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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

The picture on the Cover is that of the famous Selimiyye Mosque at Edirne, Turkey.

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Ignoble Fantasy of Professor Dr. Toynbee

An Odious Comparison between the Prophet Muhammad and Gandhi

("Relevance of Gandhian Creed in the Atomic Age" by Arnold Joseph Toynbee, published in a Statesman Supplement for 26 January 1969, on the Gandhi Centenary and Republic Day, Calcutta)

Straying into reverie and fantasy, under pressure of wishful thinking, with an urge to distort the truth to serve one's own purpose, indicates puerility or senility in thinking power, lack of factual knowledge and infirm character.

Such fantasy is the product of a mind adrift, blindly and passively following the laws of association of ideas with reason and will in torpor, whose images are purposeless and unsystematized as the visual images in a kaleidoscope. Such fantasy appears in dreaming, reverie, somnambulism and intoxication. It grows more erratic and ignoble when such a mind consciously drags into its repugnant fantasy the name of a personality whose message and teaching have banished serfdom and slavery from the world, established human rights, accorded equal evaluation to all mankind and liberated the oppressed and the weak from the high-handed mighty.

On account of the idiosyncrasy his own country "has offered him relatively little academic or official recognition. The reason is partly that his whole approach to history has been the opposite of what has been fashionable here" (The Observer, London, for 13.4.69). Another reason may be an extraordinary attack by Professor Trevor-Roper. "After that little episode even fewer of our academic heroes have appeared to want to be associated with him in any way" (The Observer, London, for 13.4.69).

In his odious comparison of the Prophet Muhammad with Gandhi he has overstepped the limits of decency and rational thinking. It is obviously beyond his ability to understand the difference between a politician and a Prophet of God. Without resorting to the unscrupulous means he could have shown his gratefulness to Gandhi for letting the British withdraw without mutual bloodshed, animosity and dishonour, and for allowing its mismanagement to plunge the Hindus and the Muslims into the horrors of massacring each other in millions — the Largest Massacre of Human History — accomplished in a few weeks, while tens of millions were rendered homeless!

The largest number of soldiers in the Indian armies, both in peace time and during both the world wars, was drawn
from the Punjab. But this was the province that suffered most through the massacres. What a fine gratitude!

The Nizam of Hyderabad, who had the proud privilege of having the title of "the most faithful ally of the British Crown", was thrown to the dogs by the same power that had given him the proud title.

One may be forced to imagine that Dr. Toynbee’s purpose in drawing such a comparison, perhaps, was once again to pour oil on the fires of communal hatred and thus flip up the communal violence. It has exacted many human lives.

Lamenting over the defunct morality of those who invent more and more powerful nuclear weapons for a total and utter destruction and of those who are ever ready to press the button is frivolous, hypocritical, vain and delusive without first getting rid of one’s prejudice and partiality and acquiring the desirable quality of self-restraint.

Dr. Toynbee’s intention, however inadvertent, to involve Hindus and Muslims in an acrimonious match culminating into another massacre is still-born because Muslims cannot be drawn into such a repulsive course. They are taught the first lesson of non-violence by the Last Messenger of God, Muhammad, never to utter a word or behave disrespectfully towards anyone who may be a respected leader of a people, any people, even though he and they may be idolaters. So we are not going to fall a prey to an emotional reaction provoked by a third party. Gandhi has nothing to do with the utterances or writings of Dr. Toynbee. When he was alive he never passed any derogatory remark about the Prophet. Rather, he always spoke of him with great respect and he used to read the Holy Qur’an in his prayers; one of the reasons for which he was assassinated by the hand of his coreligionist. Had he been alive today, he would have certainly condemned and disapproved of the poisonous flattery of Dr. Toynbee. Gandhi was the greatest and most astute leader that Hindu India has ever produced. He never pretended to be a religious leader. True to the tradition of lawyers, he was a politician, and a great one indeed.

He would have been esteemed very highly by Hindus and Muslims alike, had he succeeded in persuading the Congress to treat Muslims on the principle of parity, or had he succeeded in persuading the Congress not to reject, after accepting, the Cabinet Mission Plan — the fairest and most equitable plan the British Government ever produced for the transfer of power. Parity, because there is no minority and majority in a heterogeneous society, as the essential feature of democracy is that minority and majority are never permanent. In India the Hindus and the Muslims were two permanent entities. So they should have formed a government as two brothers with equal rights.

The Khilafat Movement of India, virtually run by Gandhi, established him securely as the all-India leader. But no advantage was taken of such an amiable and brotherly feeling. Instead, the Muslim leaders, like the Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali, were cleverly discredited in order, perhaps, to destroy the confidence of the Muslim masses in their religious leaders. This was probably one of the reasons that later on Mr. Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah was acclaimed the popular Muslim leader.

After 1923, alienation between the Hindus and the Muslims was deliberately and progressively fostered, which reached its climax in the late thirties and eventually resulted in the most horrible massacre in 1947. All along, the Muslims wanted only safeguards and not separation, but the Hindu leadership was bent upon separation. The simple-minded Muslim leaders did not suspect this.

Dr. Toynbee maintains that, “The Buddha jumped clear of politics...He deserted his wife and child...” Dr. Toynbee once again betrays his inability to understand any difference between a politician and the purpose and aim of a great Prophet of God. The Buddha’s aim was to create an egalitarian society by breaking the strangle-hold of the Brahmins, who had assumed the status of mediators between man and God. The Buddha’s message succeeded to a very large extent — millions of Buddhists are found in the East-Asian countries. But the Brahmins did not stand still and see themselves deprived of their privileges and so they eventually succeeded in banishing Buddhism from India. The existence of Muslims — essentially the egalitarian society — amid Hindus was once again threatening to destroy the caste system. A Movement of Hijrah (giving up homes and emigrating to Muslim lands) was set afoot, encouraged by Gandhi, to bamboozle the Indian Muslims. A large number of them emigrated from India and most of them died after immense sufferings and tribulations. The attempt of banishing Muslims in this way failed. The only other course left for the Brahmins now was to separate them from the Hindus permanently. The Muslim leaders played into their hands and in the end got only a truncated Pakistan. Gandhi was himself elevated to the top Brahmin caste, a unique honour for a man born in the third caste (Vaish). He rightly deserved it, for he had done the job of a Brahmin!

Gandhi was so wise and far-sighted that he realized that the only safe course for him to lead his people was through non-violence, passive-resistance and non-co-operation. He had understood that the British people would not allow their government to shoot down the non-violent masses and demonstrators. To take the violent course would have been an act of an injudicious person, not only because, at that time, the British power was at its zenith, but also because his people would have never been able to withstand the blows of the police and the bullets of the army. Had it been the German or French powers ruling India instead of the British, the course taken by Gandhi could have never borne any fruit.

After the first world war the Palestinian Arabs received Jews into Palestine on compassionante grounds. What happened to these non-violent people later on was that they were thrown out of their homes. Non-violence against the Zionists meant giving up all their rights, homes and lands. It cannot be regarded as a creed, much less a guide for all times, against all kinds of oppressors and aggressors. Violence in India has never come to an end. The genocide of Muslims goes on interminently. In some states of India internecine strife — a bloody one continues. In 1948 the Indian army attacked the peaceful state of Hyderabad and annexed it to the the Indian Union by violent means. In 1965 the Indian army crossed the international boundary to attack Pakistan. At present, the Indian armies are fighting against the Nagas. It is crystal clear that non-violence was a political weapon suitable only against the British government.

Twenty years after the assassination of Gandhi, socially and religiously, Hindu India still remains a caste-bound society. The untouchables are still there. The genius of the great politician succeeded in keeping the untouchables within the Hindu caste system, without which a catastrophe would have befallen India. According to a press report of 4 April 1969 a powerful Hindu High Priest, Shankaracharya of Puri,
has demanded that the practice of untouchability should be continued, although this is against the political interests of India.

Who can be compared with Muhammad, the Mercy for the worlds of man and animal? Examine the change in the status of mankind at large before and after his message came to mankind 1389 years ago. All through millions of years, until his appearance, no one but a few had any human rights. This message has established full human rights among those who believe in the Last Message of God revealed to Muhammad, His Last Messenger. No other book, besides the Holy Qur'an, religious or otherwise, contains all the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the U.N. General Assembly in 1949. The Holy Qur'an contains them all, but more completely and comprehensively.

The Holy Qur'an brought about conditions for the abolition of slavery. A slave became a member of his master's family and was looked after and brought up as such. The result was that slaves became emperors of India, Kings of Egypt and generals and overlords during the Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad. Bilâl, a freed Negro slave, became the first Mi'ra'izzîn (one who calls for prayer) of Islam in the Prophet's mosque.

The Holy Qur'an did away with the main source of slavery and established the principle of co-existence by abolishing the aggressive wars and that the prisoners of war must be set free after the defensive war was over (cf. the Holy Qur'an 22: 38-40, 2: 190, 8: 61, 47: 4).

The literal meaning of the very word Islam means to enable the believer to get into the state of peace and the state free from vice and defect and to become a cause of peace to others.

The Holy Qur'an has proved itself to be the mother of science by providing guidance and stimulus to the believers (cf. The Qur'an 91: 1, 2, 55: 34, 36: 38, 40, 21: 32, etc. and the History of Education, chapter on Saracen learning).

The Holy Qur'an is the originator of the theory of evolution (cf. The Qur'an 39: 6, 24: 45, 96: 1, 71: 14, 87: 1, 2) and Ibn Maskawayh's (d. 1030 C.E.) Fawz al-Akbar, on the origin of man, followed up by the Maulâni Rûmî in his Mârâihnâ, 300 years before Darwin.

No mortal can be fairly and justly compared with Muhammad, the Last Messenger of God, who is the true benefactor of mankind.

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One of the principal reasons that the West has not understood Islam is that its basic book, the Qur'an Majid (The Noble Reading), has never been translated with reverence and sympathy into any European language. This critical approach with its desire to disprove or mock the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad is a legacy from the Crusades. Its carry-over has prevented the truth from being known about Islam to non-Muslims.

Professor Irving, who holds his Ph.D. in Arabic and Spanish from Princeton University, founded the School of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota. He has held a Fulbright research fellowship in Baghdad, Iraq, and travelled widely throughout the Arab world and Iran. Dr. Irving is a member of the American Oriental Society, the Medieval Academy, the Middle Eastern Studies Association, the Middle East Institute and other learned societies.

His specialty is the Arab and the Islamic period in Spanish history, and he has written Falcon of Spain, a biography of the 8th century Arab ruler of Spain, Abdûr-rahmân I, as well as contributed numerous articles to magazines here and abroad. He is now Professor of Spanish at the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, Canada.

Professor Irving has extracted the more significant and lyrical passages from the Qur'an and placed them in logical sections with the idea of developing an abridged yet reliable anthology. These selections have been arranged either in prose form or as rhythmic free verse, depending upon the needs of the passage with the whole arranged in a sequence of five parts with a total of sixteen chapters.

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THE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

In describing the teaching of Islam, the Qur'an does not use the word Islam in its etymological meaning.

"It is one of the glories of Islam that its Temples are not built by hands, and that its ceremonies can be performed anywhere upon God's earth or under His heaven"

By Dr. A. E. ‘AFIFI

Islam does not preach fatalism or predestination

Islam is the name of the religion preached by the Prophet Muhammad, who was born in Mecca in 571 C.E. and died in Medina in 632 C.E.

Some Western writers prefer to call it Muhammadanism, like Christianity which is associated with Christ and Buddhism which is associated with Buddha; but this gives undue prominence to the role played by the founder of Islam, rather than expressing the real meaning and significance of the Muslim religion. The word Islam, on the other hand, brings out that significance to the full when it is properly understood.

It is derived from an Arabic root which means in its primary sense "to be tranquil", "at rest", "at perfect peace"; and in its secondary sense "to yield or surrender or resign oneself". This is the etymological sense of the word which has led, or, rather, misled, some Western writers to believe that Islam by definition is a negative religion and a negative system of morality; that it is a religion which preaches the unconditional surrender to the absolute will of God; and that a Muslim is a submissive fatalist who is deprived of all initiative and aspiration; one who trusts blindly in God and awaits whatever lies in store for him.

Such an understanding deprives Islam of its positive content, and of the ideals it has set up for religious beliefs and morals. If you study Islamic teaching as set forth in the Qur'an, the Holy Book of the Muslim, you will find that it does not use the word Islam in its etymological meaning. You will find therein that Islam does not preach fatalism or predestination, and that it emphasises man's free will as a basis for his moral responsibility.

The name Islam, rather, means the acceptance of, not the submission to, the will of God as revealed in His religion; that is to say, the absolute obedience to the divine Law. And as the divine Law is the law of righteousness, a Muslim is defined as a true believer and follower of the Law of righteousness.

The Qur'an says:

"Those who are Muslims seek after the right path" (72:14).

and the right path is the path prescribed by God.

The social, moral and religious conditions at the advent of Islam

In order to understand fully the rise and spread of Islam, one must review the religious, social, moral and political conditions which prevailed inside and outside Arabia before the advent of Muhammad, which took place towards the end of the Sixth Century C.E. These conditions had reached such a state of degeneration and corruption that the appearance of a reformer was absolutely inevitable. That this deliverer of the world was not a Christian, nor a Jew, nor a Magian, was only natural, because corruption had penetrated so deep into the religious systems of the time. What was left of Christianity and Judaism could not uproot the evil and bring people back to their true God. The new reformer had to be one who was guided by a new light, not by the mere weight of traditional beliefs and prejudices; one who could see with an open mind the true and false elements in the prevalent religions around him, and convert the idol worshippers of Arabia to his new faith. Muhammad claimed to
be that man, and declared that his message was a necessity of religious development.

The conditions of the world during and for a time after the 6th Century C.E. were so deplorable that when Islam came, with its new ideals, it was welcomed everywhere with incredible readiness. If people were not actually converted to Islam, they preferred the rule of the Muslim masters, who promised them religious tolerance as well as social and political justice.

Wherever one looks in the pre-Islamic world, one sees cruelty, wretchedness, injustice, intolerance, immorality and many other social and religious abominations. Christianity was torn asunder by religious factions; many atrocities were committed in defence of one religious doctrine against another.

The conflicting theories on the nature of Jesus Christ gave rise to much violence and persecution, and the streets and the churches of Alexandria, Rome and Constantinople witnessed scenes of horror and ruthless cruelty inflicted upon the ill-fated opponents of the creed which was predominant at the time. The moral ideals of the Founder of Christianity were gradually replaced by fruitless and barren wrangling on theological and metaphysical disputations. Similar remarks could be made about the social and religious conditions of the Jews and the followers of other religions.

More important for our purpose are the conditions of Arabia up to the time of Muhammad. This country, though for centuries was not disturbed by the invading armies of the Greeks and Romans, yet had its own internal troubles. Its inhabitants formed a most heterogeneous nation, differing greatly in level of culture and religious beliefs. There were Jews chiefly in the south and central parts of the Hijaz; the Christians, who formed colonies all over Arabia, and the Sabaeans, who worshipped the stars. Besides, there was a large majority of Arabs who were idol worshippers, and believed in fetishism and black magic.

The idea of a Supreme Deity was practically unknown to heathen Arabia, although there were a few men who revolted against idolatry and resorted to some sort of philosophical scepticism.

On the moral and political sides, Arabia before Muhammad was a disintegrated and disunited group of tribes, each of which was loyal to its own traditions and was ready to defend such traditions by lawful or unlawful means. There were always jealousies and antagonistic feelings which led to family and tribal feuds.

There were two main classes of Arabs: the aristocracy and the masses. The latter, though not actual slaves, were treated as such by the noble and rich members of their tribes. No regard was paid to humanity or human rights. Human sacrifices were frequent in some of the temples; the burying alive of infant girls was one of their abominable customs. Polygamy was practised to an unlimited number of wives. Adultery, homosexuality, excessive drinking, gambling and so on were the order of the day.

Neither Christianity nor Judaism had succeeded in raising those Arabs in the scale of morality. "After five centuries of Christian evangelisation," says Muir, "we can point to but a sparkling here and there of Christians," yet after twenty-five years of preaching Islam the whole of Arabia was marching under the banner of the Prophet; and after his death the re-born and re-organised Arabs of the desert were prepared to go out of their peninsula and zealously spread their faith throughout the world. They faced the world as a united nation, with the blood of the desert still warm in their veins and the zeal of the new faith burning in their hearts.

The fundamental principles underlying the message of Islam

Like all other great religions, Islam has a message to humanity not only to the Arabs, among whom the Prophet Muhammad was raised. This message is permanent and unalterable as far as its fundamental beliefs and moral ideals are concerned. The Muslim code of Law, which applies to the practical affairs of life, may be subject to change according to changing conditions in time and place.

In order to have a clear idea of the message of Islam we must:

First: go to the original sources of Islam, and get our knowledge of the teaching of Islam directly from there.

Second: we must look into the past history of Islam, when the true Muslim spirit was at its best, and when Muslim civilization was a great world force unsurpassed by any other civilization of its time; when the Muslim Empire extended from the banks of the Indus to the shores of the Atlantic, and was greater than the Empires of Rome and Byzantium at their highest.

The fundamental principles underlying the message of Islam may be classified under three groups; theological, social and moral principles. On the moral side, Islam teaches that man is essentially good. The human soul has the innate power by means of which it perceives the good and does what is right; but when it is overwhelmed with passion and lust and the carnal desires of the body, its inner eye is dimmed, and it can no longer perceive what is good or do what is right. The moral system of Islam is to purify the soul of all anti-human and anti-social desires, such as cruelty, greed, malice, hypocrisy and hatred, and to cultivate in their place the positive virtues of love, kindness and unselfishness.

In planning the ethical system of society, Islam takes into consideration that the most outstanding characteristics of all these principles are simplicity and rationality, to which Islam owed its miraculous spread, as we have already mentioned.

From the theological point of view, the Muslim is called upon to believe in and worship one God — the Creator and Maintainer of the universe. He is called upon to believe in Muhammad, the Messenger of God, in all God's messengers and their scriptures, and in the Day of Judgment. This is summed up in some verses from the Qur'an (2:1-5), as follows:

"There is no doubt in this Book, a guidance to the pious who believe in the Unseen, who are steadfast in prayer, and distribute alms out of what We have bestowed on them; and who believe in what We have revealed to thee and what We revealed to others before thee, and who have assurance in the life to come. These receive guidance from their Lord and these are the prosperous."

Man's dealing is directly with God. There is no priesthood in Islam, no church in any real sense and no intercession. There is no ceremony or ritual. The Muslim can say his prayer anywhere; in the mosque, in the house, in the field, and, if need be, on the curb of a road. Commenting on this simplicity, an English writer says: "It is one of the glories of Islam that its temples are not built by hands, and that its ceremonies can be performed anywhere upon God's earth or under His heaven."

There are no mysteries in Islam. Everything can be rationally discussed and explained. An appeal is made to the
inner consciousness of man, to his intuitive reason alone.

On the simple doctrine of monotheism Islam makes no compromise. It teaches that monotheism is the religious doctrine preached by all the messengers of God from Abraham to Muhammad. The Qur’án uses the word Muslim not only for the followers of Muhammad, but for all the prophets and for everyone who believes in the unity of God. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Solomon and Jesus are all described as Muslims in the Qur’án.

Muhammad says that he did not come to the world with a new religion, but came to remind people of the true religion of their fathers, which they had forsaken or corrupted.

Islam in this sense is a universal religion, not a particular name for the religion of Muhammad. It is a generic name for all monotheistic religions. Paradise, according to Islam, is not the abode of the followers of any particular religion exclusively. The Qur’án (2 : 111) says:

“They verily say none shall enter paradise save those who are Jews or Christians. Say: produce your proof if ye speak the truth. Nay, but he who believes in God and does what is right shall have his reward with his Lord.”

On the social side, Islam upholds the principle of equality. It recognises no distinction between people on account of race, rank, colour or creed. All men are equal in the eyes of God. Piety is the only mark of distinction. The Qur’án (49 : 13) says:

“The most honoured among you in the eyes of God are the most pious.”

The ultimate aim of Islam is the formation of one great Brotherhood of humanity, bound by love and mutual respect and by allegiance to One God. This ideal was well nigh accomplished when the Muslim empire was one big Brotherhood, irrespective of differences of races, colours and creeds.

To put this principle of equality into effect, Islam encouraged in a variety of ways the setting free of slaves, and recommended a human treatment for them. It also allowed freedom of religious belief and practice to the people of the Scriptures. The Qur’án (2 : 256) says:

“In matter of religion there is no compulsion.”

Man’s position is the highest in God’s creation

According to Islam, man is the highest of all God’s creation. He is the only creature whom God created in His own characteristics. He is even higher than the angels. He is the microcosm who unites in himself all that God has created in the macrocosm. He is God’s Viceregent on earth.

We must, therefore, Islam says, allow every human being all human rights: the right to live, the right to be free, the right to own property and the right to be educated, and so on.

