

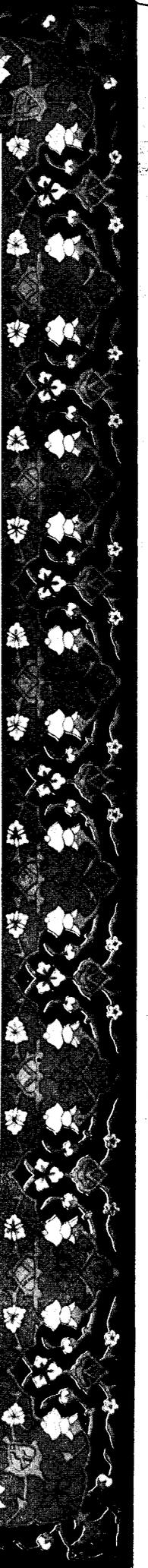
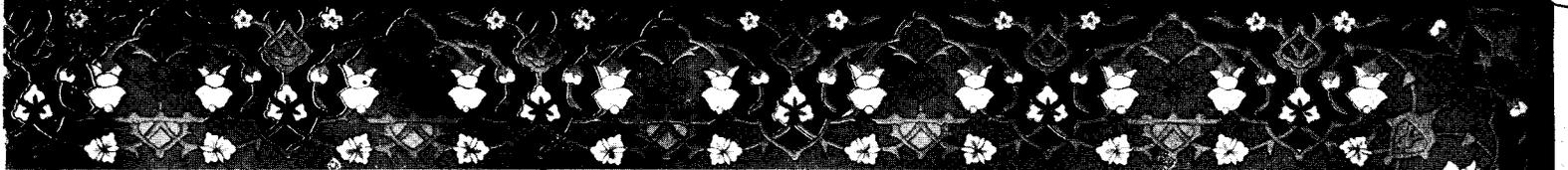
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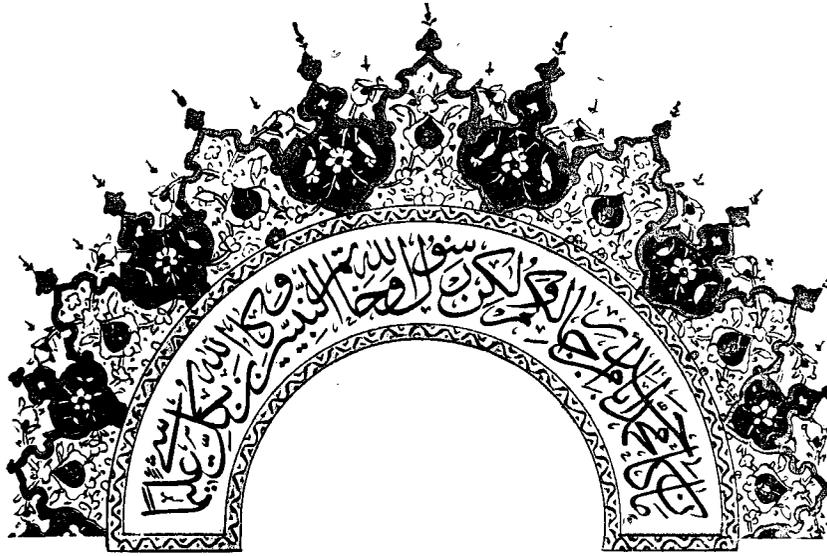
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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



" Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of God and the last of the Prophets. And God has full knowledge of all things " (The Qur'an, 33 : 40)

" There is no prophet after me " (The Prophet Muhammad)

VOL. 57 No. 2

FEBRUARY 1969 C.E.

Dhu al-Qa'dah — Dhu al-Hijjah 1388 A.H.

King Faysal of Su'udi Arabia calls the Muslims to *Jihad* to save Palestine and the Holy Places on the occasion of the *Hajj* (1388 A.H.) — 28th February 1969

(The Pilgrimage to Mecca this year was performed by a record number of Muslims. Some 375,000 Muslims from countries other than Su'udi Arabia came to the Holy Land of Islam for this purpose, the Turks topping the list with 51,000. The significance of the institution of Hajj as a means of bringing together the peoples of Islam at regular intervals, and of thereby promoting understanding, solidarity and unity between them, cannot be over-emphasized. At the present critical juncture in the history of Islam, when the parts of the Arab countries and Muslim holy shrines are under alien military occupation, the unity of purpose of the Muslims is of paramount importance as a means of regaining the rights and restoring the

dignity of the Arabs and the Muslims.

His Majesty King Faysal of Su'udi Arabia occupies a most important position in the context of the unity and solidarity of the world of Islam. His services to this noble cause are known and recognized by the entire Arab and Muslim nation, and he remains a source of great initiative and example. The following is the text (translated from the Arabic) of a speech he delivered at a meeting of the leaders of the Muslim delegations to the Hajj held in Mecca in February 1969. The meeting was attended by leading personalities from various parts of the Muslim world. Ed. — IR.)

The Text

The desecration of our sacred possessions

On this very auspicious occasion I am happy and proud, as a citizen of this homeland which has been honoured by the Almighty with the duty of serving these holy places and looking after the comfort of the visitors to the House of God, to extend to you a hearty welcome. This comes from a heart which fully appreciates the value of Muslim brotherhood and of Muslim religious bonds in closing the ranks of the Muslims and bringing the Muslims together. But while offering my

greetings and congratulations to the pilgrims to the House of God on the occasion of their safe arrival, I pray to the Almighty to complete His blessings upon them for this their pilgrimage, and to bestow on them forgiveness and good reward. I pray to Him to grant us greater realization of our gratitude to Him and belief in Him, and also to remain loyal to our faith as revealed by the Almighty and communicated through the Messenger of God, may His peace and blessings be upon him.

It is no exaggeration to say that the happiest days of the peoples of this brotherly homeland are those when you are here, and when they see you enjoying comfort, security and peace in the performance of your religious duties and in devoting yourselves to prayers to the Almighty for the forgiveness of sins and misdeeds and for guidance on to the path of righteousness. May He grant us all enlightenment and uprightness. He is the All-Powerful.

At this time, Brothers, if we live in our homes and in our homelands and enjoy the blessings of comfortable living, I hope that this will not make us forget that there is The Third Mosque, the First of the Two *Qiblahs* and the place whence the Messenger of God, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, ascended to heaven. That holy place has been desecrated by a gang of people who, since the dawn of history, have been in the habit of committing acts of aggression and arrogance. When God ordered them to enter the Holy Land and to fight for Him, their answer was :

"O Moses, we will never enter it so long as they are in it ; go therefore thou and thy Lord, and fight ; surely here we sit" (The Qur'án 5 : 24).

Could there be any greater challenge to the will of the Almighty than this? Could there be any greater defiance of the Power of the Almighty. So what can we expect of these people at this time, when, it is sad to say, greed and evil designs have triumphed, and there has been a powerful tide destroying upright beliefs and the doctrines of righteousness, and advocating the overthrow of sublime principles and their replacement by anarchy.

The aims of Zionism

Zionism is endeavouring to dominate the whole world, and not only the Arabs. If I am now talking only about the Arabs it is simply because the present fate of the Arabs represents the latest example of the crimes of Zionism and of its disregard to the dictates of good conscience and of all human principles over Arab soil. But this land does not belong only to the Arabs; it belongs to all the Muslims and to all the believers in God and all those who fight against falsehood, lack of belief in God, degeneration and dissoluteness. It is not necessary for me, Brothers, to tell you about what is happening now to the Third Mosque and the First of the Two *Qiblahs*, for you know about the trifling with the sanctity and dignity of these places and the disregard of morals which is happening there. They have become so contemptuous of decency that they are enacting scenes of immorality and mischief within the walls of the Mosque and in the holy shrines in order to show the whole world that they care nothing for anything or anybody, however strong he may be and whatever his beliefs.

But what can we expect, Brothers? Should we expect the conscience of the world to rise? Where is the conscience of the world, and does it see what is happening? Are not all these tragedies and crimes being enacted and practised openly, and are they not visible to everybody with eyes? And is it not a fact that no conscience in the outside world has been awakened by this, and no sense of shame engendered? If they are not ashamed in the eyes of God they should feel ashamed in the eyes of human beings. Nevertheless, they are offering support to the aggressors and helping them in their acts of aggression. And the question, my Brothers, is this: must we wait until the time when there will not be on the face of the earth many who believe in God or who repose trust in God and in Him alone?



His Majesty King Faysal of Su'udi Arabia

The call of Jerusalem

Holy Jerusalem calls for you, Brothers! It is asking for your help, and beseeching you to save it from its misery and affliction. What are we waiting for, and until when shall we wait while our sacred and treasured possessions are being desecrated in the ugliest manner? What is holding us back? Are we afraid of death? And is there a way of death better and more honourable than death in the course of a struggle to uphold the will of God?

The Muslims should feel angry and should rise like one man, disregarding all irrelevant questions of nationality or partnership. This is a Muslim call, a call to *jihád* in the cause of God, in the cause of our religion and our beliefs and in defence of our sacred and treasured possessions. I pray to the Almighty that when my time comes to die, I die as a martyr in the cause of God.

Brothers, please forgive me for my emotions. But when I think of our Holy Mosque and of our holy shrines being desecrated and defiled, with evil and immorality enacted in them, I cannot but pray to the Almighty that we all be destined to *jihád* and work for the liberation of our sacred possessions.

I do not think I ought to talk about anything else on this occasion. We are facing realities, and what is confronting us this day is so grave that by comparison with it all other matters are of secondary importance, for nothing can equal in significance the defence of our beliefs, our sacred possessions, our freedom and our dignity.

I call upon my brother Muslims throughout the world to co-operate with one another, to forget their disputes, and to respond to the call of God to save the House of God from the clutches of the evil gang which has desecrated the Third Mosque and the First of the Two *Qiblahs*. The Muslims should not pay attention to anything else. Every person and

every State should put aside their problems and disputes and endeavour to unify their ranks. They must all become like one country with a united front, wherein unity, solidarity and brotherhood prevail amongst its members. There must be unity of all the Muslims in the *jihad* in God's cause and for the defence of our sacred possessions. God, the All-Powerful and the Almighty, will grant us support if we are loyal to Him. God does not stand in need of our armies or of our wealth, for He has created everything. Our loyalty to God means our belief and trust in Him, and our pursuit of the way He has ordained and our avoidance of what He has prohibited. That is the way to offer support to the Almighty, and that is the way we can get His support and attain victory and the realization of our rights.

Unity, the path to victory

Once again, my brothers, I welcome you in this Holy Land. I pray to the Almighty to grant us power to adhere to our beliefs and to be pure and sincere in our faith in God, and to enable us to unify our ranks in order to co-operate in the attainment of good and righteousness and not over evil and aggression (The Qur'an 5 : 3). I hope that when we meet again next year, God willing, all the traces of the aggression against us would have been removed, and our sacred possessions and our lands would have been restored to us. I hope we shall then be able to see our brothers, the people of beloved Palestine, free in their homeland, freely determining their own destiny and fulfilling their duty to the Almighty by co-operating with their other Muslim brothers. This is not a difficult thing for the Almighty to bring about. But it requires on our part true faith and loyal determination. Let us leave aside all big and empty talk and the disputations which have not benefited us in the past and will not benefit us in the future but, rather, bring upon us great harm. Let us struggle for the implementation of God's cause, and be like one monolithic structure (The Qur'an 61 : 4). This requires, above everything else, that we should exert great efforts to cleanse ourselves of all impurities, false beliefs and destruc-

tive trends of the kind which have afflicted us and divided us into splinter peoples and groups opposed to one another, conspiring one against the other and trampling one upon the other. That was how our energies and potentialities were dissipated and undermined in the struggle against one another, and it would have been better for us to devote these energies and potentialities to defend ourselves, our sacred possessions and our land against the enemies who have usurped our rights and trampled upon our dignity.

I pray to the Almighty to enable us to attain these objectives, and to direct us on to the right path, and to assist us in all efforts aimed at promoting the good of our religion, our homelands and our peoples. I pray to Him to make us into one nation, in fulfilment of His word :

" You are the best nation raised up from men : you enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in God "
(The Qur'an 3 : 109).

This is but a single nation, not affected by any racialism, nationalism, or any ideology other than the belief in the One God and the recognition of Muhammad as His Messenger. If we pursue this path then we shall, God willing, attain victory. We do not seek to attack anybody or to commit aggression. All we want is to regain our rights, restore our dignity, and banish the aggressors so that we can have peace and stability in our homelands as Muslims and be able to devote ourselves to the worship of God, to follow the path set out in the life and teachings of His Messenger, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him! and to engage in fraternal co-operation between ourselves to promote our good in the light of all this. We must for this purpose look to these principles as our guide, and unify our ranks in accordance with them. With intention and determination, and with true faith, we shall attain our objectives.

That, Brothers, is what we must do. I pray to the Almighty to grant all of us His blessings, and to bestow upon you the reward of your pilgrimage, to forgive your sins. He is the All-Powerful.

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THE *NASI'*, THE *HIJRAH* CALENDAR AND THE NEED OF PREPARING A NEW CONCORDANCE FOR THE *HIJRAH* AND GREGORIAN ERAS

Why the existing Western concordances are not to be relied upon

By M. HAMIDULLAH

This article was originally read as a paper in the section II, Near East and Islam, of the 27th Congress of Orientalists, in August 1967, held at Michigan University, the U.S.A. A discussion followed, and at the proposal of Professor Hans Kruse a resolution was adopted saying that in the opinion of the Congress it was desirable to prepare a new concordance for converting dates from the Hijrah era into the Christian era, by means of electronic machines and in conformity with astronomical data, according to principles enunciated in the present paper. Later on this resolution was presented to the plenary session of the Congress by Professor Grunebaum, and was approved unanimously.

1. The *Hijrah* calendar¹ is the direct successor of the Meccan luni-solar calendar which practised *nasi'* (intercalation). Axel Moberg's² researches on *nasi'* date from 1931, and, of course, new sources have since become available. Except for the last three months,³ the Prophet passed his entire life under the old order.⁴ It is therefore indispensable that relations between the two calendars should be investigated anew when new material has come to light or new avenues are opened for one reason or other.

2. Many old sources, such as al-Azraqi,⁵ affirm that the *nasi'* was at first in the hands of the Kindah tribe (of the Yemen), and that later it passed to the family of Qalammas of the tribe of Kinánah. But they do not give the dates. According to al-Bírúni,⁶ intercalation began to be practised in Mecca about 200 years before Islam, and that it was borrowed from the Jews. But he does not refer to any source. I doubt it to the point of considering it wrong. As explained below, it may have begun as much as 450 years before Islam. As to the other point, we know the Jewish method with its varied and very complicated elements, which have left no trace in the extremely simple Arab method, which is more in resemblance with the Hammurabian formula.

3. That the function was at first in the hands of the Kindites should not astonish us, and the studies of Olinder⁷ on "Kings of Kindah of the Family of Akil al-Murár" have made it well-known that in their expansion the Kindites had captured even parts of Syria and Iraq, at the cost of the By-

zantines and the Persians; and the Moroccan fragments⁸ of the *Magházi* of Ibn Isháq describe in detail the entry of Tubba' in Mecca. As to the transfer of the function to the Kinánah tribe, al-Azraqi⁹ has convincingly explained that the marriage of Málik Ibn Kinánah with the daughter of Mu'áwiyah Ibn Thawr al-Kindí was the real reason.

4. However, we cannot be sure that the Kindite functionary originated in the time of Akil al-Murár dynasty. For, according to the *Genealogische Tabellen* of Wüstenfeld, there are 13 generations between Málik Ibn Kinánah and Islam, and 17 generations between Mu'áwiyah al-Kindí and Islam. If a generation means 30 years, 13 generations mean 390 years, and 17 generations are equal to 510 years, and the average comes to 450 years. That refers only to the Qalammas family, and we do not know how long the Kindites had already applied the *nasi'* system at Mecca before this transfer to the Kinánah.

5. In spite of the researches of Winckler¹⁰ and of Beeston¹¹ in the South-Arabian calendar, our knowledge is too fragmentary to know how the Yemenites' intercalation worked. With regard to the formula applied by Qalammas at Mecca, there is divergence as to when the 13th month was intercalated in the year. Some say¹² every year, which looks impossible since it vitiates the avowed purpose of equalizing the lunar year with the solar one and of having the same seasons always in the same months. Others say¹³ that it took place every two years. Yet others,¹⁴ that it was practised every three years, and yet others¹⁵ are still more precise and say that normally it was every three years, although from time to time a month was intercalated after only two years of gap. These latter seem to be right, in so far as the technical or astronomical aspect is concerned. For in a cycle of 30 years with 8 leap years, the solar calendar will have $(365 \times 30 = 10950 + 8) 10958$ days. In the same period a purely lunar calendar,¹⁶ with its 11 years of 355 days and 19 years of 354 days, must have $(355 \times 11 = 3905; 354 \times 19 = 6726; 3905 + 6726) 10631$ days. Therefore in the course of 30 years the lunar year gets shorter than the solar year by 327 days. If the intercalation is practised only once in every three years, we shall have to add 10 intercalated lunar months, say four of 29 and six

of 30 days; that makes only 296 days instead of the required 327 days. In other words, in the course of 30 years and in spite of the intercalation every three years, there will be a difference of 31 days. (I am leaving aside the difference of minutes and seconds and fraction of seconds which, according to our modern astronomers are to be added.) The difference of 31 days is too great not to have attracted the attention of the keen observers of nature and habituated to the *naw'* (or rain stars) calculation of moon's mansions that were the Arabs. (See Ibn Qutaybah's *Kitáb al-Anwá'* in this respect.) Our sources do not mention when intercalation took place after three years and when after only two years. With the above calculation, we have seen that in 30 years we require not 10 but 11 intercalations. Did this take place at the end of the cycle of 30 years, or was that merged inside the cycle, the intercalations taking place, for instance, in the 3rd, 6th, 9th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 20th, 22nd, 25th, 28th and 30th year?¹⁷ That is what we do not know in the present state of our knowledge. If it was merged in the course of 30 years, the intercalation occurs thrice after only two years' gap and eight times at an interval of three years. On the other hand, if the 11th intercalation occurred only at the end of the cycle of 30 years, we shall have the 10th normal intercalation in the 30th year, and the 11th intercalation in the 31st year, and the first intercalation of the second cycle in the 33rd year. For the intercalation in the 30th and in the 31st year, that is during two consecutive years the practice was noticed in the time of Hammúrábí¹⁸ After the intercalation in the 31st year, there is another in the 33rd year, that is, at an interval of only 2 years, whereafter the rest of the cycle of 30 years has the intercalation at the regular intervals of three years.

6. If it is so, that explains another problem. It reconciles the vexatious divergence of the Muslim historians, some saying that the intercalation took place every year, others every second year, yet others every third year, etc. With the above explanation it would seem that all of them are right, though none of them has known the entire truth: each narrator had observed the practice only once, and generalised it and did not know that the system was much more complicated. As a passing remark I may add here that important dates given by Muslim historians concerning various events of the life of the Prophet seem to confirm the practice of intercalation at Mecca eleven times every 30 years; dates given in extant concordances do not tally, since none of them has taken into consideration the intercalation for the first ten years of the *Hijrah* era, during which the Prophet was still alive and active. For instance, the date of the birth of the Prophet, of the first revelation of the Qur'án to him, of his arrival in Medina on *hijrah*, of the battles of Badr and Khandaq, and of the death of the Prophet, where not only the date but also the day is mentioned, such as 12 Rabi' al-Awwal, Monday, etc. Later we shall give a table showing the traditional date in the *Hijrah* reckoning, and its equivalent according to the extant concordances where intercalation has not been taken into consideration and also according to our own humble calculation where due share is given to the intercalation of the 13th month whenever the solar year is in advance of a whole lunar month.

Our calculation of the traditional data tallies with these dates if we follow the formula used in the Babylonian method. This reconciles all the divergent reports mentioned above.

7. Arab's not being politically united before Islam, it is understandable that there was no common era, and each region had its own important events to date from, as Tabari

and other sources have very well known. During the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the Meccans dated from the year of the Elephant, with which the Abyssinians had invaded Mecca. Several eras could exist simultaneously in Arabia without the least inconvenience. In spite of the divergence in the eras, everybody seems to begin the year with the month of Muharram.¹⁹ Our sources leave no doubt about it.

8. The migration of the Prophet to Medina complicated the situation. Cut off from Mecca and the pilgrimage, the Muslim masses could not follow when intercalation was to be made. We have clear references to it: we know that the truce of al-Hudaybiyyah was concluded in the 11th month of the calendar (Dhu al-Qa'dah) of 6 A.H.²⁰ Yet Abú Yúsuf²¹ says that the Prophet set out from Medina for al-Hudaybiyyah in Ramadán, which is the 9th month. Ibn Kathír²² reports: "The truce of al-Hudaybiyyah took place in Dhu al-Qa'dah (the 11th month of the year), yet according to 'Urwah it took place in Shawwál, which is the 10th month, and that is very strange from 'Urwah." But it will not at all look strange if we take into consideration that, with usual intercalations, the 11th month of the Meccan year was in fact the 9th month in the year 6 A.H., the year of the truce. An intercalation was practised at the end of the year 6 A.H., and yet another at the end of the year 9 A.H. So that when the Prophet went on the pilgrimage in 10 A.H., months had returned to their original position, and the difference of two months existing in 6 A.H. had vanished, and the Prophet could without the least complication abolish the *nasi'*, saying²³ in his celebrated oration: "The time has now returned to the position as it was when God had created the heavens and the earth with a year of 12 months."

9. Mecca was already conquered in 8 A.H., yet the Prophet did not interfere with the intercalation in 9 A.H., but waited²⁴ and abolished it only in 10 A.H., when the months of both the intercalated and non-intercalated computations had coincided. This spared him the headache which the Gregorian reform has caused to the West:²⁵ masses accused the Pope of having robbed ten days of their life; the Protestant and Orthodox countries did not recognize it for centuries, with the result that dates of the same events differ in the histories written in England, France, Germany or Russia, etc.

10. The abolition of the *nasi'* and restoration of the pure lunar calendar had many advantages to Islam. It gave the finance authorities the possibility of gathering taxes of an additional year in the course of 33 solar years without publicly being noticed.²⁶ (If finance ministers of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. only knew that!) It facilitated the training of the army for supporting privations of food and drink the whole day in all sorts of seasons (in Ramadán). It facilitated, above all, the task of the commonest and the least instructed Muslim to calculate his time and observe Ramadán and go on a pilgrimage to Mecca in the prescribed months, even if he lived in the desert and cut off from the civilised world. Not the least advantage is that there has never been need of changing dates to rectify the inaccuracies of calculations.

11. This calendar reform dates from the life-time of the Prophet, yet the adoption of the *Hijrah* as the point of the beginning of the Muslim era dates from the caliphate of 'Umar, some six years after the death of the Prophet. According to our sources,²⁷ it was the governor of Basra, Abú Músá al-Ash'arí, who first felt the need of citing the year along with the date and month in State documents: a certain Yemenite explained the practice in his country; 'Alí suggested to adopt the *Hijrah*, or migration of the Prophet to Medina, as the

starting point (instead of either adopting Alexandrian or Persian eras, or even the date of the first revelation to the Prophet, or the date of his death); and, lastly, it was 'Uthmán whose suggestion prevailed that Muharram should continue to be the first month, and not Rabi' al-Awwal, in which the Prophet had reached Medina.

12. Ever since the Muslims have followed the pure lunar year in their calendar — and, of course, used it in their history wherever they went — from China to Spain and beyond. In an international society one requires naturally to know corresponding dates of one era in another. Since the beginning of the 17th century²⁸ of the Christian era, when Western scholarship began to pay greater attention to foreign sources of international history, there began to appear concordances for the *Hijrah* and the Christian eras. The oldest I know is in Latin dated 1609.

