic confederation. If anything is certain and safe to prophesy in that most uncertain of areas — the Middle East, which has confounded so many past prophecies — it is this.

Contrary to the widespread misconception that Arabs and Jews have hated one another for centuries and that the Arab-Israel confrontation is merely another phase in this long cycle of mutual animosity, there is probably no place on earth where Jews have, in bygone years, found such peace, tolerance and harmony as in the Arab world. For proof of this one does not have to search further than Palestine itself, where for centuries any child, Jew or Arab, born in the same week as another became automatically a foster-brother or sister of that other child. (The leader and inspirer of the Arab revolt against Zionist infiltration in the 1930s, Haji Amin al-Husayni, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, himself had three Jewish foster-brothers.) And it should not be forgotten that it was the Arab peoples and the Muslim "church" that gave shelter and asylum to Jews fleeing from the pogroms of Christian Europe, from the Spanish Inquisition and the persecutions of Tsarist Russia down to modern times.

And why not? Most Arabs and Jews consider themselves part of the "Semitic race"; whether the next wave of anthropological research confirms this concept or not, the feeling is there. Why, then, should one element of the Semitic race not accept and protect the other in peaceful co-existence? Even to this day there is no anti-Jewish feeling in the Arab world. The Arabs do not understand how, in Western lands, a Jew is not admissible in certain social circles or business firms or apartment houses, for the simple reason that they neither feel nor practice such discrimination. But what they do feel, and with passion, is that a Westernized State, such as the Zionist movement has created with the help and connivance of the Western powers, has neither right nor place in their midst. For whether Israel were populated by Jews or Anglo-Saxons or Eskimos, it is an alien State, with alien customs, alien leaders and alien moral and material support. It is the creature of those who only a few years ago ruled and dominated the Arab world and as such, in Arab eyes, it must be a Western outpost established to serve Western purposes and Western designs — in short a beachhead through which their former rulers seek at least to threaten them, if not to return to the attack.

Britain's promises to the Arabs and how the Israeli State came into existence

After all, it is an incontestable fact that, after World War I, Britain seized Palestine, under the umbrella of the Balfour Declaration and backed by a League of Nations mandate, to serve as a base to protect British imperial interests — and this notwithstanding the pledges which she had given to the Grand Shair of Mecca. In return for the help of his Arab armies in the campaign against the Turks, who had cast their lot with Germany against Britain, the latter had promised that all Palestine, plus Iraq, Transjordan and most of Syria, would be free and independent, once their Turkish rulers had been driven out and defeated. It is also an incontestable fact that, from the very beginning of the British mandate, Jewish immigrants from Europe were allowed, even encouraged, to come in tens of thousands to settle in Palestine, to buy — at knock-down prices — land which was owned by Syrian and Lebanese landlords who were now cut...
off from their property by the international frontier separating the British and French mandated territories, and to evict Arab tenants and farm-workers and their families with a mere pittance by way of compensation. The Zionist Agency in Palestine was allowed to become a government within the mandatory government, whereas the overwhelming Arab majority — officially termed in the mandate "existing non-Jewish communities"! — enjoyed no such autonomy. And by the time that Britain came to hand back her mandate to the United Nations after World War II, a population which, in 1920, had been 92 per cent Arab and 8 per cent Jewish, had been transformed, so that the Jewish element could now claim to be more than one-third.

Can it be wondered at that the Arabs saw in these developments and discrimination a deliberate and calculated build-up by the mandatory power of an alien nation which — as it seemed to do when the United Nations partitioned Palestine and brought the State of Israel into being — was to take over from Britain the "garrison" role in the Middle East which she no longer had the will or the resources to sustain herself? True, the Arabs were foolish enough to try conclusions with the injurat Israeli State without properly co-ordinating their plans and without adequate appreciation of the innate strength and fanatical resistance which the Israeli army was to show. And the fact that the Arabs were in consequence defeated and, far from regaining any of their lands, had to concede to Israel more territory than the U.N. partition plan had awarded her, only made them the more bitter towards the Western powers who had visited this alien conqueror upon them. It was the West who had started it all by denying Palestine her promised freedom, by introducing tens of thousands of Western immigrants, by allowing the Arab population to be progressively squeezed out from its ancestral holdings and, when partition came about and Palestine ceased to exist, by awarding the fertile areas, such as the Esdraelon Plain, to the Zionists and giving the barren hills, such as the Wilderness of Judea, to the Arabs. Finally, when for a brief moment at the start of the 1948 war the Arabs were on top, it was the West who called a truce and, by denying the Arabs the opportunity to buy arms, while the Israelis were stocking up from Russian sources, made certain that the Arabs would be defeated.

The Arab is bound to see the creation of Israel as the culmination of a carefully calculated design conceived in treachery and deceit and executed in pursuit of imperialist ends.

In the light of all this, it was useless for Western statesmen to insist that they had never intended the Jewish "national home" of the Balfour Declaration to become a Jewish national State, but that, after the persecutions of Hitler's Germany, common humanity demanded that the aspirations of the Jews to establish their own nation in the land which they had once peopled should be met. The Arab was inclined to reply, "Why pick on us and our land?" Or, more elegantly, to say with George Antonious, who — writing in his Arab Awakening about humanity's obligation to alleviate the suffering of persecuted Jewry — affirmed that

"To place the brunt of the burden upon Arab Palestine is a miserable evasion of the duty that lies upon the whole of the civilized world. . . . No code of morals can justify the persecution of one people in an attempt to relieve the persecution of another. The cure for the eviction of the Jews from Germany is not to be sought in the eviction of the Arabs from their homeland; and the relief of Jewish distresses may not be
accomplished at the cost of inflicting a corresponding distress upon an innocent and peaceful population."

Suspicious of the great powers as all small nations are, the Arabs do not see the history of the British mandate as a series of accidents and coincidences. The aims of Zionism — the creation of a Jewish national state — were well-known when Balfour and Chaim Weizmann made their deal in 1917. And the Arab can hardly be expected to distinguish between what happened, or what caused its happening. After World War I and what happened after World War II. He cannot accept that what was done as an act of imperialism in 1917 had become an act of humanity in 1947. Looking back on the progressive erosion of the Arab position in Palestine over these thirty years, the Arab is bound to see the creation of Israel as the culmination of a carefully calculated design, conceived in treachery and deceit and executed in pursuit of imperialist ends. And if there was ever any chance of persuading the Arabs otherwise, it was finally lost during the 1956 Suez Crisis, when Britain and France confirmed the Arabs’ darkest suspicions by using Israel as their stalking horse to attack Egypt, in order to destroy Nasser and seize the Suez Canal, less than five months after the last British soldier had left Egyptian territory in accordance with the 1954 agreement. To all further assertions by the West that they never intended Israel as a beachhead to help them to retrieve their lost positions in the Middle East, the Arabs will reply, "But this is precisely what you did in 1956."

Thus so long as Israel remains a Western state, inspired by Zionist aims, there can be no hope of peace with the Arab world. Even if the Israelis were to agree to take back the Arab refugees from Palestine whom they evicted in 1948 and who now number nearly a million and a half, or if they accepted such frontier adjustments as would remedy the hardship suffered by Arab villagers cut off from their lands by the armistice lines, or if Israel were to concede to the Arabs a fair share of the Jordan River waters — there would still be no peace. For one thing, the refugees would not return to live under the prevailing system of apartheid, with its "pass laws and other discrimination resembling the South African model, which is imposed on the small Arab minority still living in Israel today and which has been so severe as to cause some of the more liberal-minded Jewish newspapers to protest, albeit in vain. For another, frontier rectifications which leave in Israeli hands any of the enclaves which the U.N. Partition Plan awarded to the Arabs would be quite unacceptable. And as for an Israeli agreement about the Jordan waters, the Arabs are convinced that, like other agreements and undertakings given by Israel, it would be broken whenever it suited the Israelis to do so. No agreement based simply on these terms could ever command on the part of the Arabs that essential element of confidence and trust without which peace can never be a reality. Suez 1956 made sure of that.

A de-Westernized, de-Zionized Israel is inevitable for peace in the Middle East

What then are the chances of a de-Westernized, de-Zionized Israel coming into being and making a settlement with its Arab neighbours? My answer to this question is that in the long run such a development is inevitable. Nobody, of course, can possibly tell how long it will take. But nothing ever stays the same, least of all in that constantly changing arena, the Middle East. Already, after only eighteen years of existence, the State of Israel is today very different in its composition from what it was at its inception. The oriental or "Arab Jews" now outnumber the Europeans, partly because of the considerable influx in recent years of Jews from North Africa and partly because there has been a significant "drift-back" of European Jews to Europe. As jobs and careers open up in a rapidly developing Europe, the doctors and scientists, the journalists and writers, the teachers and academicians who were only too glad to go to Palestine and Israel and work with their hands in the kibbutzim as a means of escape from the memory of Hitler's Europe, are now moving back to take up the new opportunities for using their brains and developing their talents. For them the "romance" of carving out a new State, dedicated to the aims of Zionism, has worn very thin; and now that the memory of the concentration camps has faded somewhat, Europe beckons them once again. Like most, if not all, migratory movements in history, this trend is likely to continue, even to accelerate, as the European element finds itself progressively more heavily outnumbered by the "Arab Jews".

Meanwhile the sources of supply of new European immigrants are running dry so that those who are leaving cannot be replaced. Only two untapped sources remain — the United States of America and the Soviet Union — and it need scarcely be said that the Jews living in the former, while prepared to pay an annual subvention to help the State of Israel, are as unlikely to want to migrate there as those living in the latter are likely to be permitted to do so by the Soviet authorities. Thus it can be fairly said — and I say with unashamed relief — that the Zionists have in fact missed the bus and that they cannot now succeed in sustaining indefinitely a Westernized Israel. However much money and sympathy and arms they may still be able to collect from the West — and there are as yet no signs of any of this diminishing — they cannot collect the people they need, and their cause is doomed one day to perish under the sheer weight of numbers.

