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April 1962

THE  
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REVIEW

Woking — England

APRIL 1962  
*50th year of publication*

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April 1962

50th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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**Between Ourselves**

**THE COVER**

The illustration on the cover is that of a Mosque of Cairo, Egypt, built by the Qa'it Bey, a Mameluke ruler of Egypt, during the 15th century C.E. The name of Qa'it Bey (d. 1496) has become identified with that of a whole epoch to which Cairo owes a great number of graceful monuments.

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**CORRECTION**

Qazi Tahfizur Rahman is an Indian Muslim and not a Pakistani as mentioned in Between Ourselves of March, 1962 issue of the *Islamic Review*.

## The Islamic Review

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مُحَمَّدٌ وَنُصِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولُهُ الْكَرِيمِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ

"Muhammad is...the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets..." — THE HOLY QUR'AN 33:40  
"There will be no Prophet after me" — THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Vol. I No. 4

April 1962

Shawwaal—Dhu'l—Qa'dah 1381 A.H.

# SELF CRITICISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

It is now an established fact that the world of Islam, after having remained for centuries in oblivion, has definitely come into its own and is destined to play a prominent role in the world in the shaping of things to come. But it is also equally true to say that those who realize this fact see the obstacles that stand in the way of the Muslim world; for it lacks those requisites which are the concomitants of such a destiny. In other words, before the voice of the Muslim world can command respect from the non-Muslim world, it must equip itself with characteristics which can be described as its own.

The literature that is pouring from the presses of the non-Muslim world is on the increase, and it enables one to get an idea of the nature of the challenge the world of Islam can expect to meet with from the non-Muslim world. Is it ready to meet it? The problems of the Muslim world range from the religious and moral to the political and economic fields. Its leaders in its various parts are trying their hand finding solutions to them. It is no secret to admit that some of them have drifted far from the traditional path and have introduced laws and institutions foreign to the genius of Islam. In fairness to them it would be right to add that they have been forced to adopt this course because they could not get any encouragement from the traditional repositories of the knowledge of Islam — the *'ulama* — to translate their ideas into practice. Small wonder that the Muslim countries do not seem to enjoy prestige in the world assemblies which attaches itself to those who possess individuality of their own. To give but one example, when about ten years ago the Pakistan Parliament discussed the advisability of incorporating the institution of the *zakat* into economic system of Pakistan, it was decided that owing to the extraordinary difficulties in the matter of taking such a

step, it was expedient that the discussion be postponed indefinitely! This was clear proof to those that the world of Islam could not offer any solution to the economic problems and ills of mankind. The result of this indecisiveness is that all its leaders end up as cheap imitators of this group or that group and lose their identity altogether. As the world of Islam is politically weak and economically underdeveloped, some of its leaders have stood on the fence disclaiming their allegiance to the stronger groups. Even this has not helped very much because they have not been able to produce a system with a stamp of its own.

This state of affairs to which we have made a brief reference is a challenge of stupendous magnitude to the intellect of the Muslim world. The repetition of stock-in-trade phrases that Islam has to say on this and that brings forth a sneer from non-Muslims. Witness, for instance, the words of Professor J. N. D. Anderson of London University, who is probably a match to any living Muslim scholar in the intricacies of the Muslim law of inheritance, in his book *Islamic Law in the Modern World*, London, 1959. He dismisses in an off-hand manner the claim of Muslims to solving the economic problems through the institution of the *zakat*. He says:

"... the Islamic law of inheritance leads to excessive fragmentation of real estate, which soon becomes subdivided into plots of uneconomical size. This has been avoided in some countries by legislation requiring the registration of all claims to real estate, and by regulations forbidding the registration of plots of less than a specified size; with the effect that heirs are forced to come to some amicable arrangement whereby the real estate passes to some heirs only, and the others

take their share (or compensation) from other property, or else the estate is sold and the price distributed among the heirs as a whole. It is noteworthy, however, that many Muslim writers stress the virtues of the Islamic law of inheritance as a guarantee against the perpetuation of large estates, whether in land or other forms of wealth; and even, when coupled with the law of *zakat*, or compulsory alms, as providing a *via media* between capitalism and socialism. *But this claim need not be taken too seriously*" (italics are ours).

Here is yet another example to show how even non-Muslim sympathetic writers view our claims to having in the Prophet Muhammad the ideal prophet in all fields of human activity. Leave alone the role of Islam in the realms of politics and economics, the non-Muslims are challenging the very essence of the greatness of the Prophet Muhammad in the domain of morals which is embodied in the Qur'an (68:4): "And surely you conform yourself to sublime morality." We step aside to quote the words of Dr. W. Montgomery Watt from his very interesting book *Muhammad at Medina*, London, 1956, in this matter. He says:

"The world is becoming increasingly one world, and in this one world there is a tendency towards unification and uniformity. Because of this tendency the day will doubtless come when there will be a set of moral principles which not merely claim universal validity but are actually accepted almost universally throughout the one world. Now Muslims claim that Muhammad is a model of conduct and character for all mankind. In so doing they invite world opinion to pass judgment upon him. Up till now the matter has received scant attention from world opinion, but because of the strength of Islam, it will eventually have to be given serious consideration. Are any principles to be learnt from the life and teaching of Muhammad that will contribute to the one morality of the future?"

"To this question the world has not yet given a final answer. What has been said so far by Muslims in support of their claims for Muhammad can be regarded as no more than a preliminary statement of the case, and few non-Muslims have been convinced by it. Nevertheless, the issue still remains open. *How the world answers the question about Muhammad depends to some extent on what the Muslims of today do.* (Italics are ours.) They still have an opportunity to give a fuller and better presentation of their case to the rest of the world. Will they be able to turn to the life of Muhammad and by sifting the universal in it from the particular discover moral principles which make a creative contribution to the present world situation? Or, if this is too much to expect, will they at least be able to show that Muhammad's life is one possible exemplification of the ideal man in the unified world morality? If they make a good case, there are some Christians who will be ready to listen to them and to learn whatever is to be learned.

"The difficulties confronting Muslims, however, are immense. A combination of sound scholarship and deep moral insight is essential, and this combination is rare. *I will not conceal my personal view that Muslims are unlikely to be successful in their attempt to influence world opinion, at least in the sphere of morals.* (Italics are ours.) In the wider sphere of religion they have probably to contribute to the world, for they have retained

emphases — on the reality of God, for example — which have been neglected or forgotten in important sections of the other monotheistic religions; and I for one gladly acknowledge my indebtedness to the writings of a man like al-Ghazzali. Towards convincing Christian Europe that Muhammad is a moral exemplar, however, little, indeed nothing, has so far been accomplished."

Now, how comes it that non-Muslims have a poor opinion of us Muslims? This question is worthy of a searching enquiry, and to our mind every Muslim owes it to himself to find an answer to it and a reason for the lack of individuality of the Muslim world. There might be many answers and approaches to this enquiry. To us the deep-rooted cause lies in the lack of self-criticism in the Muslim world. The Muslims for centuries have not practised the art of looking at themselves. Secondly, they have become such slaves to formalism that they cannot see the wood for the trees. In the conduct of their affairs the Muslims have become robots. They all think in terms of people who lived hundreds of years ago. They feel because they have conformed to certain rituals which are understood by them for ends in themselves they have done their duty towards their Creator and their fellow-beings. To enable the entire Muslim community to understand the rightful place of ritualism in its daily life, and to see it in its true perspective, is an immense task beset with great difficulties. As a matter of fact, one does not know where to start.

It is true that efforts are being made here and there to find out the principal root cause or causes of this trouble. In Pakistan and Indonesia, Islamic Research Institutes have been founded with a view to giving the right guidance in understanding Islam and its teachings, and to destroying many of the taboos which have grown into the system of Muslim life. Some see the source of trouble in the Hadith literature and the exaggerated place it occupies in the conduct of the daily life of Muslims, while others see the saint worship responsible for their mental decrepitude, and yet others in the garbled forms in which Islam is presented in various parts of the world today. There is some truth in all these statements. Now whatever the real cause, the one question that has yet to be answered is why the world of Islam does not possess its own entity. Can it find its way out of the morass in which it finds itself today?

In our opinion the Muslim individual has to be taught to think matters out for himself and to realize that he is not a mere imitator of his predecessors and that he possesses an individuality of his own. The Muslim of today, while he should realize that he owes a great deal to his forefathers — thinkers and philosophers, etc. — is not like unto the moon that shines from the borrowed light, and that he has also a right to think out his own problems in his own way within the framework of Islam in exactly the same way as did his forefathers, and that he has a right to disagree with others and his predecessors however exalted they may have been in the intellectual and religious spheres. The Muslims of today have to learn to disagree with the views and opinions of their great men of yesterday, as did they amongst themselves. The disagreements between the various Imams of the four principal Islamic schools of law is a standing testimony to their independent thinking — a quality which the Muslim of today lack. The rigid chains which the Muslims have forged around their feet can only be broken if Muslims wake up to the realization that they can criticize their forefathers whom they have enveloped wittingly or unwittingly in a halo of sanctity.

# ISLAM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

By Dr. AHMED GIAMIL MAZZARA KOROL-OGHLU

The European Press, which is little qualified to treat Islamic matters, perpetually affirms that democracy is not an exportable product, and infers that Islam cannot adapt itself thereto.

## Islam is the supreme democratic religion

The verses of the Qur'an, the laws laid down by the Prophet, and the doctrines sanctioned by eminent Muslim religious luminaries, confute the truth of this affirmation. Numerous other factors which are of importance in the history of humanity indicate also that the religion revealed to Muhammad has taught the loftiest principles of brotherhood and equality, thus becoming *the religion of democracy*.

One cannot deny the priority of Islam as a herald of democracy; for it was here well known eleven centuries before the idea became familiar in Europe. One has only to remember the fact that democratic principles were born in Europe as a result of the French Revolution of 1789, when the rights of man were proclaimed.

Islam silently laid the foundations of democracy, without propaganda, violent demonstrations or disturbances, among the Arab people, without bloodshed: in contrast to Europe, where even the most elementary principles of equality only spread after atrocious class-struggles during three centuries of political servitude.

The Romans themselves founded their empire through violence and reduced the conquered peoples to slavery. As compared to this, the Muslims treated other races differently. They guaranteed religious freedom to the inhabitants of the conquered territories, and also the integrity of their property; and they treated them on an equal footing with regard to both rights and duties.

In this regard, it is but right to contrast two aspects of life among Greeks and Arabs in pre-Islamic days, so that the extent and value of the success achieved by the spread and acceptance of Islam can be appreciated.

Ancient Greece, on account of her geographical situation and the character of her inhabitants, lent herself to the development of the democratic conception. The Arabs, on the other hand, did not, like the Greeks, live in towns, where it is possible for democratic ideas to arise and develop. They lived in tents and were divided into tribes, where interests were opposed and struggles perpetual.

Such an environment was hardly ideal for the triumph of democracy, and yet Islam adapted the Arabs to that social system. The success of Islam is not due to compromise with the people, or the fact that the people became better disposed towards assimilating the ideas of Muhammad, who, proclaiming Islam as the natural religion for mankind desirous of perfection, inspired men to form a new society, and to desire a new life based on brotherhood and equality, the two natural and logical characteristics of democracy.

Islam is not limited to theoretical teachings; it pays attention to the practical education of the faithful, so that they may become participants of democratic principles.

One finds confirmation of this fact in numerous episodes of Arab life which reveal the democratic spirit of the new nation. One may mention the case of an Arab who came before the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and boldly declared before the crowd: "I swear that if thou commitest errors, we shall not hesitate to punish thee with our swords." To these frank words 'Umar replied: "I thank God that there may be found among the Muslims the one to correct 'Umar's errors with a sword."

I have stated that the principles of a democratic form of government are to be found in the Qur'an and in the *Hadith* of the Prophet. An explicit proclamation of the parliamentary system of government is found in these two verses of the Holy Book: "Advise them of that which they are to do" (42:38), and "Let them take counsel about matters of public interest" (3:159).

Islam was destined to conform to the dictation of the basic rules of the democratic State, leaving to those who were responsible to the people the liberty of fixing the details and procedure of their government.

The consultative system was scrupulously observed during the early years of Islam, and the Caliph 'Umar (d. 644 C.E.), although convinced of the pressing need of the Muslims to fight Persia, did not, however, wish to act as a despot, and first consulted his people. The history of this occurrence tells us that the people requested 'Umar himself to lead his troops, while the nobles suggested Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, and 'Umar followed the former proposal. One sees that Islam laid down the bases of the consultative system, which the Caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar rigidly applied. When the Umayyads came into contact with the Persians and others, however, they repudiated this system on seeing how the governments of those countries treated their peoples.

Had the Umayyads not acted as despots, the Abbasid propaganda would not have succeeded in defeating and overthrowing them.

When the Arabs, led by 'Amr Ibn al-'Aas, commenced the Egyptian campaign, the governor of that country sought information about the enemy forces. His messenger, who had witnessed 'Amr sitting in the midst of his soldiers and eating among them, described to the governor this scene, a living and pulsating document of the democratic spirit which animated the Arabs, and he added, "It is impossible to conquer an army in which the leaders and the soldiers are on a footing of genuine equality".

The Westerners of today boast about their great men risen from the masses. Islam can also show that the architects of her grandeur came from the masses. Equality before

the law, with no distinctions between the poor and the rich, the strong and the weak, the great and the small, equality before justice, equality in the distribution of public offices — the early history of Islam, and even that of the later period when the momentum had weakened, being full of how men of humble origin were able to attain to the highest positions, fiscal equality (nobody was harassed by taxes unless as a result of measures of a general nature). Equality, in one word, was as much for rights as for obligations.

### The democratic justice of Islam

The social polity of Islam was able to attain to perfect political and civil equality, but did not promise economic equality and division of riches, since being a religion it conformed to the demands of human nature; for is it possible even to realize economic equality when men differ physically and intellectually? Natural laws do not permit of economic equality. The equality permissible in this field cannot be other than that of misery and poverty. Islam considers economic equality an ideal impossible of realization, but has always lessened the severity of natural laws by the imposition of a compulsory wealth tax called the zakat, which Islam believes, if rationally applied, will lead to the solution of the unequal distribution of wealth which gnaws at the consciences of the great European sociologists, and provokes so many class struggles and subversive theories. As is obvious from a record of contemporaneous events in the world, Islam is a rampart against which the extremist doctrines which disturb the West and the East and menace the West with extinction can only smash themselves.

It is sometimes maintained that Islam was spread by the sword. It is now admitted freely by Western writers that this statement is without foundation. Could in fact a handful of men have dominated by force of arms territories which the Romans only conquered after eight centuries? It was that justice of which the Arab Muslims converted to Islam became the brave defenders which facilitated their task of extending their rule over vast areas extending from the Indian frontiers to fruitful Andalusia.

When Muslims came up against a people they had to fight, they took care to offer to the enemy one of the three alternatives proposed to it — the acceptance of Islam, the payment of a tribute, or war. By this procedure they indicated the highest degree of religious toleration. Once the areas had been conquered Islam allowed the greatest degree of religious freedom to the conquered races. The payment of the *jizyah* (a tribute) guaranteed personal security, possession of property, the protection of both faith and their temples.

“The *dhimmi* (non-Muslims living in a Muslim country) have the same rights and duties as ourselves. He who harms a *dhimmi* cannot be considered one of us.” Such was the Islamic motto with regard to treatment of the *dhimmi*.

In his *Fatuh al-Buldan*, al-Baladhuri mentions that before the commencement of the Battle of Yarmuk, the Muslims, not seeing how they might defend Homs, in Syria, returned to its population the tribute they had exacted, saying: “Being occupied elsewhere, we are unable to protect you, and you are therefore free to act as you think best.”

The inhabitants of Homs stated that they preferred Islamic justice and government to the trials from which they suffered under Byzantine domination, and that they were ready to defend their town and its Muslim governor against the soldiers of Heraclius. “We swear on the Bible that

Heraclius’ troops will only enter this town once our efforts have become totally exhausted.” They acted according to their word, closing the town gates and preparing for its defence.

This episode gives clear proof that the *jizyah* was paid only for the defence and protection of subjects.

Islam, which has stood firm against the tempest for centuries, is the same which today repulses the attacks of extremists and anti-democrats, and stands as an unassailable rampart of *democracy, religion, freedom, brotherhood and equality*.

### Islam and Socialism

This question is difficult to deal with. There have been references to democratic, autocratic and liberal Islam, comparative studies have been made between Islam and democracy, Islam and Bolshevism, Islam and Fascism, between Communism and the other totalitarian systems, but little has been said about socialist Islam.

The problem is very complicated when one takes into account the different conceptions of the socialist phenomenon among Eastern and Western races. Socialism in the East has aspects totally unfamiliar to the West, some of which deserve a special study, for they would certainly lead to the perfection of its political and social system.

One may affirm that the socialism taught in the seventh century C.E. by Muhammad is far in advance of the forms conceived by modern Western thinkers. The conception of democracy and socialism among the Muslim peoples during the four “legitimate caliphates” never provoked any idealistic discords.

During the following centuries, forms of government were so numerous and varied that it is impossible to distinguish in the Islamic countries between the tendencies towards an eclectic socialism and a purely proletarian democracy, since each State presented aspects in contrast to the rulers and environment.

An article published in the Italian socialist journal *Avanti* about 12 years ago stated that in the west “the conception of democracy . . . is certainly antithetical to the concept of proletarian socialization, which means that the term ‘social-democrat’ is a contradiction in terms”.

But in the opinion of the writer of these lines, the term “social-democrat” is an exact definition of the social tendency of Islam according to the orthodox conception of its leaders.

In every century misery has afflicted humanity as a tragic spectre. Epic poems speak of the age of gold which brought peace and plenty. This age was to bring an end to class struggles and contrast between the rich and the destitute. Philosophers and thinkers seeking a solution to the problem propose political institutions. But the theories of these advanced minds are powerless before the innate egoism of man, who is unable to reach social peace based on an equal distribution of possessions, whether under democracy, monarchy or aristocracy.

### Trying times in the history of humanity

The more time goes by, the greater widens the gulf between the rich and the poor. Yet we obtain some consolation from the words of the Prophet Isaiah. Then Jesus, the son of Mary. To a certain extent, his words bring to the poor a message of hope. Yet for centuries the Church

persuaded the working class that the Divine order which had decreed for each the will of God could not be changed. To this extent, the Church refused any concessions to the poor. When sparks were kindled in obscure corners of a dim world, they spread, and the ensuing repression occasioned the flow of much blood. Some saints, such as St. Dominic, the crucifix in one hand, the sword in the other, incited the troops to the most barbarous of horrors. This continued until the 18th century. Popular discontent, resulting from misgovernment, ended up with a dramatic outburst in France.

A feeble spirit had degenerated the Christian religion, which had become a profession and a trade. Faith dwindled, and became purely a matter of ordinary administration. The partiality of the clergy provoked deep discontent in society, without, however, causing organized reaction.

The hour had arrived, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau became the leader of a new crusade which had but one motto: The rights of man. Who could have foreseen such a mission in so degenerate a man with so bad a reputation as Rousseau? Possibly his dissolute life was the very cause of the ideal he chose.

Poverty is not a natural product, but a product of human egotism and injustice. Rousseau opposed the system of private property, and proposed the subordination of individual interests to those of the community.

The creation of such a socialist organization rendered a fight necessary for the creation of an industrial socialism. Men such as S. Simon in France, and Robert Owen in England, set to work. Thus Europe arrived at the great stage of history concerned with Karl Marx.

In his *Das Kapital*, Marx reveals his faith in an impersonal power. According to this international materialism, industrial society originates directly from feudalism and tends towards domestic industry. Such an industrial organization renders the wealthy yet wealthier, and permits the destitute to become yet more miserable. The only remedy proposed by Marx is the nationalization of industry. But from the economic point of view, work is not the chief cause, the prime consideration being the question of supply and demand.

What is the attitude of Marxian socialism to religion? Socialists are not in agreement about this matter. Marx proposed the radical abolition of religion. All those who saw eye to eye with him sided with him. One must logically draw the conclusion that the ideals of Eastern Christianity and Western socialism are not identical.