Secondly: we must protect man and spare his life as much as possible. The principle of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is not applied unconditionally in Islam. The sentence of death passed on a man who has committed a murder could be annulled if one of the nearest of kin of the murdered man wishes to spare the life of the murderer while all others insist on just retribution. The life of the murderer then is saved, on the ground that he may become a better citizen and a good servant of God.

Thirdly: we must look upon man as an end in himself and not as a means to an end. In other words we must look upon man as a human being and not as a means of accomplishing a certain objective: for an individual or for the whole state. Your servant — if you have one — your employee in a shop, a factory or an office, should be treated as a human being and not as a mere tool by means of which a service is rendered.

Fourthly, and lastly, we must give every human being the chance to realise his humanity in full: that is to say, provide every possible opportunity for a sound physical, intellectual and spiritual education.

In this way we hope to form the human Brotherhood which Islam endeavours to form and in this way the human, not the animal, man is entitled to be the Viceregent of God on earth.

This ideology, which Islam preaches, like the theological ideology, is also universal. It could be realised at all times and in all places.

Unfortunately, in the present world in which we live, it is lost sight of. There are countries at the present time which preach another kind of ideology which denies all these principles.

They worship the devil in the form of matter and material production. They treat man as a mere tool, a mere means of production, just like the machine with which he works.

Man is regarded as part of a huge machine and as such he has no individuality, no liberty, and no human rights. He is simply a human machine.

This is Islam as it is plainly stated in the Qur’án and the Traditions of the Prophet, or inferred from them; and these are its fundamental principles. But the texts of the Qur’án and prophetic Traditions have been from the earliest times, and still are, subjected — under the influence of non-Muslim currents of thought — to different interpretations and extraordinary methods of explanation, some of which are in harmony and absolute conformity with the teaching and true spirit of Islam, and some are not.

The three main methods of interpreting Islam

There have always been three main methods of interpreting Islam.

The traditional method, which keeps close to the letter of the revealed text of the Qur’án; the second is the rational method, which puts reason and rational argument as the final judge of all religious matters; and the third is the mystical method, which leaves everything to the light of illumination and mystical unveiling. Hence we have in Islam the Orthodox School, the School of philosophers and rationalistic theologians and the School of the Sufis, or Muslim mystics.

The outcome of the different points of view between these schools is sometimes very great and far-reaching. It is shown in the attitude taken by the Muslims towards the very meaning and essence of Islam, the conception of God, the relation between man and God and so on.

God, according to the Orthodox School, is a living personality possessing attributes and is in constant relation with His creation. According to the rationalistic theologians, He is a transcendent Being who is almost reduced to a mere abstraction. To the Muslim philosophers, He is a metaphysical principle possessing the only attribute of self-sub sistence. To the majority of the Sufis, God is the main object of love. To know Him is to love Him, and to love Him is to worship Him, and to worship Him is to behold Him everywhere, particularly in your heart. To the pantheistic Sufis, God is the Unity of all Beings, and so on. To go deeply into the different theories of the Muslim schools is to go through the whole history of Islam and Muslim philosophy and theology.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
Sinan, the Architect of the Glorious Period of the Ottoman Empire

Sinan stands in all lands and times as one of the truly great immortals, who are a blessing to all men without distinction and enrich them for ever

By Professor Dr. ERNST EGIL

I wrote a book on Turkish architecture, under the title of Sinân, der Baumeister Osmanischer Glanzzeit, published by Verlag Eugen Rentsch, Ehlenbach, near Zurich, Switzerland, 1954. If the book, on the one hand, proved how little the West in general knows about the great manifestations of the neighbouring Islamic world, it also showed, on the other hand, how appreciative large groups in the West are to have the opportunity of learning about these important expressions of human thought beyond their own frontiers. One cannot deny that in the new age, on the threshold of which we are standing, since all former spiritual and artistic forms have been discarded, decomposed, re-ordered and built into new forms, the common human elements have come closer to one another and discovered a common ground; however, they may have been conditioned by forms of the period, and it is precisely Art which provides a bridge of understanding across time and space, for it does not appeal to reason, which so willingly surrounds itself automatically with a barbed-wire enclosure in order to create for itself a fortress of orthodoxy, but rather to the world of the senses, what is seen, heard and touched, in which the creative forces of man daily reveal themselves anew. The passage of time always involves becoming and dissolution, re-birth and decline, a constantly renewed cosmos, a constantly subjected chaos, which Art seeks to understand, since it sees meaning in beauty and constantly re-forms this beauty.

In Sinân's works, time speaks to us but, like all great epochs of history, that time is merely a symbol for the timeless. People speak to us, seen and portrayed through the observing wisdom of a great artist. In Sinân's works, however, a great artist also speaks to us, revealing himself de profundis in his search for light, beauty and recognition. Thus the secret of the loving Spirit, which manifests itself historically, finds in Sinân the pliable tool of its will.

Sinân's early career in the Janissary Corps

The year of birth and the origin of Sinân are unknown to us. It is certain that Sinân, while still a small boy, came to Istanbul, to the house of İbrahim Jenderili Pâşâ, in about 1495 C.E., in the company of his mother and brother, as a war captive and slave; he was later emancipated and removed to the district of Qaysariyye, where he spent his youth. We can only say that Sinân was born around 1490 or 1491 C.E., was probably of Western origin, and possibly came from Albania, Croatia, Carinthia or Styria. Attempts have been made to claim success for Sinân from these angles. But I consider these futile. There is nothing to gain therefrom; for no man can contradict that Sinân grew up in Turkish surroundings or that his life's work could develop exclusively in the Ottoman Turkish and Islamic world. The strength of the Islamic mode of life, the influence of the Turkish surroundings and the power of the Ottoman state, showed themselves to this foreign child.

In the Turkish environment one must also consider the central Anatolian landscape. For that landscape, with its spaces, colours, lonely peculiarities, the notes of shepherds' pipes, the severe winters and hot summers, the very specific landscape, its towns and mountains, formed Sinân while still a tender youth. The Turkish language and finally his service as a "devshirme" in the Janissary Corps, into which he was enrolled in Istanbul in 1512 C.E., must have similarly affected him. And just as today the new emigrant to New York is rapidly transformed into an American, so also must the brilliance of the Ottoman court, the size of the buildings, the peculiar atmosphere of the incomparable city of Istanbul, have finally made Sinân into a proud participant of this environment.

Sinân served in the Janissary Corps after his apprenticeship (1512 to about 1515 C.E.) for many years, until autumn 1539 C.E. In that period he climbed the military ranks to the highest, distinguishing himself as a chief of pioneer troops, building bridges, ships, fortifications, mosques in the conquered towns, and even built a mosque in Aleppo (The Khusrawiyye) for (the later Vizier) Khusrev Pâşâ. So it came about that in the year 1539 C.E. he was proposed by Lutfi Pâşâ, his former commander, who did later become Grand Vizier, for the post of Sultan's Architect, a post which he obtained and retained until his death, in 1588 C.E. Born in the year 895 A.H. (1490 C.E.) or 896 A.H. (1491 C.E.), Sinân lived until 996 A.H. (1588 C.E.), i.e. over 100 (Muslim) years, as is borne out by the inscription on the tombstone erected by his friend, Mustaphâ Sa'î.

Sinân becomes the chief architect in the Ottoman Empire

Sinân was, therefore, chief architect for the whole period from 1539 to 1588 C.E., that is for 49 years, under Sultan Sulaymân the Magnificent (1520 to 1566 C.E.), Salim the Second (1566 to 1574 C.E.) and Murâd the Third (1574 to 1595 C.E.). During that period he constructed the second and final series of his buildings (the original list was commissioned in 1578 or 1579 C.E. and then postponed to 1585

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C.E.). These were the following works: 81 cathedral mosques, 50 small mosques, 55 madrasahs, 7 Qur'anic schools, 19 tombs (the Turbés), 17 'imarets (poor kitchens), 6 hospitals, 7 aqueducts, 8 bridges, 17 caravanserais, 32 palaces, 6 storehouses and 32 baths. Doubtless these lists, prepared by his friend, Mustapha Sa'i, will play an important part in further researches on the life of Sinán. But it may be pointed out that these lists assume that certain buildings were erected by Sinán, as, for example, the tomb of Sulayman's wife, Roxiane (Hassik Khurram) and some mosques which may, however, have been falsely attributed to him, and especially the private buildings and water courses, many of which he must have constructed in large numbers for his friends.

Sinán's life work is, therefore, not only noteworthy but also plenteous. It is also remarkable in terms of architectonic and artistic performance.

In my book mentioned at the beginning of this article, an attempt has been made by me, by means of the dated tombs, to reach a chronological sequence of Sinán's mental development. The study and analysis of the inscriptions confirms and completes through this chronological measure a picture of Sinán's artistic development.

This development is, as will be clear to subsequent investigators, no chance success of mere creative occupation with commissions, but the blossoming of a maturing man and artist.

We come in contact with Sinán in the year 1537 C.E. (the Khusrawiyye at Aleppo) with military earnest and straight expression. His already very individualistic thought is still, emphatically speaking, draped in the heavy military cape. This straight expression which sees the actual and the constructive and only that, still speaks in 1544 C.E. from the tomb of Barbarossa, Khayreddán Páshá.

The three works of Sinán which form a unity

About that time, or shortly before it, his first change occurs—he has discarded the old, completely grasped his artistic materials and surprised us with three works which in a certain sense form a unity: they are dedicated to fortune, to death and to eternal nature. Fortune speaks from the festival and princely tent of a princess, from the flower decoration of the walls, from the gaiety of the mosque of Princess Mihrimáh. Sadness, however, speaks from the stately tombstone which he placed for Prince Mehmet in the Shaykh-Zade, which he dedicated to him. Sinán portrays eternal nature, however, where the creator in constant renewal meets its creator in the simultaneous future of nature and God on the threshold of the Iskale Mosque at Scutarí (Uesküdar). These three works span the period from 1542 to 1549 C.E. During that period the ornamental epoch of Sinán represented only intermediate play, based on the theme of the Prince's Mosque, an ornamental play with ornamentation relative to the death of the loved prince.

The three mentioned works form, in a certain sense, the basis of Sinán's later creations. They contain a triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, on which the complete evolution of Sinán in the last years of his life is based.

In the year 1549 C.E. Sinán appears to have completed his development. He appeared then to be trying to test his material frequently in a similar measure. Numerous works served him for the prominent people of the state at that time. But the subsequent period finds Sinán occupied with the duality in man. The great and the only too human were mingled in those fruitful years of Sulayman's dominion: destruction and construction followed one another at the court and in the state. In this period (1550-1558 C.E.) the Sultan's Mosque (the Sulaymaniyye) distinguishes itself as the principal work, built to show the contrast between man and God, Pride and humility speak from the Sultan's Mosque in a really princely style. Sinán also worked in his other contemporary masterpieces with contrasts: that between vehicle and content, between the substantial and the ethereal, in chiaroscuro turning as much to the light as to the shadows, as withdrawing and return. Sinán ornaments simultaneously remind one of the worthlessness of the decoration, contrasts body and soul, chaos and cosmos, to invite the pilgrim (in Damascus) to awareness and entry. Sinán works in contrast and seeks for a representation of man in his duality—divided personality.

The smaller works (the Ahmet Páshá, the Sinán Páshá, the Tekka in Damascus and others) accompany the great work of the Sultan's Mosque as variations on the basic thought, apparent at that time in the personality of the customer or in the task of the single work.

The masterpiece of Sinán, the Selimiye Mosque at Edirne

Then a new change occurred in Sinán. Evidence thereof is the Rustem Páshá Mosque. It is a change towards the deepening in spirit of Sufism. With that change Sinán received the courage to affirm, and he soon found the opportunity to demonstrate this. And he did exactly this with that work which he was to call his masterpiece, with the Selimiye in Edirne (Adrianople) and to a lesser extent with the mosque of Sokollu-Mehmet Páshá in Istanbul-Kadırga. The Selimiye became a monument of affirmation, a monument of the victory of a form of life over time and space. With the other mosques, however, Sinán glorified the cosmos and the state, which in wise ordering bound the single to the whole.

But soon the shadow sides of his environment affected Sinán. He builds for Pertev Páshá a mosque erected on pageantry and beautiful surroundings. He builds with fine irony for Pertev Páshá a second mosque, like a courtly baroque salon, as if it were the meeting point of all values and vanities and not a place of prayer.

We feel that around 1578 C.E. Sinán has moved away from his period; he stands at the threshold of his old age. Now in this final review of his life (1578 to 1588 C.E.), he concentrates on life and death.

He experiences everything once again, the Bosphorus flowing by, the accompanying period before beauty (the Shemsi Ahmad Páshá Mosque), esoteric in Islamic teaching (the Ahmad Mosque in Qaysariyye), all the rules which he had been able to hold under his influence during his life (the Klytst-'Alí Páshá Mosque in Istanbul) and, finally, the melancholy of the vision of the final realisation (the Eski Valide Mosque in Scutarí-Uesküdar).

The subsequent works insofar as they really originate from Sinán, show the traces of his extreme age—he had reached his 100th year.

This evolution of an individualistic personality to a complete expression above the fundamental ideas of time and eternity is accompanied by a host of practical buildings, such as baths, hostels and others, which in their extensive transformation show Sinán as a master of extensive combinations.

Continued on page 18
A view of Family Planning in Islamic Legislation

"If couples obey Islamic law, there should not be more than four births over a period of eleven years"

By MUHAMMAD MAKKI NASIRI

The preservation of the human race the essential objective of Islamic religion

One of the essential objectives of Islamic law has been the preservation of the human race and its survival through successive generations.

At once realistic and idealistic, Islamic law takes into account the real conditions of man's life on the one hand, and, on the other, it harmonizes with the needs of a perfect society, where virtue reigns. It carefully brings together such different qualities as wisdom, perspicacity, logical thinking, and common sense.

That is why the law has figured prominently from the beginning and on a large scale in the sphere of family organization, wishing to protect the family from all forms of arbitrariness or anarchy, because the family is the basic cell of society and the foundation on which the nation and the state rests. The Qur'an, the highest source of Muslim law, has devoted more attention to this question than to any others. It has defined the rights and duties of the family, leaving no point unexplained and neglecting no aspect of family life.

For this reason, Islam has been the religion that is most interested in the problem of the family and its organization in the framework of family planning — its means as well as its objectives.

Family planning, as it is most usually accepted today, aims at giving parents a broader and deeper perception of their moral and material responsibilities, as father, mother or together. They will, therefore, be more concerned for the future of their children and contribute to a healthier future generation, physically and morally, that will know how to serve the country with more efficiency and devotion. Thus perceived, family planning is a subject of vital importance that can only attract the attention of Islamic scholars, and in particular those among them who have a firm understanding of Islamic law, and have followed its profound philosophy and lofty spirit.

The subject of family planning should not elicit astonishment or hesitation among the experts, since the objective of their research is to study the texts of Islamic law, its regulations that have been handed down from one generation to another, for those points concerning family planning, and to relate them to discussions by contemporary specialists. They must also seek to discover to what extent these teachings can help give the family a rational organization that answers its social, material, moral and health conditions and that will ensure the birth of a pure generation without any diseases or defects, provided with all necessities for existence and capable of assuming its tasks in the difficult circumstances of present day life.

Since marriage is the base on which family structure and the birth of a new generation rest, we will examine it briefly as a point of departure in the study of this issue; and we will begin by examining the point of view of Muslim law on the subject of the ideal legal marriage as a prelude to the investigation of procreation, the fruit and ultimate goal of marriage.

A — The Five Islamic Views of Marriage

Contrary to what one would think a priori, the scholars of Islamic law do not have the same concept of marriage. Some have simply considered it as a permissible situation, while others, going further, have treated it as a meritorious

1 The text of a paper read at the National Seminar on Family Planning held at Rabat, Morocco, on 11 October 1966.
act — nothing more. Still others, going another step forward, have defined it as an obligation of sufficiency. In other words, it suffices that one group in society contracts marriage so that another group may be dispensed from it. Other scholars, who go even further, have decided that marriage is an absolute obligation. Finally, a more flexible school of thought has appeared among the Fiqhah, in particular the Malikites: marriage should be judged according to the conditions of those who manifest a desire for it. According to the individual case, marriage can be judged as a legal situation, a meritorious act, or an obligation, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, as a blameworthy or prohibited act.

Now we will briefly examine the five theories on the subject.

The first view: Marriage as a permissible situation, nothing more.

The great Imam al-Shafi’i (d. 820 C.E.) is, without doubt, the most famous of the Muslim scholars who have led the marriage state to the dimensions of a legal situation differing in no way from a choice of food or drink and also permitting a certain pleasure. Shafi’i strongly defended this position in his book al-Uum (The Mother). Explaining the imperative quality of the verb in the verse of the Qur’an (24: 32):

“Make your widows, your pious men and women slaves marry.”

he maintains that it by no means contains the idea of obligation but simply of permission. He adds that the imperative mood in the Qur’an and the Hadith can have several different meanings. It can mean that God, after having prohibited something, later made it licit. He then cites this verse as an example:

“Upon entering the legal period, go out to hunt” (The Qur’an 5: 2),

or this verse:

“Once your prayer has been said, attend to things of the world” (The Qur’an 62: 10).

or this verse:

“When the sacrificial animal has fallen dead on its side you will eat it and offer some to him who is safe from want as well as to him who suffers deprivation” (The Qur’an 22: 28).

Then Shafi’i says: “There are numerous examples of this type in the Qur’an and the Sunnah. They must not hunt during the legal period or disperse to attend to business immediately after prayer or eat the animal offered in sacrifice.”

Among the Malikites, Abu al-‘Abbás al-Qurashî is an adherent of the same view. He upholds the idea of no obligation in marriage and uses this verse as argument:

“Those who preserve themselves from all sexual contact except with their spouse or slave-concubines are not to be blamed” (The Qur’an 23: 6).

He then poses this question: if marriage were an obligation it would be inexact to say that those who contract marriage are not to be blamed — as we have just seen in the verse.

The Second View: Marriage is a meritorious act.

Some of the Muslim scholars have interpreted the imperative mood used in the passage on marriage not as an obligation but as an invitation to a meritorious act. To con- sider this conception, the Muslim is not subject to the obligation of marriage.

In his book Bidâyah al-Mujtahid (The departure point for the legislative reformer), Ibn Rushd (d. 1198) says:

“The most popular opinion on the subject of marriage is one which considers marriage an optional situation.” In the book Ahkâm al-Qurân, by Ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 1240 C.E.) it says: “Abû Hanîfah and Mâlik said that marriage is a meritorious act. See Sharî’ah al-Taqrib.” Al-Walî al-‘Trâqi, speaking on the subject of the rules concerning marriage, says: “For the majority of both ancient and modern scholars marriage is a meritorious, but not compulsory, act. The Muslim is not directed to marry or take a concubine, even if he is afraid of falling into sin. This is what al-Nawawi was able to gather as the unanimous opinion of all the religious scholars.”

The Third View: Marriage is an obligation of sufficiency.

Among the Fiqhah there are those who consider marriage an obligation of sufficiency and not an individual and absolute obligation. Thus, if one part of the Islamic community contracts marriage, the other part is not required to do so. Bachelors are not sinners in this case. But if everyone avoids marriage, then the sin falls on them all.

Among those who have held this point of view, one should cite Abû Sa’îd al-Harawi, the Shafi’ite, who said notably:

“Some of our friends have affirmed that marriage is an obligation of sufficiency. If the inhabitants of a country boycott marriage, they must be forced into it.”

The Hanafite al-Samarqandi says in his book Tuhfa al-Fiqhah: “Our friends profess different opinions. Certain among them say that it is a question of an obligation of sufficiency that loses any obligatory overtones when one part of the community discharges this duty.”

The Fourth View: Marriage is an absolute and individual obligation.

Among the Fiqhah there are those who have considered marriage an absolute and individual obligation. For them, the person who avoids marriage while he is fit to fulfill all his conjugal duties on the sexual and financial levels commits a sin. But this obligatory aspect is valid for only one marriage in life. Dâwûd Ibn ‘Alî al-Isbahânî and the Zakirithe, who agree with him, are at the head of those who hold this opinion. It is also the opinion of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and was maintained by some of the Hanifites, as al-Samarqandi reports in his work, Tuhfa al-Fiqhah.

The people who hold such an opinion are divided into two groups. One group affirms the absolute obligation of marriage and does not subordinate this obligation to the fear of sin. The Zakirithe Ibn Hazm (d. 1064 C.E.) belongs to this group. An attitude similar to that of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is taken. Another group that views the obligation of marriage or concubinage in the light of the fear of adultery holds that in the absence of such a fear the obligatory nature falls. The book al-Muharrar, by Ibn Taymiyyah, says, “Marriage is a sacred Sunnah, optional in nature, for those who want it, unless they fear adultery. It then becomes formally obligatory.”