Of course, the leaders of Israel are still Westerners. Of course, too, the hard core of Zionism, the Russian element, will take a long time to wither away. But already there are signs among the younger generation of a growing aversion towards the aggressive philosophy of Zionism and an increasing realization that peace cannot be achieved on the basis of the status quo. Already, too, there are signs of a growing resentment on the part of the oriental Jews against the lofty superiority with which they are treated by their Western leaders and an increasing determination to rise above the status of second-class citizens. And however long these trends may take to work their way through the fabric of society, the portents are as clear as they are encouraging for the ultimate future.

No one can tell how the eventual settlement will work out nor how much more blood must be shed in frontier affairs before this happens. Perhaps there will be serious fighting, although, with the Arabs in their present more realistic mood, this seems fairly unlikely on their side. And while it is always possible that Israel's Zionist leaders might make a last desperate lunge to stop the rot, the Suez Crisis must have shown them that united world opinion can move, if not mountains, at least the Israeli army back behind its borders. As for the ultimate settlement, perhaps it will be a re-creation of the concept of a bi-national State in Palestine; or perhaps it will concede a wide measure of Jewish autonomy. But one thing is certain — the only answer to the Arab-Israeli conundrum lies in the absorption of Israel and the only hope of absorbing Israel lies in its becoming an oriental State. Without this, there can be no peace, for without this, the Arabs will never be rid of their "beachhead complex".

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Mighty Baghdad lies upon the plain
In the blue smoke of distance,
And here I wait, above the yellow plain,
In God's cool woods, amid eternal hills,
And see His face above me in the sky
And think His thoughts.

From far away they send to me,
The puzzled ones, seeking God's way.
For I am the Twelfth, and after me
No other comes. And must men grope,
Seeking the way? It is not right
That darkness cloud their minds.

Each day I drink from the cooling spring
That bubbles from the sandy ground,
Bringing refreshment from the distant heights,
And as I drink I think these thoughts:

There is a spring in every quiet place
Where men may find refreshment,
For the thoughts of God come down
To vitalize the thoughts of men.

Why must they send to me?
And when I'm gone,
Where will they find the answers?

At first when, down the mountainside,
My messengers went, I thanked my God
That His word soon would take effect,
But now the joy is gone, and this is why:
The messages from God are given to the men
Who say they seek God's will,
But men do not do those things
Which God so clearly shows to them.

In those tumultuous cities, far away,
Does mankind pause and change its ways
And do the will of God?
Or do they send to me
Just for the appearance of the thing?

The One who rules above
And sees the ways of men
Will some day break His silence
And come down to make the mountains smoke
And cities burn until corruption cease,
And wars will be no more,
Because His will is peace.

This thing alone I see:
Men do not heed the word,
But in the Day of Wrath
Then they will doubt no more.

I have sent forth
Many a wise pronouncement
Against their petty wars
And pacts they make
With nations of the infidels
And all that would divide believers
And all that joins them to the Godless men,
But they heed not.

And have I lived in vain?
God knows: He placed me here.
But where do my messages go —
Into the scrap heap?
The world becomes no better,
And daily deeds
Take men still farther
From the God of Right.

And yet I've served my purpose
Giving men the light.
Sad though I am at evil's growing power.
Yet do I not regret
That God has singled me
To show to men the path they ought to tread.

NORMAN LEWIS.
Economics in the West

Economics have become the cornerstone of our present life, both for individuals and nations. Almost all the prevailing ideologies are conspicuously characterized by their economic preponderance, though they may differ in their ways and means conducive to the same material end, which is the attainment of maximum economic welfare.

It would be useful to mention at the outset of this essay what is meant by "economics" as paraphrased by the Westerners. Professor Alfred Marshall may be quoted as one of the best exponents. He defines it in his Principles of Economics as follows:

"Political Economy or Economics is a study of mankind in the ordinary business of life; it examines that part of individual and social action which is mostly closely connected with the attainment and with the use of the material requisites of well-being."

Professor Marshall continues his explanation, stating that the two great forming agencies of man's character through history have been the religious and the economic. However, man is much more affected by the economic agency than by the religious as he is almost moulded by his everyday work and the material resources which he thereby procures.

It is a matter of fact that the Industrial Revolution which followed the Renaissance in the middle of the 15th century C.E. enormously changed most moral values. It exhorted people to innovate new ideologies far detached from Christianity which had dwindled by that time to a great extent of ignorance and decadence, imposing tyrannical limitations on freedom of thought and implicitly conspiring with the "strong" against the "weak". This disappointment in the creed made Western economists devote their research to "material science", and candidly defend personal freedom which is mainly handicapped by need and poverty. No doubt such scientists have been deeply influenced by the rigid and decaying statutes of the Church as well as that of the European society prevailing at that time. In fact all of them were equally influenced by these factors, including Karl Marx, Alfred Marshall, Silvio Gesell and Joseph Schumpeter.

Economic order in Islam

I am not trying here to discuss economic doctrines and the origin of economics, but I want to emphasize the fact that economics as a science was initiated in Europe as a result of the twisted unfair Christian teachings, the great injustices inflicted upon Europeans by their rulers, and the biased attitude of the Church towards the lower classes. This state of affairs explains the revolt against religion which we meet in the writings of such eminent scientists as those referred to above.

Economists consider "wealth" as anything that satisfies human wants directly or indirectly — in technical terms, wealth is anything that has utility. All desirable things, material or immaterial, are called "goods" as long as they are produced — or rendered — to realize material gain. Thus, services required by people and rendered for profit-making are "goods". According to this Western conception, alcohol is "goods" because it has a utility, i.e., it satisfies a desire; trade in women is "goods" for the same reason, and so forth. There is no demarcation between "good" and "bad", virtue and vice, except the existence or the non-existence of "utility". Anything that is not desired, or that is desired and dealt with without profit-making purpose, cannot be considered "goods" from the economic point of view. However, some modern economists argue that utility should be measured by net "social" gain dealing in goods. Though this theory is not in application yet, it is a notable indicator to what is "good" and what is "bad". Undoubtedly there are many goods which satisfy individual desires but yield a negative social proceed, and the social proceeds are the source of meeting the "social desires".

Economic doctrines have undergone far-reaching and fast evolution since the Marxian revolutionary theory. The ultimate goal of these doctrines is to obliterate poverty more quickly and easily. Destitution alone has become the sole
measurement of all miseries in all societies whilst opulence has become the sole measurement of human values. To use Platonic terminology, “virtue” is translated in terms of riches instead of knowledge, and an American would now judge his fellow men by asking, “How much is he worth?”. The “best” individuals are the richest.

Unfortunately enough, non-Westerners have unconsciously followed in the same steps, whether they have adopted Communism or Socialism or reserved Capitalism, so much so that one may say that all the prevailing ideologies in our present world are totally directed towards raising the material standard of living of individuals, adopting any means whatsoever to that end, without regard to whether such means are in accordance with human nature or run contrary to it. Even the most modern economist, and the nearest to the Islamic teachings, Silvio Gisell, goes to the extent that:

“It is a man’s actions conflict with religious opinions, and if the man, nevertheless, is morally thriving, the religious opinions should be examined afresh on the presumption that a tree cannot be evil which bears good fruit. We must avoid the fate of a Christian reduced to beggary and disarmed in the economic trial of strength by the ideological application of his creed” (New Economic Order, p. 10).

The Christian creed with Westerners has become a matter which should be subjugated to the requisites of the economic order as it is now understood. To them, this creed must be changed and reviewed if it conflicts with the struggle for the satisfaction of material desires, and the individual must not listen to his religious logic if such logic hampers his individual’s or the society’s economic activities. It is regrettable to see the Western Christian world suffering from this illusion, though it may be excused on account of the historical facts referred to above.

But it is more regrettable, indeed, to find this unfounded idea establishing itself in the minds of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, so that all the leaders of non-Christians never cease to repeat this fallacious principle and void logic.

I should like to mention in this context, and before tackling the Islamic point of view, some personal remarks concerning this “liberal” material ideology. I have noticed among the so-called most developed nations, mainly Denmark, Sweden and the Nordic societies, that poverty does not exist. Every individual has got enough material satisfaction, his future is assured by the State, his sickness is looked after by the Government and even the education of his children is provided for by a highly organized free system. Most of the people of these countries have lost their interest in religion, and I dare say in God Himself. Their conception of life is purely materialistic. The result is that they have started to lose interest in themselves and in life itself. One reads in the official vital statistics that they have got the highest rate of suicide, the highest rate of drug-addiction and the highest rate of abnormalities. They have indulged without restriction in perverted sexual relations, and worse than that, they have developed an attitude of indifference to humanity as a whole. In my opinion, this deplorable attitude is quite a natural consequence of their atheistic conscience and the replacement of deity of materialism.

**The Islamic ideology**

Islam stands for “oneness”, i.e., one God, a unitary force having absolute power. The Almighty created us as well as all other beings. Muslims believe that He is the absolute perfection, and that every creature comprises a part of Him which they sometimes denominate as “His order of creation”. This order provides existence and incessantly inspires the creatures to look up to the Creator — who is in the depth of their innermost selves — in a continuous effort to follow the law of nature as set down by Him. Thus, the particles of an atom in their permanent revolving around their nuclei, plants in the process of their growth, and planets rotating and held up by gravity — all these are following His eternal law of nature. Human beings look to their Creator to inspire them in that law which will guide and exhort them to achieve a certain deeply-rooted ambition which is to be in close contact with this absolute power and to know their mission, fulfill it, and conform to His Law in harmony and unity.

The ideal of a Muslim is not mainly to satiate his material desires, which are meant to help him fulfill the mission to which he is dedicated. The mission in turn is nothing more than the coherence and the abiding with the divine law of nature, and the worshipping of that divinity as prescribed in Islam through the direct contact with the creating power with a view to attaining the highest degree of human perfection.