13. For some inexplicable reason,²⁹ an error was committed in Europe in the beginning, and all later authors have repeated it without caring to verify their statements, and thus they falsified the tables laboriously elaborated, rendering them scientifically worthless. French, German, English, Spanish, Italian, Rumanian, Russian — none³⁰ is an exception. The fact is the following :

14. These Western authors affirm that the first month of the *Hijrah* calendar is of 30 days every year, and also the 3rd, the 5th, the 7th, the 9th and the 11th months; that the 2nd, the 4th, the 6th, the 8th and the 10th months have always 29 days, and that the 12th month has normally 29 days and in leap years 30 days (although there are no more leap years in Islam from the time of the Prophet). And thus the Western scholars want to get the necessary 354 and 355 days that a lunar year counts.

15. Unfortunately, this simplified decision made on earth is not executed by celestial authorities on sky, the forces of nature continuing to carry out their task which is otherwise regulated; and the Muslims the world over abide by the natural phenomena, not by rules suggested by these simplifiers. What is stranger is that according to the same Western authors the 9th month, that is the Ramadán, must always have 30 days, and they forget what they themselves write ironically elsewhere (sometimes a few lines later, as is the case with Couderc, p. 74, line 10 and p. 75, line 10) that the Muslims have every year headaches to know when Ramadán begins and when it ends. If their formula is correct, then why the worry of the Muslims?

16. The fact is, no month has the monopoly of 30 days, each and every month without exception can turn by turn have either 29 or 30 days. So is Muharram and so is Ramadán or any other month. Every child in the Muslim world knows that since 1400 years. And if one consults an almanac, one can see there could be practically every year even two consecutive months of 29 days or two consecutive months of 30 days; in certain years that happens even for three consecutive months. The observatory of Istanbul has recorded that a few years back it happened even for four consecutive months of 30 days. The difference between the real date and the one indicated in Western concordances may thus amount to two to three days. What is more serious is that when an Orientalist sees some precise reference in a text, say Friday 30 Sha'bán of such and such year of the *Hijrah*, and if he consults the tables of Wüstenfeld or Cattenoz and sees that it does not tally, he jumps up to say that Muslim historians have no sense of historical accuracy and are untrust-

worthy on this score. Whereas he ought to envisage first that the tables are probably wrong.

17. There is one more difficulty of great practical importance. The formation and birth of the new moon takes place at any point of its passage around the earth, during day or night. The duration between the two lunations varies from month to month, from 29 days 6 hours to 29 days 20 hours.³¹ But the *Hijrah* month among Muslims begins only if the new moon has been born sufficiently early during the day time in order to be visible to the naked eye on the Western horizon in the form of a luminous crescent at sunset. It is quite possible, therefore, that the new moon is not yet born when our satellite was passing, at the time of sunset, on Indonesia, Pakistan or Egypt, but that it was born and visible when traversing Germany, France and all the rest of the countries lying in the West. Another factor is that in winter, for instance, in the Northern hemisphere the day is shorter and the sun sets earlier, whereas on the equator and in tropical countries the day is much longer. Thus it is a frequent occurrence that the new moon is visible in Algiers or Lagos but not in Paris, since the sun sets at Paris in winter earlier than in Algeria. Thus the difference of a day will come in the writings not of easy-going Muslim historians but on account of their exactitude and precision, conforming to the rules of the natural phenomenon.

18. A very respectable German professor has recently burst out that "the *Hijrah* calendar is no calendar at all"³² I submit that there is no reason to despair. Our epoch possesses enormous means to surmount difficulties. I recall the British slogan during the last world war : "If it is difficult we do it at once ; if it is impossible that takes some time". There are, for instance, electronic calculators, and also availability of inter-disciplinary collaboration.

19. What I would propose is that we undertake the task of preparing a new and comprehensive concordance between Muslim and Christian eras, describing for the last 1400 and even 2000 years, for every month, from which point of the longitude and latitude of the earth it began, and whether it was of 29 or of 30 days. The necessity of the visibility of the new moon — even if it was not visible as a fact on account of cloud or fog — on given lines of longitude and latitude should be given in detail for each and every month. This calculation, starting from the present day and mounting up to the past centuries, when once established, will be the surer means for finding out corresponding dates.

20. If our Congress recommends that by a resolution, I am sure that scientific organizations, such as the U.N.E.S.C.O. and C.N.R.S. of France, Forschungsgemeinschaft of Germany and others will provide the insignificant means that are necessary for this task. It is a work where an historian and an astronomer will collaborate, for the benefit of the entire world of science.

Concordance for the lifetime of the Prophet

Tackling another aspect of the same question, I beg to submit that the chronology of the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad leaves many problems yet to solve. Among others we are suffering from two sets of difficulties :

(i) We do not know exactly the formula according to which intercalation was practised in the luni-solar calendar of the Meccans.

(ii) The real and factual dates of the new moons, that is the beginning of each month : whether that was of 29 days or of 30 days. Without previously determining this, it is not possible to give exact corresponding dates in another era.

The first difficulty could be surmounted more easily. Only two methods of intercalation are known, one is said to have been in vogue in Babylonia in the time of Hammurábí (Namrúd of the time of the Prophet Ibráhím or Abraham). The other is suggested by the great mathematician al-Bírúni. The two methods affect certain years of the cycle of 30 years. (According to Hammurabi, it is at the end of the 3rd, 6th, 9th, 12, 15th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 27th, 30th and 31st year that a lunar month is to intercalate. According to al-Bírúni, it is at the end of the 3rd, 6th, 9th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 20th, 22nd, 25th, 28th and 30th that the intercalation has to operate.) Since we do not know with certainty which one was in practice in Mecca, we may calculate and prepare tables on the basis of both the methods. The work is not long (only 63 years, or 65 years with intercalations), and the events happening in them are — at least for the first forty years — few and far between. And with the meagre means of control, where the date is supplemented by the precision of the day also, one may decide which of the two methods of intercalation was more probably in use at Mecca.

The other difficulty is more formidable. It is the nature itself which has willed diversity. The slanting axis of the earth makes that times are not uniform on the globe. Already al-Bírúni (*al-Athár al-Báqiyah* pp. 65-66) knew that the visibility of the new moon is not regular, since the movement of the moon is sometimes slow and at others faster; sometimes it is nearer to the earth at others farther away — not only the longitude but also the latitude of the point from where one looks on the new moon, affects the visibility, etc.

In order to surmount this natural difficulty, I think one has to prepare special tables for the meridian or horizon of Mecca-Medina, and by mathematical calculations, even long drawn ones, determine which month was of 29 days and

which of 30 days. They are not alternate, as the Western concordances make us believe; sometimes two and even three consecutive months of 29 days are observed. According to astronomers, the 30-day month may recur consecutively even for four months. The affirmation of al-Bírúni is confirmed by modern astronomy, and Couderc is precise to say that the lunation takes from 29 days 6 hours to 29 days 20 hours, and the average is 29.530588, that is, there are not only hours but also minutes, seconds and fractions of second to count. My Turkish colleague of the department of astronomy at the University of Istanbul assured me that there is no periodicity in this matter: when 29 days 6 hours, when 6 hours ten minutes and so on; it is to calculate for every month.

So there is work — and much work — for astronomers, and I am not an astronomer.

To base one's calculation on the average may give difficulty on a given event up to three days. But in anticipation of the precise and exact tables for the meridian of Mecca-Medina — for Arabia in general — the mistakes of months, committed by the non-observance of intercalation, in the concordances now in use, could be rectified.

The only difficulty is when our own sources are divergent as to the exact date of a given event. Fortunately, they give also the day along with the date in certain cases, and this may eventually enable us to prefer one of the alternate dates given by the chroniclers.

Conversion Table

The birthday of the Prophet Muhammad is given not only as 12 Rabí' al-Awwal, Monday — the traditional day among the Sunnis — but also on 2, 8, 10, 17 and 22 of the same month and sometimes also in Safar, Rabí' al-Akhir, Rajab or Ramadán. Mounting from the last Pilgrimage on Friday 9 Dhu al-Hijjah 10 A.H., when intercalation was abolished once and for all, I find Monday 12 Rabí' al-Awwal as the birth date conforms to astronomy. The date of the death is to be chosen between a Monday and a 12 Rabí' al-Awwal: both cannot coincide. Here is my tentative table :

Birthday	2)	Rabí' al-Awwal 53 Before <i>Hijrah</i> , Monday	7 June 569 C.E., Friday
	8)		13 June 569 C.E., Thursday
First revelation	10)	Ramadán 13 Before <i>Hijrah</i> , Monday	15 June 569 C.E., Saturday
	or 12)		17 June 569 C.E., Monday
<i>Hijrah</i> Era begins	1	Muharram 1 A.H. (day ?)	21 March 622 C.E., Sunday
Prophet's migration	12	Rabí' al-Awwal 1 A.H., Monday	31 May 622 C.E., Monday
The Battle of Badr	17	Ramadán 2 A.H., Friday	18 November 623 C.E., Friday
The Battle of Khandaq ends		End of Shawwál 5 A.H., Saturday	24 January 627 C.E., Saturday (on 29 Shawwál)
The Last Pilgrimage	9	Dhu al-Hijjah 10 A.H., Friday	6 March 632 C.E., Friday
Sad death of the Prophet Muhammad	2)	Rabí' al-Awwal 11 A.H., Monday	25 May 632 C.E., Monday
	8)		31 May 632 C.E., Sunday
	or 12)		4 June 632 C.E., Thursday

Method of calculation

The great biographer as-Suhaylí asserts that there is practical unanimity on the fact that the Prophet celebrated his Last Pilgrimage at 'Arafát on Friday, 9 Dhu al-Hijjah 10 A.H. On the same occasion he abolished the practice of

intercalation, and three months later he himself breathed his last. Since the abolition of the intercalation, the determination of the corresponding dates in the Christian era is sufficiently precise and trustworthy.

So, for the earlier events one must mount up and calculate :

1. Mounting from the Last Pilgrimage to the end of the battle of Khandaq on the last day of Shawwál 5 A.H., there are 5 years 1 month 9 days, in which two intercalary months are to add, according to the Hammúrábi system. These 5 years 3 months 9 days make ... 1868 days
 2. The battle of Khandaq had taken place 3 years 1 month and 12 days after that of Badr (on 17 Ramadán 2 A.H.), and during this period two intercalations took place according to the same system, i.e. ... 1163 days
 3. One year 6 months 5 days earlier the Prophet arrived in Medina (12 Rabí' al-Awwal 1 A.H.) 536 days
 4. Two months 12 days earlier the *Hijrah* Era began ... 71 days
 5. The first revelation came 12 years 3 months 13 days earlier (on 17 Ramadán, if we follow Suhaylí and other best sources), and four intercalations are to add. So these 12 years 7 months 13 days make ... 4472 days
 6. His birth is reputed to have occurred 40 years earlier. More precisely 40 years 6 months 5 days on 12 Rabí' al-Awwal, and this duration of the luni-solar calculation gives in the pure lunar time-reckoning, with 15 intercalations ... 14798 days
- total 22908 days

If we divide this total by 7, there remain 4 days, that is if the birthday is Monday, the pilgrimage must fall so many weeks and 4 days later on a Friday.

So far so good. The popular tradition is that the death also should occur on 12 Rabí' al-Awwal 11 A.H. on a Mon-

day. As al-Suhaylí has already over 800 years ago noticed, this is not possible: either the Last Pilgrimage on Friday or the death on Monday 12 Rabí' al-Awwal, one cannot have both, whatever the combination. During the three months that separate the pilgrimage and the death, if Dhu al-Hijjah, Muharram and Safar have each had 29 days, or each 30 days, or some 29 and others 30 days, in no way the Friday of the 9 Dhu al-Hijjah can give a Monday on 12 Rabí' al-Awwal. So either the one or the other is possible. According to al-Suhaylí and other older sources, 2 Rabí' al-Awwal Monday is the more reliable day, although other dates are also related, such as the 1 Rabí' al-Awwal, 8 of the same month and so on. Of all these, only the 2 Rabí' al-Awwal (and eventually 9) will give a Monday, provided that that year all the three intermediary months should have been consecutively of 29 days — a phenomenon which happens from time to time. That is 80 days after the pilgrimage the sad demise took place on a Monday. But if one were to insist on the 12 of the month, it will be a Thursday.

Conclusion

As an historian and impartial seeker of truth, it makes no difference to me whether this or that event took place on Monday or some other day, all days being the creation of Almighty God. In anticipation of an astronomer's handling the question, our humble calculations seem to corroborate the data of early Muslim sources.

Existing western concordances are not to be relied upon for the lifetime of the Prophet, since they have not taken into consideration the intercalation and the luni-solar calendar that existed in Mecca and, through the pilgrimage to Mecca, all over Arabia also.

I recapitulate :

Event	Traditional date	Corresponding Christian date	
		My calculation	Occidental concordances
Prophet's birth	12 Rabí' I, 53 Before <i>Hijrah</i> , Monday	17 June 569 C.E., Monday	569 or 570 or 571 C.E.
First revelation	17 Ramadán 13 Before <i>Hijrah</i> , Monday	22 December 609 C.E., Monday	?
<i>Hijrah</i> Era begins	1 Muharram 1 A.H.	21 March 622 C.E., Sunday	15/16 July 622 C.E., Thursday/ Friday
Prophet's migration	12 Rabí' I, 1 A.H., Monday	31 May 622 C.E., Monday	24 September 622 C.E., Friday
Battle of Badr	17 Ramadán 2 A.H., Monday	18 November 623 C.E., Friday	13 March 624 C.E. Tuesday
Battle of Khandaq	End of Shawwál 5 A.H., Saturday	24 January 627 C.E., Saturday (29 Shawwál)	23 March 627 C.E. Monday
Last Pilgrimage	9 Dhu'l Hijjah 10 A.H., Friday	6 March 632 C.E., Friday	7 March 632 C.E., Saturday
Death of the Prophet	2 Rabí' I, 11 A.H., Monday	25 May 632 C.E., Monday	28 May 632 C.E., Thursday

For this last date, the concordances are not to blame. As just explained, we too have reluctantly reckoned three consecutive months of 29 days, an uncommon phenomenon, and this in anticipation of the exact tables for the meridian of Medina of those years,

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The *Hijrah* calendar was adopted only six years after the death of the Prophet, as we shall see later. The Christian calendar began to be used among Christians some nine hundred years after the birth of Jesus Christ, the date from which it is dated. (Cf. *Grosse Brockhaus*, 1952, s. v. Aera; Caetani, *Annali dell' Islam*, I, 348-349.)
- 2 In German, *an-Nasī*, Lund, 1931. According to Tabarī (I, 1250), Sakhāwī (*l'Īlān bi al-Tawbīkh*, pp. 138-139) and others, the data-tion from the *Hijrah* began immediately on the *hijrah* (migration), in the life-time of the Prophet, although there were discrepancies, as Bayhaqī has very well explained. For the whole question and for new sources for the study of the *nasī*, see my article in *RSO*, Rome XL, 1965, pp. 57-69: "Original de la lettre du Prophète Kisrā".
- 3 The Prophet abolished intercalation and leap year during his last pilgrimage, in Dhu al-Hijjah 10 A.H., when the cycle of intercalations was completed and months of both the intercalary and non-intercalary methods coincided. So in his sermon the Prophet could say:
- "§11. People: Intercalation is in fact an increment in disbelief: Unbelievers are thereby led astray: they render the (month) profane in a (certain) year and render it sacred in another year, in order to concord the number of the (months) that God has rendered sacred, yet they render profane that which God has rendered sacred, and render sacred that which God has rendered profane. Now the time (calendar) has returned to the shape which God had given it on the day He had created the heavens and the earth. Verily the number of months, for God, has been twelve months, in the prescription of God, on the day He created the heavens and the earth. Of these, four are sacred; three are consecutive and one isolated: Dhu al-Qa'dah, Dhu al-Hijjah and Muharram on the one hand, and on the other Rajab of the Mudar tribes, the one which is between Jumādā al-Akhirah and Sha'bān. Hark! Have I communicated? O God, be witness!" (Cf. Ibn Hishām, p. 968.) For further sources, see my *al-Waithā'iq al-Siyāsiyyah*, N. 287/a, also Blachère in *Mélanges Massignon*, I, pp. 223-249. Wāqidī in his *Maghāzī*, and Muslim in his *Sahīh* also cite the sermon. The curious term "Rajab of the Mudar tribe" is explained by Suhaylī, *Rawd*, II, p. 351; he says that the Rab'ah tribes had their Rajab two months later in the month of Ramadan. It may be that this refers to the epoch of 'Umrah, or the smaller pilgrimage of Mecca.
- 4 Although this luni-solar calendar was long since in vogue, its starting point was changed with every new event of "national" importance. Although the time of the Abyssinian invasion of Mecca (the year of the elephant) could be said as the beginning of the era in use in the life of the Prophet and in fact it meant from the birth of the Prophet himself, according to the tradition, there is reference to the recommencement of calculations from the death of 'Abd al-Muttalib (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, I, p. 41), from the Battle of Fijār, from the death of Hishām Ibn al-Mughīrah and from the reconstruction of the Ka'bah (Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārikh Dimashq*, I, p. 21), and from the time of the inauguration of the chivalrous order of Hilf al-Fudūl (Mas'ūdī, *Tanbih*, p. 186, ed. Egypt); also Tabarī (I, p. 1253), Sakhāwī (pp. 146-149) and Ibn al-Jawzī *Talqīh*, (fol. 3/a-b, MS of Paris, citing Ibn Abī Khaytamah) cite pre-Islamic calendars in Mecca sometimes remounting up to the Fall of Adam from Paradise. As far as the descendants of Ismā'il in Mecca are concerned, it may be suggested that since Hammūrābī is said to use intercalation, it is not impossible that his countryman, Abraham, and his descendants also knew its advantages.
- 5 Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, ed. Europe, I, p. 118.
- 6 Bīrūnī, *al-Athār al-Bāqiyah*, pp. 12, 62.
- 7 Olinder, *The Kings of Kindah of the Family of Akil al-Murār*, Lund.
- 8 Ibn Ishāq, *Maghāzī* (MS Fas, first fragment), fol. 11/a-12/a.
- 9 Azraqī, p. 125.
- 10 Hugo Winckler, *Arabisch-Semitisch-Orientalisch*, in: *Mitteilung der vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft*, VI, 1901-4, pp. 231-40. And also his *Altorientalische Forschungen*, zweite Reihe, 1898-1900, Leipzig 1901, pp. 324-395, especially pp. 351-353: "Der Interrex bei den Sabäern", where on the basis of an inscription he brings into relief that the person in charge of intercalation was called there *Mushahhir* (whereas in Mecca of later times he is called *Qalammas* and *Nasī*).
- 11 A. F. L. Beeston, *Epigraphic South Arabian Calendars and Dating*, London, 1956.
- 12 Every year a thirteenth month was added, according to Ibn Ishāq *Maghāzī* (second fragment of Fas, pp. 20-21).
- 13 Every two years an additional month was intercalated, cf. Ibn Habib, *Munammaq*, p. 274; Azraqī, p. 125 (who adds the precision that in 24 years Muharram turned around all the seasons), Abū 'Ubayd, *Gharīb al-Hadīth* (MS Koprulú 378), fol. 167/a-b.
- 14 Every third year a thirteenth month was intercalated, cf. Mas'ūdī, *Tanbih*, p. 218 ed. Europe. Cf. *Qur'ān*, XVIII, 25: "And they remained in their cave for 300 years and added nine (years)", which is interpreted as the intercalation of nine years in the course of three hundred years. For in round figures, 300 solar years have 109572 days and 309 purely lunar years have 109499 days. So although there is a difference of 73 days it is yet not of a whole year.
- 15 The 13th month was intercalated sometimes every two years and sometimes every three years according to the requirements of the time calculation, cf. Bīrūnī, *al-Athār al-Bāqiyah*, p. 62, Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, (MS Koprulú 1004), p. 1727. As this part of Maqrīzī's work is not yet printed, I quote him textually, along with translation:
- "This work (of intercalation) for the benefit of the Arabs was entrusted to the *nasā'a* (plural of *nasī'*), who are better known under the name of Qalamisah of the tribe of Kinānah, the singular of which is Qalammas. He used to stand up, after the *Hajj* ceremonies had finished, and to make a sermon, and to retard (by intercalation) the months, so that every month was called by the name of the month which would (normally) follow it. Everybody accepted this verdict of the (Qalammas). The name of this practice was *nasī'* (retarding), because they retarded the beginning of the year by one month once every two or three years, according to how much the advance (of the time) there was. The first intercalation touched the month of Muharram, and the real Safar was called Muharram, and the real Rabī' al-Awwal was called Safar, and so on all the months (of the year). During the second intercalation it was the real Safar which was touched and the month which followed it (that is the Rabī' al-Awwal of the first period of intercalation, which was the real Rabī' al-Thānī) was now called Safar. And so on in like manner, until the intercalation touched (turn by turn) all the twelve months (of the year), and it came back to Muharram (the first month). Thereafter they used to begin anew what they did before. And they used to determine when they observed an intercalation and determined thereby the seasons and used to say: so many years have passed from this to that (event), and that the whole cycle has so many (years). After all this, if they observed that a (whole) month is in advance of any of the four seasons (of the year) due to the accumulation of the fractions of the solar year and the rest of the difference between it and the lunar year, which they tried to equalize with the solar year, they proceeded to an additional intercalation."
- In the original it reads:

و تولى عمل ذلك للعرب النساء المعروفون بالفلاس من بني كنانة واحد هم قلدس. وكان يقوم بعد انقضاء الحج فيخطب و ينسى الشهور و يسمى الشهر التالي له باسمه. فيقبل الجميع قوله و يستون هذا الفعل النسى لانهم كانوا ينسون اول السنة في كل ستين او ثلاث شهورا على حسب ما يستحقه التقدم. وكان النسى الاول للمحرم فسمى صفر باسمه و سمي ربيع الاول باسم صفر. ثم و الوا بين اسماء الشهور. وكان النسى الثاني لصفر فسمى الشهر الذى يتلوه بصفر ايضا. و كذا لك حتى دار النسى فى الشهور الاثنى عشر و عاد الى المحرم فاعادوا بها فعلهم الاول. و كانوا يحدثون اذا راوا النسى و يحدثون بها الازمنة. فيقولون: قد دارت السنون من لدن زمان كذا الى زمان كذا و كذا دوره. فان ظهر لهم مع ذلك تقوم شهر عن فصل من الفصول الاربعة لما يجتمع من كسور سنة الشمس و بقيت فصل ما بينها و بين سنة القمر الذى احقوه به كسوا كسبا جديدا.

The last sentence of this citation is particularly interesting, and it says that, in addition to the normal intercalation every third year, they were obliged to have recourse to a supplementary intercalation, and this whenever a whole month was necessary to have

a given season in a given month. Naturally this can occur once every 30 years. For three solar years have 1,095 days, but three lunar years and one intercalary month have 1,092 days, i.e. short by three days every three years, therefore short by thirty days in 30 years.

16 Which is now calculated to have 354. 36,705 days, divided into 12 months. The lunation varies from month to month, between 29 days 6 hours to 29 days 20 hours, the average being 29 days 12 hours 44 minutes 2.8 seconds (29 530588). Cf. Paul Couderc, *Le Calendrier*, Paris, 1961, p. 14.