The Zakirithe Ibn Hazm says in al-Muhallâ: “Everyone with normal sexual capabilities is directed either to marry or to take concubines. If they fail to do either they must increase
their pious acts of fasting." Then he adds, "This is the opinion of a group of ancient scholars."

The Fifth View: Variation of the Character of Marriage According to the Individual Situation.

Other Fuqahā have considered marriage from the angle of individual and social interest and reality. To them, marriage is an act to which the five judgments of the Shari'ah may apply, according to the case. Under certain circumstances, marriage is simply a legal act. At other times it goes beyond this limitation to become a meritorious act; but it can also be blameworthy in certain instances. It can even become prohibited in other cases. But it is also necessary to point out the cases in which it becomes an obligation.

In his book Akhām al-Qur'ān, Ibn al-'Arabī writes on the Qur'ān 24:32:

"Make your widows and your pious men and women slaves marry."

"The imperative 'make them marry' has given rise to three different interpretations: obligatory, optional or lawful.

"Our scholars have said, 'The decision to be taken on such a question is subordinate to the situation of the individual according to whether he fears adultery and the loss of self-control or, on the other hand, whether he remains master of himself with no apprehension about adultery. If he fears for his religion and his welfare, marriage becomes an absolute obligation.'"

In the Qowānīn al-Fi`qhiyyah Ibn Zuzayy says textually: "Marriage is optional: the Zahirites have made it an obligation. In its division it is separated into five cases: obligatory for the person who has the financial means and fears adultery; meritorious for the person who has the means but who is not afraid of falling into adultery; prohibited for the person who does not have the means and does not fear the temptation of an adulterous act; blameworthy for the person who neither experiences any fear on the subject of an adulterous act nor is sure of being able to carry out the obligations of marriage. Apart from these cases, marriage is a lawful act."

This point of view, extolled by the Malikites, has been adopted by others. Taqīy al-Dīn Ibn Daqiq brought it up again in his exegesis concerning the 'Umdah al-Akhām. He adds that even in the case where there is a fear of adultery, along with the financial means, marriage is not obligatory and there is still a choice between marriage and concubinage. If concubinage is impossible, marriage then becomes imperative.

Ibn Rushd, in Bidāyah al-Mujtahid, says, "More recently, the Malikite leaders say that marriage is obligatory for certain categories of people, optional for others and lawful for a third group, with the criteria resting on the degree of fear inspired by adultery." Then he comments on what he has just reported: "Those who have stated that marriage is an obligation for certain people, a meritorious act for others and a lawful situation for still others have taken into consideration their interest, in conformity with the famous theory of the Masālih al-Mursalāh."

Ibn Rushd's remark has attracted the attention of scholars to the fact that the Malikites' Fuqahā takes self-interest into consideration in marriage, remaining faithful in that to their doctrine of the Masālih, which can serve as a basis for legal decisions.

From this quick review of the various legal interpretations of marriage, it becomes clear that Islam does not impose marriage on those of marriageable age or condemn chaste single people or even impose any sanctions against those who prefer celibacy to marriage. The Fuqahā affirm that marriage cannot be accomplished under coercion. It must be lawful or meritorious. It is a pure obligation of sufficiency.

Thus, according to the framework of religious law, those who cannot marry — by reason of personal circumstances or pressing need — need have no qualms of conscience. At the same time, they cannot be accused of unfitness.

As we have seen, according to the Fuqahā, the only instance in which marriage becomes an obligation concerns the person who, on the one hand, is capable of fulfilling his conjugal duties and, on the other hand, incapable of maintaining the celibate state because of fear of falling into depravity and adultery. In such circumstances, religion makes marriage an obligation for him.

In this last conclusion it becomes clear that the ability to discharge the duties of marriage and assume its responsibilities does not, ipso facto, carry with it the obligation of marriage. The cause that establishes such an obligation is the fear that the individual has within himself of succumbing to the temptation of adultery and which is accompanied by the financial ability to marry. Such an obligation is designed to protect society, safeguard the honour of families and the purity of their genealogies.

Only the Zahirite Ibn Hazm makes marriage an obligation for the person who, over and above his financial capacity, experiences neither fear of committing adultery nor desire to marry.

The Shari'ah does not impose marriage on the person who is incapable of fulfilling his conjugal duties. Quite the opposite, the Shari'ah makes marriage a forbidden object for him so that he may avoid the immediate and long-range consequences of such a situation.

If he voluntarily contracts a marriage now and later finds himself in financial straits he will have committed an act forbidden by divine law and will answer for his infraction before God.

B — Legal Guarantees Required for Marriage

After this brief glance at the conception of Islam on the substance of marriage, it is now time to turn our attention for a while to the guarantees required by Islamic law on the subject of marriage, the basis of the establishment of the family, which assures its stability, security, development and prosperity. It is by means of these guarantees that we will grasp the Islamic notion of family planning, a notion held in high esteem from the early days of Islam. Here we will limit ourselves to two kinds of legislative guarantees.

1. Health Guarantees

In a study of Islamic law, one discovers that the law is bent on securing normal health conditions for both parties and their offspring. This law subordinates the preservation of the state of marriage to the maintenance of normal health, free from all infirmities or defects. According to the law, any infirmity or deformity whatsoever that exists at the time of the conclusion of the marriage contract is a sufficient legal reason for a separation, even if the incriminating facts are not discerned until much later.

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Thus, in such a situation, Islamic law breaks the marriage bond and does not force one of the parties to sacrifice himself for the other, so long as there is sufficient cause.

Even if the husband suffers from no infirmity or deformity until after the marriage contract is concluded, Islamic law pronounces a divorce, so as not to subject the wife to the unfortunate consequences of such a situation.

Muslim jurists have even gone so far as to allow the conditions required by one of the two parties regarding the health of his spouse to be written into the marriage contract, so that in case some defect appears the first party still has the right to break the contract and put an end to the marriage. For all defects that leave the choice to one party and serve as causes for the breaking of the marriage contract, the separation by divorce must be pronounced immediately. A delay of one year can only be granted for temporary sexual impotence.

The defect must be verified by experienced experts or by the acknowledgement of the person concerned. On the other hand, the Fuqahá have forbidden the marriage of a sick man or woman who may become disquieted by the married state. Such a marriage can always be declared dissolved, considering the dire consequences it will surely bring to both husband and wife as well as to their progeny, and the harm it can cause by perpetuating the disease.

The celebrated jurist Shawkání maintains the same point of view in his book Nayl al-Awtår, relying on the opinion of a large number of the Prophet’s Companions, and of other religious leaders who came after them. Some of the Shi’ites, for their part, state that the wife can be repudiated by her husband for the same defects that permit the buyer to return a female slave. Ibn al-Qayyim maintains the same opinion in his book al-Hudá. As for Az-Zuhri, he simply affirms that a marriage is dissolved for any serious illness.

According to Ibn al-Hájib, some of the Fuqahá give the wife complete freedom of choice between saving or breaking up her marriage if her husband is stricken with an illness or defect after the contract has been signed, even though she does not normally have the right to divorce her husband.

Several remarks made by Ibn Rushd in Bidyáyah al-Mujtahid on the subject of the option given in case of defects should be noted: “The Malikites,” he says, “do not agree on why the defects that are grounds for a break-up are limited to four (madness, leprosy, skin disease and venereal disease). It has been called an unexplained precept. It has also been said that it is a question of defects that can be hidden, whereas the majority of diseases are visible; it has even been mentioned that there is a fear of transmitting these defects through heredity.”

Commenting on that, Ibn Rushd adds: “To consider this explanation, a person can be rejected because of his dark colour or skin disease, but to consider the first point of view, a marriage can be broken up on account of any defect that has not been made known to his spouse.”

Among the recommendations of Islamic law concerning health, there is one that counsels against marriage between close relatives and encourages the union of people who are not related at all. Al-Ghazzáli, in his al-Ihyá, and Ibn Jawzi, in his Sayd al-Khádir, are foremost among the supporters of this opinion. The first has shown how the wife must not be a close relative because the child that is born will be sickly. He explains this by the fact that one cannot be affected by something one knows and is accustomed to; this does not produce the same impression that something new does. The second brings attention to the fact that marriage between close relatives is blameworthy “because it hampers the expansion of the soul; the soul has no inclination for something it is already accustomed to and would rather search for something new.” Tradition attributes to ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattáb these words, spoken to a tribe: “You have become weak. You must marry with distant families.”

In the same way, the nursing of children receives great attention in Islamic health recommendations. These have gone so far as to forbid sexual intercourse between husband and wife during lactation in order to spare the child the harm of his mother’s new pregnancy. According to Ibn Dé’d, referring to Asma’ Ibn Yazid Ibn al-Sakan, the Prophet has said: “Do not kill your children secretly; nursing during the course of pregnancy makes the rider fall from his horse.” This can mean simply that such nursing is bad for the child, weakens his body and results in incurable deficiencies that will continue on into his manhood. The child in question does not begin life with the same chances as his competitors.

That is why the Qur’án praises women who nurse their children for two years. It says (2 : 228):

“Mothers who want to nurse their children perfectly do so for two years.”

The effects of such a rule of conduct are readily visible: if the child is nursed for two years and the parents follow the instructions of the Prophet to abstain during the entire lactation period, the child will be well, the mother will keep her good health, the father will not have the worries brought on by another pregnancy and there will be enough spare time for the child’s education. The mother can devote as much of her time as is necessary to the child without being bothered by other concerns. In addition, the birth of children will be widely spaced, in conformity with the planning of the Qur’án, the expression of divine wisdom. Thus, by remaining faithful to the Plan in the Qur’án, there will be no more than four births over a period of eleven years. But by allowing desire to rule, it is quite possible that eleven children will be born in as many years. This is lustful and disordered planning.

But the jurists do not stop here with regard to health. Although they don’t recommend physical beauty as a major consideration of marriage, they do prefer it to ugliness, as they prefer youth to old age. This is explained by Ibn Juzayy in al-Qawámin al-Fiqhíyyah. There is the story of the man, who lived during the time of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattáb, who dyed his hair before marrying. When his hair changed colour, the woman’s family lodged a complaint against him before ‘Umar and said, “We took him for a young man.” ‘Umar struck him forcefully, saying, “You have fooled these people.”

Among the conditions that favour a lasting union, al-Ghazzáli cites the beauty of a woman’s face. This beauty should be sought after, according to him, because it helps to keep the affection of the man. “An ugly woman often does not satisfy a man. If he is not sure of being able to apply the religious precepts in the beginning, if he is not married to a woman who is physically attractive, he must seek out beauty. The enjoyment of what is permitted constitutes, in such a case, a defence of religion.”

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Ibn al-Jawzi also approached a similar position in his *Sayd al-Khātir*. He says that a man must choose his wife for pleasure and to have children. Accordingly, she must please him, and it is on this condition that he can marry her. Nothing stops him from seeing her and talking to her before marriage. He says: "Beauty is in the mouth and the eyes."

The Islamic teaching on family and health have always been the concern of Muslim jurists

This brief survey of Islamic teachings on family and health shows us the great interest Islam has in the health of the family and in the vigour of the child and his protection from sickness and infirmity. Thus, Islam was thinking about these problems well before other legislations became interested in them. It is clear that Muslim jurists are not bewildered or hesitant on the subject of family planning. The objective of their research is to uncover the original rules and recommendations of Islamic law, and to seek the relation between these recommendations and family planning programs as they are discussed by contemporary specialists. What are the points where the two groups come together? To what extent can thoughts be harmonized and agreement reached to help organize the family in a logical way, in accord with its hygienic, social, material and moral reality, in order to ensure that future generations are healthy and pure, are provided with all the necessities of life, and are able to confront all the responsibilities and difficulties of present day living?

The jurists, understandably, will never look favourably on a marriage contracted between sick or infirm people, especially those who suffer from hereditary, chronic or contagious diseases. They discourage even more the birth of deficient and weak progeny. Muslim law leaves the choice to the health party of whether or not to break up his marriage if his partner is stricken with a sickness or infirmity. Why build the family nest today just to destroy it tomorrow? Would it not be better to take preventative measures at the right time in order to avoid such marriages?

2. Material Guarantees

In addition to the health guarantees concerning marriage and procreation, Islamic law takes into account the material factor, that is the material capacity for assuming the responsibility of a family and ensuring its preservation and it does so before the actual establishment of the family.

One of the proofs that a future husband offers on this material capacity is the *sudāq*, or dowry. He must show that he is capable of paying the *sudāq*. It is a unanimously recognized law that the *sudāq* cannot be omitted by mutual agreement because it is written in the Qur'ān (4: 4):

"Give your wives their sudāq, as a pious act."

In addition, Islamic law directs him to pay for the marriage celebration. It also requires him to take care of all the expenses incurred by the wife's presence in his house: expenses for lodgings, furniture, food, clothes, cleaning and, if necessary, domestic help. It imposes on him the expenses of the children from the beginning of pregnancy until they reach the years of discretion, passing through the periods of infancy, childhood, puberty and — for the men — the capacity of earning a living, or — for the girls — marriage.

Islamic law has envisaged various cases under this chapter: children who are studying in one of the acknowledged disciplines remain under the care of their father, even after the age of puberty and for the duration of their studies, provided they show proof of merit.

The male child remains in the care of his father, even after the age of puberty, if he suffers from an infirmity or sickness that prevents him from working.

Likewise, the husband whose parents are poor must, according to Islamic law, take care of their upkeep in order to show them his tenderness and respect, even if they still have some capability of earning their own living. Abū Hanīfah goes even further and extends the benefit of this filial duty to all close relatives.

Islamic law puts the husband in charge of the wife's allowance, the object of a revocable repudiation on his part. Without stopping, he must pay this allowance during the course of her legal retirement; he must pay this allowance during pregnancy, even in case of a final repudiation. The legal retirement of pregnant women ends with delivery (The Qur'ān 65: 6). An allowance of this kind must be considered as being for the child who, since he is still a foetus, can only be nourished by his mother's body. The same situation arises when the husband renounces his wife immediately after delivery of the child. He must pay the mother an allowance for the nursing of the child.

"You must pay them an allowance when they are nursing your children" (The Qur'ān 65: 6).

The husband will be responsible for two allowances if he renounces his wife while she is both pregnant and nursing.

Too heavy a *sudāq* can constitute a cause for separation for the husband, even before consummation of the marriage. He must pay half the *sudāq*, even if there has been no real marriage. In such a case, the repudiation is final. The Malikite *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) has followed the same lines, since he gives the wife the right to ask for a divorce if the husband is not capable of assuring her normal support. Separation of husband and wife when there is an incapacity of assuring the expenses of standard support is the point of view attributed to Abū Hurayrah and to Sa'īd Ibn al-Musayyib. It is recommended by the Malikite doctrine and also by Shāfi'i Ahmad Ibn Thaur Ibn 'Ubayd. The wife can present a petition to the Qādī in order to show her husband's incapacity to provide her with normal support. If the husband attends the presentation of the petition, the judge (Qādī) can enjoin him to fulfill his matrimonial obligations or renounce his wife, then and there. If he refuses, the Qādī can pronounce the divorce himself. If the husband is not there and does not have money to provide for the support of his wife, she is free to ask for a divorce herself.

Whatever leniency the law gives to the indigent husband — a liberal delay to the husband who is present in the hope of seeing his situation improve and an extension of time to the absent husband — they only work in his favour if he succeeds in escaping from his indigence and assuming his matrimonial obligations, especially his obligation to support his wife and children in a regular manner. As a result, if the husband regains his solvency within the legal period of one hundred and thirty days, he retains the right to take back his wife; but if he remains poor, the repudiation can be considered final.

The indigent husband cannot ask the law to support his wife under its marital authority while he remains incapable of supplying her with a *sudāq* and the standard support of
family life by invoking certain verses which he misinterprets. Examples of these verses are:

"If they are poor, God will enrich them with his own gifts" (The Qur’ān 24:32);
or even

"We will enrich you, you and them" (The Qur’ān 9:28).

These verses do not apply to the above situation because the goodness of divine providence that is so evident to each one of us must not be confused with the effort that every individual must put forth to earn his living. ‘Umar said: “None of you must stop working to earn his living, saying, ‘O God! Make me rich.’ You know very well that the sky will not rain gold and silver.”

Thus, the law of Islam has a clear and firm attitude toward adventurists who act irresponsibly by undertaking marriage lightly and seeking to have children while, materially, they do not have sufficient resources to take care of them. Anyone who embarks upon such an adventure challenges Islamic law, ignores its real intentions, and commits a sacrilegious act in the eyes of the Shari’ah. Consequently, Islamic justice does not hesitate to thwart his plans, putting an end to his adventure.

Therefore, in view of the above considerations, it can be said that all the judicial or administrative measures that apply will serve only to support the precepts of Islam and to assure their application in the letter as well as in the spirit of the law. This is God’s recommendation:

“Let those who cannot marry (because of poverty) remain single until God enriches them from His goodness” (The Qur’ān 24:33).

C — The Legal Capacity Considered in Marriage

The Fuqahā have included the health and material conditions in the elements that make up the legal capacity of the two spouses. We will mention several elements that enter into the establishment of this capacity.

1. The financial element

The husband must have a legal income that permits him to ensure the subsistence of his family. Ibn Rushd and Ibn Juzayy consider this financial element an essential component of legal capacity.

2. The health element

Both spouses must be free from all infirmities and serious illnesses. Here again Ibn Rushd and Ibn Juzayy are understood to consider the health conditions as a constitutive element of the legal capacity.

3. The moral element

The good conduct of the husband. According to Ibn Rushd, piety is considered a mark of good conduct. All the judicial doctrines agree in saying that a young virgin whose father marries her off to a drunkard or an adulterer can abstain from consummating the marriage. The magistrate must in their case pronounce the annulment of the marriage.

Thus, by its texts, Muslim law manifests a great concern by surrounding marriage with all kinds of guarantees, particularly health and material guarantees.

D — Preventative Measures After Marriage

The interest of Muslim law is not limited to material and health guarantees but extends to new situations that can arise after a couple have established their family, when they find themselves in need of taking measures to prevent or postpone conception. From its earliest days, even during the lifetime of the Prophet, Islam has made use of the early birth control practices, notably withdrawal (‘Ajl), meaning that the husband and wife should separate during sexual relations to prevent pregnancy. This is a method that is authorized by a number of the Hadith of the Prophet, which are authenticated by the authority of an important number of his disciples. Mālik, Shāfi‘i, the Kufites and the majority of the doctors of law also agree with them.

This does not stop a small number of jurists, such as Ibn ‘Umar, from considering the method blameworthy. For them, it recalls the pre-Islamic custom of Wād, according to which a father could bury his daughter alive in order to avoid an eventual dishonour. The ‘Ajl method is just another minor Wād. But, finally, the majority of the Fuqahā are for the method (on this point, refer to the exegesis of Abū al-Walid al-Bājī on the Muwattā of Mālik). This is also the point of view held by Ghazzālī in his Ihyā, for whom ‘Ajl is blameworthy only in the third degree. Likewise, the ambiguity created by the Hadith of Judahmah, who compares ‘Ajl to a minor Wād, must not be interpreted at all as a prohibition of ‘Ajl.

In consulting the many texts that have treated this question and comparing the various versions that have been collected, we have taken from them one outstanding conclusion: the first Muslims used a birth control method with the full knowledge of the Prophet, who approved of their attitude: it was a premeditated separation of the genital organs at the moment of ejaculation. Without a doubt, juridical logic cannot stop within the limits of a method that is so close to nature. On the contrary, it must authorize recourse to other contraceptive methods that have been brought to light by modern techniques; methods that have the same goal as the traditional ‘Ajl.

E — Circumstances Under which Preventive Measures are Indicated

In reading the six principles taken from the Hadiths, it appears that they describe three cases in which ‘Ajl has been used.

First case

‘Ajl is used with a woman taken prisoner during a war. She must not become pregnant so that she may bring a ransom. Otherwise, she becomes a mother and cannot be bought back nor sold.

Likewise, a free man who is married to a slave uses ‘Ajl, so that his child does not inherit the status of a slave (cf. the Hadith of Abū Sa‘īd Khudri, recounted by Mālik in his Muwattā).

Second case

‘Ajl is used by the husband when his wife does not please him and he does not want to have any children from her.

This is the case of Ibn Fahd, the Yemenite, recounted by Mālik in his Muwattā: “It is your land. You can irrigate it if you wish or leave it in a state of thirst.” A similar example was used by Zayd Ibn Thābit in answer to Ibn Fahd.

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Third case

'Azl is used when the woman is nursing a child. The husband fears that his child may drink his mother's milk while she is pregnant. This is the situation that Usâmah Ibn Zayd described to the Prophet, according to the version of Ahmad and Muslim.

If we now examine the reasons cited in the six selections from the Hadith to justify 'Azl, we find that some of them are not of a serious or urgent nature. 'Azl is therefore applicable in analogous circumstances, so much the more reason for it to apply in more serious or urgent circumstances.