**Basis of Islamic material life**

Thus economics as a science studying the material satisfaction cannot be but a means to an end. We are made of flesh and blood which serve as a container to our souls, and we are not unique in this respect, as animals and plants are made in like manner. We may even go to the extent that the hidden power in an atom is contained in its material substance. Our material being cannot survive without material satisfaction, but this should not be our ultimate goal in life, nor should it be the main purpose of our lives. To a Muslim it is an inevitable prerequisite to enable the individual to achieve his moral values. This is the first cornerstone in a Muslim’s conception of an ideal society. The second cornerstone is the strict absolute belief in “Oneness”. Muslims reject any shade of duality as anti-Islamic and contrary to their true belief. If materialism prevails, as it is prevailing at present, and occupies a part of their belief, or becomes an aspired ideology for the individual, and thence a sort of worshipped “God” whom they beseech in need or idolize as a symbol for betterment and perfection, or if any “divine” dualization is ascribed to materialism, then they condemn it as dualism. Any such contamination of belief is irreconcilable with the Islamic tenet, and can never meet Islam anywhere. The third cornerstone is to apply the Islamic teachings in all walks of life. Economics are only a part of that multi-phase life of individuals and their society, and when Islam imposes a certain economic rule it presupposes the existence of its rules in all other domains: legal, social or political. Without this complete picture, Islamic economics would appear inefficient and short of its perfection. In my opinion, unless Islam is applied as an entity, any effort to adopt Islamic economics would soon become void and waste. Islamic economics are part and parcel of a belief that vehemently repulses any shade of duality or subjection to lusts and material vanities. It is only one of the means of helping to develop the individual to communicate closely with his Creator. Material satisfaction alone will never carry a man to such an end.

As man is made of matter and soul, he cannot feel happy unless he strikes a balance between the requirements of both elements. In fact, happiness is a feeling entirely pertaining to
man's soul, irrespective of material opulence. This balance can be realized by means of:

(a) material satisfaction, provided it does not supersede the spiritual exigencies; or
(b) Spiritual satisfaction at the same time.

It may be alleged that scientific research necessitates the separation of the two types of satisfaction. This may be true from the theoretical point of view, but it is inevitable that we must take the moral or spiritual values into consideration in the course of any material assessment. This appears to us as a law of nature, because the feeling of happiness emanating from any material satisfaction must be reflected upon man's sentiments and morale — such reflection is exclusively spiritual.

These three cornerstones contribute to the happiness and welfare of man and are not merely a means of legitimate or illegitimate enjoyment. To Muslims, material welfare is the permissible enjoyment derived from the permissible acquisition according to Islamic tenets. Such a limitation to enjoyment necessarily leads to linking individual enjoyment with humanitarian welfare, as no individual is allowed under Islamic laws to inflict any harm through his activities upon others. One can safely state that any individual action which causes any social harm is categorically contrary to Islam. Hence, the Islamic economic system aims in essence at harmonizing the individual's activities and the social welfare as well as eliminating any such activity that may adversely affect the society.

Between the Islamic and non-Islamic

Economic systems, ancient and modern, are quite vulnerable to severe critics. It may be sufficient here to refer to the world's suffering from both capitalistic and socialistic systems. To make a brief comparison between Islamic and materialistic ideologies we may particularly mention the following:

1. Materialism, as utilitarianism, is an ideology aiming at realizing the welfare of human beings through purely materialistic satisfaction. For Muslims, moral exaltation through contacting the creative power and serving humanity is the ideology. Matter is only a means to that end.

2. According to materialism, the individual is part of a society which imposes its materialistic doctrine, and accordingly restricts man's liberty of thought.

In Islam the individual is the nucleus of society which abides with the Islamic teachings leaving ample freedom of thought and action to the individual.

3. Under materialism, matter supersedes and drives individuals and society alike.

In Islam matter is subservient to individuals and society.

These are the major and cardinal points which we shall discuss and analyse scientifically in the next part.

(To be continued)

*Turkey and Turks as I Saw Them — Continued from page 32*

attended their meetings but was not impressed by their views, and eventually gave up the idea of conversion to Islam. Of course, I was not surprised to hear this.

In modern circles of Turkey also, the Naurasiyyah are not held in high esteem. I was once with Mr. Nader, the Director of the Aya Sophia Library, and during our conversation he said that that sort of religious people were considered stupid. Mr. Nader speaks Urdu fluently, and I could not help laughing at the stress he laid on the word "stupid".

From this evidence it is clear that religion in Turkey is not only alive but also governs a considerable proportion of the people. One of the great mystic poets ever known to human history, Rumi, is sleeping on Turkish soil. Rumi stood firmly by the saying of the Prophet Muhammad that all human creatures form the family of God, so that whoever is most careful of his duty in the service of His creation is the most favoured in the sight of God. The poetry of this great mystic is highly praised by Western orientalists. Thanks to the efforts of Professor R. Nicholson and Professor A. J. Arberry, who have done great service to the cause of human fellowship by introducing him to the English-reading public. As long as Rumi's poetry and ideas are in circulation in Turkey, the Turkish people will never fail to fulfil their obligations towards religion.

A charming, traditional Arab personality, the Shaykh Muhammad al-Sawwaf, was in Istanbul for a few days during my sojourn there. During our discussions, in which we often had different views, I asked him to do whatever was within his power to foster the establishment of a truly Islamic University in Mecca or Medina. He was rather surprised to know that Israel, with a population of 2.5 million, has three universities and two well-organized Institutes for Science and Technology.

This article will remain incomplete if I fail to mention Anwer Ghâlib, the Imam of Nûrî 'Uthmânîyyah Mosque. He has the gift of a sweet voice. His recital of the Qur'ân can send his listeners into ecstasy. I myself felt transported to higher realms of life. He recites the Qur'ân in a way that his listener, if he knows Arabic, is brought face to face with God. This was one of the few occasions in my life when I consciously stood before God with tears running down my cheeks.

I dedicate my article to this Turkish reciter, whose recitation of the Qur'ân gave me the most cherished moments of my life.
Turkey and Turks
as I Saw Them

The Literary Treasures of Istanbul

By RASHID AHMAD JALANDHARI

The writer

The Muslim world is distinguished by sentiments which its component parts have for each other. When during the First World War the sick Ottoman Empire was fighting a losing war, it was Azad and Iqbal in the sub-continent of India and Pakistan who wrote about the sad development of events in Turkey vividly in their monodies. A verse by Iqbal which runs:

“If the Turks were overwhelmed by disaster—what then?
“The moon is born of the death of millions of stars”

was on the lips of every Muslim there. The Indo-Pakistani people, particularly the Muslims, were deeply moved by the Azad-Iqbal prose and poetry. They introduced Turkey and Turkish people to their readers in such a way that Turkey soon came to be a romantic dream of everyone. Their works, which are now part of the Urdu classical literature, will always enjoy a vast circulation among the Muslims.

To add to this sentimental attachment of mine for Turkey as a Pakistani, I was also drawn to Turkey by my research work on the commentary of the Qur’ân in the Sufi literature. Turkish libraries are a storehouse of Sufi commentaries on the Qur’ân. As I am at present engaged in research on the great Sufi commentator the Imam Qushayri (d. 1074 C.E.), it was necessary for me to travel to Istanbul where some rare MSS. by him are available in the libraries. Fortunately for me my financial problems for this cultural tour were solved by a study grant by the Spalding Trust on the recommendation of Professor A. J. Arberry of Cambridge University, Cambridge. I am deeply grateful to both for this.

Passing through Belgium, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria by train, I reached Istanbul at last. The first look at the city did not impress me much. For I did not find it as clean as I expected it to be. But soon I was compensated more than enough for my disappointment. I was deeply moved by the generosity of the people and by their great history embodied in their monuments in this city.

Istanbul, which has the distinction of having been the capital of both the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, is considered by many people as one of the most beautiful cities on earth. Poets from Byron to Hamsun have sung its praise. Its location is ideal not only for a fortress but also for a commercial centre. It is also exceedingly beautiful, situated as it is on the hilly peninsula created by the deep blue waters of the sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus and the narrow Bay of the Golden Horn. This characteristic charm of the city was enough to have kept me engrossed in it for days. But the time at my disposal was only six weeks, from 20 August to 22 September 1966. Alas! Its libraries, mosques, churches, as also the customs and the religious life of the Turks, were of greater importance to me than its natural beauty.

Libraries

Istanbul was the capital of the Ottoman Empire for 400 years. religion and the military formed the bases of the empire, it is small wonder that Istanbul possesses a rich collection of Islamic literature. It is often claimed by modern Arab writers, particularly the modern Arab writers like Amír Mustafá Shihábi and Sáí’ al-Husírí, that the Turks make fine soldiers, but that nature was not generous enough in bestowing upon them a pronounced sense of art and culture. This, in their opinion, is the reason why Turkey has failed to leave its traces of art or culture in the Arab countries which had been under their control for four centuries. Whereas it may be not altogether wrong to say that the Turks failed to leave any characteristic impress of their own on the Arab lands as did the Arabs who left behind their splendid monuments in Spain. But in spite of this it is in my opinion a sweeping
statement to make that the Turks, as a nation, lack all sense of art and culture. Istanbul itself is a standing reproof to this reproach of the Turks. Istanbul is a constant reminder of the passion of the Turks as a people for fine arts. It cannot be over-emphasized enough that Istanbul’s rich libraries handed down to modern Turkey by the Ottoman Empire were established by Turkish sultans and their ministers. In this respect the Turkish Royal family stands prominent, if not unique, in the history of Islam, whose kings were fond of reading and establishing libraries. It is true that there are some rulers like the Abbasid Caliph Mā’un al-Rashid (d. 833 C.E.) or some of the Fatimid in Egypt and Umayyad Caliphs in Spain who occupy pride of place in the history of Islamic culture. For it is one thing to produce isolated lovers of arts and culture; it is quite another to keep a tradition going from one generation to another continuously. Indeed, in this respect the Turkish royal family stands supreme.

The following libraries are the most important for Islamic studies and were built by the Sultans and their ministers.