17 The following table would show why these particular years :

Number of years	Number of days in solar years	Number of days in lunar year	Need of intercalary months
1	365.2422	354.36705	...
2	730.4844	708.73410	...
3	1095.7266	1063.10115	1 (32 days)
4	1460.9688	1417.46820	...
5	1826.2110	1771.83525	...
6	2191.4532	2126.20230	2 (65 days)
7	2556.6954	2480.56935	...
8	2921.9376	2834.93640	...
9	3287.1798	3189.30345	3 (98 days)
10	3652.4220	3543.67050	...
11	4017.6642	3898.03755	4 (119 days)
12	4382.9064	4252.40460	...
13	4748.1486	4606.77165	...
14	5113.3908	4961.13870	5 (152 days)
15	5478.6330	5315.50575	...
16	5843.8752	5669.87280	...
17	6209.1174	6024.23985	6 (185 days)
18	6574.3596	6378.60690	...
19	6939.6018	6732.97395	...
20	7304.8440	7087.34100	7 (217 days)
21	7670.0862	7441.70805	...
22	8035.3284	7796.07510	8 (239 days)
23	8400.5706	8150.44215	...
24	8765.8128	8504.80920	...
25	9131.0550	8859.17625	9 (272 days)
26	9496.2972	9213.54330	...
27	9861.5394	9567.91035	...
28	10226.7816	9922.27740	10 (304 days)
29	10592.0238	10276.64445	...
30	10957.2660	10631.01150	11 (326 days)

Of these 11 months, if 4 are of 29 days and 7 are of 30 days, that makes 326 days, and the lunar year becomes equal to solar year.

18 Couderc, *op. cit.*, p. 57 affirms: "it is not rare to find two consecutive years of thirteen months" in the time of Hammurabi; and Couderc cites the text of inscribed clay tablets found in the excavations.

19 Tabarí, *Tárikh*, I, pp. 1252-1253, 1256; Ibn al-Jawzí, *Talqih fuhúm ahl al-athar* (MS Paris, arabe 734), fol. 3/b; Azraqí, p. 127; Bírúní, *al-Athár al-Báqiyah*, pp. 60, 62; Ibn 'Asákir, *Tárikh Dimashq*, I, 37; Sakháwí, *al-Ílán bi al-Taubikh*, p. 143; Mas'údí, *Murúj*, III, 417; among others.

20 Ibn Hishám and others *in loco*.

21 Abú Yúsuf, *Kharáj* (ed. Búláq), p. 128.

22 Ibn Kathír, *Bidáyah*, IV, p. 164.

23 Ibn Hishám, p. 968, *cf. supra* reference 1.

24 "And waited" (*W'antazara*), these are the words used by Bírúní, *Athár*, p. 63.

25 According to Couderc (*op. cit.* pp. 34-35, 54-55) and Dilgan. (Hamid Dilgan, *Takvimler*, pp. 11-12), the Gregorian reform was adopted :

At Rome and in Spain and Portugal on 4th October 1582	
France	December 1582
In parts of Germany and Switzerland	1584
Poland	1586
Hungary	1587
Parts of Holland	1700
England, Sweden and the U.S.A.	1752
Bulgaria	1916
Yugoslavia and Rumania	1919
Greece	1923
Russia (U.S.S.R.)	1936

Naturally the comparison of dated historical texts of these different countries causes headache to the reader.

26 The Prophet had fixed a sort of solar year — by means of actual harvests for collecting agricultural taxes; for other purposes he applied a purely lunar year. So there was hardship neither to cultivators nor to the finance department. Cf. my work *Le Prophète de l'Islam*, Paris 1959, I, p. 266.

27 Cf. Tabarí, I, p. 1250, Sakháwí, pp. 140-141, Ibn al-Jawzí, *op. cit.*, 3/b for the suggestion of Abú Músá al-Ash'arí. Tabarí, I, p. 1252, Sakháwí, p. 141, Ibn 'Asákir, I, pp. 33, 35, refer to the suggestion of a Yemenite, and that Ya'lá Ibn Munyah, the governor of the Yemen, himself began doing that. Suggestion of adopting Alexandrian and Persian calendars is mentioned by Tabarí, I, p. 1251, Sakháwí, p. 144. Adoption of Muharram as the first month of the year is attributed to the suggestion of 'Uthmán. Cf. Ibn 'Asákir, I, p. 37. The adoption of the *Hijrah* as the starting point, instead of the first revelation of the Qur'an or the death of the Prophet, is variously attributed: to 'Uthmán, to 'Alí and even to 'Umar. Cf. above-mentioned sources.

28 In his *Tablas de conversión* (Madrid-Grenada 1946), Jimenez refers to P. Juan de Mariana, *De annis arabum cum annis nostris comparatis, tractum VIII*, Colonia, 1609.

29 The explanation given by Hamid Dilgan (*Takvimler*, p. 13) seems to solve the riddle. Muslims used in general the "visual month", by the appearance of the luminous crescent, but Muslim astronomers used in their observatories for mathematical purposes the technical month (*sanah istiláhiyah* — conventional year), for past and future calculations. The historians, for whom alone our concordances are applicable, used the visual month and not the technical or conventional month of the astronomers. Ibn al-Ajdábi (*al-Azminah wa al-Anwá*) and others refer to this same technical month.

30 Of the innumerable concordances, I shall cite as example the French (Cattenoz, *Tables de concordance des ères chrétienne et hegirienne*, 3rd ed., Rabat 1961), the German (Wüstenfeld-Mahler-Spuler, *Vergleichungstabellen*, 1961), the Spanish (Manuel Ocana Jimenez, *Tablas de conversión*, Madrid, 1946), the Italian (G. Gabrieli, *Tabella comparativa dell'era*, Rome, 1916), the Rumanian (M. Guboglu, *Tabele sincronice*, Bucarest, 1955), and the Russian (V. V. Cybulski, *Sovremenniye kalendari stran blizhevo i srednevo Vostoka*, Moscow, 1964), and the English *Encyclopaedia Britannica s. v.* Calendar. Incidentally, it may be added here that these concordances place the first day of the *Hijrah* era on 16 July 622 (a few also one day earlier on 15 July). Apparently they calculate upwards from the date when the Prophet abolished intercalation (during his last pilgrimage in the year 10 A.H.). I submit that for the first ten years of the *Hijrah* era, one should not neglect the intercalation practised at Mecca, more particularly for the first year of the *Hijrah*, when he (the Prophet) had just left Mecca. According to my calculation the first of Muharram of the year 1 A.H. falls on 21 March 622 C.E. The Prophet emigrated in the 3rd month of this year, in Rabí' al-Awwal, which began probably on 20 May 622 C.E., a Thursday. That confirms the Islamic tradition that the Prophet arrived at Medina on 12th Rabí' al-Awwal on Monday. It may be noted that, according to our sources, intercalation was practised at Mecca for the last time in the year 9 A.H., at the time when Abú Bakr was sent by the Prophet as *amir al-hajj* (more precisely, at the end of 9 A.H., and before the beginning of the 10 A.H.), and thus months of intercalary and non-intercalary methods had again coincided. It is natural then to suppose that another was intercalated at the end of the year 6 A.H., another at the end of the year 3 A.H. and yet another just before the beginning of the year 1 A.H. That makes a difference of four full lunar months. That is why I suggest that the *Hijrah* era should have begun not on 16 July 622 C.E. but four months earlier on or about 21 March. Since 12 intercalations are necessary in order that months revert to their original position, and since 12 intercalations could be practised in 33 years (to equalize the lunar and solar years, i.e. 33 solar years with their 12052 days are available only in 34 lunar years with their 12048 days). Two such cycles require 66 years. Since the Prophet died in 11 A.H. at the age of 63, the cycle of intercalations must have begun two years before his birth, which took place in the year 53 before the *Hijrah*. This must occur, in my opinion, in June of the year 569 C.E. — and not in 570 C.E., much less in 571 C.E. I suggest even 17th June as the possible date.

31 Couderc, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

32 B. Spuler, in: *Der Islam*, BD 38, 1962, p. 155.

Initiation into the Holy Qur'an

How the Qur'anic Doctrine was announced to the World

It is not the use of force but the existence of a number of intrinsic qualities which have been decisive in the development and consolidation of Islam in regions and countries so far removed from its birthplace

By the late Dr. M. A. DRAZ

There is nothing like the phenomenon of Islam before its advent

Everyone knows more or less what is meant by the Qur'anic doctrine, known generally as "Islam". But it is too often known through the medium of some quite "external" connotation or definition. This reformation — religious, social and moral — had hardly taken root on the coast of the Red Sea at the beginning of the 7th century of the Christian era, when it began its triumphant advance towards the north and south, the east and the west, and in a relatively very short space of time it had become established over one-half of the then known world.

Historically, this was an event without precedent, and one which has not ceased to interest the human race and stimulate the curiosity of the historians of morals and religion.

It is in vain that men have tried to find a prototype in ancient history, by comparing it, as has sometimes been done, with the conquests of Alexander. It is true that the expansion was a rapid one, but it was one that brought no changes either in thought and ideas, or in national customs, and one which, unlike the very first impingement of Islam, left no trace behind it.

We will not go so far as to approve the absolute inanity of the Alexandrine campaign, which at least was instrumental in the establishment of splendid cities over the Oriental scene, cities in which economic life became very prosperous. It is none the less true that this work of "colonization" never overstepped the territorial limits of these cities. The masses, the peasants, of whom it has been truly said, "... if they have not been conquered, then nothing has been conquered", continued to preserve intact their own character — their language, their customs and their political and economic régime. Even in the cities, Hellenism — represented by the administrative bodies — only penetrated deeply a minority of the bourgeoisie.

The transitoriness of the Greek conquests

There is no need to add that not long afterwards the Greek peasants found themselves under the domination of another régime, and that, under the Roman Empire, these cities gradually went to ruin. In order to gain some idea of

the ephemeral character of this heterogeneous "empire", we need only recall a few well-known dates. We know that at the end of the twenty-year period following the death of Alexander, his empire had become divided-up into three kingdoms (301 B.C.). There then took place a progressive territorial mutilation which can be outlined briefly as follows: after fifty years, the territory then known as "Upper Asia" was overrun and taken by the Parthians (250 B.C.); sixty years later Asia Minor came under the rule of the Romans (190 B.C.); after another fifty years Palestine became an independent Jewish state (144-64 B.C.); at about the same time the metropolis itself was reduced to the status of a Roman province (Greece in 146 B.C. and Macedonia in 142 B.C.). Although the Kingdom of Egypt had for a long period remained inviolate (it did not come under Roman rule until 31 B.C.), its political decline can be said to have begun after the first three Ptolemies (221 B.C.).

But this is not the real crux of the matter.

Disregarding the purely material aspect of civilisation, and viewing the question from the standpoint of ideas, it is undeniable that the Macedonian conqueror, far from taking with him Greek conceptions, purely and simply adopted those ideas which were in vogue in the conquered countries, and affiliated himself with their "divinities". And, like him, his successors made no revolutionary changes in this domain. Generally speaking, during the two periods, Greek and Roman, the philosophical and religious conceptions which flourished in abundance at that time in the East, and especially at Alexandria, not only had not been brought in from Greece, but were essentially Oriental doctrines — the Greek language had served as a vehicle for the conveyance of these doctrines to Europe, where they became known as neo-Platonism and Christianity. Thus one can say with justification that in this respect it was the Orient which conquered its conquerors. Then one day it happened — the coming of Islam! The result was a relatively rapid transformation. This time, however, it was not a change in the political and economic condition of the big cities, but a change in the very soul of entire peoples. Language, thought, laws, ideals, customs, the conception of the world, and of God — all were transformed in a surprisingly short space of time.¹

And this conquest of the spirit not only won over, in lasting fashion, the minds and hearts into which it penetrated, but it tended to gain ground everywhere when it was freely allowed to find expression in its primitive simplicity and purity — a fact which gives the lie to the widespread and oft-repeated accusation that Islam was founded only on the use of the sword. Surely its present-day ascendancy is tangible proof that its influence on men is by virtue of some inner force, through some special affinity with human nature and the truth of things ?

The first ten years of the Mission of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca

It is true that at one time the elements antagonistic to Islam, having exceeded all bounds in showing their hatred, even going so far as to persecute and victimize the followers of the new doctrine, the latter were obliged to react strongly in order to put an end to an injustice which had lasted long enough. As soon as a resistance movement had been declared, the reactionary elements rose up in all quarters, forming a veritable coalition against the new order, which they feared would oust them from power and influence, and blow succeeded blow. Thus it was some considerable time before peace could be re-established.

Viewing the situation at this stage, there is nothing in the above episode which gives any indication as to the essential or the original factor underlying the diffusion of the Islamic message. The first ten years during which the Islamic message was being communicated and taught show us how, in spite of obstacles, the simple and straightforward presentation of the doctrine daily brought in new conversions. They also show with what courage and long-suffering the Master and his disciples endured, not only the jeers and insults of their fellow-citizens, but also the ostracism, the ignorant banning of all relations with the public, and sometimes even the cruellest torture and barbarity (the Qur'án 16 : 106 ; 29 : 10). This finally obliged one hundred of the early Muslims, including some of noble rank, such as 'Uthmán and the daughter of Abú Sufyán, Umm Habíbah, to flee the country and seek refuge with the King of Abyssinia (the Qur'án 16 : 110). But the most striking example of this period, and one which shows the very remarkable result attained through this call to peace, was given by the inhabitants of Yathrib (later called Medina). Some considerable time before seeing the Master in person and hearing him speak, and simply through listening to his Qur'anic message transmitted by their own pilgrims, the Arabs of Medina welcomed it with such enthusiasm that soon there was no family which did not include several Believers among its members. And what is more, all the dissension and hostility which had existed among them for a quarter of a century² seemed to fade away overnight (the Qur'án 8 : 63). So much so, that those who had up till then been inveterate enemies now became brothers (the Qur'án 3 : 103). At the same time the Islamic practices, which could not be openly observed at Mecca, were now being commonly carried out in the light of day (for example, the Friday prayer directed by Abú Umámah one year before the Hegira). And it was here at Medina, in this cordial atmosphere of welcome and hospitality, that almost all the Faithful were received, after having abandoned “. . . their homes and their possessions” (the Qur'án 59 : 8), and been more or less the objects of persecution at Mecca.

The reasons for the volte-face in the peaceful attitude of Muslims after their migration to Medina

So far the Muslims, at least, had acted peacefully and with dignity, and there was nothing which indicated the

possibility of recourse to force. In spite of the danger which threatened his person, Muhammad was in no particular hurry to rejoin the emigrants, since he was no longer anxious about their welfare and knew they had arrived safely at their destination. He did not wish to leave his post of duty without first receiving special permission in the form of revelation, and he decided his duty was to remain in his native territory and continue to preach. He was alone, with the exception of his two friends, Abú Bakr and 'Alí. It was on the eve of the great conspiracy against his life that he received the Divine command to leave. And it was at the very hour when this ignoble plot was being put into action that he quietly left the city. One of his two friends went with him, the other remained behind to cover up his traces. But after this miraculous escape from mortal danger, surely it would be only natural that he should think of vengeance against his enemies, who had tried to bring about his death ! By no means ! And if we follow the various stages of his activities during the first year of the *Hijrah* — and for a goodly part of the second — we find his efforts, on the contrary, being devoted to pious and constructive projects : the building of the Mosque, the precepts regarding fasting, the institution of the call to prayer, and the internal and peaceful organisation of society. Everything seemed to indicate that, from this time henceforward, they were definitely going to turn their backs on their birthplace, even regarding the direction they faced when reciting prayer, when, towards the middle of the second year, they began to intercept the goods-caravans of their persecutors, expropriating their merchandise, and then going on to attack them *en masse*.

What was the reason for this *volte-face*, this sudden change of attitude ?

The change in the attitude of the Muslims to the polytheists of Mecca not due to the personal psychological influence of the Prophet Muhammad

It would be quite out of question to attribute the cause to the personal psychological influence of the Prophet — the unbiased opinions of Orientalists are in agreement on this point. In fact, there was nothing “warlike” in his character or his inclinations. On the contrary, his leniency and forbearance towards his enemies often incurred the reproaches of the Qur'án (8 : 65 ; 9 : 80, 113). Tradition records numerous acts of clemency on his part in connection with offences against his person or his own kinsfolk.³

Some have tried to explain this striking change of attitude as being due to pressure exerted on the Prophet by his people, whose warrior-spirit was their most outstanding quality. But the learned scholars, who have studied more profoundly the psychology of the Arab, do not agree with this theory. On the contrary, they have pointed out in what horror the shedding of blood is held by Arabs, even those of the desert. They maintain that Bedouin Arabs in no way

1 In order to appreciate the contrast between this revolutionary change and the other conquests of history, one could read with advantage : Jouguet, *L'Impérialisme Macédonien et l'Hellénisation d l'Orient* ; Gautier, *Moeurs et Coutumes des Musulmans*, Book 3.

2 Lammens, *Berceau de l'Islam à la veille de l'Hégire*, p. 265.

3 An instance of this was when he pardoned the Qurayshite emissary who had come to assassinate him after the Battle of Badr ; and the Jewish woman who tried to poison him at Khaybar ; and the other who, during the Emigration, brutally jostled his eldest daughter, Zaynab, who was pregnant, thus causing abortion. Another instance was the clemency with which he treated the people who slandered his innocent wife, 'A'ishah. We especially admire his infinitely conciliatory and generous conduct during and after the conquest of Mecca. (See J. B. St.-Hilaire, *Mahomet et le Koran*, pp. 125-130.)

hanker after armed combat, but that, if it is forced on them, they will retaliate rather than submit to shame and humiliation. Even when a *razzia* (raid) was made by a party — which often happened, to the detriment of one side or the other — the nomad tribes would endeavour scrupulously to avoid incidents which might lead to bloodshed.⁴

So that it is not in the psychology of the Arab people, nor in that of its Head, that we shall find a satisfactory explanation for this new turn of events. We shall look for it simply in the sequence of historical events, in some situation that must have been building-up during this time, and which finally brought about this drastic reaction. And here, in fact, the Qur'an gives us a most provocative picture.

After their migration to Medina the Muslims could not remain oblivious to the persecutions of their brethren in Mecca

We recall that at the time of the Emigration the Prophet remained at Mecca for some little time after his disciples had gone, and that he left at the last possible moment. And we can be sure that he would not have left behind him anything likely to give rise to anxiety. In that stubborn city no one would have hoped for any new conversions to Islam. But such was not the case. And in the Qur'an we read the cry of anguish of the defenceless Muslims, "... men, women and children", living at Mecca, suffering for their faith and invoking the help of God against the oppression of the unbelievers" (the Qur'an 4 : 75). What hap happened was that although the propagation of Islam was, under the circumstances at the time, no longer being actively undertaken, those spiritual seeds already sown — lesson and example — had not ceased to fructify. And the more brightly the flame of faith burned in the hearts of the Believers, the more unscrupulous became the rancour and the cruelty of those who were trying to extinguish it, and the more numerous became their helpless victims.

Indeed! And because the emigrants and their hosts, in their safe refuge at Medina, were now enjoying complete liberty for their faith and the practice of religion, had they the right to stay wrapped up in their egoism and remain indifferent to the fate of their brothers? Could they reasonably and categorically refuse to go to the help of Truth and Virtue, and allow despotism and tyranny to mount open war against them?

And yet the material help rightly and justly demanded by such circumstances was not something which the Muslims found easy to envisage, at least in its really belligerent form. Here again we need only have recourse to our one source of information *par excellence* — the Qur'an — to appreciate the hesitation and the doubts which assailed the "free men" when faced with the military plan which had as its objective the liberation of the "prisoners". It was not only their loathing of warfare (the Qur'an 2 : 216), or the instinct of self-preservation (the Qur'an 4 : 77, 78), but the particularly difficult circumstances which, in their view, rendered almost absurd such an undertaking as armed intervention. Can we suddenly set out to attack an enemy already on the move against us and several times superior to us in number and material (the Qur'an 3 : 13)? Would it not be better to limit our activity to a few indirect kinds of reprisal,⁵ and thus show the Qurayshites our reaction to their persecution, forcing them to leave our fellow-Muslims in peace? It would surely be preferable to waylay our enemy's caravan than to face the shock of meeting their army (the Qur'an 8 : 7)! This was the line of reasoning in the Muslim camp.

The Musiims were commanded by God to defend themselves collectively after suffering for more than ten years

But the imperative call to duty was there — the hour of supreme sacrifice had sounded. God had manifested "... the truth of what was true and ... the falsehood of what was false" (the Qur'an 8 : 7). They could therefore only accept the situation, so that each would know why death might come to him, or why he might survive (the Qur'an 42) — the one side for its ideals and the other for its false idols (the Qur'an 4 : 76).

Such were the circumstances at the time when the first outbreak of armed conflict occurred. So long as the persecution took the form of isolated and sporadic incidents, the Muslims were ordered, during the time they were at Mecca, to abstain from any violent retaliation, and to endure their wounds and losses with patience and courage (the Qur'an 4 : 77). But now that the fury of the pagans had become generalised into definite armed attack (the Qur'an 2 : 217), the Believers were, after more than ten years of patient waiting, authorised (the Qur'an 22 : 39) and then commanded (the Qur'an 2 : 216)⁶ to defend themselves collectively, and above all, to give help to those of their number who were quite defenceless (the Qur'an 4 : 75). To be strictly objective, there is no justifiable reproach that can be made against such an attitude, which was purely and simply a defensive one, and one imbued with the utmost devotion and self-sacrifice. But here the question is to know whether, as a result of this, the Qur'anic legislation underwent a certain degree of evolution and extended this right of legitimate self-defence to all decisions involving offensive operations.

Western writers on Islam are wrong in believing that the Muslims believe that they have the right to fight non-believers

We consider the Western world to be ill-informed on this point. It is generally believed by Westerners that Muslim peoples have the right, and even the duty, according to their Sacred Book, which they quote in support of this view, to use armed force, either to impose their teachings on others, or to destroy those who will not adopt them. And to this conception Westerners have given the term "Holy War", a term which they have associated with the Qur'anic word *jihad*. The truth is that this generic term, which really signifies "effort", has no specific military connotation, since we also find it used in the Meccan chapters to indicate either some religious preaching or missionary activity, involving purely pacific methods of persuasion (the Qur'an 25 : 52), or simply a purely personal moral effort on the part of a Believer (the Qur'an 29 : end). The term which signifies armed combat in the real sense of the word is *qital*.

4 See Lammens, *Berceau de l'Islam*, p. 247.

5 It is a fact of history that, at the time of their self-imposed exile, the Muslims had left their lands, property and wealth in the hands of their persecutors. (The Qur'an 22 : 40.) They were surely entitled to the right to extract at least partial indemnity from the goods of such people. In his book, *Sources of the Qur'an*, p. 276, Dr. Sinclair Tisdall refers to such operations as "looting expeditions".

6 The transformation of this authorisation into a command, coming as it did in such unfavourable conditions, we find it difficult to agree with Tisdall that "... the Qur'anic law had been modified proportionately to the success of Muhammad's armed forces" (p. 279). This author has made other mistakes about this chapter: (1) by reversing the meaning of the verse (2 : -217), which condemns all hostilities during the sacred month (p. 276); (2) by erroneously assuming that the methods of repression adopted against the terrorists (5 : 33) were a new form of warfare which constituted a third stage in this development (p. 277).

The reason, the aim and the limits the Qur'an assigns to warfare

Now we need only refer to the text to ascertain the reason, the aim and the limits which the Qur'anic law assigns to such warfare. It says :

"Fight those who attack you, and do not act as aggressors. God does not love those who exceed the limits" (2 : 190).

"If they desist (pardon them), for God is Forgiving, Merciful . . . If they desist, abstain from all reprisals, except against the oppressors" (2 : 192, 193).

"If they remain peaceful (neutral), and do not attack you, and give you a guarantee of security, God does not allow you to molest them. You will find others who desire that they should be safe from you and secure from their own people ; but each time they find the opportunity to foment disorder, they will take it. Therefore if they do not withdraw from you, and (do not) offer you peace and restrain their hands, then seize them and put them to death wherever you find them; and against these We have given you a clear authority" (4 : 90, 91). And in another chapter we find the same injunctions.