Western socialism stands for liberty, equality and brotherhood, with individualism subordinated to State control; every individual may intervene directly in State affairs. In a word, it is the annihilation of bureaucracy; no one must live at the expense of another, class distinctions and castes are abolished, also hereditary fiefs and private property.

Socialism is a form of evolution of democracy, but is frequently the direct result of individualism, which has great affinities with egoism. A society founded solely on individualism is by its very nature destined for destruction; for democracy or socialism resulting therefrom must limit collective initiative and create a situation which cannot be maintained.

The only safeguard against the recrudescence of the individualism called "egotism" is religion. But this religious faith must be both felt and practised. Socialism as conceived by the Prophet Muhammad is precisely a religion felt and practised, a sacred faith.

Religion and social theory must be taught simultaneously. We mean that if no fear of God restrains human actions and individual aspirations, socialism, like all other political theories, can only lead to megalomania, to war, class struggle, and inevitable disaster.

Islam, like Christianity, teaches the love of one's brother-man, believing that without supraterritorial guidance, no human being will make such a sacrifice as that of Jesus Christ. The Prophet of Nazareth was in fact one of the purest protagonists of socialism.

Modern society should be compared to a pyramid well built from bottom to top, the structure representing the compact mass of individuals and the order being the State. A serious error committed by modern socialists is that of building their socialism from the top downwards instead of vice versa. They are only slightly interested in the political education of the individual, and go straight to State reform, that is, to the abstract order which should govern the mass.

A similar anachronism is to be found in the typical matter of land administration and capital. Who does not realize that, just as much as wealthy landowners and industrial magnates, the principal pivots of the State have also done nothing towards the creation of a model socialist organization?

What is necessary for a true socialism is not so much nationalization of land and capital as that of the State, and that not only in the order but in the very mass of the people.

Basing socialism on a group of unprepared men is but courting disaster. Before socializing a country, one must ask oneself: Are the people ripe to understand, accept and apply such a social theory?

A maladministered socialism, by the liberty which it proclaims, may produce an effect contrary to that desired, by developing personal ambition. It can also have a deleterious effect on individual mentality and capacity and deteriorate the most evolved race.

One may consider those peoples who have attained the highest possible level of moral and intellectual education as being ripe for socialism.

The abolition of private property brings with it detrimental results to the economy of the country, and the whole State machinery must forcibly cease to function.

Going back thirteen centuries, we see that the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula were encouraged by the Prophet Muhammad to develop their intelligence sufficiently for living according to principles recognized today as those of the most orthodox and not interfering with private enterprise or industrial initiative, enriching some and despoiling others.

Muhammad avoided civil wars and forced none to accept his social and political theories. His success is due to religion being the basis of his socialism. Muslims possessed no other nationality than that of their universal religion, the tolerance of which recognized neither racial differences, nor those of beliefs or territorial frontiers.

Despite all the political and juridical restrictions imposed in the Oriental States by the interference of European governments, brotherly feelings among the Muslims have remained unchanged whatever the nationality or the political frontiers. In developing his political system, Muhammad showed that socialism is based not only on work, but on the good work on the lines indicated by the Prophet. The socialist Muslim State reached its zenith in the time of the second Caliph 'Umar. Under 'Umar's government, every citizen had an exact sense of his personal responsibilities, in a federal State of which he was a vital unit.

Beyond the institution of State colleges for youth, old age homes, asylums for invalids, a system of social forethought came into force under the stimulus of religion. Other organizations busied themselves with children, families, war orphans, etc. No citizen received exceptional salaries. The State gave only slight grants to notables and to those who were entirely devoted to the service of the country.

When 'Umar received the news of the victory in the battle of al-Qadisiyya (637 C.E.), he called the population of Medina together and stated: "Formerly I was a trader, now I have to attend to the affairs of the treasury." Discussions started, and as 'Ali maintained silence, 'Umar asked him: "And what do you think, 'Ali?" 'Ali answered, "You have a right to what is strictly necessary for your own maintenance and that of your family." "You have well answered," replied 'Umar.

Bureaucracy did not exist. The law dictated by God needed no parliament, and the interpretation of the law was a matter for the community.

### Democratic policy

"For me the strong is weak until I have made him pay his due; while the weak for me is strong until I make him recognize his rights." These are the words of the Caliph 'Umar.

The letter sent by 'Umar to one of his governors, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, on the administration of justice, is another proof of Islamic equality. This letter reads: "Treat all alike, so that the noble may not rely on your injustice and the poor not fear you."

When Jabala Ibn Ayham, King of Ghassan Arabia, was converted to Islam, he visited the Caliph 'Umar with great pomp and a numerous retinue. He was received with due honours. One day when he went on pilgrimage to the Ka'ba, he struck a Bedouin who had soiled his coat. The Bedouin complained to 'Umar, who said, "You owe a reparation to this Bedouin, unless you wish to be struck by him in return." "Don't you make any difference between royalty and the common people?" asked Jabala. "No," answered 'Umar. "Before Islam we are all equal." Thereupon Jaballa requested a 24-hour delay. During the night he fled with his suite and sought refuge from Heraclius, the Emperor of Constantinople.

As is well known, all matters of State were treated by a general assembly, in which the people could take part. When one thinks that the chief of the State had not even the privilege of voting, one realizes that such a governmental system would today be welcomed by every citizen wishing to defend his personal interests. This system would be both ideal democracy and ideal socialism.

It was 'Umar who thought out the fiscal system. By juridical inheritance laws the Prophet Muhammad had made impossible the maintenance of great properties. An equal distribution of the patrimony was the object sought.

The *Shari'ah* obliged the proprietor to pay a tribute to the State and the *zakat* to the poor, to an extent of 2½ per cent of his annual income. The *zakat* is the institution "which enriches the poor at the expense of the rich". It releases positive forces of socialism.

Socialism in early Islam had reached the stage that if a field was not cultivated during a certain period of time, the neighbours could purchase the right to cultivate it as public property.

Starting from the premise that all men are brothers and must mutually assist one another, Islam forbade all forms of interest and usury. The desire for commerce, industry and work was encouraged, but savings and deposits in banks were discouraged. Capitalism found itself thwarted.

Islam had strictly prohibited gambling and speculation. The object was to prevent one individual growing rich at the expense of his less fortunate neighbours. All monopolies were condemned and property was treated as a virtue.

One day 'Umar met Abu Bakr going to market with woollen clothes for sale. Reproachfully he said, "You have been charged with governing the Muslims. Why are you attending to business matters?" Abu Bakr replied, "By what other means can I provide my family?"

The Muslims did not disdain business. The fourth Caliph, Abu Talab, dealt in scents and occasionally in wheat. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, 'Uthman, Talha, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn 'Awf all sold cloth. Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas manufactured arrows, while al-Awan, Bubayr's father, was a tailor. Zubayr and Amr Ibn al-'Aas were butchers.

One sees that the East can give lessons in classical civilization to the Western races, and shed some sparks of light to dissipate the gloom of the Middle Ages.

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# THE DIVINE DIVAN

I rejoice in the brightness of the sun.  
I rejoice in the beauty of the moon.  
The sun streams golden, giving gladness.  
The moon beams silver without sadness.  
They are Thine, Belovéd. Thou didst make these mighty blessings.  
I rejoice in the mystery and the magic of the stars :  
The mighty distances and the solemn steadfast constellations,  
Treading their paths unerring through the ages.  
I rejoice. They are Thine, Belovéd. Thou didst make these worlds of wonder.

And yet, not only in these mighty things,  
But smaller, nearer, how many a blessing sings  
Thy praise, if we but ponder ! The golden grain,  
The heathful juice of myriad fruits, the rain - -  
I rejoice, O Belovéd, I rejoice in the fruitful-falling rain.

The oceans, too, are mighty and the drops therein.  
But who can count Thy Blessings, myriad, manifold?  
So, let us rather praise Thy Name for these Thy Mercies all,  
wherein  
We do rejoice at all times beyond the gleam of gold  
Of flashing rays of diamond, or ruby from the mine.  
The flow'rs, the trees, the clouds, the mountains  
And the rivers tumbling fountains —  
All these, Belovéd, all are Thine.  
In them we do rejoice and in that wondrous gift of Thine,  
Thy Guidance clear,  
Which Thou dost give to those who will give ear.  
Rejoice and live ! Live and rejoice !  
And listen to the sweetest sound  
That can be found,  
The One Belovéd's Voice !

---

Come now, let us renew the Song Supreme,  
The Song of Thy Loveliness, O Lord, I deem.  
The sweetest melodies within the waken'd heart do stream  
From contemplation of Thy peerless Beauty, O Thou One Supreme.  
For Thou indeed excellest all, O Thou Most Merciful.  
Thou art the Great Forgiver, Thou Most Merciful.  
Thy Blessings are on all sides, Thou Most Merciful.  
Whene'er to Thee we cry,

Thou standest closely by.  
Thou hearest, Ever-Present, Thou Most Merciful.  
Thou also art the Answerer, Belovéd Lord.  
Thou guidest lest we wander, O Thou One Adored.  
This universe is Thine  
And by Thy hand Divine,  
All-Mighty, Thou with Blessings hast it richly stored.  
So will we praise Thy Name, Thou One Adored.  
O Thou Most Merciful ! O Thou Most Merciful !

Behold the Banquet of the Lord is set !  
Prepare thyself to sit thereat : for no one yet  
Was ever turn'd aside, nor ever met  
Aught but the warmest welcome. Let  
Me now proclaim,  
In the Belovéd's Name,  
The nature of this Banquet. In a beauteous frame,  
In letters of eternal light,  
The one word, "Peace," with gentle might  
Doth all invite.  
What are the dainty dishes delicately set

Upon the generous board? all blesséd, yet  
Some sweet, some bitter, none that man hath met  
More wholesome, fill'd with peace ! Ah ! let  
Me now explain :  
To eat of them is gain.  
The dishes are but duties. Let no one disdain  
To eat of sweet or bitter : both are fill'd with peace.  
With draughts of prayer, these duties bring release  
From anguish, and, which shall not cease,  
An all-pervading peace.

William Bashyr Pickard.

# TRADITIONAL IRANIAN SOCIETY

## Its Characteristics and Educational Pattern

By REZA ARASTEH

Traditional Iranian society has generally been described in terms of its structural composition. The medieval Persian statesman, Násir ud-Din Tusi,<sup>1,2</sup> divided society into four groups: the scholars, the warriors, the semi-professional and skilled workers (minor officials, merchants, craftsmen and artisans), and lastly the peasants. He believed that society functioned more efficiently if men accepted their ascribed position and did not try to rise above it.<sup>3</sup> A present-day Persian scholar, A. K. S. Lambton, presents a more developmental picture of social class, beginning with early tribal and rural groups and going on to the rise of towns and the establishment of the military, the clergy, merchants, artisans and various civil officials.<sup>4</sup>

By and large, these descriptions fail to take account of the underlying behaviour of groups within that society. To interpret traditional Persian society in more dynamic concepts we shall examine it in terms of its predominant interpersonal relations, for this approach gives a better understanding of how the society functioned and the kind of education it promoted. This chapter hypothesizes that the social pattern of traditional Iranian society did not constitute a single entity. Rather three distinct groups appeared — the dominant, the submissive and the independent — characterized respectively by the traits of power, obedience and autonomy. There was limited movement from one to the other, in that an individual with knowledge and cunning might make his way into the dominant group: circumstances could also deprive him of his power and relegate him to a subordinate position.

Environmental and socio-economic factors contributed to the formation of each group's social pattern. These factors operated through three parallel ways of life existing side by side: the agricultural, the tribal and the urban. Both landlords and peasants comprised the rural settlements; the tribespeople and their leaders had their own lands; and still other occupational groups inhabited the urban areas, although the ruling power existed apart from the craftsmen, merchants, business men and scholars. Behaviour norms likewise differed, and we may think of the society as "multi-ethnic" in that the behaviour of an individual was deemed "right" or "wrong" in terms of the values held by the group to which he belonged. Even religion did not promote a common system of ethics; the ruling group merely acknowledged its presence or used it for gaining power, the submissive people confounded it with superstition and it was only some of the independent element in society who attained the purest forms of religious expression. Again we see that similar behavioural norms and values were only to be found among those who shared the same social pattern.

Those in the dominant group, whether rural, tribal or urban, valued power above all else. They directed their behaviour towards this end, because they believed that its possession brought happiness and security. A common Persian aphorism says: "The one who desires comfort and security must become strong." Dominance existed at many levels of the society: it was most powerfully expressed and symbolized by the king, and to lesser degrees by the tribal khans, viziers, landlords and village chiefs; the man who was only a family head occupied a lower position in this hierarchy.

Varying degrees of submission similarly appeared in the population. The vizier had to acknowledge the superior rank of the king; the village chief bowed to the landlord; and at the bottom, the peasants and tribespeople were compelled to show loyalty and obedience to all those above them. At an earlier period of history autonomy had largely characterized village and tribal life, but a series of political events had changed the social pattern of these areas to the dominant-submissive type.

A third group in the society did not align itself with either the dominant or the submissive; it included the creative urban element of craftsmen, artisans, some merchants, and an allied group of writers and religious mystics. This independent group, as we shall indicate later, was chiefly responsible for maintaining the continuity and expressiveness of Persian culture over a long period of time. We can best understand the development of these three social patterns in Persian society by examining the social conditions and character traits within each major way of life.

### The social pattern of the village

In very early times the villages were largely self-governing, but later a weak central government permitted the military and other groups to obtain power over the villages, and the present system of land tenure arose. Traditionally, the landlord, more than the government, determined the administrative policy of the village. Little or no interchange of communication existed between the landlord and the peasant, for the assignee (*muqta'*) represented the landlord and the *dihdar*, a villager appointed by the landlord, administered local matters. The *dihdar* carried out the directives of the assignee, settled local disputes, and dealt with the tax collectors, who customarily treated the village as an entity in tax assessment. Thus, neither the landlord nor the government recognized the individual villager, nor did the peasants themselves offer much group resistance to such authority.<sup>5</sup>

Their general apathy and marked servitude resulted from a way of life that offered no other alternative. The peasants were indebted to the landlord for water, grain, draught animals and the use of the land; their own labour constituted merely a fifth. A barren soil harrassed them still more, for they could barely harvest enough for their own needs, let alone repay their debts. Moreover, the landlord required them to donate a certain number of days of labour to the maintenance of the village and to the upkeep of his private garden. At the New Year or on other special occasions the villagers were expected to present him with gifts, although sometimes they received ones of equal worth. Not only did the peasants have to submit to the periodic raids of marauding tribesmen, against whom they had little defence, but in times of emergency the government conscripted them for the army or for forced labour units. Such a socio-dependency brought about submission to all forms of authority. Physical deprivation bred in the peasants a state of helplessness and obedience to the power above them; and as nothing in the real world gave them encouragement, they appealed to the supernatural for help. When that failed they resignedly accepted fate's verdict.

Having good reason to fear the outside world, the peasants kept to themselves and left their own community only when forced to do so. One village had so little contact with another that two neighbouring communities frequently spoke different dialects. Strangers aroused suspicion and threatened their security, what little they had. A strong wall around the village afforded some means of protection from outsiders, but it also kept out news of the world at large.

Within the village inter-personal relationships centred around the family. The peasant worked long hours in the fields with his own kin and avoided any real co-operative farming. When he found a little time for relaxation, he joined his friends at the tea house and the public bath, the only social centres in the village. Here the entertainment often took the form of story-telling and recitation of poetry and folklore. National holidays likewise brought people together, particularly at the New Year, when the villagers temporarily substituted a spirit of gaiety and fellowship for their accustomed anxiety and isolation. Muharram, the period of religious mourning, kindled group emotions, which reached their greatest intensity during the performance of the *ta'zieh*, a kind of passion play. On a closer examination we see that the *ta'zieh* gave the villagers an opportunity to project their own feelings of sorrow and suppression into the personages of the martyred Shi'a leaders. It also provided them with a reason for working together. The men canvassed the village homes for candelabra, rugs, clothing and other items, and they hung black drapes against the backdrop of the specially constructed circular stage (*takye*); the women worked equally hard preparing the refreshments, sometimes an entire dinner, and the children helped their elders when they were not out front performing. The spirit of co-operation which permeated the whole venture contributed to the success of the performances. Except for a few scenes where children were needed, the men took all the parts, generally performing the same role year after year. There were few rehearsals: the actors spoke their lines more in response to their own deeply-felt emotions and the receptiveness of the audience. Both the actors and the audience relived the tragedies of an earlier era, and in so doing reinforced the group's strong submissive traits.

## The social pattern of the tribes

In contrast to the villages, the individual tribes presented a picture of cohesiveness and strength despite their simple nomadic way of life. Located in different parts of the country, the tribes probably constituted the most extensively organized groups in traditional Iran. They were a formidable political force, as almost all the major dynasties in Islamic Iran originated out of the tribes or received their support. One dynasty replaced another by amassing greater tribal strength, and the strong rivalry between various tribes was often exploited for political purposes.

Although each major tribe adhered to its own organization and social customs, they exhibited many similarities in their way of life and inter-personal relations. The structure of the tribe and the social relations within it showed a definite hierarchy. A major tribe arose out of the union of several sub-tribes (*táyefe*), each of which comprised a number of clans (*tire*), and within them, families; the number in each unit naturally varied with the size of the particular tribe. A tribal elder presided at the head of each: the *kadkhuda* led the clan and the *kalantar* directed the affairs of the sub-tribe; in turn the *kalantars* formed a Council of Elders headed by a *khan*.<sup>6</sup> Their decisions often affected thousands of people.

The tribespeople expected their khan to live among them, follow their traditional customs and be an exemplary hunter, fighter and leader. He officiated at special ceremonies, marriages and holidays, received important guests and represented the tribe in outside matters. As it was also his duty to dispense justice to the criminals brought before the Council, he could if he wished condemn a tribesman to death. Yet when confronted by important matters he had to consider the advice of his elders. He delegated routine matters of tribal administration to lesser officials, the *kalantars* and the *kadkhudas* such that the line of communication moved downward, from khan to *kalantar*, to *kadkhuda* to heads of families. Most of the families had no voice in tribal affairs and submitted to the decisions of the tribal leaders; custom also demanded that they show their allegiance by regularly bringing them offerings of sheep and goats. In turn, the leaders expressed their dominance and authority by levying dues on the holdings of the tribespeople whenever they deemed it necessary.

The individual occupied a subservient position in the tribal hierarchy, but there were many levels of subordination. The members of the *kadkhuda's* family, and more so those of the *kalantar*, held sub-dominant tribal positions, whereas the ordinary tribesmen had to pay homage to all of them, although in return he received some measure of protection by being a member of a close-knit family or clan. The kin group, which largely determined inter-personal relations, encouraged such social activities as dancing, singing and the recitation of ballads. The popularity of folklore served to keep alive the traditions of the tribe and aided group unity. The individual tribesman fared better than the villager in that he could rely on the protection of strong, extended kinship ties, but at no point did he experience individual freedom, security or choice. We need only compare the tribesman with the gypsy barbers and blacksmiths who came to the tribal grounds every spring to do the menial work that tribespeople delegated to them. The gypsies could leave the camp whenever they wanted, but a tribesman seldom felt secure enough to separate from the group, and if he did, his only alternative was to join another tribe.

## From khan to king

The tribe that secured the most political power made its khan the king of the nation, and thereby extended its dominance hierarchy one step more. Among the many tribal khans who attained such a position in Persian history was Agha Muhammad Khan, the first king of the Qajar Dynasty — an era which marks the beginning of modern social change in Iran. The way in which he achieved political control typifies the social character of the traditional rulers, but no ruler surpassed him in acts of fiendish cruelty, acts which were largely the consequence of an early castration experience and a socially deprived childhood.

Agha Muhammad Khan encountered numerous obstacles in his rise to power. He was the eldest son of the Qajar chieftain, Muhammad Hossain Khan, who had tried unsuccessfully to gain control of the government after the assassination of Nadir Shah. The victor, the Lur chieftain, Zarim Khan Zand, married the Qajar khan's sister, and also took the young Agha Muhammad Khan to his court. Here the youth spent his time in hunting and in destructive acts of one kind and another. When he heard that his uncle was dying he fled to his tribal grounds, where he assembled an army of his kinsmen. Letting no one stand in his way, he killed his own half-brother in order to take control of the local provinces. Before he gained the kingship he fought eighteen major battles and brought into line fourteen tribal groups in other provinces. The following year he was assassinated, but he had, however, managed to secure the throne for the Qajar tribe.