Al-Ghazzâlî authorized 'Azl solely to safeguard the woman's beauty. He also authorized it to save the life of the wife. It is certainly true that numerous births can be detrimental to the wife's health — loss of weight, anaemia can lead to serious illnesses that can endanger her life. Al-Ghazzâlî authorized 'Azl also to avoid too many births in the family — a source of material difficulty that may have very unfortunate moral consequences.

Ibn al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzî, in his Sayd al-Khâṭîr, was in agreement with al-Ghazzâlî, showing how a lack of foresight in matters of conception can lead the father to reprehensible, even criminal, acts.

Once again these texts show to what extent Islam is able to accept preventative contraceptive measures, such as 'Azl and others. Families that need to make use of these procedures may do so. Often the wife's health is deficient or the husband's income is insufficient or the national economy is in a state of crisis. In all these cases the family ought to take all precautions and stop births until the crisis has passed.

F — Does Islamic Law Permit Abortions?

If husbands and wives manage to take all preventative measures of contraception, bearing in mind their conjugal obligations and their duty as fathers and mothers, the problem is solved. But if through any kind of negligence they find themselves faced with a fait accompli (pregnancy) what should they do? Should they resort to abortion?

Al-Ghazzâlî, analyzing this problem, has stressed the great difference between 'Azl and abortion. "A'zl," he says, "has nothing to do with abortion or wa'd (see above)." Abortion is a crime carried out against a being that is already an actual life. This being passes through successive stages that begin with a drop of sperm reaching the wife's womb and receiving the first breath of life. It is a crime to put an end to this existence that is scarcely beginning. But when the first cell is transformed into a bit of flesh, then a foetus, the crime is still more serious. If the soul penetrates this body, which is taking on its true form, the crime is even more grave.

Ibn Juzayy, in agreement with Ghazzâlî, considers abortion at certain stages in the development of pregnancy as assassination.

That does not alter the fact that certain Fiqâhî have authorized abortion, but before the foetus has reached the age of four months. Still, it is necessary for such an abortion to be motivated by worthwhile reasons. On the other hand, the Fiqâhî are unanimous in forbidding abortion after the fourth month. If an abortion takes place after that age, it is considered a veritable assassination and is judged as such by Muslim jurisdiction.

Now, if it is established that the continuance of pregnancy, even when the foetus has reached an advanced age, may lead to the death of the mother and that abortion constitutes the sole means of saving her from danger, then, in that case, abortion is called for. The mother cannot be sacrificed for the child.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this study, I must draw attention to the numerous Hadiths that serve as commentaries on the verse previously quoted:

"Make your widows . . . get married" (The Qur'ân 24:32).

One of these often cited Hadiths is the following:

"Marry, increase and multiply, for I shall take pride in you among nations on Judgment Day."

But it is a question of a Hadith whose authenticity is disputed by specialists in the matter.

But, admitting that it may be authentic, it is not necessary to conclude from it that it is an incitement to unlimited reproduction. A multiplication that does not signify strength and health is not of interest to Islam. Does not the Hadith say, "The strong believer is preferred by God to the weak believer." A multiplication of births without the means of subsistence and prosperity is, rather, a weakness. Small numbers may be a strength. Does not the Qur'ân say:

"How many groups, reduced in number, have conquered other larger groups by the grace of God."

Moreover, there are many verses and Hadiths that denounce a multiplication of numbers that would foster weakness.

It was also said by the Prophet, "Your abundance will be like an insufficient meal." When someone asked, "How many will we be?" the Prophet replied, "You will be many. May God remove your fear of the enemy, and not put Wayhân in your hearts." When asked what was Wâhân, he replied, "It is to love life and to detest dying."

Al-Bukhârî quoted the Prophet's words, when he stated that, at the end of the world, there will be fifty women for every man.

Such are the essential points on which family planning encounters Islamic law to find a meeting ground for understanding and co-operation. We have tried to analyze them in this study, hoping that each point has been clarified and that nothing remains in the dark.

RESUME OF THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING PROFESSOR NASIRI'S STATEMENT

Question: Can one find in Muslim legislation a text which would permit the settlement of the debate on two positions regarding abortion — one forbidding abortion of all kinds, the other authorizing it in certain cases?

Answer (Professor Nasiri): The Qur'ân has been very explicit concerning practices prior to Muslim law. For example, the custom consisting of the live burial of unwanted children, especially girls, has been the object of formal prohibition. But, as for abortion, there does not exist any specific text. It is a question of interpretation.
Question: Planning births is indicated in certain circumstances — when the woman is a prisoner of war or a slave; when she does not please her husband; or when she is nursing a child. But you haven't touched upon the major problem of this seminar, which is the demographic pressure and the need of family planning. Can the demographic problem be compared with these circumstances?

Answer (Professor Násiri): In my paper I commented on points concerning the beginning of the Islamic era. I left the door open for other arguments by analogy and, personally, I consider the present situation more important than those which I myself reported on.

Question: In your report you mentioned coitus interruptus and continence as contraceptive methods. Are other methods authorized?

Answer (Professor Násiri): If I have only cited two methods it is simply because the pill did not exist when the texts were written. But what is important is the setting forth of the attitude about contraception and, by analogy, everything that has the nature of stopping pregnancy, as a preventive measure, is permitted.

Question: In the framework of a national family planning programme and a publicity effort in favour of this programme, are the doctors of the law willing to play their role?

Answer (Professor Násiri): We have tried to report to you the point of view of Muslim legislation about family health in general. I do not think that any professor or doctor of law would shirk his duty and remain indifferent. As I said in the course of my paper, if couples obey Islamic law, there should not be more than four births over a period of eleven years.

SINAN THE ARCHITECT — Continued from page 10

Sinán is working here with the basic elements of his art. The spaces of courts and domes are in inexhaustible variations, which may be compared to musical fugues. His palace buildings also permitted him to concentrate on the happier side of life. New elements, flat roofs, hearths, sewers, resting places, terraces and balconies, new colours like olive and gold, brown and yellowish, permitted him to transform all tones, even the familiar ones. Even in these works Sinán never indulged in repetition.

Sinán did not endeavour to invent new forms, rather to make them unique

The formal elements at Sinán's disposition for his representatative art were those which he had inherited from his predecessors: Sinán did not endeavour to invent new forms, rather to make them unique and to adapt the whole according to the demands of his desired objective. Instructive in this respect is the study of his gates to the mosques or the relationship between his inter-columns, his wall panels and windows, pillars and similar details.

From the historical point of view Sinán's work, as far as the formal side is concerned, is not that of a revolutionary, but rather that of a consummator. Sinán takes over his heritage and utilizes it to consecrate and not to create what may again be surpassed. In the complete agreement of form and content, expressed simultaneously, lies Sinán's greatness. The uniqueness, however, lies in the fact that he lifts the particular humanity of his client up to the general in order to represent it. He did not receive this commission, however, from his princes and lords but only and exclusively from his own genius. Thus his work is today more living than ever. They preserve for us the uniqueness of the past, as if the fleeting word then spoken were everlasting, and as if the beauty which then enticed were eternally valid. Hence Sinán stands in all lands and times as one of the truly great immortals, who are a blessing to all men without distinction and enrich them for ever.

WHAT OUR READERS SAY....

Shári' Qurtubah 50, Apt. 5,
Damascus, Syria
30 January 1969

THE LAW OF ZAKÁH

Dear Mrs. Toto,

I have been reading with great interest your excellent contribution to The Islamic Review, entitled "Children's Page".

There is, however, one point which I should like to clear, namely, your statement on p. 32 of the October 1968 issue (Answer 11), that the Zakáh is "a 2½% tax on one's yearly earnings".

Now, the most fundamental principle of the Law of Zakáh, established by our Prophet, is: "(There is) no Zakáh on wealth until the year has revolved on it". I.e., no Zakáh is to be imposed on wealth until it has been in the possession of its lawful owner for a period of one full year.

This rule was established by the Prophet in conformity with verse 219 of the Qur'án, which states: "... And they ask thee what they should spend (for others). Say: That which is superfluous ... ."

Accordingly, the Law of Zakáh requires the Zakáh to be levied in the shape of surplus wealth only. Thus "earnings" in any form: wages, salaries, income from trade, income from dividends, income from rentals, etc., cannot lawfully be subject to the Zakáh. Only that part of a person's
wealth which remains unspent, and so becomes savings, is liable to the Zakāh, once it has been in his/her possession for a full year as from the date of its acquisition, and if it is equal to, or above, the Nisāb (the minimum savings).

To quote another Hadith: “It is related on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, who said: The Messenger of God said: Whoever enjoys the benefit (i.e. possesses) wealth, bears no obligation to give the Zakāh thereof until it has been in his/her possession for a period of one full year.” (al-Tirmidhi.)

The year's term of possession is precisely to determine the fact that the wealth subject to the Zakāh is surplus to the lawful needs of its legitimate owner and his/her dependents.

Even where non-perishable agricultural produce, i.e., cereals, pulses, dried fruits, etc., are concerned, the Zakāh loses nothing of its characteristic of being leviable in the shape of surplus wealth only. The fact that only those crops are subject to the Zakāh which are equal to or above the established Nisāb (i.e. 5 camel-loads = about 1568 kg., which in itself is quite sufficient to satisfy the requirements of an average family), confirms the fact that the Zakāh is leviable only when there is a preservable surplus.

As you undoubtedly know, the rate of Zakāh for agricultural produce — cereals, pulse, dried fruit (including dates), nuts, etc., and such non-edibles as cotton — is 10% for crops watered exclusively, or for the greater part of the year, by natural means: rain, rivers, streams, springs, and 5% for crops irrigated by artificial means involving expense and extra labour: pumps, water-wheels, canals, etc.

I do hope that the above information will be of use to you.

It may interest you to know that I have dedicated the last twenty years to the detailed study of the Institution of Zakāh, and am at the moment engaged in completing the second volume of my book, The Law and Philosophy of Zakāh.

With kind regards and best wishes, I am,

Yours sincerely,

FARISHTA G. de ZAYAS

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BOOK REVIEW


This large (16" x 12") photographic album of fine quality paper is bound in green cloth-covered boards with the title on the spine in white, in Arabic, Persian and Uzbek. The value of this impressive publication is enhanced by the paucity of available religio-architectural works having a source in Central Asia.

The “Introduction”, by the Mufti Ziyautdin Babakanov, Chairman of the Muslim Religious Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and the brief notes on the photographs and on architectural features by the Editorial Department of the same Board, are given in the three languages mentioned, at the beginning of the book — that is, at the back or reverse end to that of an English publication, since they are in the Arabic-Persian script. The notes on illustrations and architectural features consist of two parts entitled: “I. The Central Asian Republics”, and “II. Azerbaijan Republic”.

This important introductory material included in the album has also been translated into French, Russian and English, and all the translations have been included in a separate pamphlet with the same dimensions as the album, to fit snugly inside a cover. The album itself lacks pagination, these translations have a numerical listing for the illustrations. The photographs in the album are, of course, identified in Arabic, Persian and Uzbek.

The superb illustrations pay tribute to the remarkable advancement of photography in Uzbekistan. 45 of the photographs are in black and white and 90 in colour.

The Mufti Babakanov points out in his “Introduction” that the publication of the album was “to give people abroad an idea of the wealth and variety of the architectural monuments of Islam on the territory of the Soviet Union.” He remarks that of the 220 million population of the Soviet Union, 15 million are Muslims, whose religious buildings are found mainly in Central Asia and Azerbaijan, where an Islamic indigenous population prevails, but there are others in the Crimea, the Tatar and Bashkir republics, and elsewhere.

Babakanov says, “Many . . . of these buildings . . . are used for their original purpose or are important elements of town planning.” It would have been interesting had he indicated which ones were used for religious purposes. Further statements of his are, “Many of the buildings erected in past centuries have disappeared, chiefly owing to devastating wars and earthquakes,” but “historical monuments are protected by the Soviet State. The life of the outstanding works of architecture is being prolonged both by periodic repairs and by restoration based on studies by architects, archaeologists, engineers and other specialists . . . The Soviet Government allocates large sums for . . . restoration work.”

Indeed, scaffolding is shown erected for façade restorations to the Ulug Beg Madrasah, Samarkand, illustration 60; for general structural and dome repairs to the Kukeltash Madrasah, Tashkent, illustration 70; for dome restoration to Zaynuddin Baba Mausoleum, Tashkent, illustration 71; while supporting scaffolding is shown on the Kalan Mosque, Bokhara, illustration 72; and on Mir-i 'Arab Madrasah, Bokhara, illustration 75. The entire facade of the Shār Dōr Madrasah appears caged behind scaffolding in illustration 99.

Despite these commendable restoration efforts, many of the structures photographed obviously still require expert attention. Undoubtedly the Muslim Religious Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, with the assistance of the Academy of Building and Architecture of the U.S.S.R., and the State Committee for the Protection of Monuments of Material Culture, will strive to perpetuate these monuments, which are integral to the cultural history of the region.

Historical Monuments of Islam in the U.S.S.R., in my opinion, is an unrivalled, modern, photographic depiction of extant Islamic edifices, skillfully portraying their exquisite tiling and other decorative features.

Harold R. Battersby

MARCH—APRIL 1969
Unity and Solidarity the only Path

Two Arab Heads of State affirm faith in the common destiny and future

Communique expresses firm and unequivocal

His Excellency Houari Boumediene, the President of Algeria, paid a state visit to the Kingdom of Morocco during July 1962. This visit was achieved during discussions between the two Heads of State on the unification of the aims and aspirations of the Arab peoples and the King of Morocco, together with the text of the official communique expressing the firm and unequivocal faith in the common destiny and future of our two countries.

SPEECH OF

HIS MAJESTY KING HASAN II OF MOROCCO

A special welcome

The bonds which history has forged between our two brotherly countries, the language, religion, civilization and culture which our two countries have in common, and the unity of aspirations for the building up of the Arab Maghrib, which our two countries cherish, are all factors which give your visit to our Kingdom a special imprint, and which make our welcome to you unique and exceptional. On my own behalf, and on behalf of my Government and people, I extend to you a hearty welcome, and hope that your stay amongst us will be a happy one. We offer our most sincere welcome and our heartfelt good wishes to you; an honoured guest among your family, and a relative who has come to his kith and kin and to his most loyal of friends. We welcome you, Mr. President. You are with your family and your friends. You have given very great pleasure to us by your visit, a visit which we are sure will make a positive contribution towards the fostering and the strengthening of the bonds of brotherhood between our two countries by providing us with opportunities to consult with one another and exchange views on matters of mutual interest to our two countries in particular, as well as on problems affecting the Arab and African worlds and the whole world generally.

It gives us added pleasure and joy that your visit to our country should coincide with the celebration of one of the most auspicious anniversaries. On a day like this in the year 1944 (C.E.) our people, under the leadership of our late Sovereign, and my father of blessed memory, Muhammad V (may the mercy of God be upon him!), declared their rejection of the protectorate and of foreign occupation, and demanded that their usurped right to freedom and independence be restored. God willed that we welcome on this auspicious anniversary the successful leader of the Algerian revolution, which has attained for the brotherly people of Algeria, after a bitter struggle, the freedom and independence which they deserve.

The visit which you pay to our country today, Mr. President, marks the victory of a struggle and the defeat of imperialism. Yet another significance of this visit is the need for continuous efforts to consolidate relations between our two countries. It exemplifies the endeavour made to find the best means to bring about closer relations and understanding between peoples and nations in our own interest, as much as in the interest of the whole of mankind...

In the not so distant past we fought side by side in the battle of liberation and independence. We all of us waged a renown heroic struggle in order to preserve our dignity and to repel the evil that was being planned for us, and in order also to affirm our determination to control our destiny in line with our needs and the realities of our countries. We sought to push our countries forward on the path of progress alongside the progressive nations of the world. Now that God has blessed us with independence we are marching towards the happy future which awaits our Arab Maghrib, and the realization of which requires that we should co-operate and consolidate our efforts even more.

Common characteristics

There are many similarities between our two peoples, and many characteristics, habits and qualities in common. The unique geographical position of our two countries, and their common historical and cultural heritage, all spur our countries on to the fulfillment of their message to preserve the treasures of Arab and Islamic civilization. Our two countries have been invincible fortresses for Islam and a protective shield for the African Muslims. In the Arab Maghrib in the past there flourished the spiritual ideas which were the backbone of the religious and nationalist basis of our countries.

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SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY HOUARI BOUMEDIENNE, PRESIDENT OF THE ALGERIAN REPUBLIC

I always experience tremendous joy whenever I visit an Arab country and meet its leaders and people. There is even greater happiness and warmth in visiting a neighbouring country, particularly in visiting Morocco and in meeting its noble people, who are known for their generosity and the invincible spirit of struggle and resistance.

We all remember the days of resistance and struggle, and of the joint efforts made by our two peoples in pursuit of freedom and independence. We shall never forget, in particular, the very critical stage through which Morocco passed, being led by His Majesty King Muhammad V, who strengthened the unity of the people's ranks, bolstered up their strength, gave expression to their readiness to make sacrifice, and finally offered his life for the sake of regaining the freedom of his people and their dignity and glory. These herculean efforts resulted in Morocco regaining its full rights. They also helped us in Algeria in a direct manner, for Morocco extended assistance to us in our armed struggle and made a positive contribution towards the early attainment of our victory.

The Algerian people, who now enjoy sovereignty and control their own destiny, are making every effort to put an end to backwardness. They are struggling for the purpose of establishing a new socialist structure in which justice will prevail and in which there will be equal opportunities for all the citizens. And we shall never forget the sacrifices made by the brotherly Moroccan people nor the assistance and support offered by them, whether through King, Government or people. You, Your Majesty, after your venerable father, are the leader of this brave people.

The example of Morocco's struggle

On behalf of the Algerian people I thank you for the gracious words and fraternal sentiments which you have expressed towards your brothers in Algeria and towards us. We reciprocate these feelings in the most sincere and hearty manner.

While thanking Your Majesty, I should like also to congratulate you on the successful gesture which you have made and which resulted in our meeting here; an occasion which no doubt will be a significant step forward in the fostering of relations between our two countries and a contribution towards the building up of the Arab Maghrib, which has always been the most cherished objective of your late father, His Majesty King Muhammad V, and which has also been a noble objective cherished throughout many generations by the people of the various parts of this Western section of the greater Arab homeland...

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and the essence of the unity of our destiny. It is these ideas which call upon us in this part of the African continent to continue to co-operate closely together, so that our ideals triumph and give rise to conditions of co-existence which do away with all the obstacles preventing the realization of unity in the spheres of progress which lead to a better and a more prosperous life.

The bonds between our two countries are not the product of accident. They are founded on the very realities of our struggle and jihad for many generations, when we resisted imperialist occupation, which sought to undermine and eradicate our personality and to usurp our wealth and resources and to utilize our material and human resources for its own selfish purposes. Not long ago we triumphed against the wicked designs planned against us, thanks to the unity, solidarity and guidance with which the Almighty has blessed us. God enabled us to co-ordinate many of our efforts, and we then entered the battle for liberation and for the defence of our existence, honour and dignity, and God granted us victory. Morocco achieved its independence and freedom a few years before sister Algeria, thanks to the revolution waged by the King and the people. But our country did not spare any efforts, and gave every assistance, under the leadership of our late father, King Muhammad V, to help the people of Algeria and to strengthen their hand in the struggle and to reinforce their revolution. In that way Morocco sought to fulfill its duty towards the brotherly people of Algeria, and it thereby reaffirmed the conviction that the newly-won independence of Morocco can only be safeguarded by promoting the freedom and independence of Algeria.

Face the future together

Today, as we seek to bolster up even more the independence and freedom of our country, we are as anxious as ever to link together our past and future, and to overcome all obstacles towards winning the battle of development and progress. This has ceased to be a limited objective, for it has become a vital necessity for all peoples, and a matter over which there can be co-operation between all countries, irrespective of their systems of government and social status. That is why we call for the unification of the efforts of our Arab Maghrib and for the setting up of regional organizations in line with what is happening in Europe and in other parts of the African continent, for it has become abundantly clear to all that the solitary efforts of single countries, however extensive they may be, can only lead to limited results, and that the joint efforts undertaken by a number of countries can bring much greater benefits and ensure the success of economic and social planning.

It is because we believe in this policy that, ever since the day we became independent, we have sought to bring forth the idea of an Arab Maghrib from the realm of thought to the realm of reality. It is this conviction which has encouraged us to draw up plans in which priority is given to agriculture, investment, the construction of dams, and the setting up of industrial projects and tourist enterprises. We seek to make the utmost use of our economic wealth and potentialities in such a manner as to give us sufficiency and contentment. And it is a source of great satisfaction and pleasure, and a source of hope for us, that sister Algeria is engaged in building and reform and endeavouring enthusiastically to implement comprehensive planning in the economic and social spheres.