1. The Sulaymaniyyah Library. This library is situated near the Sulaymaniyyah Jāmi‘ (Mosque). It is the central library and contains the largest collection of Arabic manuscripts extant in Turkey. Some private libraries built by Ottoman officials are also under the control of the Sulaymaniyyah. Microfilms of manuscripts, wherever they may be in Turkey, are procured for scholars by this magnificent library.

2. The Beyazit Library.

3. The Topkapu Saray Library (also known as the Sultan Ahmad Library).

4. The Köprülu Library.

5. The Fayzullah Efendi (now part of the Millîti Library).

6. The Nûr ‘Uthmaniyyah Library is attached to the Nur ‘Uthmâniyyah Mosque.

7. The Aya Sophia Library.

These libraries and others established by the Turkish sultans or their ministers form only a small part of the other everlasting monuments left by the Ottoman Empire. Their collections of Arabic and Persian manuscripts, embracing every branch of Islamic literature and culture, are the most precious collections in existence anywhere today for Islamic studies. No doubt it is true that for some unspecified reason the learned people, the ‘Ulemā, who were advisers to the Sublime Porte, failed to encourage the study of modern sciences, or to deal with the problems thrown up by a new age, as was being done in the West. But despite all this, let it be said to their credit that the sultans were keen to educate themselves according to their capabilities.

It is a source of pleasure to me to place on record that these libraries are run efficiently by the Government. They are well organized and there are ample facilities for readers and scholars to do researches in their studies. Once during the course of conversation with a rather highly emotional friend of mine who probably did not know so well as I do how some of the famous libraries in some Muslim countries are badly housed and ill-managed, he was annoyed by my remark when I said that we must thank God that these valuable libraries were controlled by the Turkish Govern-

ment, for had they been under the ‘Ulemā’s care, they would have long been in ruins!

The mosques

Istanbul is often described as a city of Mosques. If the Taj represents the glory of the Moghul art in India, the Ottomans excel in the decorative art of their mosques. The Taj, an unchallenged miracle of the Moghul art, and the precious stones used by the Moghuls in the Indo-Pakistan mosques apart, the beautiful decorative designs employed in the Ottoman mosques in Istanbul are unique and stand without a rival in the Muslim world. The stamp of Turkish characteristics on the decorations can be clearly seen. “The shield and the dagger” can be observed in the decorations of the Sulaymaniyyah Mosque.

The Blue Mosque on the shores of the Sea of Marmara, the Sulaymaniyyah Mosque in the heart of the old city and the Fâtih Mosque on the hill certainly endow the city with divine beauty. On Fridays these mosques are full of devotees, the religious services being attended by thousands of men, women and children of all ages. In this age when true religion is being replaced by hypocrisy and a boring ritual, it is refreshing to observe in these mosques a spiritual atmosphere in which divine light takes charge of the human soul. Here it is that one gets a glimpse of purpose of the Turkish people and their religious leaders who come to remember God in these places of worship.

In addition to the beautiful mosques Istanbul has many historical churches, particularly Aya Sophia and Karayya, used today as museums. Aya Sophia, built by Justinian between 532 and 537 C.E., was the great church of Eastern Christendom. When Sultan Muhammad II conquered Constantinople on 29 May 1453 C.E., the population fled into the church in the firm belief that an angel would appear for their aid and the new Turkish sultan would be thrown out. However, the sultan went to the church with his soldiers and offered his thanksgiving prayers. Thereafter the church was dedicated to Islamic worship. Why the sultan prayed in that particular church is not known. It is a matter of great surprise to know that the Sultan Muhammad, who himself was a great soldier and scholar, could have made such a mistake as to take away the great church from its followers and turn it into a mosque. The same error was repeated in the Karayya church, very small in size but very rich in figurative mosaics. There is no doubt that this was a mistake; for Muslims are bound by clear instructions in the Qur’an to honour the integrity of the houses of God, whosoever they may belong to. It was Mustafa Kamal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey, by whose decree in 1934 Aya Sophia and the Karayya Church ceased to be places of Muslim worship, and were both put under the control of the museums administration. Eventually their splendid mosaics, which had been covered up by the Muslims, were once again, after years of patient and skilful work, laid bare. In spite of the great services rendered by Atatürk to his country, and in spite of his resentment against a corrupt class of the “Ulema”, who were by no means the true and rightful representatives of Islam, it is a bit of a surprise to know that he did not try to introduce healthy Islamic values in his revolutionary Turkey. However, his action of turning the churches into museums has given at least some satisfaction to Christians. This action of Atatürk will hold the non-Muslim world in his debt for all time.

Some religious people I met in Turkey still dream of recovering Aya Sophia as a place of religious worship for
Muslims. Such people I would like to ask if they could at all imagine how deep the hurt to my religious sentiments would have been if the grand Shah Jehan Mosque in Delhi had been taken over by the Hindus and converted into a temple at the time of the human massacre in India and Pakistan in 1947. To say the least, such a dream is beyond my imagination. I for one do not understand how some religious people can allow themselves to be deceived by such an un-Islamic dream. I was very glad to know and hear that some of my Turkish friends were convinced that my views were absolutely in consonance with the teachings of the Qur'an.

Turks as a people

The people in Istanbul are quite healthy and their children are clean and beautiful. From their fair complexion and features time has failed to obliterate their Central Asian characteristics. A few miles of Istanbul form part of the continent of Europe, but its people are certainly not part of European culture. Some time ago a writer, writing in the London Times, discussed whether Turkey was part of Europe or not. He ruled out the idea that her people were part of Europe. Amr Shakib Arslan's long Notes on the Muqaddimah of Ibn Khaldun, Vol. I (supplement), written about half a century ago about the Turks, is still worth reading. Describing the Turkish character, another Arab writer and free thinker (the Mu'tazuli) Juhiz (d. 869 C.E.), in his book The Merits of the Turks (Fadâ'il al-Atrâk), said that a large part of the Turk's life was spent on horseback and that the Turkish people were constantly in action and did not like idleness. This indeed is as true today as then; they are certainly active.

I was delighted to observe that the number of needy people asking for alms outside the mosque on Fridays was very limited. In other Middle Eastern countries young people are frequently seen begging for alms.

Accompanied by a Turkish lady I visited some Turkish families, both conservative and modern. I found that they lived in the Western style flats with East-West customs. In one family where I went my friend, Miss Khatija, started her Arabic prayers after dinner. Then the sad-eyed beautiful young widow of the family began to dance with her teen-age daughter. After a while she came to me and said, "Forgive us. We believe in God but also in life." In social life the Turkish women have dignified manners and mix freely with the men. Their good moral behaviour receives high praise from Arab friends who are in Istanbul for their education.

Religious life

Even in Muslim countries, mostly as a result of Western propaganda, it is often said that religion has no place in Turkey, that Turkey consciously tries to escape from a past dominated by religion. What is meant by this is not quite clear. It is true that hypocrisy, ignorance and idleness, the prominent features of religious life in the last days of the Ottoman Empire, have been removed from the political sphere, but the yearning to communicate with God, the essence of true religion, is deep-rooted in the hearts of the Turkish people. Today the Islamic values are more robust than they were in the past, say, fifty years ago. It is a matter of deep regret to know that the majority of the religious people, particularly the Imams in the Muslim world, were entirely ignorant, and what is more, they were not keen to educate themselves. How low the standard of education was can be gathered from the statement of a Turkish Minister of Education that in Turkey 5,500 out of the 6,000 Imams could neither read or write! The government of Turkey has taken steps to remedy this defect by starting in principal cities of the country the "Khatib and Imam Schools" where hundreds of students are being educated. These students can go through a course of seven years qualifying themselves for a standard of education which in England would be the equivalent of the G.C.E. (General Certificate of
Education). In 1966 there were 2,500 students at these schools. Some students can go to the B.A. standard and undergo a further course of four years at the Institutes for Higher Islamic Education. There were 2,000 students at these Institutes in 1966-67.

All teachers and lecturers are paid by the Government. The students are entitled to a scholarship if they pass their first year examination. These students are allowed to officiate at religious services if, for some reason, they do not intend to prosecute their higher studies at the University.

To me, a Pakistani who had spent some years in Arab countries, the Turkish Imams are superior in their mental outlook to their counterparts in Pakistan, especially in the matter of the correct pronunciation of Arabic. The Turkish Imams are more dignified in their manner than the Arab and Pakistani.

Self-confidence and an eagerness to learn are the distinguishing marks of religious education in Istanbul. Many Imams, some besides their religious duties in the mosques, are students at the university or at the Institute for Higher Education. I don’t think I am doing an injustice to the Pakistani religious educational standard when I say that to struggle for a better standard of religious education only exists in religious books. Poor, sincere religious students of Arabic and religious studies, in spite of having been born in the 20th century, are still living in the Middle Ages owing to sheer lack of the right sort of teachers.

I have been a student for years at the world-famous University of al-Azhar at Cairo, and pride myself in having acquired the ‘Alimiyah (M.A.) in Arabic literature. But it is with a deep sense of regret that I write that the Azhar University has failed completely to produce a responsible and dynamic generation. The life of its scholars and graduates is marked by irresponsibility and inefficiency. The Azhar’s representatives abroad, particularly in the West, neither speak the English language nor do they know how to deal with the people with whom they come into contact. It is hard to estimate the extent of the damage done to the reputation of Egypt and Islam. I feel hurt when I say that the fair names of Egypt and the Azhar University, to which I personally owe so much, have been dragged into the mud. However, this discussion had better be left over for some other occasion.