"God does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of (your) religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes. He loves the doers of justice. But He forbids all alliance with those who attacked you because of your religion, who drove you forth from your homes and who backed up (others) in your expulsion. Such an alliance would be an unjust thing" (60 : 8, 9).

Even in Chapter 9 — the one which is the most severe against the unbelievers, the hypocrites and the lukewarm, and which begins with a solemn proclamation of separation from the polytheists — we see with what meticulous care the text excludes from this measure those who had not violated their agreement. This separation, it specifies, does not apply to

" . . . idolaters with whom you made an agreement, and who have not failed you in anything and have not backed up anyone against you. So fulfil their agreement to the end of their term. For God loves those of good faith" (9 : 4).

The reason motivating the warfare to which the Qur'an exhorts Believers is even more precisely defined in Verse 13 of the same Chapter :

"Would you hesitate to fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger? And they attacked you first? Do you fear them? God is most deserving that you should fear Him, if you are Believers."

And it follows naturally that :

" . . . you will fight the idolaters all together, as they fight you all together" (9 : 36).

But :

" . . . so long as they (who made the agreement) remain sincere and correct towards you, be true towards them. For God loves those who respect His law" (9 : 7).

Nowhere does the Qur'an authorize Muslims to start an aggressive war

Nowhere in the Qur'an do we find any authorisation to take armed initiative as an aggressor against anyone. All that was permitted was a reprisal which was adapted and limited in its degree to the gravity of the incursion made by the attacking party. In other words, strict reciprocity, no more, no less. Further, even for those who were bound by a pact made with the Muslims, and who asked for their protection, the Qur'an enjoined the Prophet to give them his firm

Thus the entire responsibility for a war falls on the attacking party — the "instigators", the aggressors. But how assurance that they would be so protected (the Qur'an 9 : 6)?⁷ far does such responsibility extend? Is there a collective responsibility? We have shown in another volume⁸ that the Qur'anic principle of iputability, both moral and penal, is purely individualist, and that civil responsibility has a very pronounced tendency towards the same connotation. The same can be said of military responsibility. When the Qur'an says :

"Fight those who attack you" (2 : 190)

it is an understood thing that this refers to those who actually and physically make use of arms to attack others, as aggressors. Tradition has been at great pains to insist on this precise definition, in order that there may be no mistake or confusion on this point. Women, children, old men, the blind, the infirm, the mentally-afflicted, the peasants in their fields, hermits isolated in their cells . . .⁹ the Qur'an prescribed that all these people were to be immune from armed conflict. This edict was the origin of the prohibition of all means and devices having a general destructive effect, such as intentional flooding and the ravages of fire. When rigorously carrying out the Qur'anic command to pardon those who desist from fighting, the Prophet even went so far as to prohibit the pursuit of an enemy in flight.

The real objective of this legislation is now quite plain. It aims, quite simply, at warding off a danger. For Islam categorically condemns the spirit of destruction and domination (the Qur'an 28 : 83). It does not even aim at imposing on mankind a common ideology (the Qur'an 10 : 99). Indeed, no one would ever succeed in such a project. The Founder of Islam was under no illusion as to his human possibilities, for the Qur'an definitely set limits to his future activity and the scope of his mission. Could he change the will of God? It is by Divine decree that :

" . . . there will always be divergences and differences of opinion among men" (11 : 118);

"In spite of all your efforts the majority of men will remain unbelieving" (21 : 103).

Far from wishing to constrain the consciences of men and to put obstacles in the way of religious liberty (the Qur'an 2 : 256), Islam, on the contrary, opposes all those who would attempt to prevent the free expression of this liberty, and who do their utmost to hinder its development (the Qur'an 2 : 217). To shatter this obstacle — such is the liberal and impartial intention which should motivate the combatants (the Qur'an 2 : 193 ; 8 : 39).

The Qur'an's attitude to the freedom of conscience

Does this mean that the salvation or perdition of other men should leave the Muslim "cold" or indifferent? Such explanation has sometimes been advanced to account for this spirit of tolerance and forbearance towards people of other confessions.¹⁰ But this is only another instance of the very mistaken conception regarding the real character of the Qur'anic doctrine, which is accused of carrying out either too much, or too little, proselytism, of being either fanatic, or indifferent. In actual fact, neither of these two extremes ex-

⁷ Sinclair Tisdall arrives at this point in his *Sources of the Qur'an*, after very carefully omitting to mention the passages which limit the right to have recourse to arms. But, in order to justify his findings, he is obliged to replace this verse with "suspension points" (. . .). The verse in question enjoins that "neutrals" be given hospitable protection.

⁸ See Draz, *La Morale du Koran*, chapters 2, 4 and 5.

⁹ And yet, if it were really a question of combating a religion, would it not have been more expedient to choose, as objects of attack, these same religious personalities?

¹⁰ V. Gautier, *Moeurs et Coutumes des Musulmans*, p. 209.

plains the attitude of the Qur'an. It is a Muslim's duty to preach truth and extol virtue (the Qur'an 3 : 104 ; 103 : 3), and to do this with zeal and energy (the Qur'an 25 : 52). But our exhortation must be done in the wisest, the most persuasive and the gentlest manner (the Qur'an 16 : 125). In this domain the duty of everyone involves not constraint or coercion, but the simple demonstration of what one believes to be true and just. The other party is free to accept or reject, provided it allows those who believe the liberty to venerate their ideal and give it the honour which it merits. Apart from this, an individual is entirely responsible for his own actions (the Qur'an 2 : 272 ; 5 : 105).

The principle which determines the relationship of Muslims to other peoples

The principle which determines, juridically, the relationship of the Muslim community with other peoples and religions is generally described as the principle of "tolerance". Under some aspects this appellation can be regarded as being an "understatement", and for the following reasons. We will consider the case of those people who do not adopt the Muslim faith, but who submit peacefully to its Civil Law. Firstly, such people must not only be "tolerated", must not only be guaranteed complete respect for the territory they occupy and for their members (their persons, their property, their religion and customs), but Islam assumes the solemn duty of ensuring these liberties in the very same degree as it ensures the liberties of its own subjects (*lahum má laná wa 'alayhim má 'alayná*).

Secondly, from those who do not accept the Muslim faith or the Muslim Civil Law, the Qur'an simply demands a friendly and peaceful attitude, in return for which they will be treated with a benevolent liberality founded on both justice and goodwill (the Qur'an 60 : 8). It is only when none of these three conditions is fulfilled (religious communal life, social unity or good-neighbourliness), that positive resistance is prescribed. When the forces of unbelief oppose the Faith to the point where they will set out on the path of wholesale persecution and annihilation, is it conceivable that Religion will sit with folded arms and passively watch its own disappearance ?

There may be those who claim to have discovered some ulterior motive in this struggle for the Faith and for religious liberty. We ask them simply to give us the approximate number of converts to Islam made by the use of force or tyrannical methods. During the beginnings of Islam the early Muslims had their own experience of both methods and they discovered that, for promoting the best interests of the Faith, nothing was more successful than the quiet exchange of ideas in liberty and peace. They learned a valuable lesson — that it was wrong to try to impose their religion on others by using any kind of force. And we are told that during the Truce of Hudaibiyyah, thanks to the opening of the frontiers between the two opposing regions, the number of converts to Islam far exceeded the total number made in all the preceding years.

Once can certainly suppose that some unavoidable errors were made during periods of confusion ; one can even suspect that in later generations there was a certain degree of "deviation" in the treatment of non-Muslim peoples. But let us read this pronouncement by a contemporary critic¹¹ who, incidentally, does not declare himself in favour of the Muslim régime : "In spite of the official obstacles put in the way of

conversion,¹² there were conversions *en masse*" (p. 217). He goes on : "Never, in all the ardour of his new-found faith, has an Arab tried to drown a rival religion in a sea of blood" (p. 207). "When dealing with Christians, as also with Manicheans, the Caliph never had a hand in any persecution whatsoever" (p. 208).

The rapid spread of Islam is due to its intrinsic qualities

In any case, the evils and the hardships arising during the Islamic conquests were relatively few, and the operations so rapid, that we sometimes get the impression that the gates were already ajar, and that the advancing conquerors had only to push them open. This rapidity on the one hand, and on the other the establishment of order and the reign of justice which followed immediately, averted much human and material loss. The Protestant Reformation, which was concerned with only a few doctrines of Christianity, cost Europe, over a period of a century and a half, untold misery and deplorable losses and tragedies.

Every new institution or structure of an artificial nature, although it may persist for a time by virtue of its initial momentum, tends to disintegrate as soon as those factors which necessitated its inception disappear. What do we notice today, more than twelve centuries after the cessation of Islamic expansion ? This institution, which holds sway over peoples who are different with regard to race, language, colour and climate, from China to Morocco and from Lithuania to Mozambique, and which constitutes more than one-sixth¹³ of the world population — this institution, which during the course of history has been exposed to the ravages of all kinds of internal and external destructive agencies, has not lost so very much of its "area", and certainly nothing of its "depth". In spite of the vicissitudes of political change, its religious and moral edifice remains perfectly upright and so stoutly solid that "... Since from the beginning of the Hegira there has not been a single case of a Muhammadan (Muslim) being converted to another religion."¹⁴ In any case, one can be very certain that Muslims are much less liable to throw over their beliefs than the followers of any other confession.

Surely we should be grossly ignorant of the laws of psychology if we attributed this unswerving loyalty to some sort of atavistic urge — some impulsive yearning whose origin lay in the simple discipline and constraint imposed on their earliest ancestors, the memory of which is still preserved, even in their cerebral structure !

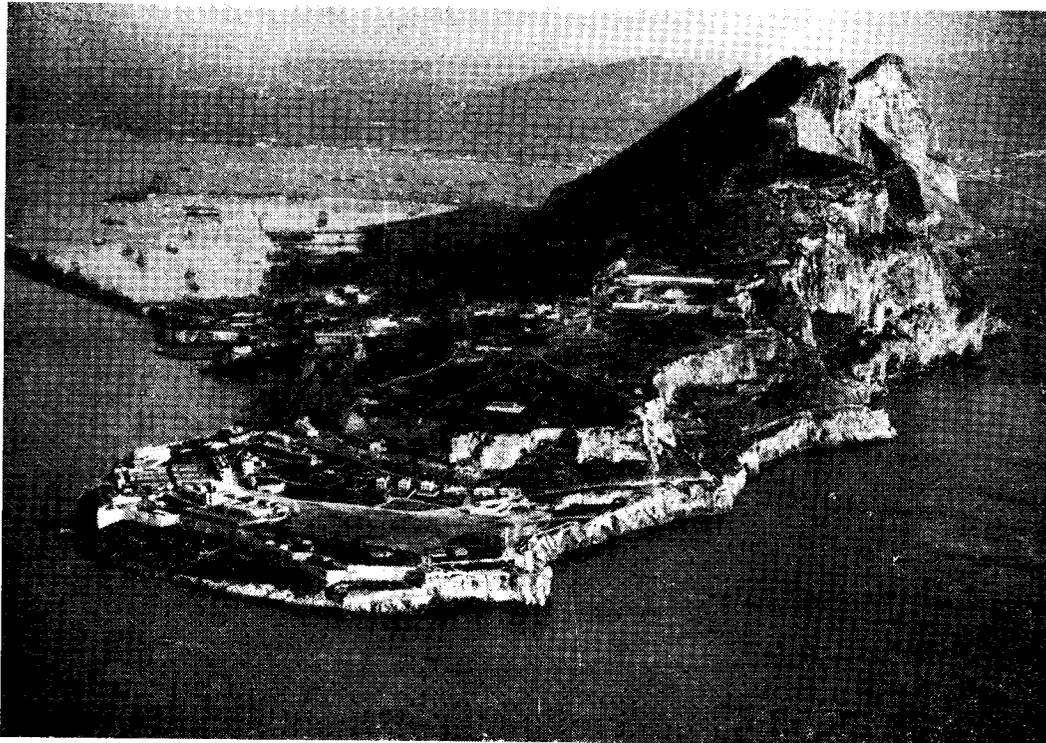
So we are obliged to recognize the existence of a number of intrinsic qualities — qualities which have been decisive in the development and consolidation of Islam in regions and countries so far from its birthplace.

11 V. Gautier, *Moeurs et Coutumes des Musulmans*.

12 Here the writer is doubtless referring to the land taxes. Historians record that the Caliphs made a point to see that these taxes were much less onerous for the native inhabitants of a country than for the Muslims — the conquerors. Thus, for example, 'Umar II ordered the Governor of Egypt to levy a tax of 40 dinars on each Muslim landowner, but only half this amount, 20 dinars, on each Coptic landowner. (Ibn Taghribirdí, *Al-Nujúm Al-Záhirah*, Vol. I, p. 238, quoted by Dr. Salamah, *Enseignement Islamique en Egypte*, p. XIV.)

13 According to the most conservative recent statistics there are now 600 million believers in the Muslim world.

14 Porter, *Discours Préliminaire*, French translation in the Preface of *Alcoran* by Du Ryer.



CHILDREN'S PAGE

By OLIVE TOTO

*Gibraltar. Named after General Tariq
(Jabal Tariq in Arabic) means
The Rock of Tariq*

Daddy talks about Muslim Spain

Sádiq was twelve years old. He had lived in England since he was ten and a half years old. His father had brought him from Pakistan and had sent him to school in England.

Sádiq had told his teacher that he was a Muslim (not a Muhammadan). Thereupon she had said, "I suppose your parents would object to your hearing about Jesus in our scripture lesson."

Sádiq went home and told his father what the teacher had said. Sádiq's father was a well educated man. He knew that to understand one's religion and tell others about it, one must also know about other religions. And so Sádiq took a message back to his teacher which said that his father did not mind his son hearing about Jesus because Jesus and Abraham and all the prophets in the Bible were his prophets in Islam too. But, of course, the father had added that Sádiq could not pray to Jesus or say "Through Jesus Christ, our Lord" at the end of a prayer, because in Islam there is only One God and the Muslims prayed to or through no one but direct to God.

I am not narrow-minded, the father had said. I know it is good for my boy to know all religions. Nor am I afraid that he will forget his Islam, because we practice our faith in our home and my little boy sees his parents praying and talking about their religion. Also, we make it a point to follow the sayings of our Prophet in all our dealings and our little boy will learn to appreciate Islam in this way. Because I do not say that my son must not listen to other religions does not make me feel my duty is ended. Our family gives him a living example of our faith in our daily life.

The little boy's teacher was greatly impressed. I wish all Muslims were like that, she had said.

The father, on hearing about her remarks had replied, "All real Muslims are like that and tell your teacher that she should read what our Prophet has said about tolerance and knowledge."

Sádiq got on very well at school. He came home one day from school and said, "Daddy, our school is going to Spain. Can I go too?" His father thought for a while and then said, "What part of Spain, my son?"

"I think the South of Spain," answered Sádiq.

The father looked at his son and said, "Don't you think of anything when you hear the South of Spain mentioned?"

"No," answered the boy. "I think of nothing except the nice sun and at school I have seen fine buildings and fine gardens in a book."

"Did not your teacher tell you who built those fine buildings?" asked the father.

"No," answered the boy.

"That settles it. My son, you must go to Spain and see what we Muslims have done in the past. Sit down, my boy, and hear about Southern Spain and our glorious past.

"Southern Spain," said the father, "was conquered by the Arabs and the Berbers, who both came from North Africa (the part which today is called Morocco). Spain would have resisted the Arabs much longer than she did, had it not been

for the fact that inside Spain the people were oppressed and unhappy because their king was behaving in a very bad manner.

"It is said that an important man called Count Julian, who was the Governor of Ceuta, was fed up with the bad ways of his king and some of his countrymen. So he planned to ask for help from the Arabs and Berbers and, as you can guess, the slaves in Spain certainly would not have fought hard for their masters, because their Spanish masters had never treated them kindly. The slaves thought, 'We have nothing to lose even if the Arabs do come to Spain.' The rich governors, indulging themselves in too much wine and luxury, would not care to fight unless they were forced to. Now this Count Julian, who was very angry and disgusted with the king (whose name was King Roderick), decided to call the Arabs and Berbers for help.

"Although Count Julian before had been against these Muslims, he set out to hold a conference with them. He visited Músá Ibn Nusayr, the Arab Governor of North Africa, who was the man who had attracted the Berbers to Islam. Julian told Músá how wonderful Spain was and offered Músá the use of his ships and offered to show him the way to conquer Spain. Músá was both surprised and suspicious. So he sent a message to the Caliph at Damascus, Syria, asking him for advice and instructions. In reply, the Caliph warned Músá to be very careful. Accordingly, a small army of only 500 men went in Julian's four ships to the coast of Andalusia, which was in the South of Spain. Their general was named Tarif. This happened in the year 710 C.E. Tarif was very successful and to this day the part which Tarif conquered is called Tarifah.

"This satisfied the invaders that Julian had meant what he said when he had offered to help them. But Músá was still careful, as was the Caliph in Damascus. He gave orders that the Muslim army must not be sacrificed.

"In the year 711 C.E. King Roderick had to go and put down a revolt amongst some of his people in the north of Spain, who were very dissatisfied and had started to fight. Now here was Músá's chance and he dispatched a general called Táriq off to Spain. Such great success did Táriq have that he was very pleased with himself. He landed at the Rock of the Lion, which now bears Táriq's name and so it is called Jabal Táriq, or, as we say it today, Gibraltar, meaning the Rock of Táriq (in the Arabic language). Táriq then captured a place called Carteya. King Roderick heard all about this and was amazed. He rushed back with his army, which was a very large one, but most of his men were fed up and having heard of Táriq's success, they meant to go over to his side, because they knew that Táriq would be good to them and not treat them as their king did. And also in Roderick's army were many ill-treated slaves, and many others who thought that by helping the Arabs, they would be free from Roderick's domination and that when they were free they would be able to drive out the Moors. You know that the word 'Moor' should only be used for the Berbers of North Africa and Spain, but generally we use it for Arabs and all Muslims who were in Spain, including the Berbers, and that is how I use this word throughout this talk.

"To come back to the army of Roderick, it was six times larger than that of the Moors, and Táriq, not knowing that any of the enemy were going to come over to his side, felt a little disheartened and cried out to his men, 'My men, before you is the enemy and the sea is at your back, there is no escape for you save in valour and resolution.' But they shouted back,

'We will follow thee, O Táriq.' The Moors then rushed forward and fought; even then the battle lasted one whole week. King Roderick kept on shouting to his army for support but in the end he gave in. Little did he know that the Muslims would rule southern Spain which, as I have said, was called Andalusia, and which is two-thirds of the Spanish peninsula, for eight hundred years.

"The Moors worked wonders with a place called Cordova. It became the marvel of the Middle Ages at a time when Europe was steeped in nothing but ignorance and superstition. Historians also admit that civilisation and learning were at their best in Andalusia when under the Moors. Andalusia had had many rulers but never were there any that ruled as well as the Moors. Historians say that the Spaniards were far happier than they had been for years. For instance, their last conquerors (the Gothic rulers) had persecuted the Spaniards, hoping to make them join their faith. It is openly admitted that no one was ever compelled to join Islam and that, amongst many other things, was why they preferred the rule of the Moors. They never had any religious riots and it is said that Músá, the Governor, married the widow of Roderick. I am sure that she must have become a Muslim. The slaves were now being treated much better but no Christian was compelled to free his slave. No Muslim owned a slave to use him just as a slave; by this I mean that a slave was no longer a parcel belonging to a master. The Muslims would give land to these slaves, let them work on it and ask for a share of the returns of the produce. If a slave became a Muslim, the law was that once he had said, 'There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet', then the slave must be freed.

"There were many ups and downs in the eight hundred years of the Muslim rule. At the beginning of this rule many Moors came across into Spain to compete in learning and in the arts. By the years 912 to 961 C.E. Moorish Spain had reached the height of her glory and fame. The capital of Cordova was a great centre of learning and was known everywhere. It had more than 100,000 houses and its seventy libraries were filled with very valuable books. There were also nine hundred public baths built and made to look very attractive. Here and there were mosques and palaces of Moorish design, with their courtyards. They also had bookshops where the best of books were sold.

"Southern Spain became the greatest of countries for trade, art and learning. Students flocked to it, businesses flourished. Looms sprang up for weaving wool. The silkworm was brought from the East and established there and from the cocoons of the silkworm silk was woven into material. Glasswork, leatherwork and stationery were made and designed in Cordova. The University of Cordova in the Great Mosque was the best in the world. It had Christian and Muslim students from all over the world. In fact, the Moors had made this place and age a golden dream come true, never to be forgotten.

"For many years the Moors flourished and were happy through the results of their toil. But, alas, as usual when people get mighty, they forget the main points of brotherhood and a few years later some of the Moors would turn against other Moors and conflict would arise. The enemy saw their chance and grabbed at it. They thought that this wonderful reign had gone on for so long and for so many years that if they got rid of the Moors, it would still remain the same and that having had eight hundred years of Moorish rule and

education they would be able to carry on in the same way on their own.

“The Spanish from the North fought the Moors and managed to drive them out and so, once more, Cordova was in their hands. They set to work to crush Islam and its believers, of whom many were put to death. For a while the Christian rule seemed all right because of the Muslim foundations of learning, etc., but then deterioration set in. The looms almost ceased to work, the baths were not used, the arts and crafts of leather- and glass-work suffered badly because there were no Moors there to look after these crafts. It was not the great city it had been. The students no longer flocked to Cordova; it was no longer the centre of learning. Only aged Moors were left in Cordova and perhaps some widows and children. This was a black period for all and the Moors suffered terribly at the hands of the fanatics.

“City after city fell. The small Muslim state of Granada survived until 1491 C.E. and then it surrendered. Islam and its culture was left behind in the buildings and books, and many of these buildings can be seen today. The Spanish had a king called Ferdinand to speed them onwards. He hated the Moors and Islam. Already 200,000 Moors had been killed but he meant to wipe every single one out. This he himself did not quite succeed in doing, for altogether there were 500,000 Muslims left. Seventy-five years afterwards the Spanish made up their minds to finish the Moors off. They sent the Moors out under escort of the army in the direction of Africa, many died on the way but some of them did reach it. There were still a few left, but since these Moors would not become Christians, many were tortured and put to death. Decay was fast setting into the land of Spain; the Spanish had killed the people who had made them great.

“The people of Spain had become their own hangman. Spain sank into a period of darkness. She busied herself with the inquisition of the Muslims and anyone who was not a Catholic. Everyone who refused to become a Catholic was put to death and so died the greatness of Moorish Spain through this Spanish narrow-mindedness. As I have said before, many of the fine buildings remain to this day and now they prove a source of income to Spain through tourists wish-

ing to see these wonderful buildings of Moorish architecture and their gardens, all designed and made by Muslims.

“Here are a few of these fine places to see, my son, when you visit Spain. First, I would like to mention the Mosque at Cordova, which even today is the largest covered Mosque in the world; it has 999 pillars in Moorish style.

“The Alhambra is a wonderful palace in Granada. Here you must be sure to see the courtyard, with its stone lions and fountains. Water is seen to be coming out from the mouth of every lion.

“There is also a wonderful garden in Granada, well planned with plants and wonderful flowers. It is called the Generalife Gardens.

“In Seville there are many buildings built by the Moors. In many cases Mosques have been turned into churches. In fact you can see Muslim architecture in Toledo and other places all over the south.

“I for one feel that if the Moors had strictly followed the Prophet's teaching, they would not have lost Spain. Petty jealousies and vanity can ruin any nation, even though the rot may only be in the top ranks. But such a weakness is like a maggot; it eats everything away. But I am sure you must have noticed how the Muslims had no Inquisition to torture the Christians.”