In similar events which occurred repeatedly in Persian history from the sixth century B.C. up to the present twentieth century, power was the dominant force, ousting one dynasty and replacing it with another. If the militant tribal leaders who attained power in traditional Iran had given the key to their success they would probably have advised the following: be from the family of a dominant tribal leader and value power above all else; mobilize the tribal fighting force for this aim, then occupy a province and refuse to acknowledge the central government; subdue rival tribes or make alliances with them so as to establish your power over all of them.

Once a khan had gained the kingship he generally tried to demonstrate his superiority by dealing powerfully with others. As he was not only a tribal king but a king of kings he expected absolute submission from his subjects, who knew him only through his directions, which he issued through various court officials. To the people the king existed as the personification of numerous legends and myths perpetuated in the folklore and literature, which made him appear as all-powerful and strong, capable of performing great feats of heroism, and universally admired. The king who had risen to power through his own resources exhibited some of these qualities, but the one born in the position had to create his own images. In its positive aspect this image contributed to the unity of the country.

## The social pattern of urban areas

At a level immediately below the king, the princes and governors imitated the king's pattern of life on a smaller scale. As administrators they at first allowed the townspeople some choice in the selection of local officials, but they gradually assumed more control, thereby adding to the complexity of urban administration. Within the larger cities, the residents of each ward chose their own leader

(*kadkhuda*) and decided on his salary, although a representative of the king, the *kalantar*,<sup>8</sup> had to approve the nomination. The *kalantar* also supervised all local affairs, including the guilds' activities. Another important city official, the *muhtasib*, had the responsibility of protecting public morality (prohibition of drinking, gambling and the like), collecting and distributing religious taxes, maintaining religious schools and institutions and supervising weights and measures. At a later period watchmen (*darugha*) were hired to patrol the streets and bazaars.

It was not uncommon, however, for local inhabitants to settle their own affairs without recourse to government officials. Religious leaders frequently took the lead in organizing local security measures. On one occasion a patriotic *sayyid*,<sup>9</sup> out of his own pocket, paid armed men to patrol the streets and bazaars each night.<sup>10</sup> In times of serious disorder the community itself banded together for defensive purposes; sometimes it united for protection against outside forces; at other times it divided into warring factions, as when the rival religious parties, the Haydari and Ni'mati,<sup>11</sup> engaged in a series of bloody feuds.

With the growth of cities, local associations came to play an important part in the life of the citizenry, for they brought together individuals of like interests, helped protect their economic and social rights and linked them to the community and state. Many of the groups were highly organized, particularly the craft guilds, socio-political organizations, religious sects (such as the Sufis and Isma'ilis), socio-communal associations (for example, *javanmardan*), athletic groups (like the *zurkhana*<sup>12</sup>) and various literary societies. In each, a council of elders maintained order among the ranks by dispersing justice to wrongdoers. Seniority and good deeds determined the individual's status, but the line of communication between members was not rigidly defined.

The guilds held an important position in society.<sup>13</sup> The head of a guild (*ra'is*), who usually served as a liaison between the governor and the members of his guild, received the annual tax order from the *kalantar*, signed it on behalf of the group and then transmitted the information to the guild members. The *ra'is* also called upon them for assistance at various times, brought them news of other associations, and because of his close contacts with religious authorities he conveyed their needs to his fellow craftsmen. Yet the clergy maintained its own avenue of communication with the community by giving daily sermons in the mosque, which were especially well attended during Ramadhan. In most cases, however, the people looked more to the guilds than to the clergy to set an example of social conduct and to aid them in times of need.

In general, the guilds and other associations provided their members with enough security so that they were able to pursue their work without undue interference from the government. Compared to the villager and tribesman, the city dweller maintained a relatively independent status. While it is true that guild members had to follow the guild's strict rules of business and social conduct, they also participated in its activities and could eventually attain a position of authority. Their common way of life fostered close international relations, characterized by spontaneity, informality and fellowship. Although the craftsmen, artisans and other urban workers occupied a "middle" position in the structural hierarchy of traditional Persian society they remained relatively unaffected by the chain of command, whether political or religious. When faced with dominant

forces the artisan could still assert his independence, or subtly express his feelings in creative work. Whether he worked with hammer, brush, pen, or just with his hands, he used his thoughts and emotions to direct his hands and tools, and he expressed universal themes of human nature, often in the guise of simple metaphors or designs. He employed many of the same styles and patterns as had his forebearers and he handed them down intact to his children and apprentices. The past, present and future were related through collective artistic endeavour.

Among the other urban individuals, the Sufis, the Isma'ilis and some intellectuals developed an internal response to the stresses of the environment. The Sufis, in particular, achieved autonomy and inner security by living a simple life devoid of material possessions and by thoroughly

developing an attitude of mind that remained unaffected by any misfortune. Because they looked upon all men as their equal they felt free to question the highest authority. Sa'di relates the story of a dervish who was rebuked for not saluting a king who had passed before him, to which the dervish replied :

"Say to the sultan, look for salutations from him, who looks for favours from you. Moreover, know that kings exist to guard their subjects, not their subjects to obey kings."

In conclusion, the dervish recited this verse :

"King, slave — the mark is lost to view  
When fate's decree at last comes true :  
Go, disinter the crumbling dead —  
Is rich from poor distinguished?"<sup>14</sup>

(To be continued)

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- 8 There is evidence to suggest that in some cities the king chose a *kalantar* whom he knew would be acceptable to the public. Cf. Lambton, *Islamic Society*, p. 12.
- 9 A *sayyid* is a religious personage who traces his descent from the Prophet.
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- 12 See chapter 7 for a further discussion of the *zurkhana*.
- 13 By the end of the nineteenth century the importance of the guilds had greatly diminished, although for a short period of time in the first decade of the twentieth century a coalition of craft guilds in Teheran (*anjuman-i-asnaf*) provided a powerful force in alerting the public to the dangers of foreign concessions and in helping obtain the Constitution.
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## Anecdotes from the Life of the Prophet Muhammad

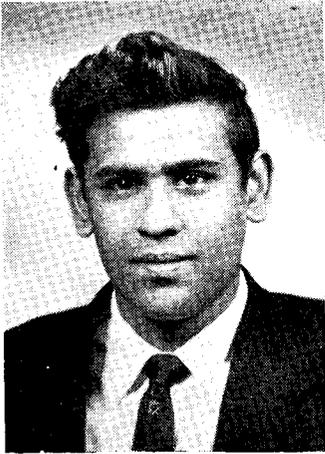
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# THE ATTITUDE OF ISLAM TOWARDS SCIENCE

**"Science without religion is lame,  
Religion without science is blind"** (Einstein)

By NIZAM MUHAMMAD

**"The faithful believers are those who remember God standing & sitting  
& lying on their sides & reflect on the creation of the heavens."**  
(The Quran: 3:191)

## Undue criticism against religion

Very often religion has been severely criticized as being hostile towards science, thereby impeding the general progress of man. When the progress of man suffers curtailment, man himself becomes static, a mere puppet between forces, and so all his attempts to effect a greater magnitude of self-comfort, happiness and security are greeted by failure and desolation. Religion, it is also stated, places undue emphasis on the supernatural, and advances theories which can never be empirically proved. Moreover, it harbours unreasonable and superstitious beliefs in the minds of man. Science, on the other hand, accepts only that which can be experimentally substantiated. Thus science, with its emphasis on naturalism, consigns religion to a position of comparative insignificance. Engels (1820-1895), the close collaborator of Karl Marx (1818-1893), has said, though not unexpectedly, *All religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces.*<sup>1</sup> There are some who emphatically claim that there can never be any compromise between science and religion, and that all attempts to bring the two together are superficial and unacceptable. According to the Russian author, Mikhail Nesturkh, *Science and religion are incompatible. Religion is based on belief in God, the creator of the universe. The scientific method is based on knowledge of nature and society, on the study of their laws and development.*<sup>2</sup>

## Islam is not opposed to science

In the attempt to challenge the validity of such inimical statements, regardless of what sources from which they have come, Islam is capable of proudly and confidently stepping into the arena of defence. It is quite probable that the mistaken view that Islam is opposed to science may have resulted from two causes, either from gross ignorance of Islamic theology and history, or from a deliberate and calumnious exertion to distort the truth. Those who have been finding it pleasurable to glory in the phenomenon of ignorance will, perhaps, find it beneficial to ponder on the incalculable harm ignorance has already caused humanity, and should realize "... That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war."<sup>3</sup>

When the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, entered the stage of history, he came into contact with an environment which was in many ways characteristic of the entire world. "In the fifth and sixth centuries," writes J. H. Denison, "the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos. The old emotional cultures that made civilization possible, since they had given to men a sense of unity and of reverence for their rulers, had broken down, and nothing had been found adequate to take their place. . . .

"It seemed that the great civilization which had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism, where every tribe and sect was against the next and law and order were unknown. . . . The old tribal sanctions had lost their power. . . . The new sanctions created by Christianity were working division and destruction instead of unity and order. . . . Civilization, like a gigantic tree whose foliage had over-reached the world, stood tottering . . . rotted to the core. . . . Was there any emotional culture that could be brought in to gather mankind once more into unity and to save civilization?"<sup>4</sup>

After speaking of Arabia, the author mentions: "It was among these people that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of the east and south." The Qur'an very beautifully summarizes the world condition at that time in the words, "Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of that which men's hands have wrought."<sup>5</sup>

## The Prophet abolished superstitious beliefs

Moreover, the age was one of superstition. Man placed undue emphasis on the supernatural instead of on the natural. Events which were not understood were conveniently given explanations couched in superstition. The pre-Islamic Arabs believed that the soul of a man who was killed by another took the form of a bird and cried over the grave of the dead man, saying, "Give me drink, give me drink (of blood)." It remained crying for days and nights till the blood of the dead man was avenged by a member of his family or tribe. The Prophet Muhammad abolished this superstitious belief. When the Prophet's son Ibrahim died, there was a total eclipse of the sun. The followers of the Prophet began to whisper that this was due to Ibrahim's death. This belief among the followers could certainly have made Muhammad appear exceptionally significant, but he had no intention of propagating superstitious beliefs in the minds of man. It was in this desert of mystery and unintelligibility that the

Prophet of Islam stood as an oasis of truth and rationality. With reference to the eclipse of the sun he said, "Surely the sun and the moon are two signs of God; they do not get eclipsed in consequence of the death of anyone, nor on account of anyone's life, so when you see this then call on God, and magnify Him and give alms."<sup>6</sup> These and numerous other instances can be quoted to show that Islam is not the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life. Islam not only abolished all these fantastic reflections, but made it un-Islamic to presume that terrestrial forces assumed the form of supernatural forces. The Prophet Muhammad publicly condemned the worship of the wind, the earth, trees, stones, etc., and the Qur'an unambiguously reprobated nature-worship: ". . . do not make obeisance to the sun nor to the moon, and make obeisance to God Who created them."<sup>7</sup>

Instead of inculcating superstition in the minds of Muslims, the Prophet encouraged the acquiring of knowledge. "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave"; "Go in search of knowledge even unto distant China"; "He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the path of God"; "Acquire knowledge; it enables the possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lights up the path to Heaven. It is our friend in the desert, our security in solitude, our companion when friendless. It guides us to happiness, it sustains us in adversity. It is an ornament amongst friends and an armour against enemies"; "He dies not who seeks knowledge"; "To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into others the lessons of science is better than religious exercise"; "The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr"; "To listen to the instructions of science and learning for one hour is more meritorious than standing up in prayer for a thousand nights"<sup>8</sup> are some of the personal sayings of this worthy benefactor in the realm of knowledge. To hint that such a person was adverse to science certainly places one in the abyss of either prejudice or ignorance.

### The Qur'an on science

If next we glance through the pages of the Qur'an, the positive attitude of Islam to science becomes all the more perceptible. Thus it is stated in the Qur'an, "In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and day, there are surely signs for men of understanding."<sup>9</sup> The next verse then qualifies the phrase "men of understanding" as being "Those who remember God standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth."<sup>9</sup> Here it is evident that the faithful Muslim is one who not only conquers self by remembrance of God, but one who also probes into the secrets of nature. Man, according to the Qur'an, is at liberty to investigate every aspect of nature, for it is said, "He has made subservient to thee whatever is in the Heavens and whatever is in the Earth."<sup>10</sup> Considering the innumerable aspects of nature, Islam in its attitude to science causes man to realize that there can be no finality in his efforts to unfold the mysteries of the universe; instead, there can only be the capacity for expansion. Again, in the very first revelation, Muhammad was commanded to read in the name of the Beneficent and the Most Bountiful, Who taught man the use of the pen and gave him the knowledge of things.<sup>11</sup> He is advised to pray, "O, my Lord! Advance me in Knowledge."<sup>12</sup> M. M. Sharif, former Professor and Chairman of the Department of Philosophy in the Aligarh Muslim University, in a most adept manner says of the Qur'an, with reference to nature:

"It teaches men to reflect on the phenomena of nature, the creations of the heavens and the earth, the change of the seasons, the cycle of day and night, the sea, the clouds, the winds, the sun, the moon, the stars and the laws they imply. It bids them to ponder over the mysteries of death and birth, growth and decay, of men and nation, and to contemplate sunsets, dawns, hills, streams, ravines, vineyards, gardens of palms, cattle going out to pasture and returning home, the canopy of the starry heavens, the ships sailing on the sea, and the beauties of the soul more than those of the senses."<sup>13</sup>

### Science strengthens religion

It may sometimes be thought that because the Qur'an frequently makes certain statements without giving details, its importance is greatly diminished. The propensity towards such a view is based on a misconception of the Book. The Qur'an is a code of life, and nowhere has it claimed to be an exhaustive study in history, science or any of the other universal topics upon which it touches. In these instances, it merely mentions certain principles sufficient to channel the thoughts and actions of man, the details of these principles being left to the human intellect to supply. In this manner, it prevents the mechanization of the human mind, thereby providing ample opportunity for unrestrained individual and communal efforts in the various fields of knowledge. There are many Qur'anic statements which become obvious only on the findings of science. Therefore, not infrequently, achievements in science are manifestations of the truth of the words contained in the Qur'an. When the Book stated, approximately fourteen hundred years ago, "O assembly of jinn and men, if you are able to pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth then pass through. You cannot pass through but with authority,"<sup>14</sup> such a statement would indeed have been meaningless to the Arabs of that age.

It was hardly possible for them to conceive man in the twentieth century attempting to penetrate the barriers of space; yet the Qur'an in the seventh century spoke of passing through the regions of the heavens and the earth, i.e., through the strata of space. When the Book stated, "And of everything we have created pairs that you may be mindful,"<sup>15</sup> the seventh-century Muslim was certainly not in a position to prove that pairs existed in all things. However, the truth of these Qur'anic words became indisputable, when in the nineteenth century, Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose (1858-1937), the Indian plant physiologist and physicist, after experimenting, established the fact that pairs exist in all forms of life.

Islam's attitude to science was so clearly understood by the early Muslims that not long after the Prophet's death they travelled to the farthest parts of the then known world, and because of their devotional intensity for knowledge, were able to establish themselves as the pillars upon which the foundation of our present-day civilization has been constructed. However, even at the zenith of their powers, science was not divorced from religion. Rom Landau, after discussing the invaluable contributions made by the early Muslims in the various fields of science such as mathematics, astronomy, geography, cartography, medicine, chemistry, physics, botany, agriculture and horticulture, mentions:

"In Islam religion and science did not go their separate ways; in fact the former provided one of the

main incentives for the latter. . . . In Islam both philosophy and science came into existence not to supplant the 'primitive' theism of religion, but to explain it intellectually, to prove and glorify it. It is thus not surprising that Islamic science never became dehumanized — as it did in the West — but was always at the service of man.”<sup>16</sup>

The fact that, later on, efforts by Muslims in the fields of science suffered diminution, was due not to Islam, but to the departure from Islamic injunctions. As far as Islam is concerned, science and religion are compatible. The

Qur'án acknowledges the fact that the universe is the work of God, and religion is the word of God. Stated otherwise, science is the religion of nature ; religion the science of life. Science and religion are inseparable. This is the philosophy contained in the Qur'anic statement that the faithful are “those who remember God standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.”<sup>17</sup> This very enunciation was reiterated centuries afterwards by the famous scientist Albert Einstein, who said, “Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind.”

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## THE SHU'UBIDS

By K. A. FARIQ

“Verily, the faithful are brothers,” and “O tribe of Quraysh! God has taken away from you the pre-Islamic pride and glorification of the forefathers ; you are born of Adam and he was made from dust,” and “The noblest of you in the sight of God is the one that fears Him most,” are the dictums of the Prophet and the Qur'án respectively. These were addressed to the Arabs, the first embracers of Islam. But the Arabs did not and could not act up to these, as is so clearly shown by their history. There are quite definite and historical reasons behind their failure. They had been a very proud race, proud of power, influence and good ancestral deeds. Every family, clan and tribe had a traditional heritage of these virtues, handed down to them from forefathers, and every one of them lived by it, guarded and preserved and vindicated it with all their power. There are geographical and ethnical causes which account for their immense pride in the traditional achievements of their ancestors and their jealous preservation of these against all harm.

This was the general trait of the Arabs, but there were also some tribes which had special pretensions to pride by virtue of their political, military or economic ascendancy in the pre-Islamic period, such as the tribes of Quraysh, Rabi'ah and Tamim.

With this mental equipment the Arabs accepted Islam. Their being the first embracers of the Divine religion became another source of pride to them. Then they embarked on a career of war and humbled and seized the most powerful and civilized empires of the ancient world, the Persian and the

Byzantine. This made their cup of pride brimful.

The old and new impulses of glory and pride not only caused the Arabs to forget the dictums of the Qur'án and the Prophet, but also did not allow them to grasp the real spirit of their new faith, and it is owing to this initial shortcoming that the whole structure of politics, sociology and morality till this day has rested on crooked and unsound foundations.

The Arabs, with their pre-Islamic notions of tribal glory, and the new glory which accrued to them from the conquest of great empires, became rulers of a large variety of peoples, professing different religions and living under different levels of civilizations, which were, in every case, far superior to the nomadic and primitive standards of life of the conquerors. Owing to the arid and unproductive state of their land, the Arabs had never been able to cultivate a corporate or civilized political or economic life and were an unlettered people, whereas the Persians, the Iraqis, the Byzantines and the Copts, whom they defeated, had been the rearers of flourishing civilizations and, in all mundane affairs, had achieved great progress. For a considerable time, the Sassanid and the Byzantine empires had exercised sway over parts of Arabia, and the Arabs had always looked upon them with awe, respect and curiosity.

The non-Arab conquered peoples either accepted Islam or preferred to adhere to their own religions, and pay the *Jizyah* (poll-tax) and live as *Dhimmis*.<sup>2</sup> There was also a third category — those who had been taken prisoners of war, treated as slaves and then freed by their masters. They

were called the *Mawali* in the technical sense of the word, and were dependent and subservient to their benefactors, but this word was also applied to other Muslims who had not been actually taken prisoner.

The Arabs behaved towards the non-Arabs, both Muslims and non-Muslims, with an air of superiority, pride and haughtiness which was against the spirit of Islam and had been expressly forbidden by the Prophet. When I say the Arabs, it does not include every individual Arab but mainly the official Arabs, the tribal chiefs and the Bedouin masses who had no religious or moral discipline. Those who had been mentally well nurtured by the Qur'an or had been thoroughly inspired by the life of the Prophet — and they were very few — did neither look down upon the non-Arab Muslims nor observed any racial distinctions.

The Shu'ubiyah was a counter-movement against the derogatory behaviour of the Arabs. It was led by the non-Arab Muslims and buttressed even by the Dhimmis, and in its first phase stood for complete equality among all Muslims, irrespective of nationality or place. In its second phase, which starts from the later days of the Umayyads, culminating in the early parts of the 'Abbasid period, it changes substantially from the principle of complete equality into an anti-Arab movement.