Sufism

Turkey before the Revolution was riddled with Dervish orders, which were the bane of a healthy and vigorous outlook on life. Thus among many other things which Kemal Atatürk abolished in Turkey with a view to injecting new life into its people, a reformation of the Dervish orders was on the list of priorities. Perhaps their harm to the social behaviour of the Turks was the real reason that decided Atatürk for their outright closure. Even so, the Naqshbandiyah Order still wield power influence there; for fundamentally it believes in action and denounces idleness, and by this nature it accords with the temperament of the Turkish people. The Shaykh Ahmad Buyukcinar, a follower of the Naqshbandiyah and a lecturer in Arabic in one of the Turkish religious schools, told me about the popularity which it enjoyed among the Turkish people. In discussions which took place at his house, the Shaykh said that the mistake lay with religious people at the time of Mustafa Kamal, who did not allow children to attend modern schools, and that the ‘Ulemá did not realize that the children with a religious background could have played a remarkable part in the new society if they had been educated at modern universities. At these conversations a specialist in Ottoman literature, Dr. Maheris, was very keen to know the influence of Ibn ‘Arabí (d. 1240 C.E.) and Rumi’s (d. 1273 C.E.) ideas on the Western orientalist. They were very pleased to know that Dr. Muhammad Iqbal held a high opinion of the Naqshbandiyah order.

I was interested to know that some Letters (Maktúbáí) of the celebrated Indian saint, the Shaykh Ahmad Sarhandí (d. 1624 C.E.), have been translated into the Turkish language. The Turkish Sufi circles consider him a spiritual guide. The Naqshbandiyah hold that an ideal society can only emerge through good education. In spite of my unpractical life compared to the true Islamic ideas as interpreted by Sufis, I very much enjoyed their meetings as well as their hospitality, particularly that of the Shaykh Ahmad Buyukcinar. The Naqshbandiyah, whose members, engaged as they are in their normal duties of daily life, work and live a righteous life.

The Naurasíyyah

Mention must be made of another party called Nuri (or Naurası), which is working for a society based on religious-political ideas. I once went to one of their meeting places, which was surrounded by old and shabby buildings, and saw some young people reading the books written by B. Naurası, who died recently. A coloured painting was hanging on the wall representing Naurası’s books as a protection and shield to the Qur’an, which was enclosed in a surround of fire and blood. As everyone knows, these are the symbolic forms of Communism.

A gentleman explained to me Naurası’s ideas about the political system of Turkey. He gave me an Arabic book written by Naurası on his notes on the Qur’an. It appeared to me from his book that Naurası was more of a preacher than a thinker or scholar. However, I drew their attention to their own unsavoury neighbourhood, to the old men and women and to the dirty places around the Beyazit Mosque. I could not help sermonizing that by helping the old people and cleansing the courtyard of the mosque, when the Istanbul Public Health Department had failed to do its duty, they could set an example for their society; for mere lip service to Islam or romantic Islamic ideals had no place in practical life. I further observed that rigid and stiff ideas, whatever their sources, traditional, religious, Fascist or Communist, were bound to bring endless trouble, not only to their own holders but also to innocent people. I also stressed that in the words of Iqbal the “value of art, religion and ethics must be judged from the standpoint of the human personality, and that which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad”. The life of the Prophet Muhammad himself, I said, stands a witness to this. My friend, who was keen to listen to my impressions about Naurası, was rather surprised. It is true that the Naurası people are sincere and good in their personal lives, but they lack the gift of wisdom.

I shall relate an experience of mine to elucidate my views further. When I was on my way back to England, a young English boy who shared my compartment on the train told me how much he was impressed by Rumi’s ideas, and was thinking seriously of embracing Islam. He had spent about three months in Konya and frequently visited Rumi’s grave. Whilst he was there he felt that Islam was penetrating into his mind. However, before he made his final decision about Islam he by chance met some Naurası people. He
During the State Visit of His Excellency Mr. Jawdat Sunay, President of Turkey, to Tunisia (1 December 1966 to 6 December 1966) in response to an invitation by the President of Tunisia, His Excellency Mr. Habib Bourguiba, questions of mutual interest were discussed by the two Heads of State. In their discussions both leaders stressed the importance of strengthening their cultural and economic ties. In the sphere of cultural co-operation they agreed to draw up a palpable programme to be studied by a Joint Commission to be appointed.

Palestine

In the domain of politics questions that pre-occupy both countries in particular the President of the Republic of Tunisia emphasized the permanent aggression which had continued to exist over the last 20 years against the Arabs of Palestine, deprived of their fundamental and legitimate rights. The President stressed the grave danger that lay in this state of affairs to the peace and security in the Middle East.

In response to the views of the President Habib Bourguiba, the President of Turkey expressed the sympathy of the people of Turkey for the Arabs of Palestine and the understanding of his Government in regard to this grave and sad problem which was crying out for a just and equitable settlement.

President Bourguiba expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the relations between Turkey and the Arab countries were continually improving. Both Presidents agreed that the widening of the field of co-operation between Turkey and other Arab countries would enable them to obtain fruitful results to their mutual advantage in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region.

Cyprus

In discussing the problem of Cyprus the two Heads of State agreed that it was the right thing to do to persevere in finding a negotiated solution, just and equitable, which should take into account the

Continued on page 38
Islam—A Dyke Against the Flood of Alcohol

(The following appeal circularised by the "National British Women's Total Abstinence Union" should serve as an eye-opener to those Muslims who feel inclined to take the Islamic taboos against alcohol and other vices as outdated. Here is a lesson which the so-called modern Muslims can learn from a mistake of the West which, after following a policy of permissiveness, is finding it hard to check the resultant tide of crime and vice.—Eds.)

National British Women's Total Abstinence Union,
Rosalind Carlisle House,
January 1967.

Dear Sir,

The following letter is based on lectures given at the Convention of the "World's Women's Christian Temperance Union" at Interlaken, Switzerland, by H. Cecil Heath, Esq., of the United Kingdom alliance, London, and Dr. Fadhl Jamali of Iraq.

These letters are being sent to the heads of all denominations and we hope they will meet with your support.

Yours sincerely,

GENERAL SECRETARY.

Dear Sir,

I view the rising tide of crime and immorality in our land today, especially among the younger sections of the adult population, and bearing in mind that there is a close affinity between crime, degrading habits such as illicit sex and drug-taking and the consumption of alcoholic drinks, we urge that the officers and members of your body, in every part of the country, be reminded of their ethical and civic duty to protect and educate the public at large and the rising generation in particular, on the need to exercise self-control in all things which may cause physical damage or moral laxity.

Above all, we would submit that this is by no means the time for weakening any stand previously taken by your governing bodies as to the permissiveness of alcoholic beverages on your premises, or at functions held in your churches; and in order that none of your members shall set an example which if followed by others, we ask you to declare to your congregations that the ideal for members of all religious bodies and ethical societies should be total abstinence in the home and in social relationships.

On behalf of the officers and members of the National British Women's Total Abstinence Union.

GENERAL SECRETARY.

Book Review


"Brother James, Divine Prophet Elijah Muhammad, Minister Louis X and Chief of the Temple" are but a few terms which the reader can never be free from in this book, written in a crisp, clean style by E. U. Essien-Udom.

Rightly called Black Nationalism, the subject matter is at once interesting and absorbing. The reader accepts involvement. He delves into the deep controversial currents surrounding the American Negro and the so-called Black Muslims. The reader becomes one with the dilemmas of the U.S. Black world.

Is the book authentic? This can be judged by one thing only: that the writer moved and worked among the followers of Elijah Muhammad for two years. The outcome is this book — which tells the story of the black nation in more dark than fair colours.

More than half the book is devoted to the so-called Messenger, his followers, his temples, his social, cultural, educational and religious activities, including his economic battle cry to organize and dignify the American Negro from his stupor. From the contents of the book, it is beyond dispute that Elijah Muhammad is and has been doing a great deal of good for his people. There is little doubt that he will be doing otherwise in the future. The book portrays him as the Alpha and the Omega of the Black Nation of America.

The frictions between the Black Muslims and the fanatic Ku Klux Klan also have their temperature checked.

Chapter Ten of the book is entitled "Black Zionism", which at once instills in the mind of the reader a wave of cold indifference against these people who are trying to shake themselves free from the yoke of the white man. Whether the author likes to call Elijah Muhammad Divine Prophet or God Himself, the Honourable Elijah still remains the vanguard of the American Nationhood. The Negro of America is on the move -- his destination is self-liberation.

It seems that the writer has gone through thick and thin to convince the Muslim reader that Elijah Muhammad is not a true Muslim. He is projected throughout the book, as a "Prophet, a Mahdi, a Saviour; Creator of Heaven and Earth. Most Wise, All-Knowing, Fender and Life-Giver, Master of the Day of Judgment".

Quotations from the Bible, rather than from the Qur'an, emanate from the Messenger's mouth. On page 126, Brother Thomas says that "the black Muslims are the chosen people of God". Adam is referred to as "a black scientist whose name is Yakub" (p. 120).

It is astonishing for any Muslim to read in the book, if at all this is true, that foreign Muslims are barred from the temples of Elijah and his followers; that the Black Muslims are never allowed to come into social contact with Christians. The book is replete with Elijah's religious doctrines, if in truth they are, which are decidedly dangerous and harmful to Islam beyond all dimensions.

Enlisted on page 180 are twenty-one laws of the Black Muslim Movement. Any follower of the Movement, violating one of the laws, is subjected to thirty days' indefinite suspension from the Temple. It is all too apparent that the climax to which Mr. Udom is working is to prove beyond all doubt that the Honourable Elijah Muhammad, forgetting all the good in him, is guilty of violating Law No. 20, which is: "Misrepresenting the teachings of Islam". This is the essence of the work.

In the final analysis, the Muslim reader is left to nurse the feeling that if what is documented in this book is true, then the doctrines of Elijah Muhammad are the most virulent and corrosive ever preached in the name of the religion which the Prophet Muhammad founded. They can never be attributed to Islam.
An Egyptian Muslim Thinker of the Nineteenth Century on the Causes of the Muslim People’s Decadence

By ‘ABD ALLAH NADIM

Is Islam the cause of the backwardness of its peoples?

Investigation into these causes have been the subject of conversation all over the Eastern world, and thinking people have been preoccupied with this question. Everyone wants to know the reasons for the progress made by Europeans and those underlying the backwardness of the Muslims, when the whole of humanity is a unity. When the question was raised many replies were forthcoming, and everyone claimed to have discovered the causes, and to know the reasons.