“Oh,” said Sádiq, “I shall be proud to be able to go to Spain.”

“Now don't forget your homework,” said his father and off Sádiq went, a very happy boy.

From this true story, dear children, you can learn the lesson always to think of the Prophet's teachings and be united and then you cannot go wrong. I do want you to be proud of the wonderful Muslim glories which we still have in Spain.

Because we have a wonderful past, dear children, shall we try to make a glorious future? You can if you are honest and true in everything.

Goodnight, dear children, and may God bless you!

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by Mawlana Abul Kalam Azad

(Edited and rendered into English by Dr. Syed 'Abdul Latif)

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Prophecies about the Prophet Muhammad in Christian Scriptures

The first part of this résumé was published in the *Islamic Review* for September 1967. We discussed in it a part of the first pillar of Islam — the formula of the Faith — “I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger”. In this connection we examined the prophecy of the Paraclete pronounced by Jesus Christ.

There are numerous prophecies in the world scriptures about the coming of the Last Messenger of God — Muhammad. Our Christian friends have tried to convince themselves that the O.T. prophecies were meant for Jesus Christ. Twenty-eight years ago a Christian missionary friend gave me two books by the Most Reverend Goodier, S.J., *The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, London 1934, and *About the Old Testament*, London 1929, to read for the obvious purpose of convincing me too. But when I read them I found that none of them could possibly fit on Jesus Christ. Rather, they convinced me that all of them were doubtlessly about the coming of the Last Messenger of God, Muhammad, about whom Jesus Christ himself had prophesied.

Prophecies about Muhammad in Christian Scriptures

Let us examine together some of the prophecies mentioned by the Most Reverend Alban Goodier, S.J., in his *The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, London 1934. On page 277 he quotes the following prophecy :

“So the Prophet had foretold, so John the Baptist had announced, the coming of the King :

And he shall rule from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”

My commentary on the above :

Look at the map of the world. See the Arabian peninsula. On its east and west are the Arabian and the Red Seas. In the north is the river Euphrates and in the south, the land ends, beyond which lies the Indian Ocean. Now then, judge for yourself. Is there any other country in the whole world that lies between the two seas with a river and an ocean on the other two ? Can this prophecy in this concrete form fit on anyone else but Muhammad ?

He is the only Messenger of God on whom this and all the ensuing prophecies fit completely, perfectly and exactly.

The Reverend Goodier continues with the prophecies :

“Before him the Ethiopians shall fall down
And his enemies shall lick the ground.¹

The kings of Tharsis and the Islands shall offer presents.

The kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts.²

For he shall deliver the poor from the mighty³
And the needy that had no helper.⁴

He shall spare the poor and needy
And he shall save the souls of the poor.

He shall save their souls from Usuries⁵ and Iniquities⁶

And their name shall be honourable in his sight⁷
And he shall live

And to him shall be given of the gold of Arabia⁸
For him they shall always adore.⁹

They shall bless him all the day.”¹⁰

My commentary on the above :

1. The Meccans, Muhammad's chief enemies, and all others, including the Ethiopian mercenaries, did lick the ground and he came out victorious in his struggle for survival.

2. It was natural for them to bring him gifts because the Last Prophet was their ruler.

3. The history and the Qur'anic legislation are its proof that Muhammad did deliver the poor from the mighty.

4. We read in the Holy Qur'an :

"A questioner asks about the chastisement to befall the disbelievers — there is none to avert it" (70 : 1-2).

"Except those who pray, who are constant at their prayer, and in whose wealth there is a known right for those who ask (for help) and the destitute" (70 : 22-25).

"And serve God, and associate naught with Him, and do utmost good to the parents, and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and the alien neighbour, and the companion in the journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess. Surely God loves not such as are proud, boastful" (4 : 36).

5. There is no other revealed book that has done away with usuries and iniquities than the Holy Qur'an, which says:

"O you who believe, devour not usury, doubling and redoubling, exercise self-restraint for God, that you may be successful" (3 : 129).

"Those who swallow usury cannot arise except as he arises whom the devil prostrates by his touch. That is because they say, Trading is only like usury. And God has allowed trading and forbidden usury. To whomsoever then the admonition has come from his Lord, and he desists, he shall have what has already passed. And his affair is in the hands of God. And whosoever returns (to it) — these are the companions of the Fire : therein they will abide" (2 : 275).

"God will blot out usury, and He causes charity to prosper. God loves not any ungrateful sinner" (2 : 276).

"O you who believe, exercise your self-restraint for God and relinquish what remains (due) from usury, if you are believers" (2 : 278).

"But if you do (it) not, then be apprised of war from God and His Messenger ; and if you repent, then you shall have your capital. Wrong not, and you shall not be wronged" (2 : 279).

"And for their taking usury — though indeed they were forbidden it — and their devouring the property of people falsely. And We have prepared for the disbelievers from among them a painful chastisement" (4 : 161).

"And whatever you lay out at usury, so that it may increase the wealth of men, it increases not according to the laws of God ; and whatever you give in charity, desiring God's pleasure — these will get manifold" (30 : 39).

Let me say a few words about the last verse (30 : 39).

In Great Britain, for instance, thousands of millions of pounds are paid in interest every year. This is mainly paid by the workers and the lower middle class. They must demand more wages and salaries, if they have to meet these payments. The increase in their wages and salaries means that the prices of the goods which they are engaged to pro-

duce must go up. This raises the prices of the food-stuffs, articles of daily use, transport, etc. The debtors again find themselves unable to meet the interest payments along with the instalments of the capital borrowed. They again agitate for an increase in their wages and salaries. Again the prices go up in their turn.

Thus a vicious circle is created. That is why we find the prices are going up every year regularly. Those poor people who do not borrow any money are hit more harshly by the price increases. The country as a whole finds it difficult to sell the goods in the competitive export markets. Those countries, like Western Germany, that have lower interest rates, are doing better in the foreign markets than Great Britain. A day must come when it will be most difficult, if not impossible, to export anything at all. So the country as a whole, eventually, stands to lose and all the members of this nation will suffer, for their standard of living will come crumbling down. This is what the words of God in the Qur'an (30 : 39), "it increases not according to the laws of God", mean. With the increase in the prices the buying power of the pound steadily decreases, so the lender of money on interest will not gain anything in the long run, while he is actively engaged in destroying the economy of the country, which can never become steady as long as such parasites keep on sucking the life-blood of the nation.

By prohibiting usury the message of God, which has come down to us through His Last Messenger, Muhammad, has saved the needy, the helpless and the poor. No Muslim can ever charge interest. Many wealthy Muslims are known to forego even the bank interest in millions of pounds on their huge deposits.

Some ill-informed writers, among Muslims, have given their verdict in favour of accepting the bank interest. No matter what type of interest it may be, of bank or otherwise, it must destroy the stability of economy in the long run and engulf the innocent poor in the most painful hardship. The only countries which can enjoy a steady economy must be only those wherein no kind of interest may be allowed.

Iniquities

6. As to the iniquities, you have only to read the Holy Qur'an and the histories of the Muslim world. Even the slaves, to give but one example, were given such an equal status that the free men of Europe could only envy them. The venom of the word, slave, was completely ejected by treating the slaves as sons and daughters, i.e. as members of the families of their masters. The first dynasty of the Muslim Emperors of India were slaves or sons of slaves. The first Empress of India, Radhiyyah Sultánah, was the daughter of the second Muslim emperor of India, Iltutmish (d. 1236 C.E.), who was slave of the first slave emperor, Qutbud-Din Aiybak, who himself was a slave of Ghiyásud-Din Ghauri. The *Mamlúk* rulers of Egypt, as the name denotes, were slaves.

A daughter of the Prophet's aunt was married to Zayd, a freed slave. The sister of 'Abd al-Rahmán Ibn 'Auf, a veteran of *Badr*, the first battle of Islam that saved Islam from extinction, and one of the top ranking men of his time, was married to Bilál, the freed Negro slave. When Egypt was conquered, which was part of the Byzantine Empire, Cyrus, its administrator, asked for a delegation to negotiate peace. "Cyrus was shocked to receive one headed by a Negro, 'Ubádah Ibn al-Sámit . . . Cyrus agreed to pay tribute and hastened to Alexandria to forward the terms to the emperor" (Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*).

The envoy of Cyrus reported : " Their (Muslims) leader is like unto one of them : the low cannot be distinguished from the high, nor the master from the slave . . ." *Ibid*.

We read in the Holy Qur'an :

" He (God) sets forth to you an example relating to yourselves. Have you among those whom your right hands possess partners in that which We have provided you with, so that with respect to it you are alike — you fear them as you fear each other? Thus do We make the messages clear for a people who understand " (30 : 28).

" And God has made some of you excel others in the means of subsistence ; so those who are made to excel give not away their sustenance to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal therein. Will then they deny the favour of God ? " (16 : 71).

Observe the stern scolding of God to the Muslim masters of slaves — both Muslim and non-Muslim — if they did not lift them up to make them their equal in wealth. Compare this order and the actual treatment of slaves in the hands of Muslims with that of the Christians. Even today the lot of the Negroes of the United States of America, of South Africa, of Rhodesia, etc., although they are free and Christians, is pathetic indeed.

The Abolition of Slavery

The Holy Qur'an abolished slavery and established a principle of peaceful co-existence by abolishing the aggressive wars and raids which were the means of obtaining slaves, and by enjoining that the prisoners of war must be set free after the defensive war was over :—

" Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely God is able to assist them. Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say : our Lord is God. And if God did not repel some people by others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which God's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down . . ." (22 : 39-40).

" Surely God defends those who believe. Surely God loves not anyone who is habitually unfaithful, ungrateful " (22 : 38).

" And fight in the way of God against those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely God loves not the aggressors " (2 : 190).

" And if they incline to peace, incline you also to it, and trust in God. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower " (8 : 61).

" . . . when you have overcome them, make (them) prisoners, and afterwards (set them free) as a favour or for ransom till the war has laid down its burden " (47 : 4).

" It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteous is he who believes in God, and the Last Day, and the Angels and the Scriptures and the Prophets, and gives away wealth for the love of Him to the kinsfolk and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free and keeps up prayer and pays the welfare tax and keep their promise when they make one, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict. Such are they who are sincere ; and such are they who are muttaqún (those who contrain their volition) " (2 : 177).

" . . . and God loves the doers of good (to others) " (5 : 92).

" (The Zakáh, i.e. the welfare-tax) obligatory charity is only for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth), and (to free) the captives, and those in debt, and in the way of God and for the wayfarer — an ordinance from God. And God is Knowing, Wise " (9 : 60).

At every default of omission or commission one is expected to show mercy to others as a condition for forgiveness.

" And those who put away their wives by calling them their mothers, then go back on that which they said, must free a captive before they touch one another. To this you are exhorted ; and God is Aware of what you do " (58 : 3).

" But (he) attempts not the ascent. And what will make thee comprehend what the ascent is ? (It is) to free a slave, or to feed in a day of hunger, an orphan nearly related, or the poor man lying in the dust. Then he is of those who believe and exhort one another to patience and exhort one another to mercy " (90 : 11-17).

" He who frees a slave will be spared, as many parts of his body, of hell as the slave's body has." Tradition of the Prophet, *The Islamic Review* for July-August 1966.

" Your servants are your brothers put under your hands, let him who has his brother under his hand feed him from what he eats, clothe him from what he clothes himself, and do not charge them with any work beyond their power, and when you charge them with some work, help them do it ; for they are made of flesh and blood like you " *Ibid*.

" Do not refer to them as ' my slave boy ' or ' my slave girl ', but as ' my boy ' and ' my girl ' " *Ibid*.

7. The criterion of one being honourable is neither wealth nor might but, in the words of the Holy Qur'an :

" Surely the noblest of you with God is the most muttaqí (one who constrains his volition) " (49 : 13).

Thus Bilál, a Negro freed slave, was the *Mu'azzin* (one who calls for prayer) of the Prophet's Mosque ; the office which is second to that of the *Imám* (who leads the prayer). The Prophet was the *Imám* of the Mosque.

8. As said before, it was only appropriate that the gold should have been laid before the ruler of the whole of the Arab'ian peninsula. Every time the Prophet received it, he distributed it among the needy and came back to his house empty-handed.

9. The word *Muhammad*, an Arabic word, is the passive particle of the second derived form, adding the meaning to the first form, of strengthening or intensifying, so it means " much praised ", " praiseworthy ". His other name, *Ahmad*, from the same root, means to deserve praise. In every one of the five compulsory daily prayers and many optional ones, an invocation for the blessings of God on the Prophet is recited by the Muslim devotee.

10. " They shall bless him all the day." Each time the name of the Prophet is mentioned or heard by a Muslim, he says : " The peace and blessing of God be upon him ". Every Muslim does this with great reverence and as a duty.

More Prophecies

Now let us study the Reverend Alban Goodier's second book, *About the Old Testament*, London 1929. On page 176 he quotes the following prophecy :

XC. — He Will Be The New High Priest

“And thou shall speak to him, saying : Thus saith the Lord of the host, saying : Behold A Man, The Orient Is His Name : and under him shall he spring up, and shall build a temple to the Lord : and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne : and he shall be a priest upon his throne : and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zacharias VI : 12-15).

My commentary on the above :

The Prophet Muhammad built the first mosque in Medina.

The praying mat on which he stood to lead the five obligatory daily prayers became his throne after the prayers were over ; otherwise he never wore a crown, never sat on a conventional throne, never built a palace for himself, while actually he was more than a king of the whole of the Arabian peninsular. See the definition of the word “Islam” in *The Islamic Review* for September 1967 to appreciate the last part of this prophecy. The whole of the teaching of the Holy Qur'an is to establish human and animal rights and thus establish peace on the earth.

On page 80 *et seq* Mr. Goodier discusses the major prophets.

Daniel

“In the second (vision) the ram from the East is conquered by the goat from the West ; and Daniel is informed by the Angel Gabriel that this foreshadows the destruction of the Persians by the Greeks. After which will come four kingdoms, of which one is to be that of the Messiah's.”

My commentary on the above :

Muhammad is the only Prophet of God who ruled over such a kingdom.

* * *

Nahum

“Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace.”

My commentary on the above :

Muhammad, the Messenger of God, assembled the Meccans at the foot of the mountain which surrounds Mecca and asked them a hypothetical question :

“Would you believe me if I tell you that there is a powerful army behind these mountains ready to attack and destroy you ?” They all answered in one voice, “Yes, we would believe you because you have never told a lie (the Prophet was 40 years old at that time) and because you are an *amin* (trustworthy).” He said, “Then listen O Mankind ! (he did not say, listen O Meccans or Arabs) I am going to tell you the greatest truth : I bear witness that there is no deity but God Who is One, He has no partner and I am His servant and Messenger.”

This was a message of peace, a good tidings to put an end to the differences in their sentiments by bringing them to the One Deity. But they became furious and left him standing there.

The Holy Qur'an addresses mankind and not a particular people. It says :

“O men, serve your Lord Who created you and those before you, so that you may exercise self-restraint” (2 : 21).

During the first three years a few who embraced Islam used to go to the mountain passes to join in the prayers with the Prophet for fear of persecution.

The Sermon of the Prophet at the Farewell Pilgrimage in 632 C.E. at 'Arafat from the Mount of Mercy is regarded as his Testament. Some of its extracts will follow under “His Life Story” (see *Infra*).

* * *

Micheas

“In the same spirit he sees through the meaning of sacrifice, dwelling more on the value of good life than on the offering of victims.”

My commentary on the above :

The Holy Qur'an says :

“Not their flesh, nor their blood reaches God, but to Him is acceptable the observance of Taqwá — self-restraint — on your part. Thus has He made them (camels) subservient to you, that you may magnify God for guiding you aright. And give good tidings to those who do good (to others)” (22 : 37).

The so-called Muslim annual sacrifice of camels, cows, rams, sheep and goats is not an act of sacrifice because the idea of atonement is quite foreign to Islam. This slaughtering of the animals every year is free from the essential conditions of sacrifice, which are :

1. There must be a priest to perform the sacrifice. Islam has no priesthood and everybody who joins in the celebrations of the prohibition of man's sacrifice, demonstrated by Abraham, must slaughter the animal himself.

2. Certain ceremonies were performed by the priests. But there is no ceremony of any kind to slaughter the animals.

3. The flesh of the victim was never eaten; it was either burnt or buried. But this is not so in this case; in the words of the Holy Qur'an :

“Then when they fall down on their sides, eat of them and feed the contented one and the beggar” (22 : 36).

4. The sacrifice used to be made as an atonement for their sins. The very idea of sacrifice as an atonement has been completely blotted out by Islam.

* * *

Malachias

“The Messiah will come, and will purify his temple and his priesthood, evil-doers shall be punished, true penitents shall be blessed.”

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS

My commentary on the above :

Muhammad purified his temple by destroying all the 360 idols placed inside and outside the *Ka'bah* when the Prophet conquered Mecca. During the 6th century C.E. human sacrifice used to be made in front of one of those idols called Hubul. Even 'Abdulláh, the father of the Prophet, was going to be sacrificed but a clever device of a *kahinah*, a woman diviner, saved his life. The carved images inside the temple — *Ka'bah* — were also obliterated. Thus the basis for the differences in the sentiments was done away with.

His Priesthood : Muhammad interdicted the very idea of ordained priesthood among his followers and thus liberated mankind from the iniquities and vested interest.

The last part of the prophecy needs no comment. It is quite obvious that the Prince Prophet had all the powers to punish the evil-doers and bless the true penitents.

The truth of the prophecies has been established beyond any doubt as they have, so perfectly, come true in the person of the Last Prophet of God, Muhammad. This proves the truth and glory of the National Prophets of God, Who made these prophecies, e.g. Jesus Christ, Daniel, Zacharias, David, Melachias. Also the prophecies of Rama, Buddah, Zoroaster and other Prophets of the Old Testament and of Hindu scriptures, which have not been mentioned herein — they are not less concrete than those mentioned above and they too fit only on the Last Prophet of God, Muhammad. These prophecies also prove that there is a God Who informed them about these prophecies, otherwise how could they have known them hundreds and thousands of years before the birth of the Last Prophet of God, Muhammad.

A glance into the life story of the Prophet Mahammad

Before we proceed any further we should briefly look into the struggle and success of the *Liberator* :

The Mercy For The Worlds, The Expected Liberator of The Oppressed, Muhammad, descendent of Ishmael, son of Abraham, was born in 570 C.E.

His father died three months before his birth. His mother died when he was six years old, his grandfather died when he was nine. He was 25 when he married Khadíjah, who was 15 years senior to him. He began to receive revelations when he was 40.

For 13 years he preached the Last Message of God to mankind in and around Mecca under the most trying conditions. Only 83 persons embraced Islam and they had to emigrate to Abyssinia to escape persecution. The Prophet himself had to leave his birth-place because of the Meccans' designs on his life. The Muslims of the A'us and Khazraj, the two tribes of Medina, a month's journey in those days (320 miles to the north of Mecca), invited him to go to Medina, where they would guarantee his safety.

This giving up his home is called Hijrah, which took place on 24 September 622 C.E. and the Muslim era starts from that year.

The Meccans did not leave him alone even there and 313 ill-equipped Muslims had to face the well-equipped army of 1,000 at Badr, 20 miles south-east of Medina, in Ramadán, the month of fasting, 624 C.E.

The Meccans were defeated but they came back in the following year with a larger army and the Muslims suffered heavily because of disobeying the orders of the Prophet. This

battle took place at Uhud, on the northern outskirts of Medina.

In 627 C.E. confederates consisting of Meccans, Bedouins and Abyssinian mercenaries attacked Medina again. The besiegers withdrew at the end of a month. This is called the battle of the Ditch.

The Pact of Hudabiyah, apparently humiliating to the Muslims, was signed in 628 C.E.

The Prophet's ally, a Christian tribe called Khuzá'ah, was attacked by the allies of Mecca, with their help, in 630 C.E. Thus the treaty was broken and a Khuzá'ah delegate came to Medina for help. The Prophet marched on Mecca with 10,000 companions, all mounted and all in armour. The Meccans had never seen such a powerful army before and so Mecca was occupied practically without bloodshed. The Prophet destroyed all the 360 idols, saying, "Truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished" and thus purified the temple, the *Ka'bah*. The people were treated with special magnanimity.

The year 630-631 C.E. is called the "year of delegations" that flocked from near and far to offer their allegiance to the "Prince" Prophet. They came from Oman, Hadramawt, the Yemen, Hamadan and Kindah. Arabia had never before bowed to the will of one man.

In 10 A.H. (632 C.E.) the Prophet entered Mecca for "The Farewell Pilgrimage" and three months later he was suddenly taken ill and died on 8 June 632 C.E.

In the words of Philip K. Hitti, *The History of the Arabs*, the Holy Qur'an deals with : "Religious laws governing fasting, alms-giving and prayer, social and political ordinances dealing with marriage and divorce, treatment of slaves, prisoners of war and enemies. On behalf of slaves, the orphans, the weak and oppressed the legislation was especially benevolent.

"Even in the height of his glory Muhammad led, as in his days of obscurity, an unpretentious life in one of those clay houses consisting of . . . a few rooms . . . He was often seen mending his own clothes and was at all times within the reach of his people. The little he left he regarded as state property."

He had no standing army, no police, no jail and yet his Sublime Democracy worked so well.

Hitti reports (passages within quotation marks) :

"These are the words of the Prophet in his noble sermon at the Farewell Pilgrimage :

"O ye men ! Harken unto my words and take them to heart ! Know ye that every Moslem is a brother unto every other Moslem, and that ye are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for one of you, therefore, to appropriate unto himself anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly given h'im by that brother."

"Thus with one stroke the vital bond of Arab relationship, that of tribal kinship, was replaced by a new bond, that of faith ; . . . a sort of Pax Islamica was instituted for Arabia. The new community was to have no priesthood, no hierarchy, no central see." The mosque was its public forum, centre of education as well as its place of common worship. "Islam cancelled the past. Wine and gambling . . . were abolished in one verse."

The Holy Qur'an also contains : " Laws prohibiting wine, pork and gambling; fiscal and military ordinances relating to alms-giving and holy war (*jihad*), civil and criminal laws regarding homicide, retaliation, theft, usury, marriage and divorce, adultery, inheritance and the freeing of slaves . . . The often-quoted prescription for marriage (4 : 3) limits rather than introduces the practice of polygamy."

". . . the treatment of slaves, orphans and strangers . . . (are) the most humane portions of Islamic legislation."

"At the time of Muhammad there was no work of the first order in Arabic prose. The Qur'an was therefore the earliest, and has ever since remained the model, prose work. Its rhymed prose has set the standard . . ."

Profoundly true to the prophecies no religious book has done do much to alleviate the sufferings of the oppressed and down trodden as the Holy Qur'an has done. It has brought a complete sense of equality among Muslims, and has created common sentiments towards the followers of world faiths. There is absolutely no feeling of high and low among them and this has affected the world order. Serfdom of Europe is now a story of bygone days. The cruel and oppressive stranglehold of the despotic monarchs, lords and clergy is gone. All this is due to the Islamic influence. The French Revolution and the reformation were the direct result of the Islamic influence. The European scholars, who drank the elixir of scientific knowledge from the fountain of the Muslim universities of Spain, went back to their countries imbued with a new social spirit and equipped with the scientific knowledge to diffuse it therein without disclosing the sources of their knowledge for fear of the Church, that was ever ready to punish the innovators, despite the fact that they claimed those inventions to be their own. Others viewed the Muslim social behaviour of equality through their contact with the travelling merchants. The crusaders brought back new ideas from the Muslim lands.

Here is a somewhat lengthy quotation from *A Brief Course in the History of Education*, by Paul Monroe, Professor in the History of Education, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1933.