The Shu'ubid tendencies of the later phase were completely unknown during the days of the early Caliphs, and there seems to have been no Shu'ubid consciousness of any sort in early Islam when the Arabs were preoccupied with the wars of conquest, and the Caliphs were quite careful not to prejudice the equality of treatment enjoined by the Prophet and their new faith. It is difficult to pick out instances of injustice or ill-treatment or contempt of the non-Arab Muslims in the ten years of 'Umar's office as Caliph. His observation, namely, "If Hudhayfah's *maula* (client), Salim, were alive, I would have appointed him as Caliph after my death", may serve as an index of his attitude towards the non-Arab Muslims. And we are informed by the historian al-Mada'ini the most important reason of Caliph 'Ali's failure is to be sought in his impartial treatment of the Arab and the non-Arab Muslims. His words are: "A delegation of 'Ali's companions visited him and said: O Commander of the Faithful, distribute this wealth, preferring the Arab and the Qurayshid notables to the non-Arabs, and win over those whose opposition you fear by money (after the practice of Mu'awiyah). But 'Ali refused to be partial, and this turned the tribal chiefs and the Arab nobility against him, and they refused to respond to his military aid call."

The emergence of the Shu'ubid consciousness in a palpable form is to be traced from the Umayyad period. The Arab tribes, after waging the major wars of conquest, had settled down in their new colonies to enjoy the fruits of their hard toil and rule and command. Wealth and slaves which came to them in plenty attenuated their religious zeal and they became very materialistic. The misappropriation of power by an Umayyad clique from the latter half of Uthman's Caliphate, and the succeeding civil wars between 'Ali and his opponents struck a great blow to the religious ideal and the unifying force that had held the heterogeneous tribal elements in a sober unity and stirred those sentiments of ancestral glory and prejudice which had, so far, been suppressed by their great early leaders.

The weakening of religious ideal and the recrudescence of the sentiments of ancestral glory exhibited themselves in two forms: (1) contempt of the non-Arab blood, and (2)

tribal fanaticism or '*Asabiyyah*'. Both these forms played a prominent role during the Umayyad rule, and are amply reflected in the history and poetry of the period. This contempt was not, however, universal, but was displayed in the main by tribal chiefs, government officials, poets and the undisciplined Arab masses. The appointment of a notable of a tribe to an influential post, say governorship, would be taken as an accession of that tribe to power and prestige. When Ibn Hubayrah, to quote an example, became governor of Iraq, his tribe, the Fazarah, took this as its own rise to power, and when he was discharged and Khalid Ibn 'Abdallah al-Qasri superseded him, his tribe Qasr became influential and the Fazarah were humbled. The Umayyad poet of the South-Arabian tribe, the Di'bil, sang in a poem of 900 verses glories of his tribe, and refuted those of his rival, the North-Arabian poet, al-Kumait, who had celebrated the virtues and ancestral achievements of his tribe, the Nizar, in a long ode. The two odes, holds Mas'udi, led to the rise of bitter discord among the Yamanids and the Nizarids, and eventually culminated in the drift of the former to the camp of the 'Abbasids, the enemies of the Umayyads. Such examples can be multiplied.

Historical evidence of the display of contempt for the non-Arabs by the Arabs is quite ample. A client (non-Arab Muslim) married a Bedouin girl of the Banu-Sulaim, an Arab sub-tribe. This was regarded as a sacrilege of Arab blood, and Muhammad Ibn Bashir, the Kharijij, rode down to Medina, we are told by Aghani, and protested to its governor against the marriage. The latter summoned the client, dissolved the marriage, inflicted on him 200 whips, and shaved off his head, beard and eyebrows. When al-Hajjaj, the governor of al-Iraq, captured Sa'id Ibn Jubayr (a client of great religious ability), who had revolted against the former in concert with Ibn al-Ash'ath, he said: "Did I not make you the leader of the prayers at Kufah while none save a pure Arab would act in that capacity?" Sa'id: "Yes, you did so." Al-Hajjaj: "Did I not appoint you as judge of the city and when the citizens protested that none but a full-blooded Arab could be fit for that office, and (acting on their protest) I sent down there Abu Burdah to replace you, did I not order him not to decide any case without your consultation?" Sa'id: "Yes, you did so." Al-Hajjaj: "And did I not attach you to the galaxy of my night-companions, of whom all are Arab notables and chiefs?" Sa'id says: "Yes, it is true." Al-Hajjaj: "Then what made you revolt against me?" "Till the establishment of the 'Abbasid Caliphate," says Aghaini, "it was a practice of the Arabs that when one of them returned from the market with purchases and met a client on his way, he would ask him to carry the load and the latter would not refuse and the government would not safeguard his rights; and when a riding client met an Arab and the latter wished him to get down, he would humbly do so, and if an Arab desired to marry a client girl, he would have to approach her sire and not father."

These are some of the instances of contempt of the non-Arab Muslims by the Arabs. But this sentiment did not stay here; it extended even to the half-Arabs, that is to say, persons born of an Arab father and a slave-girl. The contemptible term applied to such persons was *Haajin*, which means base-born. An early 'Abbasid poet so vents his feelings of contempt for the half-Arabs: "My Lord, the progeny of slave-girls has become numerous among us; my Lord, take me in a land where I may not see a *Haajin*." A Bedouin Arab quarrelled with and rebuked a judge who had legally decided the division of his (Arab's) patrimony

equally among his brothers, one of whom was a slave-born issue.

It should, however, be noted that non-Arab Muslims, known for piety and religious culture, would always command respect from all sections of the Arabs, particularly religiously disciplined people. Hasan of Basrah, Ibn Sirin, Sa'id Ibn Jubayr, 'Ataa' and many others were all clients, and yet, because of their outstanding religious devotion, they were as honourably treated as any other Arab, and their religious transmissions and legal verdicts were accepted by all without demur.

The sentiment of contempt for the non-Arab blood showed itself in all social, political and religious matters. All crafts and ordinary professions were practised by the non-Arabs, since to the Arabs they were beneath dignity. Great executive posts, such as governorships or religious offices such as *Imamah* or *Qada'* (judgeship) were not given to them except in rare cases, and the exceptions would not go without protests from the aristocratic Arabs.

This sentiment and its practical demonstration cost the Umayyad régime, in particular, and the Arabic literature in general, quite dearly. It gave rise to the Shu'ubid movement. In its early career it was an Islamic and just movement, as it upheld the principle of equality of all Muslims of whatever race or blood or place they might be, against the un-Islamic behaviour of the Arabs. "Superiority could exist," the supporters of the movement held, "among individuals and not groups of people or nations, and the criterion of superiority could only be a faithful observance of religion and the pursuit of good conduct." In this connection the Qur'an and the Prophet were their mainstay. The Qur'an says: "O people, We have created you from a male and a female and divided you in tribes and nations so that you may know one another; indeed, the most honourable in God's sight are the most righteous." The Prophet declared: "An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab on any basis except righteousness (*taqwa*)".

But towards the end of the century the movement substantially changed its character. The non-Arabs had, by this time, given a good trial to the Arabs to correct their attitude, but they doggedly clung on to their path of haughtiness and contempt. This infused the Persians, who formed the bulk of the *Mawali*, and a very progressive and cultured part of them, with a feeling of nationalism. Songs of Persian glory, of the splendour and might of the Chosroes, began to appear in poetry, though nothing would be expressly said against the Arabs. The Persians became the pioneers of the Shu'ubid movement.

The beginning of the second century saw the start of the 'Alid and, later, 'Abbasid propaganda for the acquisition of the Caliphate from the Umayyads. The Shu'ubids hailed the new campaign with great enthusiasm, as they hoped that the triumph of the members of the family of the Prophet Muhammad would not only give them equality of status but also political ascendancy over the Arabs. They helped the 'Abbasid claimants, made heavy sacrifices, routed the Umayyads and installed the former as Caliphs.

The shift of the Caliphate from the Umayyads to the 'Abbasids meant the shift of power from the Arabs to the *Mawali*, the Persian Muslims, who had been pioneers of the Shu'ubid movement. They were entrusted by the 'Abbasid Caliphs with all the executive posts of the Caliphate — ministership, chamberlainship, governorship, command of the army, to quote only some vital and general heads — and the Arabs were given a few unimportant offices. The

'Abbasid Caliphs, though Arabs from the side of the fathers, took pride only in their having descended from a noble Arab family, but, apart from this, they neither liked the Arabs nor their proud traditions. They, on the contrary, liked and trusted the *Mawali*, with whose support they had ascended to power and loved all that culture and civilization which the latter had inherited and transmitted.

This turning of the scales against the Arabs and their reduction to political impotency whetted Arab prejudice of the *Mawali*, on the one hand, and facilitated the drift of the principle of equality of the early Shu'ubids into an anti-Arab creed. The contempt of the Arabs and all they stood for and the glorification of the non-Arabs and their civilization became the most dominant note of the 'Abbasid Shu'ubids. According to them, the Arabs in no way surpassed other nations, while the latter in almost all matters worthy of glory surpassed the former. They cite the achievements of other nations — the Romans, the Greeks, the Persians, the Chinese and the Indians — in material and cultural progress, then analyse the mode of life, doings and state of the Arabs in pre-Islam and show their inferiority *viz-à-viz* the former. They shelve even the Arabs' special pretensions to eloquence, poetry and oratory. Finally, they bring forward religion and say that Islam is not a religion of the Arabs alone but of all nations, that it has fought and decried blood or party prejudice and made righteousness the criterion of superiority. As regards religion, they say, "We and the Arabs are alike; as regards worldly progress, we stand above them by head and shoulders."

This was the more prevalent form of the Shu'ubiyah movement, but besides this, it had also three other aspects which were upheld by many people throughout the Muslim world. One aspect of it was represented by the *Ahl al-Taswiyah*, or the Moderates, who believed in the equality of the Arabs and the non-Arabs and made religion and good conduct only as the basis of superiority among individuals. The second aspect of it was represented by people who simply criticized the Arabs without meaning any ill-will to Islam and espoused its universal equality. The representatives of the third aspect were hostile to both the Arabs and Islam; their hostility to the Arabs led them to the hostility of everything associated with them. These were mostly followers of Mani, Mazdak and Zoroaster, who had accepted Islam under the pressure of social, economic or political circumstances but had mentally stuck on to their previous religion in which there was ample scope for free thinking.

The Shu'ubid leanings, whatever their forms, were prevalent among non-Arabs of all walks of life, beginning with the uncultured masses and going up to the high Persian officials and intelligentsia of the Caliphate. The first could indulge in these openly and without fear of consequences, but the government officials, and they were in many cases anti-Arab, the Shu'ubid activities were secret, since an open indulgence therein could bring Caliphal harm to them. Their moral and material help was always at the disposal of those who discredited the Arabs. When the famous Shu'ubid, 'Illan, composed a book on the *Mathaalib* (vices) of the Arabs he was rewarded with 30,000 dirhams by the Persian Muslim governor, Tahir Ibn al-Husain.

The Shu'ubid movement reached its plenitude in the third century of Islam. The 'Abbasid Caliphate afforded opportunities for its growth and development. The early 'Abbasid Caliphs were mostly half-Arabs (from the father's side) and were brought up in a polished atmosphere of

mostly Persian pattern. Their ideals and way of life were different from those of the Arabs and, therefore, they had neither any love for the Arab ideals nor any instinct of blood prejudice. Their sympathies lay with the Persian *Mawali*, with whose help they had achieved the Caliphate, and whose systems of social and political life much appealed to them because of their very practical, developed and attractive nature. The Persians became the confidants, and they chose their ministers and commanders from amongst them and absorbed them in all possible ways in their service. Therefore, if they could not espouse, as champions of an equitable Islam, any anti-Arab tendencies, they could at least show a generosity of mind to stand the criticism of the Arabs or connive at the secret pursuit of Shu'ubid activities by the officials, poets and authors of their State. The words of the great Egyptian scholar Ahmad Amin seem quite pertinent on this point. He says: "The Shu'ubiyah movement reached its zenith in the third Muslim century. The causes contributing to its development were that the 'Abbasid Caliphs, while staunchly championing Islam, did not zealously champion the Arab cause and its ideals, so that while they fought atheism and dualism relentlessly they did not fight, with vigour, the Persian nationalistic feeling. And this was natural, since most of them, as we have stated before, were Arabs from the side of the father alone. The Arabs were very severely treated by the Persians, as most of the ministers were Persian and secret machinations would be carried on in the palaces to weaken their position; and if the Arabs revolted in their peninsula or the far-off parts of the empire, the Persian generals and armies crushed them relentlessly with a deep consciousness of retaliating their defeat at al-Qadisyyah (636 C.E.); and the feeling of the Turks whom al-Mu'tasim drew (from Transoxiana) was no better than that of the Persians."

In this century and the following one, the Persians who assimilated Arabic composed much poetry, chanting the glory of their pedigree and nation. "This theme," goes on Ahmad Amin, "was opened by Bashshaar Ibn Burd, the blind poet of Persian descent. He was followed by the famous poet Diku al-Jinn, about whom the author of *Aghani* says: 'He was a very erotic and anti-Arab poet who says: The Arabs have no superiority over us, the birth of Abraham has united them and us together; we have accepted Islam as they did; if any of them kills any of us, he is killed for him; and we cannot see that God, the Exalted and Great, has given them any superiority over us when religion has united them and us together.' The famous poet al-Khuraimi used very much to indulge in the exultation of his Persian descent and the contempt of the Arabs in his poetry. One of his verses runs: I am a member of the chiefs of Sughd and the non-Arab vein has made me wear a noble skin."

The influence of the Shu'ubid tendencies appeared in different forms in the literature of the early 'Abbasids. First, it assumed a positive form and demonstrated itself in the compilation of many books on the virtues, achievements and historical greatness of the Persians. Sa'id Ibn Humayd al-Bakhtakan, an epistolary official of the 'Abbasid secretariat and a man of anti-Arab feeling with claims of kinship with the imperial family of Persia, composed several works (such as *Intisaf al-'Ajam min al-Arab*, *Fada'il al-'Ajam 'ala al-'Arab wa f-Tikhariha*, *Mafakhiru l-'Ajam*) dealing with the achievements, noble traditions, royal splendour, system of administration of the Persians and the relative pettiness of the Arabs.

Secondly, it assumed a negative form and demonstrated itself in the composition of many books on the *Mathaalib*

(tribal and family vices) of the Arabs. Among authors of the works of this kind, the most prominent are two: al-Haythman Ibn 'Adil (d. 820 C.E.) and Abu 'Ubaydah Ma'mar Ibn al-Muthanaa (d. 824 C.E.). The former, a great traditionist and genealogist, was both a contemporary and companion of the four early 'Abbasid Caliphs, al-Mansur (d. 774 C.E.), al-Mahdi (d. 784 C.E.), al-Hadi (d. 786 C.E.) and al-Rashid (d. 813 C.E.). Of his several works on the *Mathaalib* of the Arabs, the following are important: *The Small Book of Mathaalib*, *The Great Book of Mathaalib*, and *The Book of the Mathaalib of Rabi'ah*. Abu 'Ubaydah was a great scholar of Arabic philology and pre-Islamic lore. By descent he was a Persian Jew. Ibn Khallikan says that he used to dislike the Arabs and composed books on their vices. Of his books on the disgraces of the Arabs, *The Book of the Arab Robbers* and *The Book of the Base-born Arabs* are famous. Another work of his is on the *Merits of the Persians*. In his other works, too, he is often found scoffing at and flouting Arab customs and fashions.

None of the books noted above have come down to posterity in entirety. Only gleanings from them have survived in such books as *al-Bayan-wa al-Tabyin* of Jahiz (d. — C.E.) and *al-'Iqd al-Farid* of the Spanish scholar, Ibn al-'Abdi Rabbih. The reason behind their loss seems to lie in their Shu'ubid contents, which were regarded as undesirable by the Muslims, and the books did not, therefore, attract as wide a circulation as was necessary to ensure their preservation.

Thirdly, the Shu'ubid tendencies exhibited themselves in the misrepresentation, or forgery, or corruption, of the information connected with the Arabs. This was done in two ways: by the forging of defamatory stories in commenting upon or elucidating Arabic verses or proverbs, and by misattribution of a saying or verse in order to undermine the authenticity of the Arabic literature.

Fourthly, the Shu'ubid tendencies assumed the form of glorifying or exaggerating the history, customs, traditions and culture of the Persians; for example, it is claimed by the Persians that they have descended from Ishaq (the son of Abraham), whose mother was a free woman, and that the Arabs have descended from Isma'il, the son of a slave-girl.

Finally, the Shu'ubid tendencies are noticeable in almost every branch of literature, and specially in the domain of Hadith. The Shu'ubids are said to have forged quite a large number of traditions in order to refute the Arabs and establish the claims of the Persians to superiority. For example, let us note the following traditions: "Verily, I trust them (the Persians) more than you (Arabs)" and "Do not abuse a Persian, for anyone who abuses him will be revenged sooner or later," and "There will appear a king from amongst the Persian kings who will conquer all lands except Damascus". Similarly, numerous traditions have been fabricated by them to glorify the personality of the Imam Abu Hanifah, who was of Persian origin. A tradition says: "Verily, Adam was proud of me and I am proud of a man from amongst my followers whose name is Nu'man and whose patronym, Abu Hanifah; he will be the lamp of my followers." Another avows: "Verily all messengers take pride in me and I take pride in Abu Hanifah. He who loves him, loves me, and he who hates him hates me."

These forgeries, let it be remembered, did not go unchallenged, and the Arabs or their supporters manufactured many traditions to confirm their own claim to superiority and honour.

1 Courtesy, *Iqbal*, Lahore, Pakistan, for July 1960.

2 An Arabic word meaning "those non-Muslims for whose safety Muslims are responsible".

# MUSLIM VIEW OF THE FAMILY AND THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN ISLAMIC SOCIETY

By ABUL HASHIM

## Introduction

A law, a regulation, an injunction or a prescription presupposes a social order compatible with it. An ideal, how ever sound and progressive, can never be adopted in a society incompatible with it. For instance, the British Rule of Law cannot be implemented in Soviet Russia and the Soviet law of regimentation cannot be grafted into a democratic country. So it is with Islam. Laws, regulations, injunctions and prescriptions of the Qur'án must be construed, interpreted and judged in the context of the social order the Qur'án contemplates.

The Qur'án does not arbitrarily confer any favour on any or deprive anyone of his natural privileges; it states facts as they are and interprets human nature as it is and on the fundamentals of human nature prescribes a social order congenial to his natural evolution. When one says that a cow has two horns one does not give a pair of horns to a cow, and again, when one says a monkey has no horn one does not take away any horn from the monkey that it naturally possessed. Whether a hornless cow or a horned monkey could be better rather should rest in the realm of idle speculation.

A thing is good when it fulfils its purpose of creation well. A pitcher is good when it holds water, but a pitcher with a big hole in the bottom is bad, however much artistic excellence it may display. So it is with men and women. A woman is good when she is within her orbit, just the same as a man is good so long as he is within his own orbit. The role of the man and the woman in creation is not identical. Providence has in His infinite wisdom patterned the body, the mind and the intellect of men and women in a way that they may be efficient in fulfilling admirably well the purpose of their creation. But if a man transgresses into the orbit of the woman and a woman enters the orbit of the man, both of them shall be unsexed and make themselves the lowest of the low.

Capitalism in the trail of its necessary and consequential ills has virtually destroyed the family and has reduced it to a mere economic unit, and has also reduced it to its minimum, consisting of the man, the wife and their minor children; it has sapped all values of the family except its material values. In Islam the family is not merely an economic unit but is an institution for basic culture of all human values — spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and even political. Throughout the course of social evolution the family has retained its status as the basic unit of man's social existence and it will continue to enjoy the same status even if and when the human race becomes one nation, as is contemplated in the Qur'anic verse "Mankind is a single nation" (22 : 213). It does not require much intuition to see that if there is no peace and happiness in the family there cannot be peace

and happiness for man either as an individual or as a nation or as a member of one human nation. It is obvious that the whole cannot be good if its component units be bad. Islam, therefore, uncompromisingly condemns anything which has a natural tendency to disturb and damage purity, integrity, peace and prosperity of the family.