Some pointed out the influence of climate on man’s behaviour. Thus Easterners would automatically be doomed to laziness and would renounce all efforts to become better. By contrast, Europeans would be impelled to action and to the undertaking of great enterprises. This argument has been disproved by what has happened over the centuries. In fact, there were periods when science and civilization were among the glories of the East, and it was from this civilization that Europe borrowed its own at a time when it was even more retarded than the East is today.

Others declare that Islam forbids all progress and that this is the principal reason. Like parrots the subscribers to this opinion are talking without knowing what they say. In fact, in their nonsense they are only repeating the accusations of a certain European whom the Press is quoting everywhere. They overlook the fact that the East abounds in religions other than Islam. Their adherents, more numerous than those of Islam, are nonetheless even more backward than Muslims in the realms of civilization and of science. One might even say that there is no possible comparison between their situation and that of Muslims from the point of view of civilization, good relations between men, and cordiality of contact with the representatives of different races and religions. If therefore Islam was an obstacle to progress, then India and China would be on the same footing as Europe, but both these countries are more backward than Muslim countries.

Islam not anti-West

And to assert, as our European friend does, that Islam is at the root of the various Eastern movements directed against the West, and that peace can return to the minds of men only by the annihilation of the Qur’an and its followers, those are accusations which are stoutly refuted by the continual wars waged by the Christian states of Europe from Roman times to the present day. The more the “civilization” of these states expanded, the more they perfected the weapons of war and destruction. The East, on the contrary, has remained calm all through those same centuries, and has reacted only to defend its motherland crushed under the European heel stained with Eastern blood. Only the disturbances fomented by Europe incited it to react. As for Europe, it was simply the greed of its rulers and religious fanaticism which led it to spread trouble and dissension in the nations of the East. It was because the European was activated by his religious zeal that he detested all other religions except his own, and that in order to gain the favour of men he posed in his country as a man zealous for his faith.

The truth is that when Islam had reached a high state of development it held considerable power. But it did not exploit this power, either against the peoples who lived in its territories or against its allies. Neither was it used against the barbarians when they surrendered. Its followers did not harbour that fanaticism which might have impelled them to oppress these races in order to force them to renounce their beliefs. On the contrary, those who pitted their strength against them could either embrace Islam or submit to its laws. This is what distinguishes this religion from all others.

As proof of the liberalism and tolerance of Islam we need only recall this fact: a delegation of Arab Christians came to see the Prophet Muhammad when he was at his place of


† An allusion to Ernest Renan and to the lecture Islamism and Science which he gave on 29 March 1883, the text of which was reproduced the following day in the Journal des Débats. This reply to Renan differs sharply from that published by Djamal al-Din al-Afghani in the Journal des Débats of Friday 18 May 1883 (cf. A. M. Goichon, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Réfutation des matérialistes, Paris 1942, pp. 174-185).
prayer. The moment arrived for them to perform their orisons and they prepared to do this, turning towards the East. The Companions of the Prophet wanted to prevent them, but the Prophet intervened and allowed the Christians, in his presence, to offer their prayer facing a direction other than his own, and according to the observances of a different religion. Is there any better proof of religious tolerance?

Others declare that the diversity of races constitutes a major obstacle. Although this statement is partially true, it must be recognized that there are forms of union which leave intact to each race its own identity, character and qualities, and in no way prevent it from submitting to the unifying power.

Religion and the disunion in the world

Again, others say that religions are responsible for all the disunion in the world and that the sole remedy is to abandon all religions, to uproot them from the surface of the earth. Such is the language of those emulators of the European Machiavellis, who have so gravely corrupted the morals of Easterners by such errors and such nonsense. Even supposing that religions are nothing but lies, that they were instituted simply as regulations during the periods of barbarism and ignorance, and that they are no longer necessary today, we must nevertheless respect them and give them due consideration. In fact, no law exercises on minds and souls an influence equal to the promises of reward and punishment which they bring. Man can escape from the penalties of the law either by running away, or by using subterfuges in order to ward off their consequences, but he cannot escape the punishments of God, whatever degree of cunning he may use. If men were left to their own devices, they would destroy each other and the nations, whatever their status, would be powerless to restrain their subjects, even if there were policemen and national guards on every inch of the territory. To maintain order and ensure security, rulers have had as an auxiliary only the laws of religion, and it is only religious legislation that has enabled jurists to draw up a humanitarian code of law. It is only religion which will impel a soldier to sacrifice his life in a religious war for the defence of his faith. During a religious war his fighting spirit is much superior to that which he will display during a war between kings. If the soldier thought that there was neither resurrection nor reward, then he would shun the field of battle. And if he were compelled to fight, then he would fight unwillingly. Let no one try to tell us that it is patriotism which impels a soldier to face death, for if he knew that he was risking his life simply to further the interests of the prince or the king, if he could expect neither reward nor paradise, then he would not sell his life for someone else’s pleasure.

So that all these statements are false, and that is why we must seek elsewhere the causes of our decadence. We can do this only by studying the causes underlying European progress; for it is by the study of opposites that we shall arrive at the truth.

Cause No. 1

It is an irrefutable fact that European nations were formerly dukedoms, earldoms, principalities and kingdoms, both large and small. It is equally true that Europe has become what she is today only through the activity of dynasties which have dominated other dynasties and unified the various scattered territories. In this way were created the great states which have become independent kingdoms. When these dynasties had gained the upper hand, they were afraid of revolts aimed at regaining independence, and experience taught them to unify the language in their country in an attempt to uproot the race-spirit which a language always keeps alive. In France, in England, in Germany, no one nowadays uses a language other than the language of the country. The idea behind the suppression of other languages is that only one language be used in commercial transactions, in writing, teaching, and conversation. The foreign language is only used in cases of necessity, and in such a way that its use does not diminish the supremacy of the language of the country. Bulgaria followed the example of the great powers and prohibited the teaching of foreign languages in her schools. In this way the Europeans made the races under their domination speak their language. These languages gradually came to “obliterate” the nationality of those people who, forgetting their own idiom and being subjected to the influence of the language which they borrowed, came in time to adopt the manners and customs of the people whose mother tongue it was.

The Eastern monarchs did not descend to these methods. They allowed the races whom they had subdued to speak their own languages and be educated in them. Through their languages nations survived. They remained subject races so long as they were weak and lacked means, but whenever there was a revolt or a movement towards independence, every race would group itself round a leader and do its utmost to shake off the foreign yoke. The nations whom the Arabs conquered without “unifying” their language are examples of this. They obeyed them while secretly preparing to secede or to overthrow them, so much so that the Empire broke up and was shared out between rebels and conquerors.

When the Turks and the Persians became masters of the Arab nation, they allowed the people to speak their own language and did not oblige them to learn theirs, either by force or through education. The national “flame” smouldered under the ashes, waiting for a propitious moment. When this arrived the different races seized the opportunity and went into revolt, either independently or through pressure from outside. These are realities and no one who knows the historical facts can ignore the accession to independence of Persia, Afghanistan, Bokhara, the Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, Muscat, Zanzibar, Bulgaria, Rumania, Montenegro, Serbia, the black kingdoms and Muslim India. All these countries were in fact under Arab domination, and after them under the domination of the Turks and the Persians.

And that is precisely what was feared by the European States. From the history of the Arabs, the Turks and the Persian they gleaned a lesson, and so they studied ways by which to preserve their kingdoms from the factors of disintegration which threatened the national unity of each one of them. And in the same way as they had, in their own country, unified the language in order to unify the nation, so did they use the self-same method in countries over which they ruled. However, they did not propagate the use of their language by force. On the contrary, they proceeded to do this by successive stages, limiting their activity in a general manner to the sphere of education, so that their subjects would not become alarmed by noticing the attempt to abolish the use of their mother-tongue. In this way they were deceiving their subjects by the pretext of educating them. They proceeded in such a way that when the first generation had disappeared, the second generation had arrived, so to speak, at an intermediate stage, whereas the third become absorbed into the ruling nation, as much by virtue of language as by
that of religion, without provoking either revolt or dissidence. And although this “underground” war may have continued probably for another century or two, while the Orient remained all unsuspecting and heedless, preoccupied with its dreams and ideals, the day came when these same Eastern subject races found themselves, as races, virtually annihilated. They included the Arab, Turkish, Persian, Hindu, Spanish, Abyssinian and African peoples. So that henceforward the Orient was populated solely by European nations both by language and by religion, even though the cradle of these races had been Asia and Africa.

**Cause No. 2**

When all the European dynasties had finished extending their hegemony over a certain territory, all power was kept in the hands of the conquerors. No responsibilities of any note were placed in the hands of the conquered for fear that this power might be diminished, and that the authority of law would be dissipated in racial passions and tendencies, and also for fear that the conquered, seeing their strength increasing, might try to regain their independence. This state of affairs continued until these races, having undergone a linguistic and religious transformation, had become a single homogeneous nation. That is how a European state proceeds when it has subdued an Eastern state. It places the responsible government posts in the hands of its own nationals with the sole object of unifying power and authority, and of gaining supreme control of the armed forces, finance and administration. Thus it needs only a handful of men to govern some millions of Easterners. A European state does not give any important post or responsibility to a foreigner; a Russian could not be in command of the British Army than could an Englishman become Finance Minister in Russia; a Frenchman cannot become Minister of Education in Italy, neither can an Italian become Defence Minister in France. It is the same with all the other states.

The Eastern countries did not go along these lines. They recruited their civil servants from among the ethnic elements which they had subdued and even from among other groups. But the time came when their power became weakened. Revolts and setbacks became numerous. Then appeared the Arab nation which, first of all, gathered all power into its own hands. By its numerous conquests it extended its empire and its laws were applied in the state which surrendered to its kings and its princes. But when civilization had grown and prospered, caliphs and princes, wallowing in luxury and idleness, handed over the conduct of their affairs to the people they had subdued. The latter, spurred on by egoism, ousted their lords and masters, the situation of the Arabs deteriorated, the new conquerors were numerous, disorder was rife, and blood was spilt on all sides. The rapacious European states attacked the East, whose very name had once out fear into their hearts. This all ended when the Turks seized power. During an earlier epoch the latter had played a role in no way inferior to that played by the Arabs. What is more, they had crossed from Asia into Europe and conquered a part of it where they held dominion for some centuries. They continued to manage their own affairs until the time when they had become firmly established, in the form of an isthmus squeezed in between Europe and the Oriental states. Then in time they arrived at the stage of luxury and flabbyness. They gave many important posts to men belonging to other races, and these men opened the gates to European intervention. This was also the case with other Eastern states, which became privileged territories for Europeans, who did what they pleased with the inhabitants.