Influence of Saracen Learning

Chapter V Middle Ages

"In Spain, especially, centering in the School of Cordova, from the tenth century on, this learning received development and many brilliant practical applications. Throughout their Western Caliphates, the Saracens established libraries, higher schools, similar to universities, and, in connection with the mosques in many cities, schools for the instruction of children. While Christian Europe was enforcing as a religious belief the idea that the world was flat, the Moors were teaching geography from globes. When the Christians finally conquered the Mohammadans, they turned their astronomical observatories into belfries for want of any other use. From these Arabs came, in the tenth or eleventh century, the knowledge of Hindu notation as a substitute for the cumbersome Roman method. Knowledge of algebra, as well as of advanced arithmetical processes, came from a similar source.

Scientific and practical knowledge introduced by the Saracens into Europe

"In medicine, in surgery, in pharmacy, in astronomy, in physiology, they added much that is now considered fundamental. They explained the refraction of light, gravity, capil-

lary attraction and twilight; they determined the height of the atmosphere, the weight of air, and the specific gravity of bodies; they constructed various astronomical tables, and determined corrections for parallax and for refraction; they invented the pendulum clock; in commerce, in geographical explorations, in navigation, in improvements in all the arts of life, their culture was far ahead of that of the Europeans; they introduced the use of rice, sugar and cotton, and the cultivation of silk; they made Europe familiar with the use of the compass, of gunpowder and of cannon. Thus in many ways the Arab culture served as an educational agency to bring the civilization of the West to a higher level."

The vested interest against Islam

Within a short space of time Islam spread far and wide on account of its lovable new social order. It was irresistible for anyone who came in contact with the Muslims. Realizing the "danger" the Church embarked on the ridiculous calumnies against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. Another group, on the other hand, conceived of a clever idea which showed apparent signs of "reconciliation" with Islam but, in fact, it was meant to block the way to Islam. This permitted their co-religionists to take and absorb whatever was necessary from Islam, but they must remain within the Church, which was the whole purpose of the movement. Such were the Bhagti movement in India and Reformation in Europe.

In Russia the Muslims were forcibly converted to Christianity and the punishment for anyone embracing Islam was death. This state of affairs remained there, off and on, for some centuries. Their states of *Sibiriyah* (Siberia), *Tatariah* and *Bashiriyah* were wiped out of existence. After the first world war Muslims were massacred in wholesale numbers, while others were deported to the obscure parts of the country in large numbers just because they traded horses with Germany for copies of the Qur'an.

The calumnies against Islam are still being continued by the clergy. In this set-up it is, at least, very difficult for a European writer to write about Islam fairly or favourably.

Here are extracts from *Environment and Nation*, by Griffith Taylor. (The words in brackets are mine.)¹

"When we remember that his (Frederic of Sicily) favourite home (Sicily) was the meeting place of Moorish, Greek and Italian cultures, and that Frederic supported many new ideas with all the weight of his authority (he was Emperor of Germany and King of Jerusalem, his wives were from Spain, Jerusalem, England and his mother was the princess of Sicily). He founded a university at Naples in 1224, and codified the laws of Sicily in a manner far ahead of his time. It is, however, chiefly owing to his remarkable criticism of the Pope and the Romanish Church (which he published in 1239 and 1245 somewhat in the modern form of the open letter) that he stands out as an innovator. He was often referred to by contemporaries as *Stupor Mundi*, the 'Admiration of the world'." (Page 202.)

"In Italy Galileo (d. 1642) was inventing thermometers, clocks and telescopes. In 1616 Galileo was censured by the Church for his astronomical teaching, which seemed contrary to the Holy Writ . . . under threat of punishment he recanted (1633) his views on the earth's motion." (Page 206.)

His name has just been exonerated — in 1968.

¹ From the notes taken about 20 years ago.

"It (Islam) preached equality of race making the negro equal to the white man, something that Christianity has not yet really done. It insisted on temperance. It had no organised priesthood. 'Pulpit is there but no priest.'

"As H. G. Wells writes: 'Against it (Islam) were pitted Judaism, which had made a racial hoard of God, Christianity, preaching endlessly of trinities and doctrines no ordinary man could make head or tail of, and Mazdaism, the cult of the Zoroastrian Magi, who had inspired the crucifixion of Mani' (*An Outline of History*).'" (Page 34.)

"For instance, Robinson (1917) states that Great Britain and Ireland are perhaps the only countries in which the profession of Christianity was not at one time or another spread by persecution and death . . ." (Page 178.)

"Hence, as abuses crept into the church, other creeds gained ground, partly because they were free from errors practiced by many Roman Catholics, partly because they incorporated something of the old pagan teaching." (Page 191.)

Here is an extract from *The Sources of Christianity*, by Khwaja Kamaluddin.

It will give you an idea of the extent of the pagan teaching which was incorporated into the Christian religion:

"At the appearance of Jesus Christ there were temples without end dedicated to gods like Appolo or Dionysus among Greeks, Hercules among the Romans, Mithra among the Persians, Adonis and Attis in Syria and Phrygia; Osiris, Isis and Horus in Egypt; Baal and Astarte among the Babylonians and Carthaginians, and so forth.

"All these deities were sun-gods, and all, or nearly all of them, as Edward Carpenter says, it was believed that:—

- (1) They were born on or very near Christmas Day.
- (2) They were born of a Virgin Mother.
- (3) And in a cave or underground chamber.
- (4) They led a life of toil for mankind.
- (5) They were called by names of Light-Bringer, Healer, Mediator, Saviour and Deliverer.
- (6) They were, however, vanquished by the Power of Darkness.
- (7) They descended into Hell or the Underworld.
- (8) They rose again from the dead, and became the pioneers of mankind to the Heavenly World.
- (9) They founded Communions of Saints and Churches, to which disciples were received by baptism.
- (10) They were commemorated by Eucharistic meals." (Page 29.)

"To elucidate the subject, I think I shall be justified if I sketch briefly an account of some of these deities.

"Mithra — Mithraism came from Persia, where it seems to have been flourishing for about six hundred years, the cult reaching Rome about 70 B.C. It spread through the Empire, and extended to Great Britain. Remains of Mithric monuments have been discovered at York, Chester and other places. Mithra was believed to be a great Mediator between God and man. His birth took place in a cave on 25 December. He was born of a virgin. He travelled far and wide; he had twelve disciples; he died in the service of humanity. He was buried, but rose again from the tomb. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicing. His great festivals were the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox — Christmas and

Easter. He was called Saviour, and sometimes figured as a lamb. People were initiated into his cult through baptism. Sacramental feasts were held in his remembrance . . . No traces of Mithraism are left in the world, although it was so powerful in the third century A.D. that, had it not been suppressed in Rome and Alexandria by the Christians with physical force, as has been admitted by St. Jerome, it would have left no chance for the flourishing of Christianity; and that it died only when most of its legends became incorporated in the simple faith of Jesus, and the church lore fully saturated with Mithraic colours, so much so that Tertullian had to admit the fact, though in a way befitting his position. He says that the learned in his days considered Mithraism and Christianity identical in all but name. St. Jerome and other Early Fathers became puzzled at the similarity existing between the two faiths, but their ingenuity ascribed it to the machinations of the Devil to mock their faith." (Page 30.)

"The sign of the cross also is not of Christian origin . . . Constantine saw the cross in his vision, as he says, and took it as a symbol of the faith. But what he saw in his vision, he must have seen also in a normal condition with his waking eyes, for the cross was the sign of life in the pagan symbolism. I saw an ancient Egyptian cross in July last when I visited Alexandria, in the Municipal Museum in the town. Curiously enough, the cross in Christendom signifies the same as did the Egyptian cross — the sign of new life brought by the crucifixion. In Ireland a similar cross has been discovered, with a crucified effigy, but it is the effigy of a Persian prince and not that of the Nazarene, as the head of the crucified bears a Parthian coronet and not the crown of thorns; which identifies it with the Mithraic cult, originally from Persia." (Page 50.)

Muhammad, the Servant of God

It is impossible to tell you even a part of the life story of the Last Messenger of God in the time at our disposal. His first biography, written by Ibn Ishaq, is extinct, but its recension, by Ibn Hishám, is available, which extends over 1386 pages. You can imagine my inability to even think of relating it justifiably. However, I should say a few words about it.

His whole life was dominated by prayer to God. He said his compulsory and optional prayers in day time and, on average, throughout his life, he spent half of every night praying. He so faithfully acted on the Word of God — the Holy Qur'an — that 'A'ishah, his wife, told an enquirer that he should read the Holy Qur'an if he wanted to know the Prophet's life story. He inspired his followers with the spirit of the Holy Qur'an so profoundly that they — as the biographies of the first four caliphs show — stood as beacons of light, the light of justice, and equity in the dark world overwhelmed with iniquities and tyrannies. The Prophet Muhammad established the Sublime Democracy, the centre and seat of which was the mosque. The *Musallá*, the mat used for praying, was the throne of the *Imam* — the Prophet Muhammad. It was not a theocracy because there is no ordained priesthood and no priestly hierarchy in Islam, as said before.

This Sublime Democracy was maintained by the first four caliphs. After 661 C.E. Mu'awiyah, the fifth caliph, was, in fact, a monarch and he replaced the Sublime Democracy by a hereditary despotic monarchy. Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, sacrificed his life and the lives of his dear relatives in an effort to save the Sublime Democracy. But the despotic rule had become well-established, and all the following

caliphs — with few exceptions of the Umayyad and ‘Abbásid dynasties — were hereditary despotic monarchs. The last line of the so-called caliphs was also of the hereditary monarchs. This change was bound to bring about a slow but sure change in the Muslim outlook on the Islamic studies and practices. Mu‘áwiyah sowed the seed and the Muslim world has ever since been reaping its harmful effects. The mosque, the centre and seat of power of the Sublime Democracy, not only has never since been revived, but it is also a tragedy that its function as such has completely been forgotten. Had ‘Alí taken a prompt action against the assassins of ‘Uthmán, or had he not agreed to the arbitration between himself and Mu‘áwiyah, the Sublime Democracy probably would not have died with him. Had it not been cut down like this it should have surely developed into a world federation of autonomous communities free from the defects of both capitalism and communism, every member of which would have grown up with a self-regarding sentiment of a proletarian.

There was no police, no standing army and no prison in the Sublime Democracy, as has been repeatedly said, yet it functioned so smoothly and peacefully. As a general rule, people lived without fear of burglars, cheats, murderers, etc. Other religious communities were given full autonomous status: having their own religious courts, schools, etc. and they could levy taxes on the members of their communities. All non-Muslims enjoyed complete freedom of religion according to the commandment of God :

“There is no compulsion concerning religion”
(The Qur‘án 2 : 256).

“Let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve” (The Qur‘án 18 : 29).

The faith of the Muslims was so honest and firm that they prayed to God to grant them martyrdom striving hard in His way. The *jihád* does not merely mean “holy war” as the Western writers have imagined but it simply means “striving hard”. Taking part in the defensive war is one of the connotations of the word *jihád*. A student who dies in the pursuit of knowledge is a martyr. A Muslim who lays down his life defending a cloister, a church, a synagogue or a mosque is a martyr. One who is killed defending a victim of aggression or injustice is a martyr. To spend wealth in the way of God is a *jihád*. Doing good to others is a *jihád*. Spreading the teachings of the Holy Qur‘án is a great *jihád* (25 : 52).

God’s Messenger

The last point in the formula of the faith of Islam is that the Prophet was God’s Messenger. How much he suffered from persecution and violence while preaching and teaching the Revelation of God is a long story. I have already mentioned some parts of it and so let us proceed further to the message itself, the Holy Qur‘án. I have given you many quotations from it. At this point I will give you a few more which I presented in answer to some questions put to me at some previous meetings.

Equality between men and women

“Surely the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and the believing women, the obeying men and the obeying women, the truthful men and the truthful women, the patient men and the patient women, the meek men and the meek women, the charitable men and the charitable women, the fasting men and the fasting women, the men who guard their chastity and the women who guard, the men who remember God much

and the women who remember — God has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward” (the Qur‘án 33 : 35).

“So their Lord accepted their prayer (saying) : I will not suffer the work of any worker among you to be lost whether male or female, the one of you being from the other . . .” (the Qur‘án 3 : 194).

“Whosoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We shall certainly make him live a good life and We shall certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did” (the Qur‘án 16 : 97).

“For men is a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave and for women a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave . . .” (the Qur‘án 4 : 7).

“And covet not that by which God has made some of you excel others. For men is the benefit of what they earn. And for women is the benefit of what they earn. And ask God of His bounty. Surely God is ever knower of all things” (the Qur‘án 4 : 32).

“Say to the believing men that they lower their gaze and guard their secret parts. That is purer for them. Surely God is Aware of what they do :

“And say to the believing women that they lower their gaze and guard their secret parts . . .” (the Qur‘án 24 : 30, 31).

Promiscuity and family unity are incompatible, without which there cannot be peace and happiness for everyone.

Parents

“And thy Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do utmost good to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with thee, say: not ‘fie’ to them, nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word” (the Qur‘án 17 : 23).

“And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they brought me up (when I was) little” (the Qur‘án 17 : 24).

The life hereafter

Paradise and Hell are two conditions and not two places. Evolution will continue even after death. Some will rise with good and healthy bodies, while others, due to their defective beliefs (imagination) and wrong deeds will wake up with some imperfections or diseases which will be the cause of pain — that pain is likened to the Hell-fire in the Qur‘án. This inference is clear from the following verse of the Qur‘án :

“In the Gardens, they will ask one another, What has brought you into Hell? They will say :

We were not of those who prayed;

Nor did we feed the poor;

And we indulged in vain talk with vain talkers ;

And we called the day of Judgment a lie . . .”

(the Qur‘án 74 : 40-46).

God’s mercy will eventually cure that disease

Man’s powers

Man is reminded of his boundless capabilities and that knowledge is essential for his progress and understanding. He did need a guiding start in various branches of learning which the Holy Qur‘án equipped him with. The Imam Ghazálí firmly believed that the Holy Qur‘án is the mother of science. Some other writers have said the same. Here are some drops from the ocean :

"And these parables, We set them forth for men, and none understand them but the learned" (the Qur'an 29 : 43).

"O community 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 energy. Which, then, of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?" (the Qur'an 55 : 33-34).

The Jinn of the Qur'an is man and not genii

This revelation takes on more astounding dimensions when we realize that at the time when the European man believed that the earth was flat and that the ships would fall off its edge if they continued sailing in one direction, the Holy Qur'an was telling man that he could fly up to the other planets and that God had created him with limitless capabilities and boundless possibilities and that it was, now, up to him to develop necessary energy to serve his requirements.

"God is He who created seven atmospheres (heaven, vapour, smoke, gaseous matter) and from the earth the like thereof..." (the Qur'an 65 : 12).

I think it means that eight of the nine or ten planets of our solar systems have heavens. The scientists have yet to find out this truth.

"Who created seven heavens alike. Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent. Then look again: Canst thou see any disorder?" (the Qur'an 67 : 3).

Regularity and uniformity of God's law in the midst of the unimaginable variety of conflicting conditions exist in the universe. It is manifest even in His creation on this earth — from trees to man.

"By the sun and his brightness! And the moon as she borrows light from him!" (the Qur'an 91 : 1-2).

"And made the moon therein a light and made the sun a lamp" (the Qur'an 71 : 14).

"And the sun moves on to its destination. That is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knower..."

"And all float on in an orbit" (the Qur'an 36 : 38-40).

The value of these revelations can correctly be assessed if you reflect for a moment and look at the condition of the world around 610-632 C.E., when these revelations were received by the Last Messenger of God, Muhammad. You know, the earth people did not have correct notions about the shape and movements of their own planet, much less about the atmospheres on other planets, their orbits, their movements, sun being a source of light (lamp), moon a reflector

of light, etc. These truths were coming out of the mouth of an unlettered Last Messenger of God to stimulate and guide man in order to accelerate his progress after 50 million years had passed preparing him for this stage.

About God's creation on this planet the Holy Qur'an tells us

"And He it is Who spread the earth and made in it firm mountains and rivers. And of all fruits He has made in it pairs, two (of every kind). He makes the night cover the day. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect" (the Qur'an 13 : 3).

"Who made the earth for you as a cradle and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the clouds. Then thereby We bring forth pairs of various herbs (the Qur'an 20 : 53).

Note these simple but meaningful words : "Who made the earth for you as a cradle."

"Glory be to Him who created pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their kind and of what they know not" (the Qur'an 36 : 36).

"And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful" (the Qur'an 51 : 49).

This truth was not known to the scientists until this century.

"On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet bear witness against them as to what they did" (the Qur'an 24 : 24).

It is easy to understand this verse now after seeing the picture films. It may mean that our beliefs and deeds will have affected these parts.

"He created you from a single being, then made its mate of the same (kind)" (the Qur'an 39 : 6).

Before man came into existence

"And God has created every animal from water. So of them is that which crawls upon its belly, and of them is that which walks upon two feet and of them is that which walks upon four. God breathes what He pleases, surely God is the Possessor of power over all things" (The Qur'an 24 : 45).

"And We have made the heaven (atmosphere) a guarded canopy; yet they turn away from its signs" (The Qur'an 21 : 32).

God is indeed the most merciful and most beneficent. Without this protection meteors would have destroyed most of the earth and the unfiltered rays of the sun would burn up everything upon which they fell.

(To be continued)

The Editors of *The Islamic Review* invite writers in all Muslim countries to send them articles on religious, political, social and other subjects in relation to their countries.

The Institution of the *Hisbah* in Early Islam¹

or

A Study of the Ethical Standards Expected of Islamic Society

The claim of the Western Orientalists that Muslims took
the Institution of the *Hisbah* from the Byzantines

By Dr. MUSA AL-HUSAYNI

Two distinctive characteristics of Islam

It becomes obvious to a student of comparative religion that Islam is distinguished by two characteristics :

The first is its "*gestalt*" view of life as a whole composed of interdependent and interconnected parts. In Islam the spiritual side of life is regarded as no less important than the moral life. The moral life of the individual is no less important than the moral life of the society. Dealings with people depend on moral principles, as does the act of worship on spiritual principles. In Islam the individual is as important as the group. Thus Islam requires that all virtues, both moral and spiritual, should be sought after. Neither of these excludes the other; rather they are complimentary. Islam seeks to ensure happiness for the individual in both the worlds — the worldly life and the life after death. It tries to establish a righteous society whose members share alike in what is good and what is bad. It envisages a society whose members cooperate in charity and piety, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. The Qur'an says :

"Let there arise from amongst you a party inviting (all) to what is good and enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (3 : 103).

And it repeats itself for emphasis when it says in another place :

"The believers, men and women, are the protecting friends, one of another. They enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil" (9 : 71).

The second feature is that Islam regards all peoples as members of one community and the best among them, to use the words of the Qur'an, "is the one who is the most pious". It recognises the unity of all revealed religions and the brotherhood of all the prophets without discrimination (The Qur'an 2 : 285). The result of this teaching is that we see toleration, justice and charity in Islam towards other religions and an exhortation by it to seek wisdom, wherever encountered.²

In the Holy Qur'an there are many verses which enjoin moral qualities, social virtues and that all should be treated on a basis of equity and justice. It enjoins upon Muslims to be kind to parents, help relatives, orphans and the poor, behave gently towards the weak and the sick, and show forgiveness and patience. It requires the Muslims to tell the truth, to be faithful and co-operate in charity and piety and to go about the world in search of gain.

The Qur'an in many places forbids bad manners and vices, such as evil thoughts, lying, treachery, injustice, aggression, profligacy, usury, cheating in weighing and extravagance. Besides there are to this effect the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and those of the Caliphs, which are numerous and are inspired by the precepts of the Qur'an.³

II

The *Hisbah* is the result of the teachings of Islam, as shown by the early history of Islam

The Institution of the *Hisbah* is a result of the two above-mentioned characteristics because it enjoins upon Muslims to do the right and forbids the wrong. It embraces individual manners and social virtues and concerns itself with justice, truthfulness and equity in all dealings. I should like to point out here that there is no doubt that the Institution of the *Hisbah* springs from Islam itself and is based on and rooted in its legal rules of the '*Ijtihad*'. It grew with the Islamic society until it became a singularly intricate system. It was therefore considered by men like Mawardi (d. 1058 C.E.)⁴, Ibn 'Ukhuwwah (d. 1320 C.E.)⁵, as one of the religious norms of life, and Ibn Khaldun (d. 1405 C.E.) considered it as a religious office.⁶

Etymologically the *Hisbah* (cf. the *Lisān al-'Arab* Dictionary) is in the infinitive. The verb (first person singular) *Ahtasibu*, for example, means, "I left the estimation of reward to God". *Ihtisāb* means seeking reward and the *Hisbah* means the reward. *Ihtisāb* may also mean disapproving bad deeds. According to the *Shari'ah*, as stated by al-Mawardi, *Ihtisāb* is defined thus : "Enjoining what is just and right if it is found to be neglected or disregarded and to forbid what is unjust and indecent if it is found to be practised." Al-Ghazali defines it as : "To stop and check one who denies God's right as a protection from committing evil."⁷

1 Being the text of a lecture at the First Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research, Cairo, Egypt, held in March 1964.

2 Our predecessors have often mentioned this in their writings. We refer to a statement by 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Nasr al-Shayzari at the end of his *Nihayah al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah*, Cairo 1896, page 86, where he quotes from other scholars.

3 Ibn 'Ukhuwwah cites in his *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah* some of the verses and traditions (vide pp. 15-20, Cambridge 1937).

4 *Al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah*, p. 245, Cairo 1298 A.H. Edn.

5 *Ma'ālim al-Qurbah*, p. 7.

6 *Al-Muqaddamah* ; *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Vol. 2, p. 226.

7 *Al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah*, p. 245. Also the *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 211-214.

It is clear from the books on the *Hisbah* that the Prophet Muhammad, and after him the Caliphs and a group of voluntary 'Ulamá in the first century, used to guide the people in their worldly and religious affairs. They used to enjoin the right and forbid the evil before the *Hisbah* became one of the offices of the state to which a *Muhtasib* was appointed. We know from the Prophet's traditions and other books that the Prophet and his Caliphs appointed a market controller. The Prophet appointed Sa'id Ibn Sa'id Ibn al-'As Ibn Umayyah to be controller of the Mecca market and 'Umar Ibn al-Khattáb appointed al-Sá'ib Ibn Yazíd and 'Abdulláh Ibn 'Utbah Ibn Mas'úd to be controllers of the Medina market.⁸

How ordinary Muslims in early days took upon themselves the functions of the Muhtasib

In the middle of the second century C.E., that is to say, when at the beginning of the Abbásids' age, the Muslim state expanded and its boundaries extended, trade and industry flourished, travelling increased, a *Muhtasib* was appointed by order of the Caliph Abú Ja'far al-Mansúr, in whose reign the city of Baghdád was founded, its markets organized and its roads paved. Al-Khatíb al-Baghdádí mentions that al-Mansúr appointed Yahyá Ibn Zakariyyah *Muhtasib* and killed him in 791 C.E. when he deceived the public. Abú al-Fidá' writes in his *Chronicles* that Nafís Ibn 'Abd al-Rahmán Abú Nu'áym, who died in 785 C.E., was a *Muhtasib* for the Caliph al-Hádí. Al-Ghazálí gives in his *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* the story of a *Muhtasib* in the days of al-Má'múm, the grandson of al-Mahdí, who enjoined the right and forbade the wrong. Al-Má'múm sent for him and rebuked him because he had assumed the function of the *Muhtasib* without his permission. A book fell from the hands of al-Má'múm and it fell at his feet. The man objected (*Ihtasaba*). Al-Má'múm lifted the book and kissed it, saying, "Why do you enjoin that which is right? God has enjoined this on us who are in office, and He says of us in the Qur'án 22 : 41 :

'Those whom We give power on earth, establish worship, collect the Zakáh and enjoin right and forbid wrong.'"