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS

SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY HOUARI BOUMEDIENNE

Continued from page 21

The bond of religion has been the strongest factor, which has preserved our morale throughout the ages of darkness and backwardness, and which gave us strength and enabled us to resist the many attempts to dilute or destroy our personality. It also ensures that our people continue to hold together, and that our civilization is preserved to serve as the foundation for any edifice constructed by our nation at this age, when there is serious conflict between many trends and when nations with weak character or structure easily lose balance, begin to doubt their own worth, and seek to imitate the characteristics of other nations, but without achieving thereby any success of progress. There are also the other factors which play a significant role in the establishment of regional groupings or alliances, and we here in North Africa have all the attributes and characteristics which would be needed to establish the nucleus of a comprehensive unit which has the capacity to develop into something of tremendous benefit to all concerned.

At present we both have to fulfill the very great task of progress and construction, and to co-operate together for this purpose. The agreements concluded between our two countries, and our membership of international organizations, will ensure that our efforts will be co-ordinated for the benefit of the peoples of the Greater Arab Maghrib and the entire Arab nation. It is but a beginning, although an encouraging one. But we aim at much more, and we desire greater things for our people. We shall always be loyal to the aim of promoting the progress and prosperity of the Arab Maghrib on a truly sound basis . . .

Our hopes and aspirations

We came here with an open heart full of confidence and faith in the present and the future. The people of the Arab Maghrib are aspiring to progress and development and anxious to preserve their unity and solidarity. They believe there is no way to the attainment of their objectives other than through solidarity and co-operation between brothers. Forgotten are the negative aspects of life in the past, and remembered are the lessons of the past also. While we march towards the future we are fortified with resolute determination, and with the intention to leave a great heritage for the future. Today we are facing a clear chapter, and embarking upon a new venture. The tasks of construction and achievement are staring us in the face everywhere, and are demanding from us urgent attention and definite solutions. As regards Algeria — and also, we are sure, Morocco — we are determined to spare no effort to make a full positive contribution in this venture and to create all the opportunities needed for the success of our joint efforts.

It is reasonable that we should enquire about the long-term aims of the Greater Arab Maghrib, and the objectives sought through the great strides which our people are making. The fact is that the great strength which we shall achieve, the position we occupy on the doorstep of Europe, the ideas which the Maghrib will radiate through its Arab civilization and its great potential in manpower, all these will have great repercussions not only in our Maghrib but throughout the Arab world and the African continent. There is no reason why this aim should not be achieved if we adhere to the principles of close co-operation based on mutual respect for sovereignty and independence and in harmony with the internal situation of each country and its special experience in the political, social and economic spheres, refrain from interference in the affairs of one another, and uphold the cause of freedom and world peace.

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SPEECH OF HIS MAJESTY KING HASAN II
—Continued from page 22

We seek to attain progress in all spheres, and to promote prosperity for all our peoples, and the realization of the best results by the widening of the spheres of co-operation between our two countries, the fostering of the bonds of kinship and the eradication of the relics of the colonial regimes with which we have been afflicted for a long time, and which did not only devise plans to exploit our potentialities and resources to the utmost degree, but which also sought to establish a secure base in our countries from which to safeguard special privileges and interests, all of which were categorically opposed to our sovereignty and hostile to our interests and aspirations.

We have proclaimed a new chapter in our relations, and have affirmed our determination to establish our political, economic, social and cultural relations on the most firm foundation, through comprehensive treaties regulating all spheres of positive co-operation and effective solidarity.

Our joint ideals

The efforts which we are making towards the realization of progress and prosperity will not so engage our attention as to make us forget the responsibilities placed upon us as members of the international community and the community of African states and the Arab world. We are bound by the Charter of the League of Arab States and the Charters of the Organization of African Unity and of the United Nations Organization, and all these require us to adhere to principles of conduct without which there would be no international harmony. These principles forbid interference in the domestic affairs of other states and require respect for the independence of other states, the rejection of the use of force and aggression, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, the encouragement of efforts to achieve self-determination for all countries and peoples, the liquidation of imperialism, the ending of racial discrimination and persecution, and the eradication of all practices which undermine the dignity of man. These principles also enjoin upon us the pursuit of a policy of non-alignment and the ending of the armaments race and the production of the means of destruction.

We uphold these doctrines and faithfully adhere to them, and as such we denounce the elements of evil and of mischief and aggression which have struck blows against the Arab and Muslim nation by desecrating its treasured and sacred possessions. As a result of discord, disunity and foreign occupation which have afflicted the Arab and Muslim nation, the aggressor Zionists have succeeded in occupying vast areas of our Arab homeland and in seizing holy Jerusalem. They have paid no heed to the resolutions of the United Nations or to the denunciation expressed by world public opinion. The continuing danger presented by the present situation in the Middle East, and Israel’s persistence in its stubborn defiance and in demonstrating the extent of its designs for expansion at the expense of the Arabs and the Muslims, require us to make even greater efforts in unity in order to put an end to injustice, restore rights, and ensure the complete withdrawal of foreign armies of occupation from Arab territory.

Once again I extend to you a hearty welcome, and hope that you will have a pleasant stay among us, your brothers and friends. We pray to the Almighty to grant us His assistance, to guide us on to the right path, to unify our ranks, to protect our homelands, and to help us together to build up the Greater Arab Maghrib. God is the best of Guardians and Helpers.
Joint Algerian-Moroccan Communique

Exchange of views ... Closer treaty bonds forged ... Building up the Greater Arab Maghrib ...

Solidarity with Sister Arab countries ... Support for Palestinian Arab resistance ...

Support for international law and justice.

In response to an invitation extended by His Majesty King Hasan II, King of Morocco, and in order to foster the fraternal relations between Morocco and Algeria, His Excellency Houari Boumedienne, President of the Council of the Revolution and Head of the Government of the Algerian Democratic People's Republic, paid a visit to the Moroccan Kingdom during the period 11-16 January 1969.

During the visit discussions took place between the two Heads of State in an atmosphere of frankness and friendship concerning various matters of interest to the two countries, the affairs of the Arab Maghrib and, in particular, the present Arab situation. The discussions also dealt with general African and international problems.

The discussions concerning the relations between the two countries have resulted in the signing of a bilateral treaty of friendship, good neighbourliness and co-operations between the two countries, designed to foster relations and establish them on a firm basis of mutual respect and confidence between the two countries, which would make possible greater co-operation and solidarity and provide better conditions for waging the battle for economic and social development.

The two sides examined the steps already achieved in the sphere of mutual co-operation in accordance with existing treaties, and they affirmed their intention to extend these treaties and develop them in line with the new relations existing between the two countries. They also agreed on the need to strengthen the many relations between their two countries and to widen the sphere of fraternal co-operation in the economic, cultural and social spheres.

The two sides expressed satisfaction at what has been achieved in the matter of building up the Greater Arab Maghrib. They emphasized the sincere desire and complete harmony with which the idea of unity is being received by them and by their brother, His Majesty King Idris al-Sanusi, King of the Kingdom of Libya, and His Excellency Habib Bourguiba, the President of the Tunisian Republic, both of whom are leading the peoples of Libya and Tunisia respectively in the making of great efforts for the purpose of building up the Greater Arab Maghrib and promoting the progress and prosperity of its peoples. They expressed satisfaction at the results achieved by the countries of the Arab Maghrib in the sphere of economic co-ordination and the promotion of co-operation in the various fields of endeavour. They emphasized the need for giving greater effect to such co-operation and for developing it in the interests of the peoples of the region. They also reaffirmed their determination to build up the edifice of the Maghrib through the joint will of the people concerned, and through mutual co-operation would ensure stability and security and serve as the basis for establishing a comprehensive regional grouping which would promote progress for all the peoples of the region and make a positive contribution towards world peace and security.

As regards the situation in the Middle East, the two sides affirmed their solidarity with the sister Arab countries. They also examined the various stages of the existing crisis and of the danger threatening the Arab and Muslim nations as a result of the Zionist Israeli aggression against them. In this respect they denounced the continued occupation by Israel of Arab territory and Islamic holy places. They also emphasize their attitude regarding the need for the immediate withdrawal of the aggressor Israeli forces from these lands. They also laud the struggle of the Palestinian people and express their support for their lawful resistance and their right to regain their homeland. In this respect the two sides draw attention to the fact of Islamic solidarity and the stand taken by the Muslim countries, which have supported Arab rights and condemned Zionist aggression.

On the African and international plane, the two sides examined current problems and difficulties. They affirmed their adherence to the principles and aims of the U.N. Charter, the Charter of the League of Arab States, and the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, and expressed their determination to support all efforts designed to preserve international peace and security. They also emphasized their support for the principle of non-alignment and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, for the right of peoples to self-determination, for strengthening the campaign for the liquidation of imperialism, for the ending of racial discrimination, for the stopping of the armaments race, and for the rejection of the use of force as a means for the settlement of international disputes.

His Excellency President Houari Boumedienne visited some of the regions of the Moroccan Kingdom, and there he saw for himself the extent of the progress and prosperity achieved by Morocco under the wise leadership of His Majesty King Hasan II. He praised the efforts made towards raising living standards and promoting prosperity for the Moroccan peoples. He also expressed thanks for the hospitality and esteem accorded to him by His Majesty King Hasan II and by the brotherly Moroccan people.

His Excellency President Houari Boumedienne extended to His Majesty King Hasan II an official invitation to visit the Algerian Democratic People's Republic. His Majesty accepted the invitation, the date of which is to be fixed in due course.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
Children’s Page

For children of all ages

Little Salim learns about Saladin ( Salah-al-din Ayubi)

By OLIVE TOTO

Salim al-Din (as an artist conceives him)

Salim was ploughing through his homework. He was a little Cypriot Turk living in England, one of the 2,000 or more children who lived in England, as their people could not live in peace in Cyprus (being Muslims and Turkish).

Well, Salim sat over his homework. He was doing the first part, which was arithmetic. There he was, biting his nails and sighing. "Don't bite your nails," said his mother, "it is very bad; you know you are twelve years old and should know better." "Oh!" said Salim, "this arithmetic will drive me mad." "Salim, haven't you even finished your arithmetic yet? After that, what else have you to do?" "History," replied Salim. "I've got to do an essay on that infidel called Saladin." "I am very good at history," said his mother, "I will help you if you like, after you have finished your arithmetic."

Half an hour later Salim called out, "Mama, I have finished my arithmetic, now for that infidel chap." "Salim!" said his mother, "Whatever are you talking about? I thought that you were joking when you called Saladin an infidel." "Oh!" said Salim, "I know very little about him. I first heard of him when I was ten years old and I know that my teacher called him an infidel. But that was two years ago, so I must find a history book to get details for my essay."

"Son," said the mother, "you are a Muslim. Saladin was a Muslim and I am a Muslim. Are you an infidel?"

"Mama, what are you saying? Of course I am not an infidel."

"Nor was Saladin," said his mother, "and never let me hear you call anyone an infidel unless you are certain. I have taught you about Islam and I have taught you the Holy Qur'an, but I have failed in a very important matter. I have not instilled in you a pride in our Muslim history, its caliphs and its heroes. I will buy all the books for you and try to make up for this. But straight away I will tell you about Saladin, the true Saladin, and not as your teacher told you, and I pray that I will be forgiven for my mistake in not telling you before.

"My dear son. Saladin was a great man, his real name was Salah al-Din Ayubi. He was born in the year 1137 C.E. at Tekrit (then in Kurdistan). Tekrit is 100 miles from Baghdad, in Iraq. Saladin's father and uncle were both great warriors from Kurdistan and they were also adventurous mountaineers.

"Sultan Nureddin made Saladin's father the Governor and his uncle the Vice-Governor of Damascus. It was in this city that Saladin spent his childhood, except for a few years, which he spent in a school in Baalbek (in the Lebanon). In Damascus he was taught to write poetry and to learn all about the Qur'an. Riches never appealed to him, and all through his life you will find that he never did anything to gain money or riches.

"When he was a young man, his uncle asked him to accompany him on an expedition to Egypt. 'By God,' exclaimed Saladin, 'I would not go even if the sovereignty of that country was offered to me!'. 'The sovereignty of that country will be offered to you if you make good,' replied his uncle. This did not tempt Saladin, but to please his uncle he went with him. Trained by his uncle, Saladin became a brilliant fighter and the enemy was defeated. Saladin's uncle was then made the Grand Vizier of Cairo (the capital of Egypt). The uncle seemed to want a life of ease and turned all his cares of the government over to young Saladin. The uncle..."
died soon afterwards and, as the second in command to his uncle, Saladin was now selected as Governor of Egypt. He was very young for this appointment, but he accepted it and was a great success. He tried to unite the Muslims of other countries and said, ‘If we all fight together against the Crusaders, we can get back to our Holy Land and will be able to pray to God in peace.’ Because, you know, these European Christian kings thought that it was great sport and adventure always to be fighting the Muslims. They called themselves the Crusaders and put on armour which had a large cross on it. The Muslims had always respected the Holy Land. I really think that the crusades were an excuse for King Richard, with his band of followers, to go off wandering.

“Now at that time Saladin set off on a mission to drive the Crusaders out of the Holy Land. After much fighting he returned to Egypt, where he found that the Caliph of Egypt had died.

“Saladin was then appointed the Caliph of Egypt. He ruled generously but if he had to fight, he would, and that meant that he would fight any enemy who tried to disturb his Muslim country. He became a wise and able administrator, a great military leader and a very capable diplomat. Under him, both Egypt and Syria became rich in culture; he enriched Cairo and Damascus with colleges, citadels and aqueducts. The remarkable architectural achievements during his rule still stand today. He was never too busy, even in battle, to say his prayers. And it is reported that he prayed eight times a day. He always told his friends that it was in answer to his prayers that God had given such strength to his arm.

“It was the strength of that arm that drove the Crusaders gradually back out of the Holy Land. At the end of his greatest victory, at Hittin, on 4 July 1187 C.E., he ordered that the King of Jerusalem and the other noble prisoners be brought to his headquarters, where he invited them to his tent, treating them with respect and cordiality. (He promised the king his freedom within a short period. A promise which was kept, despite the fact that Guy de Lusignan went on to fight him after his release.) After the battle at Hittin, Saladin went on to besiege Acre and then took Caesarea, Nazareth and Sidon. Saladin rose far above the standard of conduct which was the usual conduct expected from a conqueror. His treatment of his enemies in time of war (both wounded prisoners and civilians) was an example to all. After each battle Saladin would visit the field of battle, to ensure that the sick and wounded were taken to shelter and treated by members of his medical staff, irrespective of race or religion.

“The Crusaders fought Saladin fiercely. They had the idea that these places were their holy places alone. They also seemed to have forgotten that, to a Muslim, Jerusalem is a very important place, because both Jesus and Muhammad had great associations with that place. Since a Muslim believes in both as prophets, he has to respect every inch of the soil of Jerusalem. This is even forgotten today by most people when they talk about the Holy Land, and some think that it should belong to the Jews. Today one hears this kind of talk, but one should never forget that only Muslims and Christians respect Jesus.

“But to come back to my story. Saladin entered Jerusalem and said, ‘I have done this with God’s help.’ Saladin was known to be a generous man; he was thoughtful, a good Muslim, kind to all and a clean fighter. After the fall of Jerusalem, on 2 October 1187 C.E. (which was the crowning of his victories), he showed great mercy towards the inhabitants of the Holy City. To all those who chose to remain he allowed them to live, trade and worship as before. To those who preferred to return to Europe, he ordered that they were to be permitted to take all of their belongings and when they were delayed in Alexandria on their way home, because the Venetian and Genoese navigators demanded very high fares from them, not only the food but also the cost of their passage was paid by Saladin.

“When King Richard was ill, Saladin sent him peaches preserved in snow and I have already told you the other story of how Saladin cured King Richard of his illness. On another occasion, when a Christian Commander’s sister was being married inside the besieged city of Kerak, Saladin gave orders that there was to be no firing upon the castle whilst the wedding ceremony was being performed. A marriage was to him, and to all Muslims, a religious occasion, when a man promises to look after a woman. But a Muslim never says ‘until death do us part’, because we live on this earth and one cannot make such a vow in marriage (because we may not suit each other, but if we do, we would like to continue in the life hereafter). In Islam, if both parties agree to part, they can get a divorce after six months. You see, dear Salim, I am telling you this because people often think the wrong things about us Muslims.

“In history there are many stories of Saladin, who always remained a poor man because he gave away all he had. Saladin, at the age of 50, had reached the height of his glory. But his health had begun to decline and it was all he could do now to defend Palestine against its enemies. Although his doctor had told him to rest, he was unable to do so. Sometimes he did not eat for two days, but he would always lead his soldiers into battle.

“King Richard was a great fighter, although misguided, especially when he called the Muslims ‘infidels’, would not leave Saladin alone. He had found a good fighter in Saladin and, being one himself, began to look upon this fight as a sport. But Saladin was only interested in the protection of Islam and his people and not in having a fight for fun or sport.

“In the midst of his illness and misfortune, Saladin was still renowned for his generous deeds. When his soldiers besieged the city of Acre and took a number of prisoners, which included the treasurer of the King of France, Saladin ordered them to be taken to his tent and given robes of honour. He then entertained them at a great party and then gave them good horses to carry them to Damascus. Saladin had a very hard time at the siege of Acre, and many a time he had to cry out to his troops, ‘On for Islam! On for Islam!’ Finally, he succeeded in taking Acre, but in doing so he suffered a great loss of men and material. It is said that during the prolonged siege of Acre, in 1190 C.E., as a result of a victorious battle, many prisoners were brought to Saladin, among whom was an elderly man. Questioning him on the reason for his coming such a long way, and learning that it was for a visit to the Holy Land, he allowed the man to proceed on his pilgrimage and gave him gifts and presents.

“Saladin then returned to Jerusalem, because he had heard that King Richard was turning his attention in that direction and was hoping to recapture it from the Muslims. Thus Saladin had to strengthen the walls of Jerusalem and prepare to defend it. Although still suffering from his illness, Saladin started to do heavy manual work. He carried heavy stones on his back and in every way was a

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shining example to his men. After saying his prayers in his tent in the morning, he would work until noon. After prayers and a short rest out of the glare of the sun, he would return to his work again. The only distinction was that he had a royal tent with a light inside. Historians report that everyone said of Saladin. 'This man never sleeps, this man never eats, and this man never despairs.' His words to his companions were, 'God will perform a miracle and save this city.'

"And you know, dear Salim, what happened was really like a miracle. It was on a Friday when King Richard advanced and was seen by the people of Jerusalem. Saladin and his forces were really not strong enough for a great fight, but they were ready to do or die for the sake of Jerusalem and Islam. Historians say that all day Saladin prayed in silence to God, and God listened to his words. Well, Saladin and his soldiers waited for the enemy and, to the amazement of them all, the enemy came no closer to Jerusalem but, instead, marched straight on into Egypt. The enemy knew that the rainy season was coming and their armour would rust, also that their food supplies would be spoiled. We also know that King Richard's soldiers were very fed up. It is said that it was for these reasons that King Richard was anxious to go home. A truce was signed between Saladin and King Richard and shortly afterwards, on the 9 October 1192 C.E., King Richard sailed for England.

"Before leaving, Richard wrote to Saladin, saying, 'I will return shortly and bring about your defeat.' To this Saladin replied, 'If it be the will of God, I can think of no man worthier of bringing about my defeat than you.' We know that all through Saladin's life civilian populations were well treated; women, children and elders especially. Saladin showed a truly magnanimous spirit when he conquered anyone.

"Again, I repeat that if King Richard had stopped to think, or had known what Islam was, there would have been no need to fight the Muslims, since they and their leader, Saladin, would have guarded all the Holy places. A Muslim, according to the Qur'an (14:67), must respect Churches, Mosques and Synagogues, in fact, all places where one worships God. There was a strict prohibition against killing and killing prisoners of war. Saladin never wavered, although this fact almost led to a mutiny amongst his troops because these soldiers were very badly treated by the Crusaders and, after all, one can stand only so much and then one can take no more from a cruel enemy.

"I am sorry to say that Saladin died a year after the treaty was signed. Saladin died at the age of 55, on 4 March 1193 C.E. On his deathbed he told his son, 'I came into this world with nothing and after many years of warfare, I go out of the world with nothing. Avoid bloodshed, for blood never sleeps. Follow the way of peace, for this alone is the way of God.' One of his greatest enemies in the field was Renault de Saugette of Tyre, who said, 'There is no adversary as generous, as loyal to his word as Saladin.' When Saladin died in Damascus, this greatest of history's heroes, this man who ruled a great nation of tremendous wealth and power, was found to possess one gold piece and 47 dinars. Saladin was buried on the same day as his death, in the garden house in the citadel of Damascus, at the hour of 'Asr prayer. His burial service and his grave were those of a poor man. He had left no money because he had given it all away. And thus passed away a man whom even his greatest enemies had to admit was a fine warrior and a kind, humble man.