## The man and the woman

We have it in the Qur'án : "Men have a degree above them (women)" (2 : 228), and again, "Men are the maintainers of women, with what God has made some of them to excel others" (14 : 34). These are matter-of-fact statements like "a cow has two horns" and "a monkey has no horn". A seeker after truth must have the honesty and courage of accepting truth as such irrespective of whether it appears pleasant or unpleasant. That men have a standing over women is a hard reality. It is so, if not for anything else, at least, for their physical superiority over women. The Qur'án recognizes it and takes all conceivable steps to see that men do not take undue advantage of their natural superiority over women. In fact, all Qur'anic regulations adjusting relations between the two sexes are directed to this end. Wherever there is a right of men over women there is a corresponding right of women over men. If men have the right to the obedience of women, women have the right to their maintenance with dignity and honour.

## Polygamy

Sex is a contrivance for procreation. In the natural course a woman should take two years and a half to produce a healthy child if the period of lactation be taken into consideration. The male sex can fecundate a number of females in twenty-four hours; such is the potentiality of the male in the matter of procreation. The purpose of sex is procreation, and emotion in sex is but incidental. Too much indulgence in sex emotion invariably leads to horrible sex perversion, just as the other way sex starvation does. A woman should have a natural craving for sex when she is physically fit for conceiving, while her male counterpart has a natural right to have sex relations as and when he is fit to fecundate a female, but for maintaining social justice, his natural rights have been curtailed. In fact restricted natural rights are social rights. Every way of life has its own way of restricting natural rights and of creating social rights and obligations. Islam does so in full recognition of the fundamental traits of human nature. It does not teach men and women to dance in the air by setting up unnatural and as such unreal ethics, which invariably leads to lamentable perversion of nature. Polygamy in Islam does not, therefore, give man arbitrarily a right to have four wives, but it restricts man's natural right to unrestricted polygamy; his

natural right to marry countless wives is restricted to four, and again to one only when justice cannot be done to more than one. Restricted polygamy of Islam, without the least interference with women's natural rights in sex, does on the one hand give men reasonable indulgence to their sex potentiality and on the other hand effectively checks sex perversion. Let it be repeated that sex is nature's contrivance for procreation and emotion in sex is but incidental. Those parts of a woman's body designed for bearing and rearing of children have in particular the greatest sex appeal to men, and women after a certain age lose their sex appeal when they lose their potentiality for procreation, while men retain their potentiality till the end of their life. It must be noted here that Islamic morals can be implemented in an Islamic order of human existence. The capitalistic and communistic orders of systems discourage marriages, and are indifferent to sex purity and honesty in sex; they encourage irresponsible extra-marital sex relations for the satisfaction of emotions and give social blessings to prostitution, both public and private. The terms "husband" and "wife" are replaced by the terms "boy friend" and "girl friend". In this context a proper appreciation and implementation of Islamic sex morals are unthinkable.

### Marriage of minor girls

The law relating to marriage contracts of minor girls by the accredited guardians now prevalent in Muslim societies makes marriage contracts of minor girls by their guardians valid. The minors, however, retain their rights to exercise their option of acquiescence after attaining puberty before their marriages are consummated, with an exception in favour of their fathers or fathers' fathers, who are characterized as guardians of absolute authority. Thus when a minor girl is given in marriage by her father or in the absence of the father by her father's father, the marriage is irrevocable. These laws are, however, deductions from the general law of guardianship of minors' properties through *Qiyas* or analogy by Muslim jurists of the Middle Ages; they have no direct sanction in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (Practice of the Prophet). That a legal guardian of a minor girl can make a valid contract of marriage of the minor is sanctioned in the *Sunnah*. 'Ayesha Siddiqah was given in marriage to the Prophet (peace be on him!) by her father when she was a minor. But that a minor girl given in marriage by her father or father's father is irrevocable is but a conjecture. It will not be inconsistent with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* if the "option puberty" be extended to minor girls in all cases. It is not a sound analogy to apply the general law of guardianship of property in cases of marriage when it affects not merely the property of a girl but also her person, for minor girls are not chattels but persons with all human dignity. Since giving minors in marriage by their guardians is not obligatory, a law fixing the age of consent and prohibiting marriage of minors will not be incompatible with Islam. Fundamentals of Islam are constant, but accidents are variable with variation of social conditions. In these cases not *Taqlid*, or blind imitation of jurists of old, but *Ijtihad* (exercise of judgment) is necessary.

### Divorce

Of all things permitted in Islam, divorce is the most abominable. It is in the category of necessary evil. Divorce before a child is born is not of much consequence, but divorce after children are born is a serious matter, for divorce in such circumstances has a very serious impact on the destiny of the children. Separation through divorce should

come only when it must, to prevent a greater evil. Procedure in the Qur'an for divorce is not so easy and speedy as it is in the opinion of some of the Muslim jurists. Decision for a divorce can only be taken when all possible steps for reconciliation have failed. A divorce when effected must be deliberate and not sentimental or emotional.

A woman has no unilateral right to divorce in the absence of a prior agreement to that effect in the marriage contract. Marriage in Islam is not a sacrament but a social contract, and if the woman has a stipulation to that effect in her marriage contract she has irrevocable right to divorce her husband. When a woman, in the absence of a stipulation like that, takes the initiative for divorce, she can have it either through mutual consent on terms mutually agreed upon or through the judiciary on terms deemed fit and proper by it on grounds of cruelty and slander; gross neglect of matrimonial responsibilities amounts to cruelty. When the husband takes the initiative he has to discharge in full his matrimonial liabilities; the divorced wife gets, in full, her dower, her maintenance for a fixed period and maintenance for the period of lactation of her suckling baby, if there is one. Thus if the husband be honest or if there is any easy speedy social or legal procedure for realization of the wife's dues, the man will think many times before deciding upon divorce, and if he does so he will do so at a serious material inconvenience to himself. This justifies man's unilateral right to divorce. The law of divorce is very hard for men and liberal for women. Women have no material liability in the matter and they are free to marry again according to their free choice. Women are gifted with all the tender virtues in extreme measure, and as such they are extremely sentimental and emotional; their tender feelings are necessary for efficient motherhood. If a woman has an inherent unilateral right to divorce she would exercise her right, more often than not, on trivial grounds; she would be swayed away by every ephemeral gust of emotion. Divorce, be it repeated, is the most abominable of all things permitted. The Qur'an enjoins that all possible measures should be adopted for reconciliation, so much so that even when a wife is guilty of faithlessness the man is permitted to beat his wife as the last attempt for her correction and a possible reconciliation; beating a wife is bad, but a divorce is worse. We have it in the Qur'an: "And (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the beds, and chastise them. So if they obey you, seek not any way against them. Surely God is ever Exalted, Great" (4 : 34).

### The Law of Evidence

In Islamic Law of Evidence two women are equivalent to one man. While dealing with contracts the Qur'an says: "And get two witnesses out of your own men and if there are not two men then one man and two women such as ye chose for witnesses, so that if one of them errs the other can remind her" (2 : 282). Pleasant or unpleasant, the fact is that women are overwhelmingly emotional, and as such are weaker in memory, weaker in proper appreciation of facts and weaker in presentation of facts without an alloy of emotion. When there is no other corroborative evidence, circumstantial or otherwise, the evidence of one man only is not deemed sufficient to prove or to disprove something; evidence of as many as four men is necessary to prove adultery and fornication, for the punishment in such cases is extremely severe. The provision for requiring two women witnesses for every man is not calculated to do injustice to women, but to guarantee justice to all.

## The law of inheritance

In the law of inheritance a woman has half of what her male counterpart gets. Islam does not encourage parasitic existence. Every able man and woman must work, but strictly according to their respective ability, remaining within the natural confines of their respective orbits. Nevertheless, the responsibility for the maintenance of women rests with the male members of the family. Function of women in this respect is active co-operation with their menfolk in building up a sound family economy. A woman's marriage dower is the first charge on the assets of her husband. She can realize her dower any time on demand. A woman after her husband's death can marry again and find a new home. The responsibility for the maintenance of children after their father's death devolves on the father's father if alive, and on the paternal uncles if and when the grandfather is dead; the mother has no legal responsibility in the matter when male guardians are present. These circumstances abundantly justify a woman's half-share in the Islamic Law of Inheritance.

## Seclusion of women

As has been said before, the family in an Islamic order of human existence is not merely an economic unit as it is in a capitalistic society, but it is a sacred institution for the basic culture of all the values that make all the difference between the human and the non-human. The family, in Islam, is a State within a State; the spirit of equality, fraternity, social justice and mutual co-operation is inculcated in the children in the family State; these, writ large, bring to man all his happiness and help the realization of his boundless possibilities in his individual, social and universal existence. If the family is destroyed nothing remains. Man must therefore in these circumstances revert to animal life, maybe a civilized animal life. Of all things that destroy the family, *Zina*, or extra-marital sex relations, is the foremost. Islam, the philosophy of realism as it is, makes family purity the *sine qua non* of man's social existence. This necessitates proper adjustments of relations between the two sexes. Men and women are for this purpose divided into two watertight compartments, namely the *Mahram* or the "Prohibited" and the *Ghair Mahram*, or the "Non-prohibited". The prohibited are those between whom matrimonial relation is prohibited, and the non-prohibited are those between whom marriage is permitted. In Islam there are fourteen degrees of prohibition. Men and women of the prohibited category can mix freely with one another as here there is the least apprehension of sex crimes. Restrictions are imposed on the free mixing of persons of the non-prohibited category; in this respect strangers have the same status as that of first cousins. These restrictions apply equally to men and women, as enjoined in chapter 24 of the Qur'an. What is forbidden

is not free movements of women with decency and decorum but aggressive displays of beauty throwing sex appeal in wanton disregard of all sense of decency. Seclusion of women within four walls is foreign to Islam; the Muslim aristocracy learned this in the days of affluence from Byzantium, Persia, and the Rajputs of India, just as today they are learning free mixing of sexes in mixed night clubs from the Western way of life.

## The family laws

If the family laws of Islam be scrupulously observed, every family would be a paradise on earth. But it is a hard reality that family laws of Islam are not observed in the world today. In the absence of positive laws enforcing observance of family laws and in the absence of social discipline in this respect, men take undue advantage of their natural standing over women and flout Qur'anic laws with impunity. Islamization of a society must necessarily begin with legislation for rigid observance of the family laws of Islam. But here care must be taken that no right or obligation repugnant to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* is created. If family laws and morals are strictly observed, women will reappear in the social life of man in their full glory.

## Position of women in Islam

A woman in Islam is not a chattel, but a person, with all its legal and social implications. She is known by her own name and not by her father's or husband's name. Her person, property and honour are safe. In Islam a female child is not considered a curse, and she in her father's home enjoys the same status as that of a boy; in her husband's home she is a household goddess. She is a legal heiress of her father, mother, husband and children. Her property does not merge with that of her husband. She has the freedom of disposal of her property as she likes. If she is married by her legal guardian when she is a minor or if she is married by force, she can repudiate her marriage, in the first case by exercising her "option of puberty" when she is come of age, and in the second case any time before the marriage is consummated. If she is maltreated by her husband she can use her right to divorce, and in the absence of any such stipulation in her marriage contract, she can secure a divorce from the judiciary with full compensation. In Islam, the slander of women is a heinous crime, and the punishment for that is extremely severe. We have it in the Qur'an, "And those who launch a charge against chaste women and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes and reject their evidence ever after, for such men are wicked transgressors" (24: 2). The Prophet raised the honour of women heaven high when he said, "Paradise lies at the feet of the mother".

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# PALESTINE, A WORD THAT MEANS UNITY

By CHARLES DE VERTEUIL

Whatever the political atmosphere may be regarding unity within the Arab world, there is one subject upon which all Arabs, and all Arab States, agree — Palestine. A Holy Land to three great world religions, a home for many hundreds of years to countless Arabs, its unresolved problems lay like festering sores upon the body-politic of the United Nations and the consciences of mankind. In modern politics no problem has remained so long unsolved ; none has become so emotionally charged and so utterly distorted with the swift passage of time.

Over thirteen years have elapsed since the harrassed British threw up the sponge and quit their moral and legal responsibilities in the Palestine Mandate. Moderates on both sides have long since given up hope of ever settling Arab-Israeli differences, whilst the extremists on both sides grow increasingly restive. Nearly one million refugees, their numbers increasing almost daily by natural causes, are still displaced by a war which was far from their choosing. Whilst billions of dollars have been subscribed all over the world to perpetuate the State of Israel, the Arab States and international agencies are hard pressed to raise enough to keep these refugees in conditions approaching human decency.

Regularly — almost monotonously — once a year, the United Nations re-reads the solemn declarations it made in 1947 and 1948, and just as regularly the whole sordid mess is forgotten conveniently by the world for another year. The Arabs have almost exhausted descriptive adjectives to tell the world what they think of the betrayal ; Israel constantly flaunts international law and frustrates by divers means, not least of all its control of the media of propaganda in many lands. Human decency is deliberately sidetracked and compliance with the dictates of international bodies laughed at.

Palestine has been with us far too long as a crisis. At this time we ask our readers to cast their minds back to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, and even further back to the series of agreements which in reality are the cause of the misery and unhappiness in the Middle East today. Many aspects of the Case of Palestine are conveniently forgotten in 1961 by everyone with the exception of the Arabs, who were affected most of all.

The most avid Zionist would be a fool to deny that for centuries prior to the outbreak of World War One, Palestine was anything else but an integral and indistinguishable part of the Arab world which geographically and politically surrounded it. The Ottoman Turks, rulers for four centuries, acknowledged this fact, and if it is necessary to go even further back, there is very little historical doubt that Arab occupation of the Holy Land — sometimes shared with the Jews and other races — goes back to the beginning of recorded time. But our concern is more with events from the year 1914 onwards.

In that year there were 50,000 Jews resident in Palestine. They represented barely 8 per cent of the population and owned less than 3 per cent of the land, and an even lesser percentage of business and industry. They were no poorer, nor richer, than their peaceful Arab neighbours who constituted, Muslim and Christian, over 90 per cent of the population. These are facts ; irrefutable and true.

It doesn't matter what is going on in the Middle East, it is rare indeed that Palestine does not enter into the scheme of things. Historically and religiously, for centuries, this tiny country has influenced not only the immediate vicinity but lands many miles away. In the summer of 1914 Palestine was the landbridge between Asia Minor, the Middle East, and Africa. She became of immediate concern to the Allies and has been of more than passing interest to the Turks, who afterwards allied themselves with the Kaiser's Germany, for many years.

Three British armies, under separate commands, all with their political axes to grind, operated out of Cairo. There was the Indian Army, the Anglo-Egyptian-Sudanese Army, and the Imperial Army sent out from the British Isles. For nearly two years they played at politics — and did little soldiering. A few long-range desert groups, with their Arab friends and allies, began to harass the Austrians, Turks and Germans in the Arabian Peninsula and other parts of Asia Minor. Although many dedicated British, French and Arab soldiers served in these cloak-and-dagger expeditions, they never amounted to much ; this was caused by lack of supplies and money and because of the lack of cohesive and united command. The Austro-German-Turkish force immobilized (mostly in complete inactivity) an Allied combined army of 350,000 men — or ten times their number. This force had to be fed, even if it was not allowed to fight, and there was a constant drain, with no military returns, upon the Allied treasuries.

In 1916 two men began to influence the direction of the Allies' Middle East war effort. One was a professional soldier and the other an archaeologist-soldier-mystic. Two such contrasting men, both Britishers, it would have been very difficult to have met. The professional soldier, Lord Allenby, looked at the problem through the eyes of Sandhurst ; the mystic, who possessed the twin attributes of being both soldier and writer, T. E. Lawrence, was at first reluctant but latterly inspired.

At this time the Arabs in this area had been ruled for over four hundred years by the Ottoman Turks, a rule which had vacillated between sheer neglect, disinterest and utter corruption. They viewed the struggle between Germany and the Allies as a heaven-sent opportunity to shake the shackles of Turkish imperialism from their lands forever. Little did they know when throwing their lot in with the

British that they were only going to delay the happy day of emancipation. In this context it is not necessary to dwell too long upon the events leading up to the defeat of the Germans and the Turks, but between 1916 and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 three pacts or agreements were entered into which were to cause the situation confronting us in the Middle East today, nearly half a century later.

Solemn promises were made by Lord Allenby to the Arabs. In effect they stated that in exchange for either Arab armed assistance, or at the very least benevolent neutrality, the British would help the Arabs become a free and independent nation. In 1916 a pact by the name of the Hussein-MacMahon Agreement was signed between the Arab Hashemite State and the British High Commissioner in Egypt and recorded for posterity. If nothing had happened to complicate it, there is no historical doubt that the British would have lived up to this solemn promise, but . . .

Zionism was beginning to spread its wings within governmental circles. Because of the trend of the war, it took an invidious form in France and England. The Zionists had not forgotten the possibility of the German-Turkish axis winning because similar overtures were made during and prior to World War One, to both the German and Turkish governments. Zionist influence made a breakthrough that Zionism in its early days owed more to its Gentile supporters than it did to its Jewish members. In 1917 a letter of intent was sent by Lord Balfour, the British Foreign Minister, to Chaim Weizmann, brilliant Russian-Jewish scientist who had become a naturalized British citizen. Known as the Balfour Declaration, and certainly not an internationally legal and binding document, it promised to help establish at the end of the war in Palestine a "National Home" for the Jews, but in a manner which would safeguard the rights of all other people already living there. The Arab sorrow was just beginning and the British were embarking upon a course of vacillation and double-dealing unrivalled in international affairs for many centuries.

And what about the much-vaunted Balfour Declaration? It was a reward to Chaim Weizmann in exchange for "an invention" which contributed towards winning the 1914-18 war. Many a native-born Britisher would have liked to have been rewarded similarly. They weren't; no one has ever tried to explain the magnitude of Britain's generosity to a foreign-born scientist whose invention was not on a par with many more during that fateful decade. The machinations of Zionism have to be thanked in this instance, but the partial honouring of this pledge by Britain to the Jews was to set the seal against any Arab unity for years to come. But there was more in store for the betrayed and neglected Arabs.

In 1918 it was obvious that the war in Europe would end in victory for the Allies. The policy makers started to look a little further afield; the eyes of the British and the French alighted upon the Near and Middle East. One of the most infamous carve-ups in history was to take place. Meeting in Damascus, an Englishman and a Frenchman framed on the spot and signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement. If there had been any chance of reconciling the Hussein-MacMahon Agreement with the Balfour Declaration—which is highly questionable—then the Sykes-Picot Pact certainly negated it. In effect it carved up the entire Arab East. It created phoney kingdoms where none existed before. Where these weren't possible, the Anglo-French allies settled for protectorates and mandates. Palestine became the responsibility of the British Crown—and then the fun started.

The entire British occupation of Palestine was doomed from the outset. Whatever the legal pretext, no nation can make two (or even three) sets of promises and expect to muddle through to something akin to a just settlement. But it must be recorded that upon the basis of a promise of better things to come, the Arabs in Palestine supported the British mandate to a greater extent than the Zionists ever did—or intended to. The entire Zionist plan was aimed at one objective: the defeat of the British, their eventual withdrawal and the establishment of a Jewish State. It was inevitable that in working toward this end the Zionists had to involve the Arabs. With the exception of the war years (1939-45), when Arab and Jew served with distinction in the armies of Britain in the Middle East, it was an uneasy truce; open warfare became the order of the day; more illegal than legal Jewish immigrants entered the Holy Land to the chagrin of the British and the rightful fury of the Arabs. When Britain surrendered her mandate in 1948 to the United Nations it was too late, because the Zionists were determined, come what may, to capture Palestine by the sword.

When we see the Zionist propaganda machine at work and gaze upon the TV or newsreel of the bronzed bodies of young Zionists working in the new Israel, how many of our well-washed brains ever think of what led up to it all! The State of Israel was created in bloodshed. It is perpetuated by certain great powers to act as a deterrent to the coming unity of the Arabs from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean; it is subsidized by vast sums of money which pour in (and not always so willingly) from Jewish communities all over the world. It was created largely by the sword.

What do the Arabs ask over Palestine? Their demands are just and simple: repatriation or financial compensation for all refugees; the adjustment of boundaries to those laid down by the two international commissions which studied the problem in 1947 and 1948; a guarantee from Israel that she will surrender forever any thoughts of spreading over those boundaries.