**Cause No. 3**

Each of the dynasties established in Europe tolerated only one religion and forced it upon its subjects. This was the cause of much bloodshed. In fact, it was necessary that no other religion should exist which would inevitably have brought about dissension, internal wars and foreign intervention. It is worthy of note that Europe paid special attention to religion. She crammed it into all educational books of whatever kind, put the sign of the cross, a revered symbol, on clothing, table-ware, glasses, carpets, bedding, tools, visiting cards, buildings, and even on the lintels of doors, to such an extent that, at whatever object a man looked, he could see this pious symbol. The sole object of all this was that practically everything a man saw should continue to foster his religious sentiments.

Knowing that if religious unity, unity of language and unity of power, could be developed into three strong coexistent factors, the state would rest on a solid basis, the Europeans started out gradually to transform the Eastern nations. But France did not force the Algerians or the Tunisians to renounce their faith, as did Spain when she forced her conquered Muslims to become Christians or leave the country. Neither did Great Britain use this form of constraint against the Muslims of India, nor Russia against the Daghestanis, the Turcomans and other Muslims under their domination. Each of these states concentrated its efforts solely on spreading its language among them, on opening schools where they were given a standard European type education, and on prohibiting all religious instruction except for a few minor principles of no importance, calculated to deceive the simple-minded. They used these methods so that educated people might be deprived of religious culture. Thus they could easily be persuaded to adopt another religion. And if by chance it happened that an Eastern people, even one not under the European yoke, were to speak about their religion, they were accused of being uncivilized, uncouth, of being barbarians and savages. They were pointed out as being religious fanatics, whereas fanaticism is the hallmark of the European. But are not those who hold the power experts at hoodwinking the underdog?

As for the Eastern sovereigns, they did not proceed along these lines. They may have behaved as conquerors or dominators do, but they always respected religious beliefs. This was the case with the Ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Persians. Then came Islam, which asked only that people adopt it as a way of life, or become faithful subjects of the rulers. And when it spread its wings over the East and the West, it left intact to many races their faith—Christian, Jewish, Brahmanic, Zoroastrian or pagan. It gave them complete liberty to practise their cults, and no Muslim would prevent them from doing so. This is a feature unknown to any other religion. Alas! this tolerant attitude brought Islam neither praise nor appreciation. On the contrary the whole of Europe invaded Syria on the pretext of religious dispute. It spread misery and shed blood over every inch of its territory, bringing ruin to its Muslim, Christian and Jewish subjects. The country was deprived of any source of civilization, and, by its religious fanaticism, Europe built a wall of misery which barred the way to all progress.

In spite of all these crimes, Islam lays on Muslims the duty of behaving with consideration towards those who do not share their faith. It tells Muslims to treat as equals their non-Muslim compatriots and their guests, even if they do not reciprocate. In fact, it is impossible for Muslims to
modify the principles of their religion whatever their desires be.

But Europeans were not content to establish religious unity in their own continent. Its nationals formed religious congregations, and staffed them with thousands of priests, gave them millions in gold and spread them all over the East under the aegis and protection of their states. These missionaries spread all over Africa and Asia, propagating their religion. The East was submerged under this flood.

The Easterners did not copy this example. They grew stupid and lazy by sheer neglect, dissipating silver and gold on frivolous pleasures. 'Ulama, rabbis and priests were abandoned in their mosques, temples and churches, where they hoped that some enquirers from beyond the deserts might seek them out to obtain religious instruction. Besides this they used archaic methods, and this made it more difficult for students to get instruction. We are not accusing them of having abandoned the project of penetrating to all parts of the world, since they lived in penury and lacked the means necessary for subsistence. But Muslims do complain about the owners and founders of Waqfs for not having followed the same road as the Europeans. In fact they gave their wealth and property to those who did not deserve them and who snored in the tekkas. They squandered their means on candles for a birthday, in votive offerings at tombs. What is more, those who put aside a certain amount of money for education saw it used for other purposes. Gradually, in the Eastern kingdoms, the sciences fell into neglect and ignorance became general. In some countries the 'Ulama limited their activities to giving a purely religious education. Mathematics were neglected. Industries perished because there were no technicians. They perished also through negligence - the neglect of the rulers to look for ways of reviving them, the neglect of the nations to open schools and factories under the aegis of charitable and commercial societies. People came to look upon European inventions as devices beyond the scope of reason, and thus they automatically condemned themselves never to attain the progress made by Europe because the scientific foundation was lacking as well as the knowledge of international questions.

**Cause No. 4**

When the education of the European nations had been completed, with the protection and assistance of kingdoms and scientific and commercial organizations, these states soon perceived that if they remained disunited and mutually hostile they ran the risk, in spite of their religious unity, of destroying each other in order to realize their rival ambitions, and thus gave the Easterners an opportunity to meddle in their military and civil affairs. To avoid such interventions these States found no better expedient than to conclude treaties, so that each state had nothing to fear from its neighbour and could concentrate uniquely on its own affairs. It was then that the European sovereigns came to a common agreement to preserve the unity of Europe against any threat from the East, whatever the international situation, and to concentrate their efforts on conquering and colonizing the East. Thus we see them in common consultation when plotting some attack upon an Eastern kingdom. As soon as an agreement was reached, and they had decided to invade and occupy a country, the state undertaking the operation went on ahead under the attentive eyes of its brothers. If it won the day all well and good. If it got into difficulties all the others went to its rescue and inflicted savage and intolerable treatment on the Eastern state. When a state had carried out its mission, another one took its place in accordance with their agreements. The European states carried out these tactics time after time, until their Entente Cordiale had allowed them to penetrate deeply into Africa and Asia.

The Eastern states did not make use of this very effective method. Far from acting in concert they became disunited, and pitted their countries one against the other. Their mutual hostility reached such a degree that sometimes an Eastern state would give help to a European state in order to subdue another state, Eastern like itself, without perceiving that by so doing it was falling into the trap into which Europe was leading it, either by force or through the lure of monetary gain. Thus there existed no bond of union between the rulers of China and those of India, nor between these two countries and Persia. None of these countries made an alliance with the Turks, and the Turks made no effort to form an alliance with Afghanistan, Bokhara, Morocco or Zanzibar.

And it was because of this disunion that Europe was able to come between rulers who were thought to be linked in the bonds of friendship, but who in reality were not. By their state of disunion their kingdoms were now merely minor territories of two vast continents. It was all the more easy to conquer them one after the other since each ruler, although he could plainly see what was happening to his neighbour, made no move whatsoever towards unity in the Eastern political scene, or towards drawing up a defensive alliance. As for the Europeans, they soon became masters in the art of corrupting Eastern rulers and, by misleading lies, to set them against each other, to such an extent that they came to hate each other even more fiercely than they hated the European. What is more, the Europeans, by the use of stealth and Machiavellian tactics, succeeded even in winning the affection of certain Eastern kings.

Such were the four great causes or principles on which Europe laid the foundations of her states and indoctrinated the nations which came under her domination. From these "primary" causes there sprang "secondary" causes. These reinforced the first causes and were the starting-point of urban life, scientific and industrial progress, and the development of civilization.

**First “secondary” cause**

Europeans gave writers the liberty of spreading their ideas among the nations. The sole aim was that the thoughts of the masses might be led into the desired channels when they came into contact with those of intellectuals. By this means writers have fashioned whole nations, indoctrinated them and brought them out of dark ignorance and illiteracy to reach the summit of science and enlightenment. The states thus found competent men who had cost them little or nothing. They had been instructed by writers and scholars.

The East did not follow or imitate this procedure, and its rulers resented the presence and activities of writers and intellectuals. They suppressed their ideas and conceptions to the point of destroying them. It is at this juncture that the Arab Empire emerged. It granted liberty of thought, brought in scholars from wherever they could find them, undertook the translation of ancient philosophers and opened up horizons which had been dimmed through ignorance over many centuries. Then the era of greatness and unity came to an end, to be replaced by the era of invasion. The Empire broke up. The rebels killed their scholars, burnt their books and destroyed the schools. Eastern science and knowledge became extinct. Writers and literary men suffered all the rigours of
the harsh treatment meted out to them by the kings. China, India, Iraq, the Arab countries and the Muslim Occident all remained hostile to writers, of whom the most brilliant were exiled or executed. Many of them went to Europe and found work under its banner. They then opposed their own people and duped them, either by way of a joke or as a form of revenge, or perhaps out of gratefulness for the country which had saved them from death.

If the Eastern rulers were to establish the liberty of the Press, and were to take writers under their wing, if they were to give their support to those who serve faithfully their kingdom and their people, if they were to silence the tongues of corruptors and provocateurs, then they would bring back to life the nations who wander in the deserts of ignorance, and would revivify in them the spirit of ardour and zeal — the safeguard of kingdoms.

Second “secondary” cause

When the European nations started on the path to cultural progress, the holders of capital united in order to open development banks. With only a few shares they amassed a good deal of money which they invested in factories and commerce. The states came to their assistance by creating a “protectionist” régime, so that the national products could be sold fairly easily, and that the capital remained in the country. By these means their wealth increased, the poor became as well off as the rich, and the states in their affluence and the prosperity of their finances became wealthy rivals on the road to even further success.

The Easterners did not follow this road. They amassed fortunes but buried them in the ground or squandered them on enjoyment and pleasure. They allowed what productive activities they were engaged in to run down and used European products instead. They thus ruined both industry and industrialists and their wealth found its way to Europe. Hence the spectacle of the Eastern artisan groaning under the burden of his poverty. Although he lived next door to the wealthy, the latter was too busy with pleasure and distraction to listen to his reproaches.