Here are some important dates you may like to remember because they should be of great interest to you, Salim. Remember, Saladin was a Muslim hero.

1137 C.E. Birth of Saladin (Salāh al-Dīn Ayyūbī) at Tekrit in Kurdistan (now Iraq).
1164 C.E. Saladin began the conquest of Egypt.
1174 C.E. Completed the conquest of Egypt.
1175 C.E. Saladin was made Sultan of Syria.
1187 C.E. Defeated the Crusaders at Jerusalem.
1189 C.E. Began the siege of Acre.
1191 C.E. Acre gave in to Saladin.
1192 C.E. Peace treaty signed between Richard and Saladin.
1193 C.E. Death of Saladin."

"I will learn these dates by heart," said Salim. "Now," said his mother, "you must get to know about other Islamic heroes, but right now I will leave you to get on with the rest of your homework."

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England
Interest—An Economic Study on the three Economic Systems—the Capitalistic, Socialistic and Islamic

The Impact of “Capital” and “Interest” on the Economy of the Society

By MAS'UD AHMED ‘ABBASI

The development of physical and social sciences, particularly in the realm of political-economy, has followed the intellectual growth of man with the result that the once simple societies have become so complex and intricate that the maxim of “survival of the fittest” appears to come true. The development of the means of transport and communication has made different societies, known as countries geographically and nations historically, so interdependent upon each other that none of them, big or small, strong or weak, can dream of living and surviving in isolation. Along with goods and services, the ideas have also travelled fast, and the underdeveloped receiving economies appear to be the burlesque imitation of the developed giving societies. The demands and requirements of man have increased along with the discovery and advancement of means and resources; or let it be said that the availability of means and resources has been responsible for creating new demands. At one time “political” systems of nations were instrumental in carving out the economic systems, but presently one finds that economic systems are influencing the political pattern. This is the set-up of the world today, in which man is living. Confining this discussion basically to economic systems of various societies, it would be appropriate to dwell on the salient features of three celebrated and time-honoured systems; viz., the “capitalistic”; the “socialistic or totalitarian”, and the “Islamic”.

The capitalistic system

The versatile and powerful economic system prevalent today is the “capitalistic” system. It visualises “Laissez-faire”, a free economy, in which the five recognised factors of production, viz., capital returning interest; land returning rent; labour returning wages; organization returning salary; and entrepreneur returning profit or loss, operate as free agents bargaining amongst themselves. The returns of these factors are determined by the simple principle of “demand and supply”. This system becomes content after providing this base to the economy and claims that maximum good shall flow to the society as a whole while functioning on this base. In emergencies, however, the State may impose control on production, consumption and distribution. This system claims that, given a free field of choice, every individual of the society, motivated by profit, would so work and function that he would give his best to the society. He would be the best judge of his economic activities and be free to reap what he sows. His interest shall remain involved in production to share its fruit in proportion to his contribution. In short, this system lays emphasis on the “individual” rather than on the “society”, and leaves the latter’s welfare to the exclusive sphere of “politics”.

Socialistic system

Another economic system prevalent is termed as the “socialistic” system. It lays emphasis on the collective endeavour of man compared to the “individual” choice, talent and ability. It believes in collective production and controls distribution according to the contribution of different factors of production. It contends that if the entire society prospers the individual would automatically prosper. In this system individual ability and talent is regimented in a particular direction determined and decided by State for collective good and welfare of the entire society in disregard of the choice of the individual. The argument advanced is that after all every individual is part and parcel of the society and cannot survive or prosper all alone. Let him, therefore, function within the framework of the society to which he belongs and to which he owes all he has acquired. An unfettered scope of endeavour and return is not allowed to an individual lest he become selfish. In this system, therefore, more emphasis is laid on ensuring equitable distribution than on augmenting production.

Capitalistic and Socialistic systems compared

Looking at both the systems, we find that both aim at the prosperity and well-being of the society in which they are regnant. Another feature common to both is that they regard and recognise man as only an “economic-creature”, living for food, cloth and shelter. The difference lies, however, in the means they adopt to reach the same goal. In one system, after the individual is allowed to earn what he can by haggling and bargaining with other factors of production, he is made to contribute — in the political sphere of course — towards the collective welfare of the society in terms of taxes that the State extracts from him. In this system the individual wealth and prosperity is intended to be cut to size, though indirectly.
While wisdom lies in allowing the individual maximum incentive to work ceaselessly to earn maximum return by making contribution to production, the drawback lies in exacting from him the substantial portion of his hard-earned wealth later on through taxes, which he, having worked most selfishly throughout, feels reluctant to part with voluntarily and cheerfully. To overcome this difficulty of "conscious sacrifice", indirect taxation was introduced but in actual practice this sacrifice also ceases to be equitable, as the "haves" of the society successively try to wriggle out of or shift this burden too to the "have-nots". Thus politics have to interfere in the economy throughout and remain in constant conflict with different sectors thereof, to ensure collective welfare and tranquillity.

In the other system, wisdom lies in eliminating economic dictatorship of an individual or group of individuals on the bulk of the society by ensuring equitable distribution of national wealth; but the drawback lies in denying and hampering the very incentive of the individual to work most and contribute his maximum to the production. Lack of optimum production means poverty and poverty cannot be distributed. Moreover, directed all the time so much in his economic activities by others, however wise and charitable such directives may be, the individual feels bereaved of his freedom of thought and action. This state of mind frustrates him and all his interest and incentive in work diminishes. His self-respect, a natural gift of man, is lost. Man is born free and in spite of being social, he has an urge to make and mould the society and cast his impact thereon rather than be overwhelmed by the society itself. He wants to move and change the society all the time and remain dynamic. After all it is the individual who makes the society; though it is also not without force to state that the society too makes man.

Both systems have their own extreme views of ensuring "greatest good of the greatest number". One system lays emphasis on the individual in absolute disregard of and without recognising the society; for it argues that if the individual is good, the entire society will be ipso facto good; whereas the other lays emphasis on the "society" in absolute disregard of and without recognising the "individual"; for it argues that if the society is good, the individual will be automatically good. It, therefore, follows that both systems have their own merits and demerits: or, rather, in both systems merits and demerits weigh equally. In the one, production is hampered whereas, in the other, distribution remains inequitable. That is why both economic systems fail to accomplish the cherished goal. People at large are not content with either of them. There is ultimate unrest, economic disparity, selfishness, moral and mental degradation, hampered production, exploitation of man by man, disputes and differences, violence and eventual wars.

The Islamic economic system

The Islamic economic system is a compromise between the two systems. It restrains both the systems from taking their extreme and, therefore, harmful forms. It allows profit motive and incentive to work substantiated by unfettered return to the individual, thus preserving the meritorious feature of capitalist "economy ensuring maximum production"; yet it abandons "interest" on "capital" and disallows formation of a "money-lenders" class, thus preserving the meritorious feature of socialist "economy, ensuring equitable distribution of national wealth and elimination of absolute selfishness in man. It disagrees with both systems, recognising man as an "economic-creature" alone. On the other hand, it regards man as a "moral-creature"; and provides "economic", "political" and "social" systems so coordinated and equilibrated amongst themselves as to enable man to accomplish his "spiritual" and "temporal" values together. It lays equal emphasis on the "individual" and the "society" and intends to create harmony, rather than conflict, between them, so that the individual must remain social and the society must preserve the individual.

As this article is basically concerned with "interest" on "capital", it would be advisable to deal at some length in the theory and practice of "capital" and "interest" and analyse their impact on the economy and the society in general and non-technical terms.

THE CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM

The case for capital

"Capital" in the hands of any individual, after all, is the reward of rendering sacrifice of the satisfaction of immediate demands resulting in savings. Let these savings, rare, therefore, encouraged and tempted towards "investment" by eliminating the risk of entrepreneur, thus guaranteeing the security of his capital; yet ensuring the profit of entrepreneur by guaranteeing the fixed return, in terms of interest, thereon. The capitalistic system theorists argue that capital and its formation is essential to bringing about large scale production, in the absence whereof the greatest good of the greatest number could not be thought of, and the concept of plenty and abundance would be meaningless. It being so, capital, in spite of being only a "means" of production basically, should be recognised as an independent "factor" of production.

They argue that other factors of production, the real owners and subscribers of capital in any economy or society, do not and may not find it convenient to form capital in the manner and to the extent that it could be mobile and an effective contributory towards maximum production and tapping and harnessing the natural resources on a large scale. It is therefore desirable that a group of persons amongst themselves be allowed to function, as their agent, to borrow their capital, form it, and lend it in turn for collective large scale production economically and dynamically. Security and fixed profit guaranteed, the capital with different sectors of economy, being otherwise shy by nature, would be tempted to come out and channelised to productive use. Moreover, it is said, that in a free economy, like all other factors of production contesting independently, on the basis of supply and demand, this factor shall also countenance equal equalities and opportunities.

Some fallacies involved in the argument in favour of the capitalistic system

Let us scrutinise the fallacy of this argument by discussing the actual functioning of the factors of production and distribution of wealth amongst them, in a free economy. Can capital be formed only through the accumulation of savings in consequence of a painful and arduous process of rendering sacrifice of satisfaction of the immediate demands? In practice there are so many other manners responsible for the creation of capital. The most genuine may be the extraordinary calibre, talents and industry of an individual or group of individuals in the society returning them more than their actual immediate demands resulting in savings and their accumulation. Such a saving is as valid as the former; for it comes out of the physical exertion and practical contribution to production yielding economic growth and prosperity. Moreover, an individual or group of individuals may discover some
natural resources or invent and innovate items of utility so as to earn more than their immediate demands.

Other manners of acquiring and forming capital may depend on "political" or "historical" or "geographical" factors outside the normal economic sphere. Another negative manner of forming and retaining capital may be through evasion and avoidance of direct taxes or shifting the burden of indirect taxes. In all these manners, however, it may be seen that the capital remains in the hands and at the disposal of the persons who have earned it by their industry or otherwise. Such savings may be mobilised for capital-formation on an "individual", "corporate" or "governmental" basis. But when capital is regarded as a "factor" instead of a "means" of production and a class is allowed to be artificially created to function and be responsible for dealing in "capital", the real mischief is done in the "capitalistic" economy.

It is the capital of the people which reaches the hands of this class in temptation of "security" and "interest", which makes use of this admittedly most precious and rare means of production at its own discretion and naturally to its own greatest advantage that it may derive out of the principle of supply and demand. And while employing this capital, this class haggles and bargains for its price or share of production, as all other factors of production do. While contributing this "precious" commodity, so little and restrained in supply and so much in demand, the capitalist derives the maximum price for it and ensures the lion's share of production for himself.

Having satisfied the real contributors of capital with security and a meagre amount of interest to them, the capitalist becomes free to regulate its employment, pocket the entire return he gets out of it, and often at the cost of the direct return to those very factors of production which had placed their capital in his hands. That is how, without making any active contribution of his own to production, this artificial class thrives and prospers by leaps and bounds at the cost of other real and substantial sectors of the economy. The capital, being shy, is formed at arithmetical rate, whereas the population, viz., the labour, increases at geometrical rate, with the result that capital and labour acquire the maximum and the minimum prices respectively.

In any society at any time, the supply of capital has always remained restrained and restricted, whereas the supply of land and labour, abundant, as an inherent natural phenomenon. Further motivated by "money" alone all the persons in a capitalistic society have a tendency to become so selfish, self-conceited and self-centered that they imagine it a constant tussle and tug of war amongst themselves. The artificial class of capitalist further aggravates this trend in the society, with the result that the spirit of co-operation and goodwill is lost altogether. Everyone becomes conscious of the fact that he must strive hard, so to adjust the demand and supply as to get the maximum return out of the minimum contribution.

The capitalistic system gives rise to class consciousness

This system, therefore, gives rise to "class-consciousness" based on economic classification and there ensues a constant conflict of interest amongst them, which often results in "violence" causing an immense burden on the "political" sphere. As the vast majority of the people get the minimum return out of the maximum contribution, owing to the mischief of demand and supply, the microscopic minority of the classes, viz., the capitalist, gets the maximum out of the "minimum" or, let it be said, "no" contribution of his own to production. Small scattered capital, thus procured by the "capitalist" from the minor investors at one stage, after a short span of time, becomes heavily multiplied in his hands and acquires gigantic proportions.

It is therefore said that in its beginning the credit system sneaks in as a modest helper of accumulation and draws by invisible threads the money resources scattered all over the surface of the society into the hands of individuals. But soon it becomes a new and formidable weapon in the competitive struggle between various factors of production and finally it transforms itself into an immense social mechanism for the centralisation of capital. The poor, in spite of optimum production, continue to become poorer and the rich richer. That is the price that the real contributor of the capital, in the ultimate analysis, has to pay for the temptation of "interest" and security of his capital. His capital never increases, his "interest" is so meagre compared to his loss of return as a factor of production that he ultimately groans in misery of his own doing.

It is also witnessed that once the "capitalist" class is allowed to creep in the economy, flourish and thrive on the strength of "interest", even the production suffers, owing to "no return" or very "meagre" return to the labourer, the real and substantial factor of production, thus causing him loss of incentive to work and profit motive indirectly, as much in effect as it does in the "totalitarian" economy directly. It is rather worse than that. There, if, owing to loss of incentive to work production is hampered, whatever is produced is distributed equitably amongst different factors of production at least removing the cause of grievances against each other. There do not exist classes poles apart on economic standards. Their affairs are conducted by "economists" who have no "economic" axe to grind, save to the extent of their enjoying powers vested in political leadership.

Political measures fail to make distribution equitable

Here, on the other hand, even political measures, indirectly applied to make distribution equitable, fail to bring about collective welfare and prosperity. It may be that production is boosted owing to the vested interests of the "capitalist" but the entire benefit thereof is devoured by him at the cost of the vast majority of the masses, to whom their equitable return is denied. Holding the "means" of production in his hands, the capitalist, in order to earn his own maximum and quickest profits, does not hesitate to create unnatural demands of extremely harmful goods and services, like "alcohol", "tobacco" and "tea". The mainstay of several government budgets on revenue from taxes on these and similar items speaks volumes for the huge consumption of such items and the mentality of the "capitalist" and the harm of this system. Thus it is seen that in practice instead of being governed by the principles of demand and supply, the capitalist holds means to control, regulate and determine the demand and supply, at his discretion, and to his advantage.

Monopolies and cartels become the main feature of such an economy. Whenever the politician, under dire political pressure, interferes, all measures taken by him are flouted through hoarding, blackmailing, smuggling, profiteering, adulteration of products, including even the necessities of life. Over and above all, to satisfy his never-ending greed for money, the capitalist tends to corrupt the public-office. To save economy from collapse the public services are expanded.
to cope with the volume of violation and non-observance of laws, and huge amounts are spent on non-productive services. Such an economy, therefore, provides a few “haves” and almost all “have-nots”. It is in such societies that “palaces” crop up amongst millions of hutments around.

**The capitalistic system engenders a tussle between the “politician” and the “capitalist”**

Often times the politician, committed to collective economic welfare of the society, betrayed in his normal endeavour to keep economy flourishing on a normal basis, has to take extreme measures of “nationalisation” of industries and services of “national importance” and the common man’s consumption; thus touching the border of “totalitarian” economy. This attitude generates a regular tussle between the “politician” and the “capitalist” on the one hand and degenerates the common man by making him conscious of “survival of the fittest” on the other. To survive, therefore, all and sundry must earn by hook or crook, devoid of all “moral” values. Less measurement and weight, non-conformity with standards and samples, imitation and forgery, dishonouring of commitments, in such a society, become the order of the day, resulting in wasteful activities and loss of real productive effort. It is thus seen that this system first provides the disease and then makes an indirect attempt to heal. An artificial class having been created in the “economic sphere” similar artificial classes are tempted to be formed in other spheres of social behaviour.

It is said that in the “capitalistic” economy the evil of economic dictatorship is countered by indirectly cutting the capitalist to size through the media of progressive taxation. Thus the capital-formation is retained, large scale production encouraged; yet the distribution equated. This is how by political interference the economic balance of the society is preserved. On close scrutiny the fallacy of this argument also would not be difficult to trace. The capitalist, as said earlier, having once acquired the most powerful means of production, viz., the “capital”, becomes so empowered as to shape the economy and regulate the society. The entire and effective control of commercial activity having centred in his hands, he possesses all means of transport and communication and controls the media of propaganda. He lures the masses to their fate and exploits their sentiments. He attempts to make the political offices so costly that only a capitalist himself or, at best, a person supported and influenced by him could dare contest for and capture political offices.

**The capitalist directly and effectively influences politics**

In spite of the heaviest political pressure, the politician must play to the tunes of, and work in collaboration with, the capitalist. In the most advanced country of the world, practising a capitalistic economic system, one finds that contesting for the office of the “President” is an affair as costly as the annual budget of any developing country. Moreover, on a political level also under the economic influence, all the theories of taxation are so propounded on the basis of the dictum, holding good in respect of both “direct” and “indirect” taxes, that the contributor of taxes shall in turn be benefited correspondingly proportionate to his contribution, when the taxes are ploughed back in the economy by the State. Any attempt by the State to divert such funds towards the common man’s good, not a direct contributor towards taxes, is resisted by the capitalists, and the political decisions are influenced to a very large extent. That is how the capitalist directly and effectively influences politics.

The less fortunate and the poorer masses of the society are thus left at the mercy of the capitalist, who in the exhausting process of economic mechanism goes fathoms deep and moral values become alien to his nature. If ever he would do anything under political pressure, apparently economically un-rewarded, for the good of the common man, he would do so to establish his own dignity in the eyes of the suffering millions and to project his own image in social and political realm. A substantial class of “unfortunate” persons not fully equipped for economic endeavor does exist, by law of nature, at all times in all societies. In capitalist society this class learns to live in inhuman misery and animal submission. That is how the indirect attempt to “heal” the “disease” fails. From the above discussion, it follows that “interest” on “capital” is the root cause of all the drawbacks of the “capitalistic” economic system, which otherwise can legitimately claim to be full of enlightened devices and civilised behaviour. This economic system has to learn sooner or later that “prevention” is better than “cure”.

**Can the absence of security of capital hamper savings?**

It would be feasible to meet the question at this stage whether in the absence of security of capital and attraction of interest thereon, savings would be hampered, investments and capital-formation discouraged and large scale production suffer; and in any case, in a developing economy like that of Pakistan and other Muslim countries the speed of economic growth would be slowed down. The answer is in the negative. Everyone, in the absence of the artificial class of capitalist, would be a capitalist himself according to his own size, determined by his ability and incentive to work. The more they save and invest, the more they participate in production and their return would also be equally great without a lion’s share thereof being devoured by the said artificial class.

Moreover, they would further gain by not losing their direct returns in respect of their contribution to production getting rid of demand and supply being exploited by the capitalist. No doubt in any industrial undertaking or venture the risk of the entrepreneur exists but the charm of a higher margin of profit is equally great to counter it. Moreover, the shyness of capital is not merely an economic factor but almost a social affair. The love for “money” in an Indian, for instance, is far greater compared to a Muslim, for reasons other than economic. Moreover, the risk would be merely in their logistical and not once only; and would further be eliminated when production will be subjected to items of unutility and benefit to the consumers, instead of creating unnatural demands for harmful and non-utility goods and services in the society.

Production will be regulated for the substantial utility and benefit of the society and not the selfish interest of a few only. The control of such organisations utilising and employing the capital of the people at large would ultimately vest in the owners thereof, through their elected representatives answerable to them; and the decisions of policy-making being so broad-based and largely participated, the chances of unwise and hazardous investments would be reduced. Moreover, the controlled production of goods and services of real utility for the society would be better and preferable to uncontrolled production of wasteful goods and services. Moreover, the risk of the entrepreneur is alarming in sophisticated industrial products aimed at and intended to create new demands.
In developing economies, industrialisation pertaining to utilisation of agriculture and other natural resources to meet the subsisting demands, such risk is altogether missing. In the ultimate analysis the small investor would not be subjected to the threats advanced by vested interests. The Governmental endeavour on this behalf, in terms of NIT1 and ICP2 has already started paying dividends and belying the apprehensions. In such a case economic activity would be widespread, people’s participation in industrial and economic growth enlarged and a higher sense of responsibility cultivated amongst people.

"Rent" is different from "interest"

Another pertinent criticism may be advanced as to how "interest" on capital is different from "rent" on property or "hire" on assets, more particularly when capital is capable of transforming into any shape at the discretion of the user. On scrutiny it would be seen that though the question theoretically and superficially appears sound, yet it is not basically valid. The transactions and the returns in both the cases are different in nature and impact both. In the former the lender becomes unconcerned with the "use" of the loan after his "loan" is secured and interest thereon guaranteed. In the latter the owner of the "property" or "asset" remains involved in and concerned with the "use" by the user throughout. In the former productive effort is not at all made by the lender, whereas in the latter productive and economic endeavour is made by the owner of the capital by converting it himself into property or "asset".