The Jews are very inconsistent in their refusal to deal with the Arab refugee problem. On the one hand they claim that there is insufficient room to accommodate (or reaccommodate) them, but on the other hand send periodical clarion calls to World Jewry to emigrate to Israel and help develop the land. They cannot have it both ways. If there is room in Palestine for anyone, it should be for those hundreds of thousands of Arabs who were displaced by Jewish infiltration and military invasion. The Arabs are justified in their fear of future Israeli expansion—at their expense.

It is a long time now since the Protocol of Lausanne was signed on 12th May, 1949. The Arabs have consistently stated that they believe that the embryo agreements reached there could become just and lasting. The Israelis have just as consistently attacked it and their leaders have publicly proclaimed that they do not believe in the internationalization of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the adjustment of boundaries and the repatriation of Arab refugees.

This is no longer an affair merely between Israel and the Arab States. The world has come a long way since 1949. The Afro-Asian nations support the Arab stand over Palestine and have said so frequently, for example at the Bandung Conference in 1955, and the recent Belgrade Conference. The United Nations, even if merely paying lip-service to an ideal, annually tells the world (*sotto voce*) that the Arabs' case is right, and the Zionists are in the wrong. Yet this invidious and evil situation persists; complicated if

possible by lies and misrepresentations about Palestine in a similar manner to Leon Uris' book and movie, *Exodus*.

Increasingly in the world, loud and influential voices are being raised. Professor Arnold Toynbee, probably the greatest living English-speaking philosopher-historian, has incurred the wrath of Jewry by siding with the Arabs over Palestine. In the United States prominent persons in business and industry are constantly lending their moral support to the Arab cause. Gradually the Iron Curtain of propaganda and news disseminations is being pierced; the world is slowly learning that there are many aspects to the Palestine Affair.

Nevertheless, despite the hatred and bitterness that surrounds Palestine, there is still time for a just and lasting settlement, still time to settle the differences, still time to penetrate the fog of fear and hatred. Not everyone in Israel supports the imperialist policies of Ben Gurion. There are men in Israeli public life who have stated that they are willing to negotiate with the Arabs all matters at dispute. One of them, Pinhas Lavon, was subjected to a frame-up and subsequently castigated — and only because of his moderate views. Despite the understandably bitter deliberations of Arab leaders, there is no doubt that if a genuine offer were made—even at this late hour—by responsible Israeli authorities, the Arab States would rise to the occasion. But one thing is tragically certain, this issue must be settled before long.

If we all believe in the principles of world justice; if we

do not believe that mob rule must prevail, there is only one basis for genuine peace in the Middle East over the Palestine Question. Allowing for circumstances which exist today—and were not present in 1949—there is only one basis for a settlement, and one agency which can impartially handle that settlement. It must be done through the United Nations; it must be dealt with by a commission whose members do not belong to any of the nations interested currently or prior to the Israeli invasions; it must be based upon the original boundary and demarcation lines laid out by the two original commissions in 1947-48.

On two occasions (in 1952 and 1956), Israel tried to push through in the United Nations resolutions and recommendations that would have altered the often-tabled wishes of the vast majority of nations over a solution to Palestine. Twice she was overwhelmingly rejected. This must mean that in the eyes of the vast majority of the civilized nations the United Nations is right — and Israel wrong.

As Arnold Toynbee so eloquently and forcibly illustrated when addressing Jewish students at McGill University early in 1961, there is only one correct, valid and just answer to any problem. The world may appear to be very busy today with other problems; Berlin occupies the headlines, men go into and return from space—and no one seems to worry any more about this unresolved problem. It would be fatal, in more senses than one, if the world continued to conveniently forget Palestine.

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# LIBYAN EDUCATION MAKES ITS MARK

Free, compulsory, universal primary education — this objective is so important in Libya that it was written into the Libyan Constitution at the time of independence, December 1951. In 1952 the country's legislature passed a bill providing that the expansion and development of education at all levels, from the primary to the university and including boarding facilities, be financed from the public budget.

In these circumstances "very considerable achievement", in the words of a recent World Bank Survey Mission to Libya, has been witnessed in the past decade. The concentration has been on setting the foundation for a proper, complete school system and opening the gates of education to the largest number of children in the shortest possible time.

When the country gained its independence fewer than 10 per cent of the adult population had ever been to school. The circumstances for the next generation will be much different. The pace of educational expansion may be gauged from a comparison of the enrolment figures in 1952/53 with those for the 1959/60 school year. The total number of pupils in Libya's schools increased during this period from 45,000 (42,000 primary students) to 155,000 (140,000 primary). Correspondingly the number of schools grew from 234 to 616. At present about 75 per cent of all Libyan children in the primary school age group (6-12) are enrolled.

The educational system in Libya is divided into three broad categories, theoretical, vocational and technical, and religious education. In accordance with the modernization and development trend now in full swing, the first two categories are given the predominant emphasis.

Theoretical education falls into five stages: Pre-primary, including kindergarten (20 schools, 2,600 pupils); primary, six years (495 schools, 140,000 pupils); preparatory/junior h.s., three years (58 schools, 7,000 pupils); secondary/senior h.s., three years (15 schools, 1,800 students); and higher, university education. In the 1960/61 school year the Libyan University had over 800 students, in Schools of Arts, Commerce and Sciences.

The great expansion in the area of primary education has created a fairly broad base from which other advances may be made in the field of theoretical education. As the current number of primary students in Libya gradually matriculate, the higher phases of the system will be expanded to accommodate them. And, in primary education itself, the situation now allows for a shift from concentration on numerical expansion to improving the quality of the education offered. Thus priority is now being given to measures to ease overcrowding, to provide better teaching equipment, to improve the curriculum, to secure better supervision of teaching, and above all to increase the supply of trained Libyan teachers.

According to the programme of Libya's Ministry of Education, the ultimate goal of universal primary education is realizable within 15 years. But care is being taken that



the expansion of enrolment in the coming years will be placed so that it does not outdistance necessary improvements in educational standards.

The vocational and technical category of the educational system is divided into two cycles: The intermediate section, into which pupils are admitted after receiving their primary certificates; and the senior section, which is open to those students who have earned their preparatory certificates. Within this category of education all the Teacher Training Institutions for men and women (8 institutes, 1,900 students), agricultural schools (2 schools, 200 students), commercial schools (2 schools, 345 students), and technical schools

(4 schools, 310 students). It is apparent that there has been only a start made in this category of the education system, except in the teachers' training institutes, where the need is particularly and immediately great.

The supply of suitable teachers is the principal factor limiting expansion of the school system at all levels. Thus the ministry is giving the highest priority to teacher training. As plans progress, the training of teachers for secondary/theoretical and for technical and vocational schools will be assumed by the Libyan University, along with the existing teacher-training institutions in the country and the Higher Institute of Technology, which is currently being established in collaboration with the United Nations Special Fund and UNESCO. Until the University and the Higher Institute are able to fill the gap, Libya will continue to rely to some extent on teachers recruited abroad to cope with the increased enrolment of 11,000 students anticipated over the next five years.

Already most of the primary school teachers are Libyans. They are trained in the eight training colleges, which they enter immediately after completing their own primary schooling. Initially it has been necessary to set admission requirements low, but, in accordance with the general development of educational facilities, measures are under way to raise the standards of teachings so that prospective teachers would have at least nine years of ordinary schooling before entering a training college.

Further, programmes of rural teacher training are being separated from those of urban teachers and transferred wherever possible to agricultural schools and vocational training centres in the three provinces. Although the course of study in rural teachers' training would follow the general three-year curriculum set up for other primary school teachers, special emphasis would be given to agricultural and other subjects of rural interest. A programme of in-service training augmented by summer teacher institutes is also being organized. To maintain teaching standards a selected number of rural school inspectors will be appointed.

Proposals to raise the salaries of teachers in Libya, and other measures aimed at improving the status of the teaching profession and making it more attractive, are also under consideration by officials of the Ministry of Education.

Aside from the organization and direction of the Libyan school system and its moves toward expansion, the Ministry of Education and its three provincial departments are naturally responsible for the programmes of study in the various types of school. The programme of primary studies, most important at present, is prescribed in detail by the Ministry. In general the programme's intent may be described as an effort to weld the nation together by offering all children the opportunity to gain equal knowledge and develop similar ideas. At present primary schools in rural areas follow exactly the same curriculum as those in urban areas, but measures are under way to stimulate an interest in agriculture and to encourage a proper appreciation of the advantages of rural life — an effort which is particularly important in an agricultural country such as Libya.

The teaching programme in rural schools is therefore being modified with this end in view. Wherever practicable, school gardens are being started, special arrangements being made for the practical study of nature, animals and agriculture. At the same time a system of separate, specialized training for rural children is being devised and instituted.

Ministry personnel also have a major responsibility where curricula and methods in the general theoretical schools are concerned. A technical section has recently been established to see to the preparation and production of school text-books and instructional materials in various subjects for the primary, preparatory and secondary levels. Another new section in the ministry is attending to the revision of the curriculum and the preparation of text-books for technical education — agricultural, commercial and vocational schools — under the guidance of experts in these fields. During the 1959/60 school year 25 new text-books for various levels in different subjects were produced under the auspices of the Education Ministry.

Religious education is still an important segment of Libya's education system since the precepts of Islam are basic to the moral and social posture of the country. It has four levels, pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher. In the Qur'anic schools, on the pre-primary level, over 20,000 youngsters get their basic instruction in the teachings of Islam. They advance through the other stages to get more detailed knowledge of the Qur'an, through indoctrination in the law and philosophy of Islam and in the Arabic language. The highest point of religious education is reached in the Religious Institute of the Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali Senussi, established in the last century. The institute was reorganized by a royal decree in 1955, and now it is ready to accept students from all over the Islamic world. Its headmaster is appointed by royal decree and is chosen from the country's most outstanding religious scholars. The institute has branches all over Libya, and its budget in 1959/60 was nearly \$450,000.

As in the case of other developing countries, Libya's educators are mindful of the needs of the adult population, which for the most part has been denied the benefits of education. The Libyan Government has made considerable efforts in the field of adult literacy and fundamental education in the past five or six years, due in part to the wholehearted and valuable collaboration of UNESCO. Evening classes in 250 schools throughout the country have today an adult enrolment of about 20,000. In addition, the ministry in 1959 inaugurated a Fundamental Education Centre in Fuehat, Cyrenaica, which is presently being raised to the level of a national institution. In 1959/60 the centre had 100 adults enrolled. Further, 20 Adult Education Centres have been established in the remote Saharan oases of the Fezzan province.

While the Libyan University is still in its infancy, many students who have completed their secondary school training and who are interested in continuing their education in the more specialized professional fields must go to institutions of higher learning in foreign countries. The 1960/61 school year saw 340 of the most highly-qualified Libyan young people studying abroad at schools in the United Arab Republic, England, Italy, the Lebanon, Turkey, Spain, Germany, Iraq, the United States, Belgium and France. Their fields of specialization ranged from fine arts and physical education to medicine and engineering, up to and including the graduate level.

The Higher Institute of Technology opened the doors of its temporary premises in Tripoli in October. Fifty exceptional high school students were chosen as its first pupils, among whom will be those to first receive university level engineering training in Libya. Eventually the institute will be expanded to accept about 200 boarding students for a

five-year course leading to a B.Sc. degree in civil, mechanical or electrical engineering, or food technology.

Where physical plants are concerned, the phenomenal increase in school enrolment in recent years has necessitated a considerable expansion of the Libyan school building programme. In the 1959/60 season alone 223 new classrooms were built and put in use for primary and secondary education; 76 in Tripolitania, 118 in Cyrenaica, and 29 in the Fezzan province. During the same period 50 other classrooms were rehabilitated to help accommodate the growing numbers of students in all fields. Twenty of these were in Tripolitania and 30 in Cyrenaica. The average cost of building a new classroom to hold 25 students is about \$3,300. Schoolroom equipment costs an average of about \$11 per pupil.

It cost the Libyan Government over \$10,000,000 for its endeavours in the field of education in 1959/60. This

amounted to a 32.66 per cent increase in expenditure over the previous season. To name a few of the most pertinent areas of expense, \$3,788,000 was allotted to teachers' salaries; \$2,494,000 for school building and equipment, and maintenance; \$958,000 to the Libyan National University; \$274,000 for scholarships to students in foreign countries; and \$199,000 to the adult education programme.

The educational picture in Libya is definitely one of expansion and improvement. Funds spent, numbers of classrooms opened and students enrolled in all phases of the system support this judgment. The basic problems, particularly in the primary education phase, are well on their way to solution. With the experience so gained the Ministry of Education will surely find it simpler to develop the other elements of an ultimately efficient and all-encompassing educational system. The outlook is bright, both present and future.

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## IQBAL — THE MUSLIM INTERNATIONAL POET

By N. M. SULTAN MARICAR

**“Even in this twentieth century the school of Persian poetry in Hindustan was sufficiently active to produce an international figure whose contribution to literature has ensured him immortality as certainly as his intervention in politics; the name of Muhammad Iqbal, that visionary whose Persian eloquence pleaded the cause of Islam reborn and was powerful in creating Pakistan, is now inscribed on the roll of honour headed by Firdausi.”**

In his tribute to Iqbal, Professor A. J. Arberry has indicated the international celebrity which is attached to the poet. Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1938 C.E.) was not only the poet expressing the inner feelings as well as the outward expressions of the environment with which he came into contact, but he had also the signal honour of being the rare combination of sage, philosopher, thinker, lawyer and statesman.

Iqbal was born in the town of Sialkot in the Punjab (then part of India). He was the descendant of a Kashmiri Brahmin (Hindus of the highest caste) who had been converted to Islam. He received his early education first at Sialkot and then at Lahore. While still a young man, he began writing poems in Urdu. So proficient was he that when one of his teachers sent the poems to the great poet Dagh for correction, Dagh, after correcting a few, soon confessed they were so good as to require no revision. In later years, Dagh was proud to recall the time when he had corrected the works of Iqbal. In the classroom, Iqbal occasionally proved himself to be quick-witted. When he once came late, his teacher told him, “Iqbal, you are late,” (or “Iqbal is late”). The youth replied humorously, “Iqbal (which means glory or fortune) always comes late”.

His English professor, Thomas Arnold, advised the young genius to study abroad and to learn something of the culture of the West. Iqbal accordingly went to England in 1905, took a degree at Cambridge University, obtained a doctorate at the University of Munich (Germany), and finally taught Arabic at the University of London. Back in Lahore in 1908, he pondered over the complex civilization of the

West, and while there was much to be admired about it, he foresaw that this kind of civilization would eventually take the road to destruction. With a prophetic note, he wrote as follows (translated from Urdu):

“O residents of the West,  
God's earth is not a shop.  
The gold you are thinking to be genuine  
Will now prove to be low of value.  
Your civilization is going to commit suicide  
With her own dagger.  
The nest which is made on a frail bough  
Cannot but be insecure.”

For a while Iqbal served as Professor of Philosophy in the Government College, Lahore, but he resigned because, as he said, “I have a message for my people, and it cannot be conveyed if I remain in the Government service”. Thereafter, he earned a livelihood through his legal practice and was free to write as he pleased.

He wrote of many things pertaining to art, beauty and life, but his poems increasingly turned to God and immortality. One of these, which attacked religious inertia, brought about quite a controversy. Since his youth he had yearned to write something along the lines of *Paradise Lost* by Milton. This he achieved with the production of his *Magnum Opus, Javid Nameh*, although it resembles Dante's *Divine Comedy* more than Milton's masterpiece. The critics of his own language acclaim this as one of the world's classics.

Iqbal's poetry and prose published in Urdu, Persian

and English were of outstanding merit. He was a profound thinker who believed in dynamism, and throughout his writings, he placed the greatest emphasis on action, interpreting it as a movement. His philosophy found practical expression in its mature form in *Asrari Khudi* (Secrets of Self) and *Rumooz-i-Bekhudī* (Mysteries of Selflessness or Non-Ego). In 1928-29, he delivered a series of lectures on *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam*, in which he made a bold attempt to construct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to the philosophical traditions of Islam and the more recent developments in various domains of human knowledge. He explained that the true Islamic order changes from time to time in conformity with authoritative, progressive interpretation.

Iqbal had a spiritual bent of mind, and thought that real happiness lies in a detachment from the materialistic view of life.

“That man is happy in this world who neither accumulates materialistic things nor takes the advice of the materialistic people.”

He spurs on the youth of Islam to a state of activity :

“This is no time for idle rest,  
Much yet remains undone :  
The lamp of *Tauhid* needs thy touch  
To make it shame the sun.”

“Raise thou, through love, all human things  
To greatness and to fame :  
Enlighten thou the groping world  
With dear Muhammad’s name.”

As regards the belief in God, he says :

“The word of *mu'min* (believer) knows no frontiers,  
Every place is the *mu'min's* home.”

Among the modern poets, Iqbal has rendered yeoman service in understanding, appreciating and disseminating the message of the *Maulana Jalāl-al-Din Rumi* (1207-1273 C.E.), the great poet whose portrait is even now preserved in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul (Turkey). It will not be incorrect to say that an appreciation of the poetry and message of Rumi can be obtained by first studying Rumi himself, and then Iqbal. Rumi speaks through Iqbal in accordance with the requirements and exigencies of the present-day world, and guides us through the arduous journey of life. After a profound study of Eastern and Western philosophy, and of Islamic as well as non-Islamic thought, he accepts the Qur’ān as his guide, the Prophet of Islam as his beloved and Rumi as his mentor. He thus builds up the splendid edifice of his philosophy of “Self”, and by stimulating the latent powers of the Muslim nations, he prepares it for a peaceful service of the entire human race. However, Iqbal was conscious of the danger of excessive egotism. He realized that the Ego can grow to its full stature only when placed in society. He thus, in a most lucid manner, emphasized the mutual relationship between the individual and society.

“Individual exists in relation to the community,  
Alone he is nothing,  
The wave exists in the ocean,  
Outside it is nothing.”

In the name of Islam and through his poetry, he has presented the world with a glowing flame compounded of

Islamic mysticism and modern philosophy. In *Payām-i-Mashriq* (Message of the East) he says :

“Truth without feeling is philosophy,  
With feeling it becomes poetry.”

Iqbal’s thought was not concerned with how man was created, but with the ultimate end of man’s life. He wants man to cherish an intense desire for a high ideal and have firm faith in it and then to struggle day and night for the achievement of this ideal. This is *Life*. His conception of *Love* is not earthly but Heavenly (towards God) :

“*Kufr* (disbelief) with love becomes Islam,  
And a Muslim without love is a *kafir*.”



*Muhammad Iqbal (died 21st April 1938 C.E.)*

Iqbal’s ultimate aim is the realization of Islamic brotherhood, but he is not narrow-minded and he never looks down upon non-Muslims.

“A God-loving dervish is neither Eastern nor Western,  
My home is neither Delhi nor Ispahan nor Samarqand.”

He exhorts Muslims to build up their future freely on the foundation of the national traditions of Islam. He said :

“The memory of bygone times is an elixir for my earth,  
My past is a commentary on my future.”

More than forty years ago, when Muslim peoples were taken by decadence, Iqbal prophesied the achievement of their independence, thus :

“The caravan of feeble ants will build with flower petals a boat,  
Which will struggle against thousands of waves and cross the ocean.”

Soon afterwards, he also foretold the union of Muslims and the advancement of Islam :

“The night will take to flight with the rising sun and this garden will resound with the song of ‘Divine Unity’.”

He said :

“Shall we not listen attentively to the voice of our spiritual leaders and, becoming united and strong, hold aloft in the international assembly the banner of human brotherhood and World Peace.”

Besides his literary efforts, which continued to the time of his death, Iqbal interested himself in education and politics, and was very much concerned about the future of Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. His political activities germinated in the birth of a Muslim nation (Pakistan). He gave a concrete shape to the aspirations of the Muslims in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, and played a conspicuous part towards achieving a separate homeland which they desired. It was Iqbal's fervent appeal which persuaded Muhammad 'Ali Jinnah in 1934 to return to politics. The letters written by him to Jinnah during the last years of his life (1936-37) were posthumously published in the form of a book which carried an introduction by Jinnah himself. These last years also synchronized with a very eventful period in the history of the Muslims, in which the All-India Muslim League Central Parliamentary Board was established in 1936, and the great historic session at Lucknow (North India) was summoned in 1937. These letters can be read with a great amount of interest. It was on the foundations laid by Iqbal that the Muslim League's historic Pakistan Resolution of 1940 was based. Thus Iqbal gave the blueprint for Pakistan, and he may be called the creator of Pakistan even though Jinnah is referred to as the Father of Pakistan. Percival Spear has placed Iqbal in a comparative position when he says :

“Sayyid Ahmad Khan was the philosopher, Iqbal the prophet, and Jinnah the statesman-creator of Pakistan.”