The man answered that he was one of his helpers and subjects and pointed out that he was doing the *Hisbah* according to the Qur'anic verse which reads :

"And the believers, men and women, are the guardians of one another; they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong" (9 : 71).

Al-Má'múm admired his answer and allowed him to continue with his work as *Muhtasib*. Al-Ghazálí uses in his story the word *Muhtasib*.

Hisbah as a government department in the early centuries of Islam and later

It appears from Ibn Khaldún's writings that the Muslims in North Africa and Andalusia put this work within the jurisdiction of the Qádí. He could appoint whomsoever he chose. He writes : "In many Islamic countries, like Egypt and the Maghrib, during the 'Ubaydiyyún (the Fátimid) period and in Andalusia during the Umayyad period, the *Hisbah* was within the jurisdiction of a judge who could appoint whomsoever he chose to fill this office. Later on, when the office of the Sultán was separated from the Caliphate, and politics fell within his office, the *Hisbah* became part of his office and a special officer was appointed to administer it." Al-Máwardí, the author of the oldest chapter on the *Hisbah*, states that it

did not fall under the authority of judges but was considered in Eastern Islamic countries as an independent office.

The *Hisbah* continued from the 8th century C.E. until around the middle of the 19th century C.E. The late Syrian scholar Muhammad Kurd 'Alí says : "The *Hisbah* can be divided into the secular and the religious. The secular side was discontinued in the Islamic countries when the governments did not observe the essence of religion. The secular survived slightly in Egypt until the middle of the 19th century C.E. It was replaced in some of the Ottoman countries by country councils." He quotes the French Tunisian magazine without mentioning the number or the date, about the development of the *Hisbah* in Tunis, saying : "Things ended up by adding the duties of the *Muhtasib* to the council of the ten dignitaries . . . and one of its duties was to investigate the cheating in commodities when sorting out the good from the bad if there was a dispute between the buyer and the seller with the help of the chief merchant. The members of this council were not paid. They enjoyed the special privileges of heading the group of merchants or of sitting sometimes near the Bey. Today a tribal court replaces the former council of the ten in the *Hisbah* and judges cases as experienced men do. This court is presided over by the treasurer of the merchants' association, who has ten assistants. The Shaykh of the town also deals with some of the affairs which were formerly dealt with by the *Muhtasib*. He presides over a guild as well. His verdict in disputes over technical matters cannot be repealed. He is charged with confiscating the properties of the bankrupt and selling it in Tunis and distributing the proceeds amongst the creditors of different nationalities. The aldermen are today asked to present a printed statement of the names of the births and deaths in their districts. These aldermen are a smaller version of the *Muhtasibs* of the past."

In Egypt, Dr. al-Sayyid al-Báz al-Aríní has written a book dealing with the *Hisbah* from its beginning to its end. He arrives at the conclusion that it continued to exist in Egypt until 1253 A.H./1837 C.E., when the *Muhtasib* became a civil servant in the Khedive's Diwán.

Nothing is left of the office today except the name. In some of the villages in Palestine they call the fairs frequented by sellers from the villages "the *Hisbah*", which is quite different from the market.

III

Early literature on the Hisbah

The Muslims attached much importance to the *Hisbah* and wrote many books and pamphlets on it. But most of what was written has been lost, and now very little is extant. The oldest is what was written by al-Máwardí (died 1058 C.E.) in his *al-Ahkám*, and the chapter written by Abú Hámid al-Ghazálí, who died in 505 A.H./1111 C.E. in his book *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*.

The number of books, printed and in manuscript form, that are extant is about thirty. Those that are printed, as far as we know, are :

Printed books

1. *Niháyah al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah* by 'Abd al-Rahmán Ibn Nasr al-Shayzarí. Cairo. 1946.

⁸ *Al-'Istí'áb fi Ma'rifah al-'Asháb*, by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Qurtubí, Vol. 2, p. 575.

2. *Ma'álim al-Qurbah* by Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ahmad al-Qurashí, known as Ibn 'Ukhuwwah. Cambridge. 1937.

3. *'Adáb al-Ihtisáb* by Abú 'Abdulláh Muhammad Ibn Abú Muhammad al-Saqatí al-Málikí al-Andalusí. Paris. 1931.

4. *Al-Hisbah* by Ibn 'Abdún al-Tujaybí, the Andalusian. (Published in the *Revue Asiatique*. Paris. 1934.)

5. *Al-Hisbah fí al-Islám* by Ibn Taymiyyah. Cairo. 1318 A.H./1900 C.E.

6. *Al-Hisbah* by Jamál al-Dín Yúsus Ibn 'Abd al-Hádí, known as Ibn al-Mubarrad al-Dimashqy. Beirut. 1937.

7. *Al-Ishárah Ilá Mahásin al-Tijárah* by 'Abú al-Fadl Ja'far Ibn 'Alí al-Dimashqy. Cairo. 1318 A.H./1900 C.E.

8. *Al-Mukhtár fí Kashf al-Asrár* by 'Abd ul-Rahmán Ibn Abí Bakr al-Dimashqy, known as al-Jawhary. Beirut. 1909 C.E.

9. *Al-Dalálat al-Sámiyyah* by 'Alí al-Hasan al-Khuzá'í. Tunis.

10. *Al-Tarátib al-Idáriyyah* by Muhammad al-Husayní al-Idrisí al-Kittání. Rabat. 1346 A.H./1927 C.E.

11. *Adáb al-Hisbah wa al-Muhtasib* by Ibn 'Abdún Ibn 'Abd al-Ra'úf and al-Jársifí. Cairo. 1955.

12. *Al-Hisbah* by 'Abd al-Razzáq al-Hasan. Baghdad. 1365 A.H./1949 C.E.

Manuscripts

There are seventeen manuscripts.⁹ The latest among them to have come to our knowledge is *al-Hisbah al-Kabir* by Ibn al-'Abbás Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Marwán al-Sarakhsi (died 286 A.H./899 C.E.).¹⁰ Another book is attributed to him entitled *Al-Hisbah al-Saghír*. This book has a special importance because its author was entrusted with the *Hisbah* at Baghdad during the time of the Abbasid Caliph Mu'tadid. This book is missing.¹¹

The book *Niháyat al-Rutbah fí Talab al-Hisbah*, by al-Shayzarí, is the first printed book. Its author died in 589 A.H./1193 C.E. All the authors who have written since then have referred to it, such as Ibn 'Ukhuwwah (died in 729 A.H./1328 C.E.) and Ibn Bassám, who flourished in the 15th century C.E. It is possible that Shayzarí had taken over the *Hisbah*; for his book is detailed, accurate and learned in a way that could not be available but to the man who held this office.

These works have a great significance in the history of Islamic civilisation for three reasons: first, because they reveal the achievements of Islamic civilisation motivated originally by religion. Besides, they show the new trades that flourished in those days; secondly, because they reveal the ability of Mus'lim writers to study these trades; and thirdly, because they contain a linguistic wealth that is not found in dictionaries, and prove that the Arabic language was capable of absorbing hundreds of foreign terms.¹²

IV

The aim and purpose of the Hisbah

The institution of the *Hisbah*, whether practised voluntarily or as a duty entrusted by the state to the *Wáli* (the governor), indicates clearly the kind of society that God wants the Muslims to establish.

The Qur'anic verses and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad call explicitly for the establishment of a virtuous society, in which every member has a right to call for the right and the good, and to object to what is bad and what is corrupt.

Therefore the *Hisbah* in the sense of calling to the good and warning against evil was to be practised by every Muslim, responsible and capable, even if not employed by the state for that purpose.¹³ Al-Ghazálí states that the job of the *Hisbah* can be performed by sinners, slaves and women,¹⁴ and that it is permissible for the son to perform the job of the *Hisbah* in relation to his father, the slave his master, the wife her husband, the pupil his teacher and the ruled their ruler, with minor differences;¹⁵ and that it is a social function rather than a governmental one.

The *Hisbah* embraces every aspect of life, both worldly and religious; it embraces the moral and social values of the life of the individual and also his commercial dealings.

Religion described briefly consists of man's duties towards his Creator. His worldly life shows his duties towards his fellow-beings. But the former should come before the latter. And if a man is not conscious of loving God and seeking His pleasure in all his actions, his conduct will deviate from the right path. That is why the call to the religious duties is an integral part of the *Hisbah*, with a view to keeping alive the conscientious mind looking for God at all times. Ibn Taymiyyah bases the *Muhtasib's* order to the public to say their prayers on the fact that "Prayers are the best known act, the pillar of Islam and the greatest of its precepts, and ranks equal with the two professions of the faith."¹⁶ We read in the Qur'an 29:45 in this respect:

"Lo! prayer keeps (one) away from lewdness and inequity."

The duties of the Muhtasib

The *Hisbah* is concerned with morals in their several aspects, among which is the right of the *Muhtasib* to order any community consisting of members less than forty to organize the Friday prayers so that the young ones are not brought up in an atmosphere where prayers are omitted and that the community should not think that the prayers could be dropped if the number increased as they were dropped when the number fell.¹⁷ The *Muhtasib* may also order the advancing of the times for prayers lest the delay incite the young to believe that the retarded, not the advanced time, is the right one.¹⁸ The *Muhtasib* may order the removal of teachers in whom he observes slackness in doing their work lest the children be brought up in the way of life "difficult to get rid of when they grow up. He thus accredits the learned who have a good method and eliminates the negligent and the bad ones who corrupt the mind and damage the

9 G. Awwad in *The Review of the Arabic Scientific Academy of Damascus*.

10 *Kashf al-Zunún*, by Hájjí Khalfah, Istanbul 1941.

11 G. Awwad, *op. cit.*

12 The late 'Abd al-Hamíd al-Abbádí had called the attention of the Academy of the Arabic Languages to collecting these verses and interpreting them (*vide The Review of the Egyptian Academy*, Vol. 8 for 1955, p. 427).

13 *'Ihyá'*, 2/214.

14 *Ibid*, 2/214.

15 *Ibid*, 2/218.

16 *Al-Hisbah fí al-Islám*, p. 9.

17 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultániyyah*, p. 230.

18 *Ibid*, p. 231.

morals."¹⁹ The *Muhtasib* himself should have good qualities, such as mercy and patience; for it is said that "No one enjoins good and warns against evil unless he is qualified to do that, possessing mercy and forbearance."²⁰

The *Muhtasib* may forbid the teacher to use his pupils for his personal jobs which may be degrading in the eyes of their fathers, such as the carrying of garbage or lifting stones, etc., and should make sure that the prefect who escorts the boys to school every day is trustworthy and honest; for he takes the boys in and out. The *Muhtasib* may also prevent the teacher from teaching indecent poems to the boys,²¹ order the children to be good to their parents, to obey them humbly and to kiss their hands on meeting them;²² and see to it that a child was not beaten more than three or five times, except when on its feet.²³

The *Muhtasib* is entitled to enforce the rights of the slaves owed them by their masters and to see that the slaves are not given unbearable work. If a slave complains that his master does not clothe him or satisfy his needs, the *Muhtasib* may order him to fulfil these two duties and compel him to do so.²⁴ He should further observe the conduct and honesty of merchants who deal with women customers. If he suspects them or if indecency comes to his notice, then he has the right to prevent them from dealing with women and may even admonish them.²⁵

The work of the Muhtasib includes the care of the animals

The work of the *Muhtasib* is even extended to the care of the animals. He should compel the owners of cattle to feed them when he found that they neglected their duty, and see that the cattle were not overworked.²⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah quotes the Prophet Muhammad as saying: "They (the cattle) are a blessing, a shelter or a sin for a man. They are a blessing for him who observes the rights of God in regard to their necks and backs."²⁷ The *Muhtasib* may order those who gather wood and straw to unload the beasts of burden because if they stand with their loads on, they are hurt and tortured, and the Prophet Muhammad did not allow the hurting of animals except for eating. Al-Shayzarí states that the *Hisbah* may command the butcher not to drag a sheep forcibly by the leg nor to use a blunt knife for slaughter because this tortures the animal;²⁸ that the veterinary surgeon should also have sufficient knowledge of animal diseases and their treatment, and be religious enough not to approach the animals with the idea of cutting, or cauterizing or something similar without enough knowledge lest he hurt or wound them, because animals cannot tell about their illness or pain.²⁹

There are many indications to show that the job of the *Hisbah* is to look after social values, social goodness, welfare, security and safety. One short story will illustrate my point. Al-Saqa'í in his *Fí Adáb al-Hisbah* tells us that a *Muhtasib* at Kúfah never let a mu'azzin stand on a minaret unless he was blindfolded, to protect women and houses from his gaze.³⁰

Butchers and the Muhtasib

According to Shayzarí, the *Muhtasib* should oblige the carriers of meat to carry it only in the utensils which are used at night and washed in the morning, and oblige the butchers not to puff up the slaughtered animals, for the taste of the meat would change with the bad breath of the butcher.³¹

A further step, for being considerate for the feelings of people, was the rule that no barber should eat anything that gives out bad breath, such as onion or garlic, which may be

offensive to his customers.³² The notion of luxury was even taken into consideration by the rule according to which the *Muhtasib* could order the masseur to rub his hands with the peelings of pomegranates to render them coarser so that they could remove the dirt and at the same time could give a better feeling to the customer.³³ The kneader should not knead without having on him a sleeveless dress and a mask on his nose, to protect the dough from his sneezing or speaking, and a white band on his head to protect the dough from his sweat. If he worked by day, someone should stand beside him with a fly-flap to chase the flies away.³⁴

A pastry cook was by law required to have a fly-flap all the time to chase away the flies from the pastry. The merchants of fats (they are styled grocers in Egypt) were forced to have their goods well protected in boxes so that no flies or insects might reach them nor dust fall on them. They should also have a fly-flap to drive the flies away, wear clean clothes and have clean and washed covers, utensils and scales.³⁵ The butcher had to sprinkle salt on his block-tables when he closed so that dogs did not lick them and insects did not feed on them. If the butcher had no salt, then he could use some other powder. Butchers were not allowed to take the hind-quarters of animals outside the limits of their shops, to avoid people's clothes being touched and make them feel disturbed.³⁶

One like myself, who has visited most of the Western countries, cannot help observing the high standard of Islamic society attained at a time when Europe lived in darkness. I could go on giving examples of such rules that would astonish the Western reader and even ourselves. But let us move on to another subject, referring the reader to *Niháyat al-Rutbah fí Talab al-Hisbah* by al-Shayzarí.

The Muhtasib and the Community

The organization and the unification of the community was one of the aims of the *Hisbah*,³⁷ in pursuance of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad that someone should take the leadership of any group exceeding three in number: "If three went out on a journey, they should appoint one amongst them their leader", and "Any group of three living on a piece of land should appoint one amongst them their leader."³⁸ If such a rule was necessary for the few, it should be even more necessary for the many.

The importance of organizing the community for the Friday prayers was recognized and it was accepted that the *Muhtasib* should use compulsion in this matter and have the power to punish those who neglected it, provided the number

19 *Ibid*, p. 242.

20 *Al-Hisbah*, by Ibn Taymiyyah, p. 62.

21 *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, p. 104.

22 *Ibid*.

23 *Fí Adáb al-Hisbah*, by al-Saqa'í, p. 68.

24 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultániyyah*, p. 244.

25 *Ibid*, p. 244.

26 *Ibid*, pp. 234, 243.

27 *Hisbah fí al-Islam*.

28 *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, p. 27.

29 *Ibid*.

30 *Ibid*.

31 *Fí Adáb al-Hisbah*, by al-Saqa'í, p. 32.

32 *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, p. 88.

33 *Ibid*, p. 60.

34 *Ibid*, p. 29.

35 *Ibid*, p. 60.

36 *Ibid*, p. 28.

37 *Al-Hisbah fí al-Islám*, by Ibn Taymiyyah, p. 3.

38 *Ibid*, p. 5.

was requisite to conduct the Friday prayers, which is forty or more.³⁹ If the number did not reach forty, the *Muhtasib* may order the saying of the Friday prayers if his opinion agreed with the opinion of the people.⁴⁰

A special market place and guild were established for each trade and the *Muhtasib* was empowered to choose one of the experts of the trade, known for his honesty and trustworthiness, to supervise the members of the guild and convey to the *Muhtasib* the relevant information.⁴¹

The poor and the needy had a right in the wealth and property of the rich. If some persons had no place to go to and were compelled to live in someone's house, the *Muhtasib* was to find lodgings for them and if they had to borrow clothes to protect them from cold or utensils to cook in and drink from, he was to give them these articles free. If they had to borrow a bucket to draw water with, or a pot to cook in and an axe to chop wood with, he was, according to Ibn Taymiyyah⁴² and in pursuance of God's admonition in the Qur'an 107 : 4 :

"So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers"

to give them all these things free.

Ibn Taymiyyah on the duties of the Muhtasib

Ibn Taymiyyah says that he who needed to dig a canal through someone's land could do so, provided the canal did no harm to the landlord's property. Ibn Taymiyyah regards the fulfilment of the duties of teaching, advising and giving testimony⁴³ that one may be called upon to do as paramount. He thinks that the professions of social welfare, such as farming, weaving and building, should be regarded as a duty of "the whole community" unless certain individuals are entrusted with them. In such a case they would perform the duty, the well-being of the people being incomplete without such trades.⁴⁴ If the ruler compels the members of these trades to do something the people need from their trades, he may evaluate their wages similar to those of their rank, and this is an act of obligatory evaluation.⁴⁵

The wealthy were deemed responsible for the maintenance of mosques, the building of city walls, the reparation of water supplies and the care of wayfarers when the treasury lacked the necessary funds.⁴⁶ The wealthy who could not find ready money were required to offer their services instead.⁴⁷

If a man capable of working practised begging, the *Muhtasib* had the power to chastise him and order him to earn his living by working at some trade. But if the man persisted in begging then he could inflict punishment on him until he desisted from doing so.⁴⁸

In the time of the ruler Abú Zakariyyah al-Hafsi, the *Muhtasib* of Tunisia helped the poor section of the Andalusian immigrants by lodging them with the natives of the country, for whom they worked, and permitted the rest to stay on wherever they wished.⁴⁹

One cannot enumerate so many other things which were introduced to build up a virtuous society. For instance, the guardians were allowed to let the girls in their charge marry if those girls wanted to and if their prospective husbands were suited to them. One *Muhtasib* saw to it that ships were not overladen. He saw to it that the privacy of houses was not violated and the prying into the private lives of people was prohibited.⁵⁰

Transactions and the Hisbah

With regards to transactions in the Islamic society, rules governing them are recorded in the books on the *Hisbah*. The first noticeable characteristics of these regulations is that they are intended to cover all people without distinction of religion, race or rank. Indeed, the caliph, the judge or those in authority were not privileged and the *Muhtasib* could take action against them.⁵¹ There is no difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim concerning transactions; both are asked to fulfil their obligations and to protect their rights under the law and their agreements.

All dealings are based on the fear of God,⁵² equitable judgment between people,⁵³ the protection of people's money, honour and their persons, and conducting business with honesty and truthfulness, and similar rules enunciated by the *Shari'ah*. Al-Shayzari says, "The criterion in matters of the *Hisbah* is the sacred *Shari'ah*; all that is forbidden by the *Shari'ah* is not permissible and the *Muhtasib* should suppress it and prevent it; and all that is allowed by the *Shari'ah* should be recognised as it is."⁵⁴ It was recognised that the *Muhtasib* should be a jurist well-versed in the matters of the *Shari'ah*,⁵⁵ free, just, thoughtful, frank, righteous and knowledgeable in matters of religion and human weaknesses.⁵⁶

The Muhtasib prevented the monopoly of food, etc.

According to these rules the *Muhtasib* prevented the monopoly of food and forced the monopolists to sell,⁵⁷ he prevented fraud in all sales, and laid down detailed rules for this: the tailor should weigh the expensive cloth and give the same weight back to the client;⁵⁸ the cotton merchant should not mix new cotton with old;⁵⁹ the traders should have iron utensils and weights;⁶⁰ the goldsmith should acquaint the buyer of gold-jewellery with the degree of the mixture of alloy with gold and no one was to make jewellery in the furnace unless the owner was present.⁶¹ The *Muhtasib* was expected to choose the measures and the weighers, when the city grew big, from amongst honest and trustworthy people, and pay them wages from the treasury, if there were enough funds in it.⁶² He was also to ensure that those who worked in certain trades were skilled enough and to test them for their efficiency. A draper should not trade in cloth unless he knew the rules of sale and other transactions, and what was right and what was wrong. 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab said,⁶³ "No one trades in our market unless he is well-versed in his

39 The number for the Friday prayers is three and not forty (Editor, I.R.).

40 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultaniyyah*, p. 230.

41 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 12.

42 *Al-Hisbah, fi al-Islám, op. cit.*, p. 31.

43 *Ibid*, p. 32.

44 *Ibid*, p. 17.

45 *Ibid*, p. 233.

46 *Ibid*, p. 235.

47 *Al-Muqtabas*, Cairo 1911, Vol. 6, p. 159.

48 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultaniyyah*, p. 244.

49 *Ibid*, p. 244.

50 *Ibid*, p. 244.

51 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 114.

52 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 244.

53 *Al-Hisbah fi al-Islám*, p. 5.

54 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 118.

55 *Ibid*, p. 118.

56 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultaniyyah*, p. 228.

57 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 12.

58 *Ibid*, p. 67.

59 *Ibid*, p. 28.

60 *Ibid*, p. 69.

61 *Ibid*, p. 19.

62 *Ibid*, p. 77.

63 *Ibid*, p. 61.

religion." A money-changer was not to take up his trade unless he knew the *Shari'ah*.⁶⁴ A veterinary surgeon was to have a sound knowledge of his religion, which would prevent him from amputation or cauterizing,⁶⁵ and the *Muhtasib* should make sure of his knowledge.⁶⁶ A phlebotomist was expected to have acquired renown for his knowledge of anatomy, arteries, muscles and veins.⁶⁷ The *Muhtasib* was to see to it that doctors abided by their oath of Hippocrates and made them take an oath not to give anyone a harmful medicine or dispense to him poison, prescribe amulets to the people or divulge their secrets.⁶⁸

Ibn Taymiyyah adopted the idea of fixing the prices of goods and the tariff of services in many cases. For instance, when traders refused to sell the essential goods; and when someone specialized in the buying and selling of a certain foodstuff, a fixed price was imposed on the basis of the price of similar foods;⁶⁹ or when people needed weapons for *Jihad*, the *Muhtasib* could ask the weapon dealers to sell them for the price of an equivalent commodity;⁷⁰ or when people needed the products of a certain trade, like farming or sewing, the *Muhtasib* could force the workers who could do these trades and estimate their wages according to similar jobs; or, when people needed someone to make arms or equipment, etc., the price asked would be based on that of a similar article.⁷¹

Hence all dealings were based on religion, science, utility and mutual benefits without harm or hurt.

The Hisbah and the fraud

In order to give a fair account we should also mention a further point which is revealed to us by books on the *Hisbah*. That is about the fraud which is explicitly banned by God. The question is, how could such fraudulent devices be practised in a virtuous society where religion and morals prevailed? Is it attributable to the extension of big cities crowded with inhabitants and visited by foreign buyers and sellers? Al-Shayzari says at the end of the chapter on the fraud of the merchants of perfumes and drugs, "No one dares do it except aliens and those who wander in the alleys. The *Muhtasib* does not fail to discover and see to it that justice prevails."⁷²

Or is it attributable to the act that the Arabs looked down on certain trades and left them to certain peoples such as the gypsies and the Jews, with the result that most artisans turned out to be non-Muslims living under the protection of an Islamic State? Or is it due to the opulence of cities which incited the people to earn money by hook or by crook? Or is it caused by the spread of bribery and profit-seeking through the institution of the *Hisbah*, when the government lost interest in it and appointed insignificant people to that post?⁷³ Did fraud prevail when the *Muhtasib* became, during a certain period, a concessionaire who secured the post for money and practised it with arbitrariness and coercion, collecting money by means fair and foul that he overlooked the fraud and let it prevail? Or was it the result of natural disasters such as epidemics or droughts driving the traders to hoard goods and to raise the prices, causing a spread of hunger and misery? Or did it originate from destructive ideologies that spread and divided society into divergent cliques cheating each other?