In the former the element of entrepreneur is missing altogether, whereas in the latter that element remains as much patent and alive as in producing any goods and services for consumption. In the former the real owner of the capital does not determine the economic use of his capital; whereas in the latter, the owner himself determines the pattern, size and utility of product thus making a direct contribution to production and economic growth. In the former the capital is rendered liable to "abuse", whereas in the latter it is restricted to definite and purposeful use. In the former the element of loss is missing and profit restricted; whereas in the latter both the elements remain equally available.

It is true that capital is converted and has the potentiality to be converted to any property or assets; but this potentiality of capital is left to the discretion of user; viz, the means of production is vested in the borrower; whereas in the other case the capital remains vested in the owner and not the user. The fact of the matter is that "rent" on property or "hire" on asset is more synonymous with "wages" and "salary" or the margin of gross profit determined by the manufacturer or trader on his goods or "remuneration" charged by any professional; and strictly unlike "interest" on capital.

"Interest-free" economy can be established

Another question may be posed as to how shall the economic affairs with other countries be conducted, while the most powerful of them are living and subsisting on "interest". In other words, how would foreign capital be attracted without ensuring "security" thereof and also the temptation of interest, more particularly at this developing stage of our economy? The answer is that we have two powerful "economies" co-existing together in the world, despite being diametrically opposed to each other basically. We are still dealing with both of them and have to do so even in future. Provisional arrangement to expedite the matter, without hampering the economic growth of Muslim countries until they find a more suitable atmosphere, can be recommended. In any case, sincerely professing and practising an "interest-free economy" at home, the Muslim countries may also find like-minded nations abroad. Dealing with firmness they may also persuade several alien economies and aid- or loan-giving countries to their own ways.

Sooner or later many of them may realise that economic participation on "profit-basis" would be more advantageous to them than on "interest-basis". After all, the repercussions of advancing money on an "interest-basis" have already started showing signs of discomfort in both the giving and the receiving countries. Moreover, both "capitalism" and "collectivism" are giving way to "co-operative" endeavour in their own spheres. Wisdom and restraint should be the "key-words" towards foreign economic dealings. In any case, it must always be borne in mind that economies do and can survive eventually, by developing their own technical skill and know-how and tapping and harnessing their own resources. Otherwise, owing to strings generally attached to all foreign-aids and loans, the receiving economies always live under the apprehension of compromising their political independence, followed by economic dependence. Such countries have to stop looking at developing countries for a solution of all of their problems and strive hard to attain self-sufficiency.

The example of Pakistan

Looking at the genius of the Muslim of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent in its retrospect, we find that the territories, now forming Pakistan at the time of independence, in over-all complex and in their historical and geographical background, looked like an "un-economic" entity. "Economic-creatures" should have never staked their all for such an uneconomic unit. Being devotees to "moral" values, the Muslims rendered sacrifices unprecedented in history for its achievement, and working with complete faith in their destiny, with dedication, they belied the apprehensions of all, by converting it into an economic entity, envied by many. This has been done in spite of following the principles and maintaining the institutions — not altogether Islamic — inherited from the alien rulers. To appreciate the human nature and, particularly, the Muslim mind, let me illustrate the same by citing a national episode, mainly in economic perspective, that happened during the 1965 war with India.

All the principles of "capitalistic" economy, practised in this country, collapsed miserably when it was seen that during the entire period of war the stockists brought out, and offered their stocks; but the consumers reduced and restrained their demand; people worked harder and unperturbed; price-level remained stable and static; and thus happened just the opposite of what must have happened in a capitalist economy. There was nowhere a single complaint of exploitation or selfishness throughout the entire length and breadth of the country. Complete economic harmony prevailed without pressure, prior training or planning. The reason is not far off to trace — this is the genius of the Muslim and these are the values closest to his heart. It is thus proved that man, and in any case a Muslim, is not an economic creature only.

"But God hath permitted trade and forbidden usury" (The Qur’án 2:275).

1 National Investment Trust. 2 Investment Corporation of Pakistan.
Initiation into the Holy Qur’an

The Qur’an—its three aspects—Religious, Moral and Literary

“To be Muslims is at the same time to belong to Moses, to Jesus and to all the Divine Messengers who have appeared since the creation of the Human Race”

By the late Dr. M. A. DRAZ

If, immune to all external influences, the Qur’án has always had a profound effect on different types of people, it must have had some special attraction for them, as though it had the power of adapting itself to each person’s way of thinking and acting, as though it brought the right solution to the major problems and cares of each individual. In a word, it must have fully satisfied his need for the true, the good and the beautiful, with a work which is a religious, a moral and a literary masterpiece.

Let us now deal with the Religious Factor.

CHAPTER ONE

The two important theoretical questions that have divided philosophic thought

In our opinion, one of the chief characteristics of the compelling power of Islamic preaching is the way in which it has presented religious truth and endeavoured to put an end to useless arguments about such truth.

With regard to the two important theoretical questions which have divided—and sub-divided—philosophic thought: “Where does the world come from?” and “Where is it going?”, we have all seen how so-called “revealed” religions, after having furnished an exact reply to these questions, have then built upon this reply a whole system of dogmas and ritual which has changed from one period of history to another, and from one country to another, and which is still changing today under our very eyes, not only in its forms, but also in its fundamental principles. Now, by a kind of logical instinct, man will not readily admit that one Divine truth can contradict another. If yesterday we were told that something was true from all eternity, can someone tell us tomorrow that it has become out-of-date, that it must be rejected and replaced by its opposite, without it causing us some misgiving, and leading us to suspect that there was something false in one or other of the two statements? How ever extraneous it may be, the agreement of recognised authorities regarding this or that idea remains, for the man of common sense, a sign of its truth. From this point of view we can say that a doctrine will hold all the more sway over people’s minds the more authorities it can rally to its support, thus still further increasing the confidence placed in it.

The arguments and disputes of the pundits we find disconcerting — they trouble our souls. It is when they are in agreement that we enjoy the equilibrium so necessary to our inner peace. How comforting it is to know that others think exactly as we do, that the master-minds of humanity have all rallied to the same opinion, that the mouthpieces of God confirm each other and cannot be shaken! Did not Moses make continual reference to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob? Did not Jesus come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets?

It is on this idea that the Qur’án has insisted with even more emphasis and tenacity. It affirms categorically, not only that all the Prophets constitute but one invisible religious body under the protection of God (21:92; 23:52), but also that at one time all mankind was similarly united in one body and that it was their descendants who became divided (2:253; 10:19), either because they had forgotten some part of the Divine teaching (5:13, 14), or because such teaching was boldly presented (2:75; 5:13, 41), or because of worldly ambition and self-interest (2:146, 174).

And, in its perennially logical and coherent way, the Qur’án does not define or describe Islam as a "Muhammadanism" which has been set up as a rival to Judaism and Christianity, disputing with them the honour of being the sole repository of Truth. To be Muslim is at the same time to belong to Moses, to Jesus, and to all the Divine Messengers who have appeared since the creation of the human race, by paying equal respect to all of them and accepting all their teachings, without making any distinction between them (the Qur’án 2:133, 285; 3:84; 4:152). Or, rather, it is to belong to God and to carry out His will as revealed successively...
from their lips (the Qur’an 2:133; 3:84). If this is accomplished, then there will be an end to schisms and to rivalry (the Qur’an 6:159; 42:13), for if it is true that the doctrine preached by so-and-so is the same as mine, there is absolutely no reason why I should try to shout him to silence, unless it be through egoism (the Qur’an 2:91), jealousy (the Qur’an 2:109), or vanity (the Qur’an 5:18).

The Qur’an’s appeal for a return to the original unity of all religion

Thus the Qur’an makes an appeal for a return to the original unity of all religion—a “unification” ardently desired by all evolved souls, whose hearts are moved at the very mention of the word “unity”. This would doubtless be the first step, although everything will depend on the plan to be followed and the method which is adopted.

We think that the point of departure, the nucleus around which we can organize our system of Qur’anic discussion, consists in the central idea of a transcendent Creator, All-Powerful and All-God, Who has created everything in the universe and on Whom everything, without exception, depends. The great advantage of this conception is that, on the one hand, it harmonizes perfectly with the postulate of that religious unity which we propose to establish, since schism could only arise from a pluralistic conception (the Qur’an 3:64; 29:46). On the other hand, by rising about all the various “peculiarities” of the different religions, it brings home to man that eternal truth which has never ceased to be acknowledged (or be easily acknowledgeable) by all. In fact, even the pagan Arabs, who had sunk to a very debased form of idolatry, nevertheless acknowledged a supreme God, Creator of the universe and Lord of the heavenly world (the Qur’an 29:61).

This recognition was not due merely to some vestige they had conserved of the religion of the patriarchs Abraham and Ishmael—its germ is latent in the human soul, and there is a relevant passage in the Qur’an to the effect that the souls of men acknowledged the Supreme Being before they were united with their bodies (the Qur’an 7:172). But with these people this primitive monotheism, this “natural religion” as it is termed in the Qur’an (the Qur’an 30:30), was a kind of theoretical conception enveloped in and practically submerged by the adoration which they paid to a multitude of lesser divinities (the Qur’an 12:106). Since they invoked God only when some great danger was imminent (the Qur’an 10:22), they would set aside for Him only a very small portion of their ritual offerings (the Qur’an 6:136). Owing to their every day contact with the forces of nature, it was inevitable that they should attribute certain influences to the stars (the Qur’an 53:49) and to the heavenly bodies (the Qur’an 4:37), before which they would prostrate themselves. Between God and man they set up intermediary powers who were able to bring man closer to his Creator (the Qur’an 39:9), or to intercede with God on his behalf (10:18). Thus the angels, whom they regarded as being the daughters of God, became the objects of their adoration (the Qur’an 43:19, 20). Statues (the Qur’an 22:30) and sacrificial stones (“raised stones”) (the Qur’an 5:90), which they considered as possessing hidden powers, or which in their eyes were symbols of certain invisible divinities, came in time to receive the same veneration as the object symbolised.

Little by little the imagination of these highly-superstitious people did not fail to invent a multitude of lesser gods, whom they considered as subservient to the Creator God—these lesser divinities presided over their less important affairs and enterprises. How could such inveterate anthropomorphism conceive of a king unless at the same time it provided him with assistant and collaborators who were equally worthy of veneration? Tradition has handed down a wonderful “salutation” which the pagan pilgrims used to recite during their invocations: “I am wholly Thine, O God! I am wholly Thine. Thou hast no partner, except one, over whom Thou has complete mastery, and also over all that he possesses.”

The idea that “the gods” were really a unity would for them have been something unbelievable (the Qur’an 38:5), in fact, in their eyes, all the more monstrous and false, since they had never heard anyone preaching the unity of God, either among their own people or during the previous revelation (“the former faith…” the Qur’an 38:6), that is to say, Christianity as introduced into North and South Arabia by a few refugee sects. In spite of the difference between the deified personalities of both these regimes, the pagans found enough similarity between them to justify their debased form of polytheism (the Qur’an 43:57, 58). For the people who followed the Holy Scripture had also succeeded in reconciling the unity of the Creator God with the plurality of venerated divinities.

By siding with both factions, and then opposing them, the Qur’an makes use of the first concept in order to destroy the second. It entraps its adversaries in their own argument in order to show them, if not the absurdity, then at least the ingratitude, of such a chaotic and confused medley (the Qur’an 2:21, 22; 16:17; 22:73). Thus the unity it teaches stems from a pre-existing conception which was already in vogue, though buried under the debris of antagonistic ideas. The Qur’an extricates this truth from the chaos of such ideas, and restores it to its pristine purity. It certainly does not “discover” it or invent it. It proceeds by elimination, not by addition.

The strength of a religious idea lies not in its originality but in its original character

As we have mentioned above, the strength of a religious idea lies not in its originality, but, on the contrary, in its original character. It secures our adhesion with a much-enhanced fidelity if it plunges its roots deeply into the beliefs of our distant ancestors. That is why, in addition to the deductive reasoning we have just mentioned, the Qur’anic doctrine of the unity of worship is based on the prophetic tradition of all epochs (the Qur’an 2:133; 3:79; 21:24, 25; 22:78; 44:45). So that both reason and tradition co-operate in this establishment of the religion of the One God and the refutation of idolatry and “partnership” in all their forms (the Qur’an 46:4).

But how can one explain why a postulate of this kind, so rational and so natural, and one that is continually confirmed by positive teachings, should also be liable to be thrown over and replaced by ideas which are in diametrical opposition? It is that man, by his nature, is drawn to admire creative power wherever it manifests. And, from the admiration to adoration, the process continues uninterruptedly, meeting only with differences in degree. The sun gives us light, warmth and life. The tree gives us shelter and fruit. The spring which gushes forth mysteriously from the rocks, and all similar natural forces which operate silently and effectively—all these are so many wonders which tend to fascinate and hold the attention of the enquiring mind. And what are we to say

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of the extraordinary or supernatural achievements of a magician or a thaumaturge?

Guided more often by the external senses, men are readily apt to localise these phenomena in the immediate vicinity of the place where they are produced. They attribute them to the object which manifests them, as though they were the effect of a real, active and autonomous cause. It is only when the intelligence makes a voluntary effort at reflection — which it does not always do — that it can rise above the actual phenomenon to its origins, from the sensible to the intelligible. One of the principal objectives of the Qur'ān is to give the greatest support possible to such effort, by constantly reminding us that it is an impossibility for any creature either to come into existence without there being a creative act, or to create itself, or to create anything else whatsoever, whether it be in the heavens or on the earth (the Qur'ān 52 : 35, 36; 7 : 1 91, 192), not even an insect, even if every force available in the universe were concentrated in an effort to create it (the Qur'ān 22 : 73). What is more, if a mere fly were to steal something from the most powerful ones of the world, they would be unable to recover it (ibid).

Outside of God, no one owns even one atom of matter in heaven or earth, either as a partner or as a servant (the Qur'ān 34 : 22). Nothing and no one, other than God, can change the order of nature (the Qur'ān 33 : 62; 35 : 43; 48 : 23), nor maintain it in its present state (the Qur'ān 22 : 65; 35 : 41). To this unchanging order of things, which nothing we can do will modify in the slightest degree, we give the name “Eternal Law”. Viewed in its relationship to the Creator, this unchangeability and the entire law of causality is but the expression of one word of His sovereign will. If He so desired, He could make rainwater turn salty and bitter (the Qur'ān 56 : 70), He could make the heavens fall on the earth (the Qur'ān 23 : 65), He could annihilate the human race and replace it with other creatures (the Qur'ān 14 : 19; 35 : 16). Who could stop Him if He wished to destroy everything on the earth that lives (the Qur'ān 5 : 17)? God is not only the most powerful, He is indeed the All-Powerful. The whole chain of immediate and far-off causes is but one of the instruments in the all-powerful hand of the Fashioner of the world (the Qur'ān 39 : 62, 63). Everything, in the last analysis, must be accounted for by the existence of God (the Qur'ān 53 : 42).

On hearing or reading language of this kind, one might perhaps be tempted to postulate, not only an absolutely "fatalistic" theory of things, which would render useless all human intervention, but a world of total passivity, from which all the "connecting-links" of causality would be absent. Such a conclusion is not only opposed to reason and the findings of science, but it is at variance with two groups of Qur'ānic texts — those which make a continual appeal for our moral effort, and those which explain some physical or historical phenomenon by some other one. The only tenable solution would be one which sets a definite limit on each of the propositions. To attribute to man and to the world neither autonomous power nor absolute powerlessness — this seems to be the "golden mean" which the Qur'ān has prescribed for us.

If a series of phenomena always takes place in a regular order of sequence, we have a right to suppose that it will take place in the same order in the future, and a belief in a Nature which is stable is indispensable to life. But it must not be believed that this stability is part of the essence of things, independently of the Higher Power which governs and co-ordinates them. It is to an act of the Divine Will that everything owes its existence, its permanence, its strength and its stability. Far from being the outcome of spiritual laziness, this religious explanation of the universe comes from an intelligence that is superior to the intelligence of the scientist. It recognizes scientific thought, keeps it "in its place", and infinitely transcends it. Scientific thought will stop and devote its efforts to the examination of immediate causes and intermediate stages, but the urge of the metaphysician will not stop here, and will not find complete satisfaction until it has reached up to the beginning of beginnings, that which explains everything and which nothing can explain in its entirety. The finite is imprinted on a remote corner of the infinite. We must therefore not marvel unduly at the wonders of man and of nature, however splendid they may be. The power used by a thaumaturge, which is a power limited in time and space as well as in the results, is only borrowed power, liable to be withdrawn by The One who lent it him (the Qur'ān 18 : 391).

**People fail to understand properly the importance of the systematic refusal of the Prophet Muhammad to perform miracles**

Men had not properly understood the Qur'ān when they failed to interpret in this light the systematic refusal by the Prophet to set himself up as a "worker of miracles". And so the insinuation was that He gave no signs confirming the divinity of his mission. Was he, then, arbitrarily trying to impose on men a belief in this mission without furnishing any proof or sign from above? Would not that have been the height of folly? The truth is that, in all the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the lives of the Prophets, which ratified their mission and ensured their success, the Qur'ānic doctrine never considered any miracle or prodigy to be of directly human origin. It was by virtue of the power of God that this or that wonder sprang from the lips or the hands of His messengers. And the latter had not — any more than the people to whom they had been sent — the option or the right to ask that this be changed.

Noah and the ancient Prophets had already declared this (the Qur'ān 11 : 33; 14 : 11). And when the Pharisees asked Jesus to show them a sign from heaven, what did He do except to refuse, and go away (St Matthew 16 : 1-4). God gives His "Letter of Credit" to whom He will, under the form which He desires and which He considers to be the most appropriate for the conversion of some particular period of history, or some particular age of humanity. Moses threw down his rod, and, to his great astonishment, it became a real snake (the Qur'ān 20 : 20). Jesus spoke to the dead man, and, by the authority of God, the man returned to life (the Qur'ān 5 : 110)."}

It was the same with the Mission of Muhammad. Firstly, when the recitation of a few verses had disarmed the fiercest opponents, and brought them from death to spiritual life (the Qur'ān 13 : 24), it was not Muhammad who opened their closed hearts (ibid). It was not Muhammad who caused the deaf to hear and the blind to see (the Qur'ān 30 : 52, 53). It was by the will of God that all these benefits became possible (the Qur'ān 28 : 56; 6 : 122, 125). For everything depends absolutely on Him. (the Qur'ān 13 : 31). Secondly, when the community, which had for a long time been divided and ravaged by hatred and internal wars, became almost overnight welded into a group of intimate friends — such a sud-

1 Compare the Gospel: "By the spirit of God do I cast out devils" (St Matthew 12 : 28).

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den change of heart — this was not only due to the action of one man, it would not have been brought about by all the powers of the world assembled together.

Only He Who is the Lord of hearts can unite them (the Qur’an 8 : 62 ; 3 : 103). And when, at long last, faith triumphs over unbelief, and the weakest strata of society overcome the strongest, it is neither a simple act of the Prophet, nor the courage of the Faithful which has conquered their adversaries, it is God Himself who has killed them (the Qur’an 8 : 17). From the beginning of the Qur’an to the end, we find the same explanation for the miracles worked through the intermediation of the Prophets, including Muhammad. Whether he relates a story from past history (the Qur’an 11 : 49 ; 12 : 102 ; 28 : 44-46), whether he predicts a future event (the Qur’an 31 : 6), whether he discovers some secret details connected with a lawsuit and finds the best way of settling it (the Qur’an 4 : 113 ; 66 : 3), it is not due either to his perspicacity or to the depth of his knowledge of humanity, but to a dispensation from God the Compassionate, from Whom has come all creation, all science and all goodness.

With this conception of the abundant richness and plenitude of the Divine attributes, the Qur’an has thus established the first part of the common religious doctrine, namely, that there is only one unique Being worthy of our adoration. Using this same conception, it now goes on to develop the second part — the teaching concerning the life hereafter. God is not only the beginning. He is also the end (the Qur’an 57 : 3). It is to Him that we shall return (the Qur’an 2 : 28), to render Him an account of our actions and receive what we have deserved (the Qur’an 2 : 281).

Survival of the soul and the Resurrection of the body

Here it is essential to develop two points: the survival of the soul and the resurrection of the body.

With reference to the first point, the teaching of Islam does not seem to have encountered much opposition. The Qur’an, which records very conscientiously and accurately all the objections raised by its adversaries, makes no mention of this. There are reasons to suppose that the pagan Arabs had some vague, though superstitious, idea of a certain kind of life of the soul after death. In fact, we gather from pre-Islamic poetry that their thirst for vengeance led to their believing in a fabulous entity which they called Hāma, a kind of spectral double which hovered at night over the victim’s tomb crying, “Give me drink!”

It would not go away and would repeat its cries until satisfaction had been rendered for the crime committed. When it denied the existence of such an entity, prophetic tradition confirmed that it was a pre-Islamic conception.