Although Iqbal advocated the division of the sub-continent, he was a strong opponent of narrow nationalism and racism. The profundity of his belief was very expressly shown in his condemnation of the evil system prevalent in modern civilization :

“Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind. . . . Only one unity is dependable and that unity is the brotherhood of man,

which is above race, nationality, colour or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life, and the beautiful ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize.”

However, Iqbal was convinced that the way to a peaceful India, and to a peaceful solution of the Hindu-Muslim problems, was through a redistribution of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. He realized that in the particular situation, unity in diversity was more feasible than diversity under unity. The creation of Pakistan was seen as a practical necessity rather than as the consequence of any selfish motives.

Iqbal believed that religion is a power of the utmost importance in the life of individuals as well as States, and that Islam is itself destiny and will not suffer a destiny.

In his presidential address delivered at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League, held at Allahabad in 1930, he said :

“I lead no party. I follow no leader. I have given the best part of my life to a careful study of Islam, its law and polity, its culture, its history and its literature. This constant contact with the spirit of Islam, as it unfolds itself in time, has I think given me a kind of insight into its significance, as a world fact.”

Again he said :

“Islam does not bifurcate the unity of man into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter. In Islam, God and the Universe, spirit and matter, Church and State, are organic to each other. To Islam, matter is spirit realizing itself in space and time.”

Iqbal has mentioned that Professor Wensick of Leiden (Holland) wrote to him : “It seems to me that Islam is entering upon a crisis through which Christianity has been passing for more than a century. The great difficulty is how to save the foundations of religion when many antiquated notions have to be given up. It seems to me scarcely possible to state what the outcome will be for Christianity, still less what it will be for Islam.”

Based on this writing, Iqbal says about Islam that he cannot predict the final fate of the national idea in the world of Islam.

He also says of Islam :

“Islam is not a church. It is a State conceived as a contractual organism long before Rousseau ever thought of such a thing, and animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as an earth-rooted creature, defined by this or that portion of earth, but as a spiritual being understood in terms of a social mechanism, and possessing rights and duties as living factors in that mechanism.”

Islam has given a gift to mankind, i.e., a kind of homogeneity which is necessary for a nation. There are no social barriers between Muslims and Christians or adherents of

any other faith. A Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian does not pollute the food of a Muslim by touching it, and the law of Islam allows inter-marriage with the "People of the Book". The Qur'an declares, "O People of the Book, come let us join together on the 'word' (unity of God) that is common to us all". Indeed the first practical step that Islam took towards the realization of a final combination of humanity was to call upon the peoples possessing practically the same ethical ideal to come forward and combine. The way of Islam and Christianity could not allow the infinite meaning of this verse to work itself out in the world of Islam. However, today it is being gradually realized in the countries of Islam in the shape of what is called "Muslim Nationalism".

Iqbal has said that the staunch internationalist recognizes that without the full national autonomy, it is extraordinarily difficult to create an international State. So also without the full cultural autonomy — and communalism in its better aspect is culture — it will be difficult to create a harmonious nation.

Religion does not teach jealousy or enmity, and Iqbal did not look down upon other religions :

"I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religions and social institutions of other communities. Nay, it is my duty, according to the teaching of the Qur'an, even to defend their places of worship if need be. I love the communal group which is the source of my life and behaviour."

Iqbal's definition as regards the leaders of Islam is :

"One who, by Divine gift or experience, possesses a keen perception of the spirit and destiny of Islam along with an equally keen perception of the trend of modern history : such men are really the driving forces of a people, but they are God's gift and cannot be made to order."

Iqbal strongly advises humanity :

"Rise above sectional interests and private ambitions ; and learn to determine the values of your individual and collective action however directed on material ends ; in the light of the ideal which you are supposed to represent. Pass from matter to spirit. Matter is diversity ; spirit is light, life and unity."

"It is Islam that saves Muslims and not vice versa."

He quotes the verses from the Qur'an which teach us that "the birth and rebirth of the whole of humanity is like the birth and rebirth of a single individual".

Again he quotes the Qur'an :

"Hold fast to yourself ; no one who erreth can hurt you, provided you are well guided."<sup>3</sup>

During his last years he occupied advisory University positions. He was called upon counsel the Afghan Government on educational reform, and many of his recommendations were adopted. As late as 1935, Oxford University wanted him as a Rhodes Professor, and only ill-health prevented him from accepting the invitation. He had also attended the historic "Round Table Conference" held in London in 1931-32 to frame a Constitution for the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent.

But the poet's health was failing, and on 21st April 1938 he died with the name of Allah on his lips. One of his dying regrets was that he had not been able to complete his book in the English language on *The Reconstruction of Muslim Jurisprudence*. Half an hour before his demise, he recited the following verse :

"The departed melody may recur or not !  
The Zephyr may blow again from Hijaz or not !  
The days of this Faqir have come to an end !  
Another seer may come or not !"

On his death, Muhammad Ali Jinnah mourned thus : "To me he was a friend, guide and philosopher, and during the darkest moments through which the Muslim League had to go, he stood like a rock and never flinched."

Thus died Iqbal, a hero to Islam in particular and to mankind in general. While Shakespeare, Shelley, Byron or Rabindranath Tagore are, without doubt, great poets, excelling in one or the other branches of literature, they appear less luminous when compared with Iqbal. This is because Iqbal's poetry is of a superior type in the sense that it deals with the fundamentals of humanity and the major thought movements of the world. Iqbal was convinced of the need for spiritualism in the progress of the world. He conceived of Islam as a creed of dynamic struggle enabling man to control the new forces of science instead of becoming a victim to materialism.

"Throughout his life," says Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "he devoted himself to inciting activity, to insisting eloquently that life is movement, that action is good, that the universe is composed of processes and not of static things."<sup>4</sup>

#### REFERENCES

- 1 A. J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1958), p. 450.
- 2 Percival Spear, *India* (University of Michigan Press, U.S.A.), p. 410.
- 3 The Qur'an, 5 : 104.
- 4 W. Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1946), p. 103.

# RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD

By AL-HAJJ 'ABDULLAH IBN NUH

Our modern world has many characteristics, among which is the existence of new concepts in the minds of men. Darwin's theory of the 19th century, for example, paved the way for the general acceptance of a concept which was hitherto unstressed. It was in part the advancement of the idea that life is based on the elimination of the weak by the strong, or as Darwin stated, it was a case of "the survival of the fittest". Then came Sigmund Freud with his psycho-analytical theory dealing with unconscious mental processes. Not long afterwards came Albert Einstein with his theory of relativity.

In a world which is full of so many radical changes, the question of the fate of religion becomes an obvious one. Does it become necessary to make changes in religion so as to manifest its fruits? In facing the dynamic changes and revolutionary situations in all walks of life, there are many religious people who withdraw or isolate themselves in order to devote themselves to their particular religion. To them, the physical world is almost non-existent, and this devotion devoid of the necessary inferences becomes a virtue. The adoption of such an attitude finds no support in Islam, in which moral excellence is achieved not by seclusion and the unmindful uttering of prayers, but by worshipping God sincerely and by living a co-operative life (The Qur'án, 107 : 4-7).

The general and outward expressions of religion may have been undergoing some changes, but the real and inner truth has always remained unaffected, so that even in the modern world there can be no doubt that the aim of religion can be realized. The deeper understanding of *'Ulumul-kalám*, i.e., theological interpretations, can successfully meet the challenge of science.

If we look at religion and science, we realize the importance of these two in the daily life of mankind, and we do not exaggerate when we say that the future of the world depends upon the attitude of the present young generation and their decision or the relationship which should exist between the two. The two great forces represented by religious feelings on one side and the use of minds or thoughts on the other side, to analyze things carefully, resulting in the drawing of conclusions (logic), may be seemingly contradictory to each other, and may influence one way or the other the minds of men.

This misunderstanding may be illustrated as follows. If we for the first time enter a big city like Djakarta, for example, then we will surely be confused by the very many streets and their inter-connections. However, if we view the city from above by means of an aeroplane, then it will be easy for us to comprehend the whole city, since our view has broadened. Thus in order to fully understand the relationship between the two forces, it is advisable that we look at them with a broad view. We must view them from above, or through maps with quite a big scale, and all

influences which will only narrow our view should be removed.

Should we be successful in doing this, then we shall be able to meet two big realities. Firstly, while it may be a fact that history is full of contradictions between religion and science, or that religious feelings and scientific views have not always been reconcilable to an appreciable extent, it is nevertheless true that there ought to be no contention between true religion and true science. Secondly, religion has always been adaptable, and science, undergoing many more changes than religion, is perpetually developing, and the real nature of the two does not differ. It is worthwhile to note that just as among religious people differences of opinion often prevail, and scientists in this case remain neutral or take the side of one or the other, so too, in scientific circles, there are often contradictions, and in this case religious people remain neutral or side with one group or the other.

It is wrong indeed to use the hypothesis that whenever there is a contradiction between religion and science the truth is always with the first or the second. Science does not say that it is always right, but it strives for truth by basing its theories upon known realities (empirical studies) in the world, and the old scientific theory could be replaced at any time by a new and a more profound one.

When there is a contradiction between religion and science, we may take a *tawakuf* attitude, i.e., waiting, but not remaining passive or in despair. Contradiction indicates that truth covers a wide field in which there will be a meeting point between a profound religious view and a subtle scientific view.

It often happens that differences of opinion have been caused by the failure to recognize the functions of both science and religion. Science is based upon empirical studies, and attempts to explain, among other things, the matter of which the universe is composed. Religion takes into account morality and inner beauty. One stresses upon material being, the other on spiritual being. Thus each has its own field. However, this does not mean that they are separate entities. In fact, one corroborates the other. A closer understanding between the two fields can make a great contribution to the development of mankind.

In this 20th century, in Europe, it is the religious people who are on the defensive in facing the progress of science, while their arguments are often very weak. In facing the dynamic progress of science, the religious thinkers are not always prepared, and only after painstaking study are they successful in discovering suitable interpretations.

Religions in Europe, for example, will never attain their former glory unless they are able to meet the challenge of time with the spirit possessed by science. Religion should

always be adaptable so as to meet the requirements of the time.

It is in Islam wherein the inter-relation or inter-dependence between both religion and science is clearly expounded. Interpretations of Qur'anic verses according to the needs of the time could be seen from the commentaries of al-Razi, al-Zamachshari, Muhammad 'Abduh, Tantawi Kauhari, al-Maraghi, Mahmud Shaltut, etc. These represent developments through the ages.

The process of history shows that the world, which is full of contradictions, is inclined to a meeting point, so as to save mankind from destruction.

This fact has strengthened our conviction about the truth of our Prophet Muhammad's doctrine. Our Prophet has called on the people throughout the world and through all ages to agree to the point that we should have faith in God the Omnipotent, and that we are in no case allowed to worship others besides God. This means that all of us should return to unity, peace, co-operation and brotherhood. This is the Prophet Muhammad's teaching, which does not implement force. He has advocated brotherhood to all

people throughout the world and through all ages by saying : "Men throughout the world are brothers."

We believe that the rapid progress of science will help to purify religions from all superstitions, and that science will clear the way towards a meeting point that science, instead of being a liability, will become an asset to religion.

Islam, in particular, has always exhorted its followers to exhibit a scientific spirit, nor was this admonition left entirely unheeded. History bears testimony to the contributions made by the Muslims of the Middle Ages towards the development of science, as Briffault in *The Making of Humanity* has mentioned :

" Science owes its very existence to Arabic (Muslim) culture. The ancient world was pre-scientific. The Greeks systemized, generalized and theorized, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experiment, measurement, of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks — that spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs."

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## THE BURDEN OF DESTINY

By NORMAN LEWIS

A spiritual gift is not an individual thing ; it is inseparable from a mission. Neither individuals nor nations can retain what God has given them or it becomes "a fire in their bones".

What Islam has been working toward from the time of Muhammad is *the leadership of the world*.

Abraham gave to the world its greatest gift — pure faith. This faith gradually spread by the power of Abraham's example and it became a dynamic force with Muhammad.

Among nations, as among individuals, it is example that wins where force can never win. When Islam arises in power, all the world will watch every move. And when other nations become convinced that a God-motivated community, no matter what its size, has power to be found nowhere else, then there will be a change in the thought of many men. Nations who have many gods and those who have none will feel admiration for a people who attain political and social greatness *because of* a basic moral integrity.

Nowhere on earth has sincerity been more manifest than in what Spengler calls the Arabian Culture. When men realize that a God watches every move, hears every word, is aware of every thought, then, *and only then*, do those men become utterly sincere.

The basis of every form of leadership is sincerity, and this rarest and most valuable of all human qualities has been found in Islam as in no other social or political movement.

Islam is inseparable from God. The distinctive quality of Muslim culture is God-awareness. No other religion ever brought its members to a consciousness of God as did the religion of Muhammad. And this God-consciousness is the foundation of all greatness.

Two things must happen in the world, and may happen very soon : the Godless nations must see the ultimate end of what they have built upon Godlessness. And they, as observers, must be greatly impressed by the true success of the Godly nation or nations.

The political unity of Islam would increase its power in every way. But the true unity of Islam will always be its unique faith in God.

Other nations, even other civilizations, will pass away. But that which is moulded by the hand of God is eternal.

There will be only one reason why Islam will be given the leadership of the world. It will not be for the sake of any of the outstanding statesmen of India as individuals, nor for the sake of any Islamic State, nor for the sake of the Empire of Islam that is yet to be. It will be for the sake of God.

# ISLAM IN ENGLAND

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## The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust

March-April

12th March 1962. Mr. J. L. P. Baiss, teacher in Rugby School, Rugby (Warwickshire), invited Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, to give three lectures on Islam to different classes in the school. Each lecture was followed by further inquiries about the Muslim faith. There were some Muslim scholars also studying in the school. Messrs. Jamil Ahmad Khan Dehlavi and Mahmud Harun of Karachi, and Rushdi of Bombay, showed the Imam round the school.

14th March 1962. The Imam attended a committee meeting of the World Congress of Faiths, London.

17th March 1962. The World Spiritual Council held its committee meeting at Charing Cross Hotel, London, with Sir Adrian Bolt in the Chair. Programme for the next Conference was discussed. The Imam also participated.

19th March 1962. Mr. F. R. Lewis, Head of the Religious Knowledge Department of the County Grammar School, Godalming, Surrey, invited the Imam to speak to the Upper Sixth Form of the school at 10.30 a.m. Speakers from Anglican, Catholic and Free Churches, and a representative of Judaism, had also addressed the students of the Sixth Form. The Imam spoke on "Islam Today". About 15 minutes were given to questions and answers.

20th March 1962. In their programme of Spring lectures the World Congress of Faiths (Youngusband House, 23 Norfolk Square, London, W.2.) invited Mrs. Brutnell to speak on "Sufism". Mr. S. M. Tufail was asked to preside over the meeting.

31st March 1962. The funeral service of a Turkish Cypriot baby, Birol Shakir, was held at Brookwood Cemetery at 10.15 a.m. (Grave No. 220502). A marriage ceremony was held at 12.30 p.m. Members of the Workers' Educational Association (Walton-on-Thames Branch) visited the Mosque at 3 p.m. They were accompanied by the Rev. Canon A. R. Winnett.

5th April 1962. A funeral service for Dilnawaz Khan, a young Pakistani Muslim, was held at Brookwood Cemetery (Grave No. 220510). Dilnawaz Khan was married at the Mosque on 9th July 1960.

6th April 1962. Miss Barbara Phillips, Secretary, Friday Forum of the Grammar School, Brockenhurst, Hants, invited the Imam to speak to their members on "The Islamic Faith". The object of the gathering was "to encourage honest thought and to discuss the value of any system of belief held today". Miss Dearlove and some other members of the staff were also present.

8th April 1962. The Rev. E. Shirvell Price, M.A., of Bank Street Chapel, Bolton (Nr. Manchester), invited Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail to preach the sermon on the occasion of the Service of All Faiths for People of All Faiths. This was held in co-ordination with the World Congress of Faiths, represented by the speaker. The Order of Service is given below :

### ORDER OF SERVICE

Service ordered by the Rev. E. Shirvell Price, M.A.

*Worshippers are invited to kneel, stand or sit, during the prayers, according to their own usual practice, or as seems most fitting to them. The congregation is invited to stand for the congregational hymns and to be seated for the readings of the Scriptures, unless otherwise indicated.*

*The hymns will be found in the red hymnals in the pews.*

*The Service will proceed unannounced.*

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*On the entry of the Ministers and Readers, the congregation will stand, and will remain standing until the end of the first hymn.*

### Sentences

"My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all peoples."—*Hebrew Scriptures.*

"Altar flowers are of many species, but all Worship is One; Systems of Faith are different, but God is One."—*Hindu Scriptures.*

"He who is beloved of God honours every form of Religious Faith."—*Buddhist Scriptures.*

"Make thyself pure, O righteous man! Any one in the world here below can win purity for himself when he cleanses himself with Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds."—*Parsee Scriptures.*

"One is your Father and all ye are Brethren. God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that revereth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him . . . for He hath made of One Blood all the nations of the earth."—*Christian Scriptures.*

"Men have rent their great concern into sects, every party rejoicing in that which is their own. Wherefore, leave them until a certain time. One day God will call to them and say, 'Where are my companions?' And He will bring up a witness out of every nation and say: 'Bring your proofs.' And they shall know that Truth is with God alone. . . . To his own book shall every nation be called. . . . And thou shalt see every nation kneeling."—*The Qur'an.*

“Mankind is One; all are leaves of one tree, flowers in one garden. Religion must be the cause of love and harmony, else it is no religion.”—*Baha'i Scriptures*.

*Call to Worship*

*First Hymn*: “All People that on earth do dwell” - 2

*Invocation and Prayer*

*Reading from Zoroastrian Scripture*

Mr. Homi Mahiar Ghadiali (a Parsee)

*Anthem*: “The Lord is my Shepherd” - *Schubert*

Sung by the Choir

*Reading from the Upanishads*

Mr. Raj Bahadur Saxena (of the Brahmo Somaj)

*Reading from the Buddhist Scriptures*

Mr. M. C. T. Foneska (a Buddhist from Ceylon)

*Second Hymn*: “Gather us in” - 267

(Omitting the fifth line refrain in each verse)

*Reading from the Qur'an*

Mr. Abdul Qadir (a Muslim)

*Reading from the Baha'i Scriptures*

Mrs. P. Senior (a Baha'i)

*Prayers of the World Faiths*

Followed by Silent Prayer

*Ascription*

*Anthem*: “Glorious and Powerful God” - *C. V. Stanford*

*Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures*

Mr. Mark Rosen (a Jew)

*Reading from the New Testament*

The Rev. Kenneth Cairns (Minister of Walkden Congregational Church)

A SOLEMN AFFIRMATION to be said, upstanding, by all who are moved so to do.

As men and women of divers' faiths we affirm our unity before the Eternal God and our faith in the Divine Spirit in man;

Which treasures ancient wisdom, measures modern thought, and glories in the growing vastness of knowledge;

Which recognizes in all prophets a harmony, in all scriptures a unity, and through all dispensations a continuity;

Which abjures all that separates and divides, and magnifies brotherhood and peace;

Which seeks discipline in social duty, freedom through truth, justice through mercy, and love through sacrifice;

And which shall make of all sects, classes, nations, and races, one fellowship of men.

To serve this Faith and all men throughout the world we pledge the allegiance of our hearts and our hands.

*Third Hymn*: “City of God” - 255

SERMON

*S. Muhammad Tufail, M.A.*

Member of the World Congress of Faiths

*Organ Voluntary*, during which the Offertory will be taken

*Fourth Hymn*: “These things shall be” - 265

*Benediction*

After the service all present are invited to an informal social talk and cup of tea in the School Hall.