All these reasons or some of them might have favoured the prevalence of fraud. One should emphasise the fact that

a true believer never resorts to fraud since the Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever cheats us is not one of us." Moreover, fraud increases or decreases according to the nature of the environment. It is frequent in towns, rare in villages and deserts, practised more by traders and artisans than by farmers, and prevalent in the towns more where aliens have access than in distant and hardly accessible towns.

The falsity of the claim of the Western Orientalists that the Hisbah institution was borrowed by the Muslims from the Byzantines

Lastly, let us consider the claim by the Western Orientalists that the Muslims copied the *Hisbah* from the Byzantines and gave it an Islamic colour.

The American Orientalist Professor Gustav Von Grunbaum, in his book *Medieval Islam*,⁷⁴ compared the *Hisbah* of Islam to the Byzantine *Book of the Prefect*,⁷⁵ which regulates the affairs of traders and merchants in Constantinople. The reason why he did so is not clear. Is it his belief that the Muslims copied the *Hisbah* from the Byzantines, or is it that he noticed the resemblance between the attributes of the Muslim *Muhtasib* and the Byzantine City Prefect and also between the books on the *Hisbah* that the Muslims wrote and the Byzantine *Book of the Prefect*?

The Byzantine Book of the Prefect

We have read all the books we could get on the *Hisbah* and also the Byzantine *Book of the Prefect* and we come to the following conclusions:

First: The Byzantine *Book of the Prefect* was written in the tenth century C.E., whilst the *Hisbah*, though it was not a subject of writing before the eighth and the beginning of the ninth centuries C.E., is based originally on the Qur'anic texts and on the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and on his *Sunnah* and the precepts of his Caliphs since the dawn of Islam, that is to say, two centuries before the *Book of the Prefect* was written. Ibn Bassam⁷⁶ was right when he observed "So a special science emerged called *Ihtisab* that dealt with the current dealings of townspeople leading a civilised life."

Second: The *Book of the Prefect* begins with the following sentence, "When God created the existing things and blessed the world with peace and harmony, He wrote the Divine Law on the Board with His finger and made it known so that people will act accordingly and respect each other's rights, the strong will not encroach upon the weak, and everything proceeded according to plan."⁷⁷ It is known that the New Testament does not contain laws and does not interfere with the affairs of the state, separating the worldly from the Divine. And what is mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy

64 *Ibid*, p. 74.

65 *Ibid*, p. 86.

66 *Ibid*, p. 83.

67 *Ibid*, p. 83.

68 *Ibid*, p. 89.

69 *Ibid*, p. 98.

70 *Al-Hisbah fi al-Islam*, pp. 15, 29.

71 *Ibid*, p. 23.

72 *Nihayah al-Rutbah*, p. 23.

73 *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyyah*, p. 245.

74 Chicago 1947, p. 164.

75 Translated into Arabic and published by Dr. al-Sayyid al-Báz al-Arini in the *Review of the Faculty of Arts*, Cairo University, Vol. 19, Part I, for May 1957, pp. 135-187.

76 *Nihayah al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah*, by Ibn Bassam, published in the *Arabic Review*, *al-Mashriq*, Beirut, Year 10, 1907, No. 21, p. 962.

77 Page 146.

of the Old Testament is not broad enough to include those meanings implied in the *Book of the Prefect*, which are similar to those corresponding to what Muslims believe that the Holy Qur'án is inscribed on the "*Safely Preserved Tablet*".⁷⁸

Third: Most of the *Book of the Prefect* concerns the jewellers, money-changers, traders of silk clothes, of Syrian silk textiles and of crude silk, merchants of linen textiles, merchants of perfumes, manufacturers of candles and soap (pp. 151-167), leather manufacturers and dealers in pork and wine. A very small part is concerned with the merchants of foodstuffs (pp. 167-168), butchers (pp. 169-170), fishmongers (p. 171), bakers (p. 172), inspectors of cattle markets (pp. 174-176) and artisans such as plumbers, decorators, marble workers and painters (pp. 176-178).

The *Prefect* was concerned mostly with the first part because the materials produced by such trades were used by the Emperor, princes, feudal lords and clergymen, who were keen on having them in abundance. While the *Hisbah* concerns itself mostly with the needs of the common people, such as food and clothing, the building of mosques and markets, and never deals with the needs of a specific minority as the Caliph, the *Wáli* or the religious men. Such a difference proves that both approaches are entirely dissimilar in means and ends.

Fourth: Seldom are religious matters or morals mentioned in the *Book of the Prefect*, while the *Hisbah* cares much for these matters and gives priority to them. The writers on the *Hisbah* admit unanimously that the *Hisbah* is a religious matter and that its criterion is the *Shari'ah*.⁷⁹

Fifth: The *Book of the Prefect* lays restrictions on aliens, Jews and slaves, while the *Hisbah*, on the contrary, does not put any restrictions on them and applies the rules of law and covenant, which awarded the Muslim a reputation for their tolerance and made the Islamic world, during the time of the Inquisition, a refuge for the Jews, where they could monopolise certain trades for themselves.

In conclusion, the differences are fundamental in objectives, origins and details and do not justify the allegation that

the *Hisbah* is copied from the Byzantines. But were the Muslims inhibited and did not profit from human civilisations? All indications are that they looked for wisdom with unflinching interest and with the keen eyes of birds they selected what was beneficent and shunned what was detrimental.

Such indications are found in the books of the *Hisbah*:

1. Trades and professions of use were permitted in Muslim countries and were taught, while harmful things were banned, such as astrology and jugglery.⁸⁰

2. References were made to Greeks, Persians and Indians and their scientists were called the wise men.⁸¹

3. Translations of scientific treatises on philosophy, medicine, pharmacy and chemistry were made.

4. The Oath of Hippocrates, who was a pagan, was adopted.⁸²

Therefore historians admitted that the Islamic civilisation made great conquests in many fields and served as the bridge over which the ancient Greek civilisation reached Europe and made the Renaissance possible.

It is established by documents that the Crusaders' Kingdom in Jerusalem adopted the idea of the *Hisbah* and its functions from the Muslims and that they even used the Arabic word *Muhtasib* (corrupted into *Mathessep*) in their writings.⁸³

78 The Qur'án 85: 21-22.

79 *Al-Ahkám al-Sultániyyah*, p. 245; *Niháyah al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah*, p. 118.

80 *Ma'álim al-Qurbah*, p. 182; *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, p. 98.

81 *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, pp. 151, 166, 169.

82 *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, p. 98. Hippocrates, born around 400 B.C., was a Greek doctor and is called the father of medicine (*vide Tabaqát al-Atibbá*, by Ibn Abi 'Usaybi'ah, Vol. I, pp. 24-27 and the footnote on page 98 of *Niháyah al-Rutbah*).

83 Documents published by Dr. al-Sayyid al-Báz al-Arini in Arabic and French as Appendix to *Niháyah al-Rutbah*, pp. 125-129.

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The Meaning of Life and Islam

Islam is the Embodiment of Human Dignity

By SAYYID AHMAD AMIN

Islam, the embodiment of human dignity

The very first question which poses itself to a thinking man is, "What is the end of life?" Is our life on this earth everything or is there something beyond it? If our life on this earth is everything, then we know it for certain that it is ephemeral and transitory and the very fact that it is transitory shows that it is not an end in itself. For otherwise life would be meaningless and there is nothing meaningless in Nature. There is a scheme, a design in everything. Life cannot be without a purpose. It must have some meaning. If we cannot comprehend the Meaning of Life, the fault lies with us and not with Life.

It is here that Islam comes to the help of man. Islam, let me tell you at the very outset, is not the name of any particular religion founded by any particular Prophet. Islam is the generic name of the teachings of all the Prophets of God, from Adam to the Prophet Muhammad (the peace of God be on him!). It denotes complete surrender to the Will of the Almighty and the moulding of Life according to His wishes, so that man may attain a higher and nobler form of life after his brief sojourn in this world comes to an end. This was the teaching of all the Prophets of God. And the very first tenet of Islam is that one must believe in God and in all the Prophets of God, beginning with Adam, the first Prophet, and ending with the Prophet Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, through whom the word of God was revealed to Man in the form of a Book and God Himself in His mercy promised its future safety and freedom from interpolations. And for fourteen hundred years it has stood like a solid rock in the midst of stormy seas, pointing to man the straight path — the path of deliverance from pains and worries, fears and anxieties.

Islam also means Peace. With belief in God, there is an end of all conflicts and commotions. All doubts and conflicts are finally and for good laid to rest. There is peace with Almighty God, the Maker of Man; there is peace within yourself and there is peace with the outside world. There is God's Peace everywhere — Peace of the mind and Peace of the soul, compared with which the Peace of Man, i.e. peace made by man-made laws, pales into insignificance because man-made laws extend only to the hands and feet of man. They have no sway over the mind of man, much less over the soul of man.

Life now has a meaning and a purpose. Man has been sent to this world only for a trial. He is to prove by his conduct that he deserves a higher form of life. This world is like the resting-place of a bird in passage. Empty-handed man comes to this world and empty-handed he goes. He takes with himself only his faith and his deeds. All worldly possessions he leaves for others. Blessed is he who considers himself to be only a trustee, a manager, an administrator of all that he has in this world.

Islam does not teach renunciation of this world. But Islam does teach that you should live in this world according to the dictates of God Almighty. You should live only for God and you should die for God. This world is nothing but a testing-place. It is a stepping-stone for a higher life. To run away from this world would be sheer cowardice. You have got to live in this world and face all the duties and responsibilities of worldly life. And you have got to do it because the pleasure of the Almighty lies in this.

A godly man lives in this world but all the time his heart is with the Almighty. He does not neglect any of his worldly duties because he knows that the brief span of life on this earth has been allotted to him for the performance of these duties. He has got his duties to perform towards his parents and children, his wife and other relatives, his neighbours, his fellow-beings, all living objects and all the creations of God. But his whole object in performing these duties is to seek the pleasure of the Almighty. His love for his parents, children and wife is subordinated to the love of God. He would never tread a path which would incur the displeasure of God.

The Path of God is the path of goodness

The path of God is the path of goodness. The beast in man has to be tamed in order to make it serve the purposes of the soul. All beastly passions are to be curbed and the first and foremost is anger and then comes lust. The Holy Qur'an describes *Muttaqūn* (those who fear God) as *Kāzīmūn al-Ghayz* (those who control their anger) and *'Afūna 'An al-Nās* (forgivers of erring men). Greed, avarice, pride and malice have to be shunned. Strength has been given to some of us, so that we may help the weak and not oppress them. Wealth

Continued on page 40

HIJAZIYYAT¹ AL-ZAMAKHSHARI²

or

Zamakhshari's Longings for Mecca

By BAHIJAH AL-HASANI

"How wonderful is the city (Mecca) in which
I am the neighbour of the House of God,
Zealous, taking refuge in the corner (of the House of God)
Either kneeling, prostrating myself, standing, or walking
round the House,
Going early to 'al-Tan'im* every morning
And standing on Mount 'Arafat' every year."³

Al-Zamakhshari gives us at the end of his book *al-Fā'i'q fi Gharīb al-Hadīth* the following information :

"This book was completed at the beginning of Rabī' al-Akhir in the year 516 A.H. (1122 C.E.), the fourth year of the 'Warning year'. I decided at this time to perform the pilgrimage and dwell near the Sacred House, and I trusted in God that He, The Powerful, The Wise, would help me to achieve this."

This was his first stay, of which we do not know the length. During this time the youths of Mecca gathered round him and scholars from different parts of the world came to him to acquire the various literary sciences. There was a close bond of friendship between him and Ibn Wahhās⁴ and his disposition changed from ambition, envy and rebellion to a serenity and contentment imbued in him by the Islamic faith. Religion purified his nature and refined his humour of all rancour and envy and pursuit of glory. He devoted himself utterly to religion; it was his *raison d'être*, for which he lived and for which he hoped to die. Therefore, he turned to writing exclusively in those fields of literature which served the faith of Islam.

In spite of this contentment of spirit and the realisation of his hopes in Mecca, in spite of his nearness to the House of God, and his love and admiration for the Meccans, in general, and Ibn Wahhās in particular, he was still homesick for his native town and wished to return to it. It happened one day that he heard two doves cooing softly and sweetly on the branch of a tree. It stirred his restless longing and heartfelt yearning for his country. He hoped to return, yet was debarred by the great distance.

Apparently al-Zamakhshari could not endure separation from his country. He forgot the bitterness of life he had experienced there :

"O you pair of ring-doves of Na'mán† who stirred my longing
For the land of my birth and whose song made me languish,

You lamented, on two branches of the Arák‡ tree,
In your desire to make me shed tears upon tears;
If they fell upon a grove of trees,
The green grass would flourish in its meadow,
Between my native town and the Hijáz is a great distance,
Too far for a she-camel and for an obstinate young camel."⁵

He was restless and could not stay longer in Mecca, although when he left it to return to his home, he regretted his action, and he wished to stay in al-Hijáz and his longing to return weakened, as he tells us in the following ode.

Despite his welcome by the Khwárizmians and his reception by Sultán Muhammad Ibn Anúshtikín,⁶ he still longed for the Hijáz and relived his memories of past sweetness, singing them in his odes. He describes how he passed his time in Mecca, bowing and prostrating himself in prayer and performing the circumambulations :

"It is a deep sigh from an impassioned heart
Until I see the 'Mother of Towns' (Mecca) again.
By night I travelled with my body, without heart or will.
How great the difference with the others and their night travels.

1 I myself called this collection of poems (that has a prominent place in al-Zamakhshari's *Diwán*) the *Hijáziyyát* of al-Zamakhshari, for in them he writes about al-Hijáz, especially Mecca, in relation to the days of pilgrimage and other related occasions. This collection also describes his life in Mecca, as well as his love, longing for this Holy City, when he was away.

2 Abú 'l-Kásim Jár Alláh Mahmúd Ibn 'Umar Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ahmad al-Zamakhshari, the great master in the science of Qur'anic exegesis, tradition, grammar, philosophy and rhetoric. He was born in 1074 C.E. and died in 1143 C.E. For his life and references, see the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2.i. 183-184.

*Al-Tan'im is the name of a place between Mecca and Medina.

3 *Ms. Nafahát Azhár Rabī' al-Abrár*, fol. 18.

4 Abú 'l-Hasan 'Ulay Ibn 'Isá Ibn Hamzah Ibn Sulaymán Ibn 'Abd Alláh al-Hasaní al-Sulaymání, the Amír of Mecca, the friend and the protector of al-Zamakhshari. Al-Zamakhshari compiled his book *al-Kashshaf* at his instance. For his life see *Táj al-'Arús*, 3,243; the introduction of *al-Kashshaf*.

†A valley between Mecca and Tá'if.

‡The name of a valley near Mecca.

5 *Ms. Nafahát Azhár Rabī' al-Abrár*, fol. 12; *Diwán al-'Adab*, fol. 5.

6 Muhammad Ibn Anúshtikín, the founder of the Khwárizmsháhíid Kingdom. His time was devoted to the dispensing of justice and carrying out good works, and in patronising scholars and men of religion. A man who could combine sword with pen. He died in 521 A.H. (1127 C.E. For his life and ref. see the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2.ii 913.

We two⁷ stayed in the plain of Mecca, while the dawn lightened,

We dwelt near the House of God while Sirius rose.
Devoted, continually, in prayer in the House of God;

Making our circumambulation among those performing it.

My camels had barely left Batn Nakhlah' when the force

Of my passion and longing grew strong in me.

How will it be when the Hijáz is left behind us,

With the padding of the mounts whose hearts are pining.

If my soul urges me to travel towards Iraq — may it

Neither receive its sustenance nor meet any trouble,
(i.e. may it perish)

Is it to buy at a loss wretchedness for the gain of the next world?

To acquire the mean world in exchange for the next,

When I call to mind the memory of my stay in Mecca the

Memory stirs within me.

I endure a night as all my nights with sighs and copious

Tears watering deep-bedded rivers praying for oblivion
for my heart,

The reply comes to his prayer — tears choking and overflowing

There is no excuse for one fixed in Mecca,

Where there is no pain or hunger or nakedness.

Would you go from here to gain another place in exchange?

— By thy Lord there is no excuse."⁸

He has left us many odes describing the pilgrimage and all its processions and ceremonies vividly. He presents us with a picture of the arrival of the pilgrim caravans approaching from every quarter of the world, singing chants which filled the heavens; wherever one walked in the streets of Mecca, one heard nothing but prayers and calling on God; it is as if we accompanied the pilgrims on their visit to the Mosque of the Prophet. We accompany al-Zamaksharí with dishevelled and dusty hair, repeating *Labbayka* (Here I am at Thy service) on the Mount 'Arafát, we accompany him early in the morning, going to Miná, then to Mujammar§, then to the Mount of Bisát al-Rahmah'.||

"How wonderful it is when I go to Mount 'Arafát

From Miná driving on my donkey early in the morning.

Where those who arrive, from every region, recite chants

Which spread to every land.

Wherever they listen, they hear prayers and invocations
to God

And when I go early in the morning with the people of
Mecca around me,

Making the Lesser Pilgrimage and saying, 'I am at your
service'

At Dhú Tuwá.¶

And when I stand with those standing in prayer at night,

And when I fast with those who fast during the day.

The rushing of the riders going to the tomb of Mustafá

Urges my mount to perform the circumambulation.

These are wishes which I fulfilled and then I lost (the

Opportunity of fulfilling them again),

Like a clumsy woman who has obtained camel hair (for a

Tent but cannot erect it).

What success my gambling arrows would have achieved.

If I had met my death when I was the neighbour of God."⁹

He said too :

"How it saddened me when she (the female turtle-dove)
called

To her mate in the thicket, singing words of love re-
peatedly in rhymed prose,

Eloquent and distinct in her song, entertaining the
listener,

Elegant in her imagery, a delight to the eyes.

She made the eyes of the listeners shed tears, like an
orator,

When she took for her pulpit a branch of the 'Arák tree.

My heart felt compassion for her and the tears shone
(in my eyes)

And her song startled the bird of my heart but it refused
to be scared away.

And my yearning was stirred towards the valley of Mecca,

And prevented my soul from being patient.

When the 'Mother of All Towns' (Mecca) is mentioned,

My heart flutters like the quivering of bright daisies,

And my face grows pale, and shines like the light of dawn.

How wonderful is the eagerness of the riders as they say,

'Here I am at Thy service,'

Going to Mount 'Arafát, their hair dishevelled and
dusty,¹⁰

And the night of assembly and the early morning journey
to Miná

And my descent from the Mosque of al-Khayf for the
ritual stone-throwing.

And the desire to tread the 'Pall of Mercy' and to run on

It with shaven head and loin-cloth ;

I remembered all this, and my patience and strength
disappeared ;

The one who years cannot help remembering!"¹¹

And he said :

"O Mount of Rahmah, could I but see you,

And see 'Na'mán' and al-Iraq ;

He who camped near you will never despair of being
given

The chance of standing and moving between you."¹²

And he said :

"Do you remember me in al-Ma'lát,** my friends,

When the lightning appears from the direction of 'Iraq'?

Is it with you as it is with me? For I am ill when the

Lightning flashes from the direction of 'Iraq'.

My longing heart flies with me to al-Ma'lát

⁷ He means Ibn Wahnás and himself.

⁸ Ms. *Najahát Azhár Rabí' al-Abrár*, fol. 10; Ms. *Diwán al-'Adab* fol. 41.

§The name of the place in Miná where the pilgrims throw stones at "the Satan" — a rite of the Pilgrimage.

||The name of the rock which is also known as the Mount of Mercy, from which the Prophet delivered his historic epoch-making Farewell Address, in 631 C.E.

¶A place near Mecca.

⁹ Ms. *Diwán al-'Adab*, fol. 13.

¹⁰ Zamaksharí seems very fond of this phrase!

¹¹ *Diwán al-'Adab*, fol. 11.

¹² *Ibid.*, fol. 12.

**A place between Mecca and Badr.

Except that (my) wing(s) are too weak to fly,
I burst with passion like one grieving for love,
When life is flowing from her throat."¹³

Al-Zamakhsharí returned impatiently to Mecca, composing on his way the following ode, in which he declares that Mecca is his country and his return to his native land was only a passing fancy :

"I am the neighbour, the neighbour of God,
Mecca is my resting place where I pitch my tent
And secure its ropes (Where my tent pegs are driven in
and

My tent ropes knotted).

It was only an impulse drove me to the country,

The home of my family and friends,

When my passion was satisfied, and how good it was,

The flame of a kindling whose flint (spark) never failed
me.

I sped back to the sloping valley of Mecca as if I were a
Tiger speeding back to the forest.

Tell those who travel to various villages,

That Mecca, the 'Mother of Towns', is my destination and
abode.

Those who kneel by different *mihráb* (prayer niches),

My *mihráb* is the Ka'bah of the Sacred House.

To stay fast by the House of God, to stand close by the
tomb,

Telling one's beads and weeping,

Or craning my neck, at the end of the night,

Towards the place of the righteous, to the right of the
door —

Tell the kings of the earth they may sport and play :

This is my sport, my pleasure and my pastime."¹⁴

13 *Ms. Nafahát Azhár Rabí' al-Abrár*, fol. 17.

14 *Ibid.*, fol. 13.

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ISLAM IS THE EMBODIMENT OF HUMAN DIGNITY—Continued from page 36

has been given to a few so that we may provide for the wants of the many and not exploit the needy and the poor.

Islam is the very embodiment of human dignity. Man is the vice-regent of God upon earth. The sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the seas, trees and animals have all been made for man. He has not been made for any of them. He is to bow his head only to the Maker of all, namely, God Almighty. He is not to bow his head to anyone else other than God. He is to worship God and God alone. Even the Prophets of God were human beings like us but God selected them to deliver His message to mankind and they were the very models of virtue, for us to copy in our own lives and profit thereby. Islam does not permit *shirk* (associating any partner or partners with God) in any form or kind — "There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet."

Equality of man is the natural concomitant of Islamic belief in the oneness of God. All men are equal, be they poor or rich, high or low. Before God, only he is superior who is most pious amongst you is the verdict of the Qur'an (49 : 11). There is only one nobility which Islam recognizes and it is the nobility of virtue. There is no such thing as nobility by birth. The nobility of virtue is open to all, irrespective of the colour of your skin, the country to which you belong or the family

in which you were born. One of the most trusted companions of the Prophet and one who is revered by Muslims throughout the world was Bilál, who came from Abyssinia. The colour of his skin did not stand in the way of his attaining the position which he did attain.

Islam enjoins the dignity of labour

Islam teaches man to stand on his own feet. It enjoins upon mankind the dignity of labour.

Laisa li al-Insán Illá má sá'a — for man there is nothing but what he strives for. (The Qur'an 53 : 39.)

This, too, is a natural corollary from faith in God. Man is to bow his head only before God and ask for help only from Him.

Iyyáka Na'budu wa Iyyáka Nasta'in (The Qur'an I : 4).

In order to maintain his dignity and self-respect, he has to help himself. Faith in God implies faith in self. Islam can be likened to alchemy, which transforms base metals into solid gold. It engenders in man self-respect and self-confidence, which change him from a man of clay into a man of iron, with a heart of gold.

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