But it was against the second point that the impious hurled their objections and their sarcasm. It was not easy for their sceptical minds, too much over-concerned with the mundane matters of everyday life, to believe that a completely disintegrated human body could assume its former shape and begin life all over again.

“If it possible, say the sceptics, when we shall have become bones and dust, that we shall be raised up to a new creation?” (the Qur’an 17 : 49).

“Whoever believes a statement like that can only be a madman or . . . he has forged a lie against God” (the Qur’an 34 : 7).

“Bring our fathers (back), if you are truthful!” (the Qur’an 44 : 36).

“No, there is nothing but our life in this world, nothing destroys us but time . . .” (the Qur’an 45 : 24, 25).

The Qur’an borrows arguments from the book of Nature

To combat all this plausible “reasoning”, the Qur’an brings forward its decisive argument, taken from the book of Nature. It lays stress on the infinite multitude of scenes and pictures which are spread before our eyes, in which we see the manifestation of the glorious power of the Creator. It is from the earth that God raised men, and it is to the earth that He will cause them to return. And it is from the earth that He will raise them a second time (the Qur’an 20 : 55). It is salutary for man to reflect a little on the successive forms taken by a human being (the Qur’an), from a mere drop of blood to the wonderful state in which he is born (the Qur’an 23 : 12-16).

“God brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living” (the Qur’an 30 : 19).

Will it not be easier for the Fashioneer who produced the first creation to produce it a second time (the Qur’an 30 : 27)? The Qur’an draws special attention to the wonderful changing phenomena which distinguish the seasons of the year. Do we not see the dry and sterile earth become fertile?

“When We send down water on it, it stirs and swells, and brings forth of every kind of beautiful herbage” (the Qur’an 22 : 5-7).

“Look then at the signs of God’s mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death. Surely He is the quickener of the dead, and He has power over all things” (the Qur’an 30 : 50).

But, the sceptics will say, although one may admit the possibility of a new life for plants, how can a human being be given a second life, after the separation of the senses and the consciousness from the body? Those who reason in this way have only to reflect on what happens every day to everyone when the regularly-recurring states of sleep and waking consciousness serve as a kind of initiation to this condition of life after death (the Qur’an 6 : 60 ; 39 : 42).

Thus it is not impossible — it is even very probable — that we shall live again. But on what can the certainty be based? The Qur’an proclaims its certitude not only by virtue of a Divine decree — a kind of obligation or covenant assumed by God — but as a manifestation of supreme justice and the highest wisdom . . .

“So that He might make manifest to them that about which they differ” (the Qur’an 30 : 39),

and that every soul may be rewarded for what it has earned (the Qur’an 45 : 22). Otherwise, the creation of man would have been in vain (the Qur’an 23 : 115 ; 75 : 36).

The two great propositions constituting the basic framework of the religion the Qur’an aims to establish

Thus the two great propositions which constitute the basic framework of the one religion to be established by the Qur’an are truths which have either been recognised as such, in themselves, or are founded on obvious self-evident principles. For a theoretical demonstration, we cannot ask for a more effective persuasive power. Although the religious theme remains, on the whole, what it always has been, it has nevertheless made substantial progress under the form

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Arabic Language and Script

"It was the Arabisation of the conquered provinces rather than their military conquest that is the true wonder of the Arab expansion"

While most Europeans know that Arabic is the written and spoken language of 90 million inhabitants of the Arab World, few realize that the Arabic script is also used by one-seventh of the human race.

Today some 350 million people living in Africa and Asia write their languages in the Arabic alphabet. Modern Persian, the language of Iran, the Urdu, the language of Pakistan and parts of India, are written in Arabic. In addition, the Arabic script letters are in use in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, sections of China, southern Russia and the Philippines.

The reason for this extensive use of written Arabic dates back to the seventh century rise of Islam and the Arab State. As the Arab State flourished and expanded, Arabic became the administrative language of vast sections of the civilized world. By the eleventh century this language was the common medium of expression from Persia to the Pyrenees — the language of kings and commoners, poets and princes, scholars and scientists. Arabic became the principal reservoir of human knowledge, supplanting previous cultural languages, like Coptic, Aramaic, Greek and Latin.

A noted scholar has written that, "It was the Arabisation of the conquered provinces rather than their military conquest that is the true wonder of the Arab expansion." For the warriors who came out of the Arabian peninsula brought with them a remarkably flexible language, capable of developing new words to meet new situations. Thus Arabic could create a new administrative terminology and adapt itself easily to the demands of new scientific and artistic discoveries.

Arabic belongs to the Semitic family of languages, which includes Hebrew, Aramaic and Phoenician. In the form in which it is known today, Arabic was developed in the sixth century by bedouin poets, who sang to the tribes of northern Arabia. These pre-Islamic Arabs were a desert people with little formal education, but they created a poetic language of amazing richness and classical exactitude. Because they were an observant people, they invented specific names for every type of thing: a camel so many years old, a mother of so many foals, a good trotting beast, etc.

The literature of pre-Islamic Arabs was a literature of abstract thoughts, but of concrete images of desert life: love, war, hunting, animals and nature. Poets found a natural rhythm in the structure of their language, which was built upon a three-consonant root for various nouns and verbs. By the juxtaposition of consonants and vowels in a basic root, many words with exact shades of meaning could be created.

The Qur'an was the first document of Arab prose literature

In the seventh century, the Prophet Muhammad gradually developed a new prose style which could convey sustained arguments and abstract ideas of religion. The Qur'an itself is the first document of Arab prose literature, adding new depths of thought and reflection to the language, while retaining the vivid imagery of pre-Islamic poetry.

During the succeeding centuries of the Arab State, when Arabic was forced to become an administrative language, it drew upon Byzantine and Persian terms and its own immense inner resources of vocabulary and grammatical flexibility. The Arabic language was enriched by cultural contacts with the civilizations of other peoples — Greeks, Persians, Copts, Romans, Indians and Chinese. In the eighth century C.E. the Arabs learned from the Chinese how to make paper, and many Arabic manuscripts written on paper date from the ninth century.

Greek influence upon the Arabs' language and thought became pronounced during the ninth and tenth centuries, when the Arabs translated many scientific and philosophical works from Greek into Arabic. Under the reign of the Abbasids, a special school for translators was established in Baghdad with a library and regular staff. The Arabic language became the repository for the accumulated wisdom of past ages, plus the new wisdom contributed by Arab doctors, philosophers, scientists, astronomers and mathematicians. One of the most famous scholars of medieval Islam, al-Birnifi (d. 1048 C.E.), wrote in Kitab as-Sayyidah (The Pharmacopia) that, "The sciences were transmitted into the Arabic language from different parts of the world; by it they were embellished and penetrated the hearts of men, while the beauties of that language flowed in their veins and arteries."

Arabic words in European languages

Many modern European languages — Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian and English — owe a great debt to Arabic. The English language itself contains many words taken from the Arabic: algebra, named after a book entitled al-Jabr, which was written by the great ninth century C.E. Arab mathematician al-Khwârizmî; alchemy, from al-Kimyâ, the Arabic word for chemistry; admiral, from 'amir al-Bahr, a leader or prince; mare from mahr, a female horse; genius from genii, someone clever as a devil; soda (originally a headache remedy) from the šiddâ (headache) described by the famous eleventh century C.E. Arab physician Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna), and many other words.

After the decline of the Arab State, countries or peoples which had embraced Islam as their religion retained the Arabic script for their writing, even when speaking other languages. The classical Arabic script in which the Holy Qur'an was written remained constant throughout the Arab World itself, although spoken Arabic frequently underwent dialectic changes in various Arab countries.

The Arabic script, which reads from right to left, was developed into a fine art by gifted calligraphers, who transcribed all their works by hand. Pens used in traditional Arab calligraphy derive their names from the specific function for which they are employed: the ihlulâh pen for writing book titles, chapter headings, initial letters of verses in the Qur'an, shop signs, etc.; the riq'âh pen for government documents and

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Prophecy, Zionism and the State of Israel* 

By ELMER BERGER

I

PROPOSITIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The accepted criteria of prophecy with the Jews

It is not a simple matter to discuss prophecy in the tradition of Judaism. The term “prophet” has meant many things to many people. Even in Judaism, the fact that many, if not most of the great teachers and scholars, took pains to distinguish between true and false prophets clearly indicates the prevalence of popular misconceptions of the term. So, for example, Moses Maimonides observed, eight centuries ago, “There are as many different opinions concerning prophecy as concerning the Eternity or non-Eternity of the Universe.” The great twelfth century teacher says, among other things about the authentic tradition of prophecy in Judaism, that “perfection of moral and rational faculties are the sine qua non.” And in another place Maimonides says: “Prophecy is, in truth and reality, an emanation sent forth by the Divine Being through the medium of the Active Intellect, in the first instance to man’s rational faculty, and then to his imaginative faculty.”

Authority could be added to authority. But I have no reason to labour the point. The distinction between the fortune-tellers, the soothsayers, the “school of prophets”, on the one hand, and the men who left the tradition we all identify as authentic Hebrew prophecy, on the other hand, is generally accepted. There may be differences of opinion as to precisely where in the evolution of Judaism the authentic tradition begins. Some date it with Samuel, noting his reluctance to supply a worldly king for the Israel of his time. Others find more congenial and less debatable criteria in Nathan and then in Elijah and Elisha. I hope it will not sound too arbitrary or dogmatic if I say, at this point, that while recognizing these divergences of opinion they are of only secondary relevance to the subject of “Prophecy, Zionism and the State of Israel”. It seems to me that no matter where the criteria begin to become clear in the tradition, the criteria themselves are fairly generally accepted. They are:

1. The men we call prophets were motivated by passionate commitment to a moral God and they articulated their commitment through the processes and disciplines of rational thought. Martin Buber makes the dramatic point that Samuel, with whom Buber identifies the prophetic tradition, “replaces the priestly with a prophetic guidance, instituting free announcements in place of the oracle fettered by sanctuarian tradition.”

2. The second index of the character of these men is that they were not purveyors of clichés — but destroyers of them. They were not — in any sense whatsoever — guided by that phrase, now of dubious respectability in my own country, “the consensus”. They were reluctant, resisting contributors to the public information of their day. They were the opposite to our contemporary propaganda engineers and public information officers of modern Prime Ministers or Presidents.

“I weary myself to hold (it) in” (the word of God), said Jeremiah, “but cannot.”

The prophets were not parochial — either in time or in space. They were not confined to the prejudices, the predilections, the popular opinions of their own people. In the realm of knowledge they knew history and they knew the history of people other than their own. And in the realm of faith or commitment, while they loved their people they explicitly declared, over and over again, that this people was subject to the moral covenant made with the God Who declared Israel was “as the children of Ethiopia unto Me”; a God Who invited “all the ends of the earth” to “look unto Me and be ye saved.”

3. And, finally, these men looked for no escape from their world in the realms of the apocalyptic or the eschatological. They saw the glaring injustice of life all about them and it was the credibility gap between what they saw every day in the midst of a people believing they were serving their God, on the one hand, and what these stormers of heaven believed God demanded of man, on the other hand, which compelled them to speak. The prophecy of Isaiah is a classical illustration of the here and the now to which the major prophets addressed themselves. In scorn and derision the prophet says about the people of Israel:

Behold, in the day of your fast ye pursue your business, And exact all your labours; Behold, ye fast for strife and contention, And to smite with the list of wickedness; Ye fast not this day

*Being the text of a lecture delivered at the University of Leiden, Leiden, Holland, on 18 March 1968.
4 XX : 9.
5 Amos IX : 9.
6 Isaiah V : 22.

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So as to make your voice to be heard on high.
Is such the fast that I have chosen?
The day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush,
And to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Wilt thou call this a fast,
And acceptable day to the Lord?7

The claim that the prophets of the Old Testament predicted the events of this century is not correct

There is little — almost nothing — in these prophets of specific predictions in some clearly delineated future, clearly perceived and painted on great canvases with garish colours. The sins they condemned were defined with the explicit language of a prosecuting attorney.

But those who entertained any substantial future hope — and not all of them did — were very wary of specifying the details of that hope. They avoided predicting the rewards for virtue in any gaudy descriptions of either a heaven or an earth decorated with tinsel and populated with angels. The God, the moral passion which consumed them, had no terminus in time, no Elysian fields at the end of virtue's road. The highest attainment was for man to know God — a never-ending, always tormenting, always exacting service to search. There was no promise of peace of mind or of soul. The prophets were certain of the immutability of the moral equation. But there is little in the first-hand legacy they left to indicate they presumed comparable certainty about the specific rewards or punishments with which the history they all respected would balance this equation.

This point is so important that I quote from among the least controversial, most standard of all sources by way of support. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* says that the truths which the prophets spoke were given in the natural order of development, that is, according to the needs and capacities of the learners; that they were evoked by certain definite, historical occasions.8

And for another, perhaps more controversial but deeply traditional view, let me refer you again to Martin Buber:

"The pure prophet (Buber says) is not imaginative or, more precisely, he has no other imagination than the full grasping of the present, actual and potential... The true prophet, this quivering magnet needle, pointing the way to God, is altogether bound by this 'time'. He is bound by the situation of the house in which God is preparing the work He has in mind, and therefore the decision is not yet made, but is being made. Men cannot hear from the mouth of the true prophet what they wish to hear; they can only hear what they shall hear, that is what is designed in this hour and set before them, that they may let drop into it their 'Yes' and 'No', their decisions and their refusals to decide, the molten metal of their hour, and supply God with the material for His work."

If this criterion is accepted, none of the prophets would have predicted an event of our century; and it must, therefore, also follow that any who today claim some event of our century is the fulfillment of the visions of these men of 25 centuries ago, presumes. He may be entitled to make his claim. But he is not entitled to uncritical acceptance of that claim as an article in anyone's faith.

II

THE SACRED LAND?

The present State of Israel is not a fulfillment of the Old Testament Prophetic Messianism

It may legitimately be said that so far I have offered only street signs along the way of the authentic, prophetic tradition, and provided little information about the way itself. An adversary would have a right to ask that the substance of a prophecy be examined instead of resting a case on generalizations about the form.

I propose to examine three substantive facts about the prophetic tradition.

1. The first of these is that while some of the prophets did speak of restoration in Zion, it was not the land, in and by itself, which was invested with sanctity. Without doubt — speaking in the context of their time — some of the prophets saw the imminent destruction of their morally corrupt society, but also saw some new society emerging in some future age of redemption. The legitimacy of such a Zion in the tradition of Judaism is without question. But I am also saying that I do not believe any legitimate claim can be made for any particular state, at any given time in history — and perhaps not even in any specified place — as the fulfillment of the prophetic view of redemption.

The absolutely unquestioned criterion of the prophetic view of redemption was the clear restoration of the covenant with God. The covenant had been broken by king and people. The defiled and broken covenant heralded the destruction; and it was only the covenant restored, or, with Jeremiah, revised and reformed, which could bring redemption. Only then would God again call Israel His people because the people again had come to know God.

That syndrome is unavoidable. It was never the land which was inherently sacred. The land was sanctified only insofar as the covenant obtained. It is simply not true that willy-nilly what transpired in the Holy Land was holy by virtue of soil itself. "What is the transgression of Jacob?" Micah asked; and answered in the same breath, "Is it not Samaria? And what are the high places" — the abominations "of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?"9 The land — Samaria and Jerusalem — supported the idolatry, sanctioned the social corruption, acquiesced in the human indignities inventoried by Micah and all the other prophets. Therefore, "I will make Samaria a heap in the field," promised the Lord. And in yet another time and place Amos has said, "Seek ye Me and live. But seek not Beth-El, Nor enter into Gilgal, And pass not to Beersheba."10

Whatever else these declarations mean — and they are thoroughly typical — they do not, in any conceivable sense, invest the land, as such, not even the shrines and not even the principal shrine, with sanctity. *The land is subject to the covenant.*

Micah is explicit about this.

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob,
And rulers of the house of Israel.
That abhor justice, and pervert all equity;
That build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity...

7 *Ibid* LVIII, vv. 2-5.
9 *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
10 I: 5.
11 V: 10.
Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, 
And Jerusalem shall become heaps, 
And the mountain of the house as the high places of a 
forests.\(^{12}\)

Zion is holy only if the law of God does go forth from 
it, which is not at all the same as saying that any law which 
goeth forth from Zion is holy.

I do not wish to transform this presentation into an 
especially political dissertation. But if the prophets were, 
indeed, rational men, then it seems to me to be incumbent on 
any who claims the present State of Israel is a fulfillment of 
Old Testament Prophetic Messianism, to examine some of 
the laws which have come out of this allegedly reconstructed 
prophetic Zion and to demonstrate their consistency with 
God's law. There are, for example, laws seeking to bind Jews 
of all countries into an obligatory nationality relationship 
with this new state. At the same time there are laws which 
discriminate against more than a million and a half people 
who are recognized by the world to have legitimate claims to 
citizenship rights in the territories now comprising, or 
occupied by, Israel. There are discriminatory practices against 
the more than half of Israel's Jews who are Arab Jews, or 
Orientals.\(^{13}\) There are laws which prevent the full and 
equal practice of any Judaism in this "Jewish" state other 
than the interpretation of Judaism vested in the recognized 
religious-political parties.

In addition to laws, there are attitudes and policies of 
the State of Israel which certainly raise questions that its 
mere existence on the soil of the Holy Land sanctifies the 
State and therefore redeems the land in the spirit of 
Messianism, either in Judaism or Christianity. Nearly 25% 
of the population is admittedly "not at all observant, com-
pletely secular". An additional 46% are religiously moti-
vated, again by their own admission, in only a minimal 
degree.\(^{14}\) In another area of policy, it cannot be overlooked 
that since 1947-1948 (C.E.), at least, the several administra-
tions of the State of Israel have stood in the Middle East, 
claiming they want peace, but — in the language of an 
American Assistant Secretary of State — they have adopted 
"the attitude of the conqueror and the conviction that force 
and a policy of retaliatory killings is the only policy (their) 
neighbours will understand."\(^{15}\)

Now I wish to make it unmistakably clear that in noting 
these illustrations of Israeli law and policy the implied judg-
ment is definitely not made in the context of the power politics 
of the world. Judgments in that arena would be of an entirely 
different character. But these laws and such policies cannot, 
at least in my judgment as a religiousman, be made consistent 
with the kind of law which must go forth from Zion in order 
that is all I 
)a, in the context. I cannot consider such observations 

12 III: 9-10; 12. 
13 Michael Selzer, The Arzynization of the Jewish State. Black Star, 
14 Georges Friedmann, The End of the Jewish People. Doubleday 
15 The Middle East, by Henry A. Byroade, Assistant Secretary of 
State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, The 
(To be continued)

To INITIATION INTO THE HOLY QUR'AN — Continued from page 36

which it has taken in the Qur'an. This is not only because 
the Qur'an has furnished proofs in a manner capable of 
convincing the most sceptical minds and moving those who 
have hearts of stone. It is not only because of the very com-
prehensive and penetrating glimpses it has given of the 
ensemble of the celestial and terrestrial universe, and the 
lessons it has drawn from each aspect of internal and exter-
nal creation. But the religious matter itself, that aspect which 
concerns the attributes of God and the destiny of the soul, 
has found in the Qur'an a much more advanced development 
than can be found anywhere else.

We will add that the sense of the Divine which is found 
in the Qur'an is characterised both by a rare purity which 
removes it far from the crude anthropomorphism into which 
man's imagination can so easily fall, and by such compelling 
power that the reader completely forgets his most harassing 
material cares and is carried up to the sublime world of the 
spirit.\(^{16}\)

2 As examples, read Chapters 13, 20, 39, 40, 41 and 42, or passages 
such as 2: 255-260; 3: 190-195; 4: 77-79; 5: 109 to the end; 6: 
95-104; 58: 77; 59: 21 to the end.

To ARABIC LANGUAGE AND SCRIPT — Continued from page 37

everyday writing; the Persian pen for calligraphy done by 
the people of India, Persia and Afghanistan; the dwarţal pen, 
used by the Turks and Egyptians; the kafiţ pen for the oldest 
kind of calligraphy in the Arab countries, beautiful during 
the reign of the Abbasids, and the maghribi pen, used widely 
in North Africa and in Spain for many years.

Islam forbade the painting or sculpting of actual objects 
because of the inherent danger of possible hero-worship, so 
Arab artists frequently found an outlet for their talents in 
the highly stylized and intricate art of calligraphy. Because 
of its beauty and the ease with which it is written, Arabic 
script continues to hold a place of respect and admiration in 
the twentieth century world.

However, the twentieth century world has also proposed 
some modern innovations in the traditional system of printing 
the Arabic language. Although the Arabic language contains 
only 30 letters, present-day printing methods employ more 
than 400 characters to reproduce this language in newspa-
papers and books. Some students of Arabic believe that this 
printing technique unnecessarily complicates the language, 
rendering its mastery more difficult for the average student.
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