Third “secondary” cause

When the European states perceived that discoveries and industries always originate with the poor, they developed a whole system of legislation dealing with concessions, rewards, scientific and technical diplomas, and titular decorations. The object of all this was to stir up in the people the spirit of emulation and competition. All new inventions were rewarded and bought by the wealthy and the industrialists. Inventors became very numerous. The progress of science was such that the use of steam and electricity became widely known, and the ancient and the modern worlds were discovered.

The Easterners did not follow this road. They discredited the inventors, ran after the foreigner and his goods. The rulers would have nothing to do with them and gave them neither sympathy nor protection. Their energies dried up, no further effort was made in the search for the utilitarian and the practical. Each artisan was satisfied with the simplest and the most popular, that is to say, with the absolute minimum necessary.

Fourth “secondary” cause

When the European states perceived that ignorance could lead a nation only to ruin and slavery, they developed educa-

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rulers meted out harsh treatment to them, so much so that no one would dare follow in their footsteps, for fear of receiving similar treatment.

Sixth "secondary" cause

The education of nations meant the creation of commercial societies and associations. There were numerous circles where thinkers and ordinary people came and worked together — the idea being that the latter should imitate the former, who would impart their knowledge and ideas and thus produce trained men. In these assemblies were introduced ideas concerning the constitution of nations and kingdoms, regal acts, the customs and the history of civilization. Such assemblies infused new life into a kingdom, a life enriched alike by ministers, deputies and workers. The rulers placed no obstacles in their way, since they readily perceived the utility of such a proceeding.

The Easterners did not follow this path. The only reunions they convened were given over to slander and calumny, doing harm to some and opposing others, venting their hatred and jealousy, playing off one against the other, humiliating, poking fun, playing the fool... Thus they cut themselves off entirely from the rest of the world. Some were content to remain at home with their children. Others — a mere handful — devoted themselves to study. But more often than not they were carried away on the mad and thoughtless surge which had taken possession of urban society. It was now very seldom that an assembly was convened to deal with the affairs of the nation or of the state, since the more sober and responsible citizens knew only too well that no one would give a hearing to their investigations and their complaints, the great majority of the nation being more concerned with pleasure and frivolity.

Such are the causes of Europe's rise to power. In making a study of them we have been able to understand why the peoples of the East have lagged behind and fallen into the European trap. We have also learned that Islam and the religions of the East are not responsible for our decadence, as is claimed by so many of those who gravitate around the European camp. On the contrary, Islam was the one factor capable of promoting civilization and progress during an era when men lived and acted according to its precepts. As for the climate, it is the same climate known for centuries to Egyptians, Phoenicians, Persians, Indians, Arabs and Turks.

We have also shown that this decadence was but the logical consequence of widespread ignorance due to the repugnance of rulers towards education, and to the harsh treatment they meted out to writers and thinkers. It was equally due to the behaviour of the wealthy, who kept aloof from enterprising types of societies and associations, took no interest in any form of commerce, industry and agriculture, and let themselves be swayed by their appetites and passions.

But if the rulers would grant due and reasonable liberty to thinkers and to the Press, if the wealthy would use their gold for the benefit of industry, for the spread of education in the towns and villages, in giving assistance to scholars and scientists in their search for knowledge, if kings, ministers and nations would unify their efforts on the road to progress, then they could, little by little, stem the European flood and even outstrip the European in the arts of science and power.

But if they neglect these necessary measures and remain immersed in their discord, their jealousies and their ignorance, then will it be in vain for them to ask each other: "Why have the Europeans gone forward and why have we fallen back, when, after all, the human race is a unity?"

What Our Leaders are Saying—Continued from page 31

also the ideals of justice, peace and liberty which were the bases of progress and understanding amongst the peoples of the world. Besides they stressed that those principles conformed to the precepts on which were based the historic and cultural patrimonies of Tunisia and Turkey, precepts which also found expression in the religion of the two peoples of Tunisia and Turkey and which constituted a precious source of inspiration so as to favour a rapprochement between all countries and legitimate interests of both communities and of all parties interested in the dispute. They also expressed their conviction that the parties must abstain from all action susceptible of heightening the tension in the island of Cyprus and act in a way which respected international accords.

In examining the world political situation both Presidents affirmed their profound attachment to the principles of the United Nations Charter as
What Our Readers Say . . .

BRITISH NEO-COLONIALISM AND THE ARABS

The Hardships of the “have-nots” in the Peninsula

102C Jalan Berhala,
Brickfields,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
14 December 1966.

I have read with interest your analysis of the British neo-colonialism vis-à-vis the Arabs in The Islamic Review for July-August 1966. Recent developments, however, affirm that, contrary to your assumption, Britain still intends to maintain her physical presence in the Peninsula mainly through a new Government for South Arabia to be granted a phoney, if formal, independence in 1968. I select three for specific mention:

(1) In an article published in the magazine The Reporter, New York, for 24 November 1965, Sir Julian Amery, a former British Minister of Aviation in the Conservative Government, argued at some length that Britain could not afford to withdraw east of Suez.

(2) At about the same time Mr. Rene MacColl interviewed Mr. Muhammad Hasan Obali, Minister of Education in the South Arabia Federation, about the British withdrawal, and quoted the Minister, inter alia, as saying:

“The British evacuation ought to be carried out in a series of slow phases and not a sudden withdrawal. We would like to see it continue until 1972.”

The interview was well carried by British News Agencies.

(3) In its analysis of world events, Time Magazine in its issue for 2 December 1966 wrote that the British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson, turned over to his Foreign Secretary, Mr. George Brown, the possibility of finding a way to hold a British line east of Suez.

To appreciate fully the confidence the British have in the success of their plan, the means by which they tried to ensure this might receive greater emphasis.

“The British, who were in full political control of the area,” you argued, “did not mind small territories federating and getting independence, as long as they were likely to remain poor and eventually dependent on Britain.” You could have rightly said that the British deliberately kept the people in such territories in grinding poverty.

In Hadhramout, for instance, repeated requests were made for the establishment of an agricultural school, another for fisheries and technical assistance for the implementation of small agricultural and other economic projects to alleviate the hardships of the people. It was explained that the Hadhramas, especially those residing abroad, could easily be persuaded to invest in these projects, given the right guidance and atmosphere. But the British lords ignored all the pleadings and explanations, often with contempt. The same inhuman and arrogant attitude is maintained, I believe, in other territories, not excluding those in the Trucial Coast, which have no known mineral resources.

Again, when the South Arabian Federation was being formed there arose a popular desire in the Qua’i and Kathiri Sultanates and, to a lesser extent, in the Sultanates of Mahri and Wahidi, to form the “Arab State of Hadhramout”. The idea was to give it a political status so that it could take its right place in any future unitary or federal arrangements when the entire area of Aden and its protectorates was ready for a complete and true independence. The British rulers insisted and saw to it that these Sultanates remained separate. However, when the foreign oil company which had been exploring in the territories of the first three Sultanates declared its intention to pull out for lack of oil in commercial quantities, the British rushed arrangements, without preparation whatsoever, for these Sultanates to join the ill-fated South Arabian Federation.

It is evident now that a British-backed enlarged Arab Government for the entire area will be given formal independence in 1968. The Arab nationalist movement will have to continue its struggle, which as things are, will be a long and bitter one. The most tragic thing is that the brunt of the conflict will fall on the least able to bear it — the “have-nots” in the Arabian Peninsula.

Yours faithfully,

AWADH BASAHAI.

CODING REGULATING PERSONAL STATUS AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION IN CERTAIN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

15 Viale Trente Aprile,
Roma-Gianicolo,
Italy.
18 December 1966.

Dear Sir,

It was for me a pleasant surprise and a real pleasure to receive copies of your esteemed periodical. My article on “Codes Regulating Personal Status and Social Evolution in Certain Muslim Countries”, that you deemed worthy of publishing remains, however, a modest attempt, and does not in any way claim to grasp adequately all the aspects of the problem. Your translation is fine and you did not overlook any of the many footnotes and references given in the original text.

FEBRUARY 1967
INSPIRATION FROM THE WORDS OF KING FAYSAL OF SU'UDI ARABIA AND THOSE OF THE PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN

86 Okesuna Street,
Lagos,
Federal Republic of Nigeria.
29 December 1966.

Dear Sir,

I read with keen interest extracts from the thought-provoking words of His Majesty King Faysal of Su'udi Arabia on Zionism and His Excellency President Ayyub Khan on Islamic Socialism in Pakistan. His Majesty in his speech had greatly established a sound Arab policy on Zionism and has gone a long way to correct the wrong notions given to us about it in Africa. It is gratifying to hear from an eminent personality like His Majesty King Faysal that the Arabs and the Jews of Palestine should co-exist, and that it was the incursion into the Arab land of that area which had led to the displacement of the Arabs — what the people of Su'udi Arabia and honest and reasonable people all over the world condemned.

It is noteworthy that His Excellency President Ayyub Khan has thrown light on "Islamic Socialism". Many writers have not done justice to this concept since the inception of Pakistan. How pleasing it is to know from the President of Pakistan that Islamic Socialism has as its basic objective the creation of equal opportunities for all and to achieve what Communism and Capitalism have not.

I wish to express my gratitude to you for your sound and timely appeal to the British press, which appeared in the editorial column of The Islamic Review for November 1966. The phrase "If the mountain will not go to Mahomet..." has been loosely used by Western writers since Sir Francis Bacon coined it, and has done great injustice to the personality of the Prophet Muhammad. Today we are working and hoping for a mutual understanding and co-operation among the religions of the world, particularly Islam and Christianity. In the words of Sir Winston Churchill, "If you cannot help us please do not stand in our way." If the British press cannot help Muhammad's noble cause, let it not put asunder what has been achieved so far.

Yours faithfully,

N. OLAYIMIKA IDRIS.

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