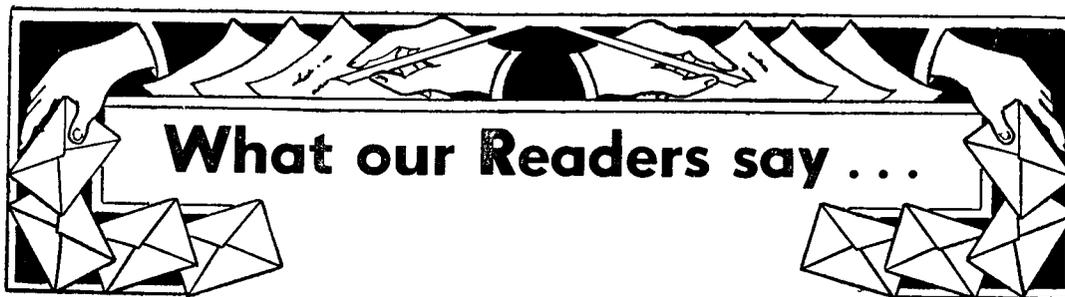
Visitors are invited to sign their name in the Visitors' Book. If they have not done so before the service in the vestibule, they may do so in the School Hall afterwards.

(All the proceeding was tape-recorded)

*12th April 1962*. Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail spoke to the members of the Fifty-Nine Society of Kensington at Kensington Central Library, W.8., on “Bridging the Gulf Between Islam and Christianity”. Mr. Leslie J. LeDrew was in the Chair.

*15th April 1962*. Miss Jean Phillips, Secretary, Fellowship of Youth, St. John's Presbyterian Church, Orpington, Kent, invited the Imam to address their members on “Islam”.

*20th April 1962*. A funeral service for Joyce Elizabeth Yasmin Scott was held after the Friday Prayers at 16 Chesham Place, London, S.W.1. Yasmin Scott accepted Islam at the hands of the late Dr. S. M. 'Abdullah on 19th June 1952. She passed away quietly at Dundee (her birthplace) in the beginning of April 1962.



#### MISNOMERS ABOUT ISLAM

34a Ellingham Road,  
London, W.12.  
12 April 1962.

Dear Sir,

Since many people, even among the educated and learned, use some misnomers in respect of the natural religion of mankind in the mid-twentieth century, when man has acquired so much knowledge that he is attempting to reach the moon, I seek the courtesy of your esteemed periodical for requesting the people concerned to note that :

The name of the religion intended by God for mankind is *Islam*, not Muhammadanism.

The adjective from the name of the religion is *Islamic*, not Muhammadan.

The followers of the religion are *Muslims*, not Muhammadans.

The name of the Last Messenger of God is to be spelt as *Muhammad*, and in no other way.

The sentence "If the hill will not come to Muhammad, Muhammad will go to the hill" is a figment of Bacon's prejudiced imagination. It has no factual basis and is, therefore, to be rejected by every sensible man in future.

Yours faithfully,

K. H. MUMTAZ.

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#### SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM

Sadaaqat-i Islam Society,  
19 Chamberlane Road,  
Lahore,  
West Pakistan.  
24th February 1962.

Dear Sir,

We have constituted the Sadaaqati-Islam Society with the aim of propagating Islam and removing the misunderstandings created by non-Muslim missionaries, in particular Christians. To start with, pamphlets entitled *Naveed-i Masih* and *Roze Ka Maqsad* have been issued free of cost.

We have also started a library and reading room for the welfare of the general public and our members. Gifts of books relating to Islam would be welcomed.

Yours faithfully,

RIAZ AHMAD (Secretary).

#### KOREAN ISLAMIC SOCIETY

No. 288 Rimundong, Dongdaemun-ku,  
I.P.O. Box No. 1249,  
Seoul, Korea.

Dear Sir,

Since 1955 C.E. the light of Islam has also come to shine over the land of Korea. Here in this country Buddhism and Christianity have already laid their foundations. Islam is, however, growing between the two influences.

Of the total population of South Korea, 23,000,000, the Buddhists and Christians number 30 per cent, and the remaining 70 per cent are non-religious.

In a corner of Seoul we are keeping our mosque and seminary in the canvas tents. There were about 30 Muslims in the beginning, but now there are over 1,000, out of which there are about 300 students. We are operating this seminary as one of our missionary activities, giving free accommodation to the children of the poor.

We badly need our mosque. In 1960, after finishing the Hajj, I visited many Islamic countries, seeing many beautiful mosques, and I am now convinced there is no country except Korea where a mosque does not exist. This is a great heartache to us. We started the construction of a mosque on 25th February, and the work is slowly progressing. If help comes from outside we shall be able to complete our mosque soon.

In addition to the construction of a mosque we have sent 11 students to the Klang College, at the invitation of the Welfare Organization of Malaya, in order to have them trained in Islamic knowledge.

May these humble beginnings bear fruit for the religion of Islam. Amen.

Yours faithfully,

*Al-Hajj* 'UMAR KIM TIN LIN KYU,  
President.

IN DEFENCE OF *CHRESTOMATHIA BAIDAWIANA*

45 Walton Street,  
London, S.W.3.  
15th April 1962.

Dear Sir,

I have before me, as I write, your issue of October-December, 1961, and also a copy of a book you reviewed then, *Chrestomathia Baidawiana, the Light of Inspiration and Secret of Interpretation*. I am deeply concerned to promote better relationships between Muslims and Christians, and it occurred to me on reading your review that you are doing the translators less than justice, thereby, in my humble opinion, prejudicing the relationships between us. Will you allow me to make the following comments on your review, entirely in a spirit of friendship?

1. The correct title of the book is *Chrestomathia Baidawiana . . .* (the first vowel is an "e"), and not as you have printed it, *Christomathia Baidawiana . . .* I looked in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary for "Christomathia" and found that it does not appear there. However, the other word, "Chrestomathia," does appear, and means "a collection of choice passages" (from the Greek, its other form being "Chrestomathy"). In other words, there is no possible association between this word and the Person of Jesus.
2. In the heading you omit to mention that a Muslim worked with the Rev. E. F. F. Bishop in preparing this useful translation. I think your Muslim readers would have been glad to see: "With the help of Mohamed Kaddal, M.A., B.Litt., Department of Arabic, University of Glasgow".
3. In quoting the words of the opening Preface you print some words of your own to appear as though they were written by the translators. I am sure that this was a compositor's mistake, but will you allow me to quote them?

"That is to say, as Stephen and Paul have imagined that Jesus Christ's character is in likeness of Joseph, therefore in the chapter Yusuf of the Qur'an Joseph's life has been drafted in the guise of Joseph."

I have the 1957 edition of the work, which you are quoting, and I can nowhere find these words in the Preface. I have the author's assurance that he did not, in fact, write these words. (Mr. Bishop tells me he drafted the Preface himself.) As I see them, these words form the nucleus of your charge, which cannot now be substantiated.

4. On the following page (54) you write: "These lines mean that in the author's opinion the source of the Qur'an is not divine, but that it has been taken from the Old Testament and some extra hidden canonical writings." As the work was the "result of Muslim-Christian co-operation" (Preface), it is surely unjust on your Muslim colleague to make this accusation. As you well know, it is a legitimate activity for both Muslims and Christians to examine those beliefs which were common before the Muslim or Christian eras. By

so doing we do not pass judgment on Islam, or on Christianity. Why not quote the remainder of the sentence — "though, as will be evident in the ensuing pages, this is not invariably the case". The translators of that learned commentator, Al-Baidawi, go on to mention the great critical faculty which he exercised. They nowhere suggest what you say, that "the source of the Qur'an is not divine".

5. "The Rev. Bishop is an Arabic scholar, but strangely he renders the Qur'anic word 'qasas' as stories. . . . It is absolutely wrong to translate it as story." May I remind you that Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall translates this word as "narratives", and that Professor Arberry (whose translation you also advertise for sale) translates it as "stories". This reading is, of course, supported by Hans Wehr's Dictionary, and as the whole verse is speaking of the Qur'an, mentions the Qur'an by name, and uses the root *qassa* twice, it is difficult to see how you can support your reading.

Finally, will you allow me to comment on your words:

"Any attempt at promoting better understanding between Christians and Muslims is indeed very commendable. But this must not be at the cost of truth, which the present bid to fit in the Qur'anic chapter 'Joseph' (Yusuf) with Jesus Christ so palpably involves."

As one who shares with you this concern to promote better understanding between us, I also share a deep concern for the truth. On these five points above it seems to me that your reviewer is departing from the truth, and by doing so he is prejudicing the relationships between us. Happily, this is not true of all your reviews, and I see with great pleasure that you devote considerable space in your January-February, 1962, issue to a review of Norman Daniel's book, *Islam and the West*. In my opinion, this is indeed a worthy review of a great book, and one which is likely to have far-reaching effects (for good) on the relationships between us. May I express the hope that your future reviews of work from the Christian side will be as constructive as this?

With warmest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

D. P. BREWSTER (Rev.).

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## Book Reviews

*THE BHAGAVAD GITA.* Translated into English from the script by Juan Mascaro. Published by Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. Price 3/6.

The Hindu religion, unlike Christianity and Islam, had no period of sudden revelation such as that given by Jesus Christ and the Prophet Muhammad, but has evolved over the centuries to become what it is today. During the passing years its history has been recorded in Sanskrit in the form of epic poems and scriptures. These vary in the fields they cover on aspects of physical life and its spiritual counterpart, each having their own order of importance in the life of the practising Hindu. It is however acknowledged by Eastern and Western scholars alike that amongst these the Bhagavad Gita ranks as one of the most beautiful, and for this reason it has been translated into many languages, for the edification of those who live beyond the shores of the Indian continent.

As Juan Mascaro, translator of this edition, points out in his introduction, "Sanskrit literature is, on the whole, a romantic literature, interwoven with idealism and practical wisdom, and with a passionate longing for spiritual vision".

His translation, which at places has turned more into an interpretation of the words than mere translation, has taken him over twenty years to complete. This has helped Mr. Mascaro to come to an inner understanding of the philosophy contained in the *Bhagavad Gita* and present it to the Western mind in a way which is not too cumbersome to understand. The addition of a few explanatory notes about unfamiliar names and places would have added to the value of the book.

The Mahabharata, the immense poem of which the Bhagavad Gita forms just a part, is based on partly mythological and partly historical events of doubtful origin. The dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, as it appears in the Bhagavad Gita, though it is set against the background of the great war fought between the two brothers, must be regarded as symbolic in its references, if it is to be at all understood. Thus it is that the battle for the rule of a kingdom becomes a battle between the forces of good and evil that dwells in all of us, to attain a place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus it is that in Arjuna's questioning we can find our own questions regarding life :

"What power is it, Krishna, that drives man to act sinfully, even unwillingly, as if powerlessly?"

Krishna's answer is an answer to us all :

"It is greedy desire and wrath, born of passion, the

great evil, the sum of destruction ; this is the enemy of the soul. . . .

"Desire has found a place in man's senses and mind and reason. Through these it binds the soul, after having clouded wisdom.

"Set thou, therefore, thy senses in harmony, and then slay thou sinful desire, the destroyer of vision and wisdom.

"They say that the power of the senses is great. But greater than the senses is the mind. Greater than the mind is Bhuddi, reason ; and greater than reason is He — the Spirit, in man and in all."

*KEY TO THE DOOR*, by Captain Tariq Safina Pearce. Published by the Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, West Pakistan. Price Rs. 7.50 (approx. 12/-).

The author of this book is an Englishman, born into an upper-class family of the late Victorian era. His religious education followed the conventional pattern of the day, with baptism into the Church of England in infancy, religious instruction given during his general schooling, culminating in his Confirmation into the Church as what was regarded as "the age of discretion", i.e., thirteen years.

It is interesting to observe the Victorian attitudes to religious matters, to life, to death and the hereafter, to general morals, in Captain Pearce's book. They are Dickensian in character, and left their own type of impression on the young child. It was the lip-service given to religion and certain acts of hypocrisy which he observed which puzzled the young boy so much, and created within him a spiritual vacuum. It was his search for something inwardly satisfying to fill this void with which this book is occupied.

The book gives an account of personalities met and remembered in childhood days in England, and in adult days when he followed the sun in his travels to countries as far apart as Canada and China. Though no doubt he was not fully aware of it at the time, he was still seeking "the Key" in his personal relationships encountered in his travels, and was given plenty to ponder over, when, perhaps blinded by the labels humans find it necessary to affix to their philosophical beliefs, he met and spoke with a professed atheist,

a Roman Catholic, an old Quaker. The groups to which they belonged were on the whole unattractive to the searching wanderer, yet these individuals, while not being representative of their groups, stay strong in his memories due to their oneness in their inner thinking. Their appreciation of the true meaning of life, their actions towards others, brought them together in young Captain Pearce's mind, and he was even more puzzled.

It was in China that he first had an inkling of the path he was to take, when, impressed with conversations he had with a mandarin of his acquaintance, he asked one day what this man's beliefs were, and received the answer "I am a Muslim". The learned mandarin made no attempt to preach any doctrine to him, but instead gave him a parcel of books which he asked that he should read when time allowed. Among these books was a translation of the Qur'an.

Time did allow Captain Pearce to study the books, the Qur'an in particular, and his travels also took him to countries with obvious Islamic influences, so that as time passed he began to recognize that he had at last found the spiritual answers for which he had been seeking, and eventually found that he could declare himself a true believe, a Muslim.

In reading this book, another seeker after spiritual truth may find the answers to problems encountered by him or herself, and so benefit. To a reader who already feels that they have "the Key", though it might be under a different name, appreciation can still be felt in Captain Pearce's personal recognition that mankind has that Inner Self, and that man must educate his awareness of it and allow it to influence his relationships with the outer world.

There is one important criticism I have to make, however, and that is that Captain Pearce should look more deeply into that pillar of Islamic faith, tolerance. While he has acknowledged that even a Roman Catholic, a Quaker or an atheist may have Inner Understanding, in spite of their labelling themselves by these names, his charity does not extend to the Jews. Indeed his final sentence in his chapter on Jews states, "I have nothing but contempt for them". It is to be regretted that he obviously did not meet a "good" Jew in his travels, yet they abound, like Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and professed atheists and agnostics. It is not merely a "putting up with" people who might create an aversion within one on a spontaneous encounter. It is a positive act of seeking to understand the next man, his environment, the effect it has on his particular human nature, his manner of living. It is the ultimate recognition that within us all dwells a Soul. This goes on to influence not only the religious question, but the political and moral one too, and, most important of all, it influences our attitude to others. If the Muslim can create an appreciation in others of these qualities within him, then he will be joined by others who see Muhammad as a true Prophet.

*THE WAY OF ZEN*, by Allan W. Watts. Published by Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex. Price 4/-.

Since the spread of Buddha's doctrine, and his death, several branches of his Order have developed, influenced in part by the environment in which they have originated. However, basically the principles are the same. One sect

which has flourished universally is Zen Buddhism, which began in Japan, and it is its teachings with which the book under review deals.

Mr. Allan Watts is already known to many through his books on comparative philosophy and religion, and is well known in the United States as a lecturer and teacher. Followers of Zen acknowledge that their philosophy is too deep and involved to be explained briefly to the casual enquirer. Volumes could be written in an effort to explain its complexities, and yet to one whose mind is already attuned to the subject, the answer could be given in a sentence or two. Mr. Watts is of this latter group, thus one approaches his book full of confidence that it is authoritative and concise. However, though this little book is such that it can be easily slipped into the pocket for casual reference when time is available, it cannot be referred to so lightly. Although Mr. Watts has ably endeavoured to explain the intricacies of Zen in as clear and concise a manner as is possible, it is not a clear philosophy to explain. However, to a sincere seeker after Truth this book can be recommended as one of the best exponents of this subject yet published.

*CHILD REARING IN THE LEBANON*, by Edwin Terry Prothro. Published by Harvard University Press. Price 30/- net.

To quote from the beginning of this book, "This is a report of a study of several hundred mothers and children of that tiny eastern Mediterranean country known to its inhabitants as the Greater Lebanon. Among the families studied were Arabs and Armenians, Moslem and Christians. . . . The methods used in studying these people were those of social and child psychology. It was hoped that such an approach would yield new information on life in the contemporary Near East and also provide data for testing some of the generalizations about child-rearing which have arisen from studies of Western families." The research on which the book is based was made possible by a grant from the Social Science Research Council, and was an American project, prepared while the author was a Research Fellow in the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University. The investigations pursued were deliberately modelled after selected American studies so the results obtained could be compared with those previously obtained in the United States.

The actual interviewers of the mothers and children involved were six carefully selected young women, three of whom were married, and of whom two of these had children of their own. All were Lebanese, and spoke fluent English and Arabic. Four of the young women were native and residents of their respective communities under investigation. The interviewers were selected thus in order that co-operation could be obtained from each mother in a less obtrusive way than if strangers had been employed, and as a result they had little difficulty in obtaining entry into the homes and discussing problems with the parent.

The communities, or "primary social units", were selected after considering the various geographical, demographic and related factors. It was decided to draw some

of the subjects from the large, comparatively modern and cosmopolitan coastal city of Beirut, and some from the Beqaa Valley, where modernization was less advanced, and where the culture was more similar to that of other Middle Eastern countries. The next decision was to draw subjects from three groups: Sunni Muslim, being the largest Muslim group in the Lebanon and the Middle East, Greek Orthodox Christian, being the second largest Christian group in the Lebanon and the largest in the Middle East, and the Gregorian Christians, being the largest Armenian group in the Lebanon and the Middle East. It was necessary to deliberately choose certain groups of people as the Lebanon, though only a small country, being only 120 miles long, and less than 60 miles across at its widest point, in all covering a total of approximately 4,000 square miles only, has over 1½ million people crowded within her borders, amongst whom there are a bewildering variety of religious sects and ethnic strains, each group priding itself on its uniqueness. The land is further divided in its physical structure by a range of mountains known as Mount Lebanon.

The studies of the mothers and their children had a twofold purpose. First they attempt to shed a light on general problems of child psychology. Secondly, they aim at revealing basic information about family life in Lebanese towns and villages. Together, the information gathered about both of these would record the responses of the future generation to the past, and give an insight into their future behaviour as adults.

As is to be expected, this book deals mostly with the mothers' aspect of child-rearing, how they dealt with the aggressive child, how they trained the child in toilet matters, and how they disciplined them generally. While the author aimed at producing as balanced a survey as was possible in such a variable society, the results nevertheless can be taken as being a very true outline of the pattern of life followed by most of the inhabitants. The section dealing with the information gleaned from the children themselves must, of necessity, be more brief in nature, for obvious reasons. Most of the findings were made by means of employing pattern tests, and asking them each individually what certain things connected with him or his surroundings were used for. Thus it was discovered that whereas in employing this technique with American children it was found that "play" was the principal function of the common objects in their world, in the Lebanese children interviewed the most significant factor in their lives was food, and anything connected with it. This is analyzed against the background of the social habits of the country, thus providing more gender in enabling the student to understand more fully a culture which may be unfamiliar to him.

Altogether this is an admirable book, the material of which was gathered under commendable direction. Where there has been any deviation from the restrictive categories named, mention has been made of it, so that the reader can still be elastic in the conception he forms from studying the statistics supplied.

J. WYATT.

## PEN PALS

ABUL MUTLIB, 48 Baitak Khana Road, Calcutta 9, West Bengal India. Indian Muslim student aged 20 years. Hobbies: Stamp collecting, foreign correspondence, swimming, travel to historical places. Wishes to correspond with a boy or girl.

MUHAMMAD SHAHID ALAM, 8a Purana Paltan, Ramna Diccra, East Pakistan. Age 15. Pakistani Muslim. Interested in corresponding and changing stamps with people in other countries.

ABDU RAFIU A. BALOGUN, P.O. Box 2269, Lagos, Nigeria. Age 30. Wishes to correspond with all nationalities of both sexes. Hobbies: football, table tennis, reading Islamic literature, and above all, an exchange of ideas on Islamic principles and knowledge.

S. M. F. BUKHARI, Momnawad, near Gaikawad's Hawely, Ahmedabad 1, Gujrat, India. Age 17. Wants pen friends from Islamic and European countries of either sex. Hobbies: collecting stamps, coins and view cards, reading books, especially Islamic, correspondence, and customs and traditions.

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