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SEPTEMBER 1958
Between Ourselves

THE COVER

A reproduction of a fine piece of Arabic calligraphy of the words whose translation reads: 'God, glorified by His name!' from a placard in the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England.

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The Islamic Review

SEPTEMBER 1958

46th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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MAWLID—BIRTHDAY OF THE PROPHET

Times have changed. Today Christian Ministers speak in praise of Muhammad. This was an unheard of thing half a century ago.

It is customary to commemorate the birthdays of all great men. Remembrance of national heroes and leaders gives a sense of pride to a people in its past and at the same time it gives a nation a faith in its future. The whole world of Islam will celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad in the last week of this month, the exact day depending on the appearance of the moon. The manner in which this occasion will be celebrated varies from country to country.

While talking of the event we feel that Prophet Muhammad’s life has a special significance not only to the world of Islam but to the whole of mankind.

It is perhaps right to say that religion in some form or another has always remained a vital force in every society. Muhammad’s contribution to mankind is to make religion a permanent force of vitality by giving it a natural and scientific basis and by differentiating between the real precepts of religion and the elements of superstition that had crept into various religions. (In fact, one of the names the Qur’an claims for itself is Furfan, i.e. Differentiator.) Muhammad had the farsightedness to emphasise and stress the universal concepts of world’s natural religion such as unity of God, unity of the human race, belief in the revealed scriptures of the world, the emphatic assertion that every country and nation has had a religious leader and that all religious personalities of the world should be venerated and respected. In this age of internationalism an intelligent Muslim feels much consolation when he finds that the words of the Qur’an guide him towards the fact that “mankind is one family.” These words of the Qur’an are in fact prophetic. They point towards the day when this feeling as if of “one family” should prevail over the whole world.

In the West to-day the movement to close the ranks of co-religionists and to establish cordial relations between various religions is growing strong. One can notice this in the organisations known as the World Council of Churches and the World Congress of Faiths. Muhammad gave this message at a time when its need was not even felt. Muhammad’s message to the world is just as much inspiring to-day as it was to the pagan Arabs thirteen hundred years ago.

One of the questions that perplexes a thinking mind to-day is the disparity between the ideal and the practice. Perhaps it is forgotten that there always has to be a distance between an ideal and the practice, otherwise striving would cease. What is desired is that an ideal should encourage and inspire a people to exert themselves. So long as this happens, an ideal is serving its purpose. It cannot be denied that even in its worst moments the Muslims have always felt a consolation in their ideology. At least they have always looked up to it in hope. To-day we find that Muslims all the world over are emerging out of a period of depression. They are regaining self-confidence. It seems quite certain that in spite of heavy obstacles the message of Muhammad is going to play an important role in the world of to-morrow. A proof of this is found in the opinions of Western thinkers about Muhammad. Half a century ago a word of appreciation in the West about Muhammad was a surprise. To-day one notices with keen interest that even Christian Ministers speak highly of Muhammad. In the present issue we are including the text of a speech given by the Reverend Arthur Peacock of the World Congress of Faiths at the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday celebrations in London.
MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

Eleventh of September will be the tenth anniversary of the death of the late Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the architect and founder of Pakistan. Out of love and great respect the people of Pakistan remember him with the title Quaid-i-'Azam. Perhaps it is also true that the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent have never had a better political leader.

Good leaders are very essential for any nation. One only has to look at Egypt and realise what a difference a good leader can make to any country, particularly a Muslim country. Jinnah’s outstanding personality and devoted sincerity won Pakistan for the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. It is undoubtedly true that had it not been for Jinnah Pakistan would never have been created.

Looking at the conditions in Pakistan one feels certain that if Jinnah would have been alive Pakistan would have been a country far more important to the Muslim world than it is to-day.

Jinnah claimed Pakistan on behalf of the Muslims of India on the basis of the ideology of Islam. It was only the strength of the ideology that united the component parts of Pakistan into one country in spite of linguistic and cultural differences.

Ten years ago the Muslims of Pakistan ardently believed that they were going to make a unique country. To-day even faint hopes of achieving that ideal are receding rapidly.

One cannot help recalling on this occasion the zeal and the fervour that was found amongst the Muslims in Pakistan in the early days. There was a spirit of dedication and sincerity to the cause in those days. The spirit remained so long as Jinnah and Liaquat were alive. They were the fountain-heads of inspiration to the movement of Pakistan. They were taking the country towards a goal. To-day the Muslims in Pakistan feel as if they are moving aimlessly. The cause of this frustration is the lack of devoted leaders. It is essential that Pakistan, which set out to establish an ideal Islamic State, should soon have leaders who should pursue the path that has been left halfway.

The motto that Jinnah bequeathed to his country was “Faith, Unity and Discipline.” The more one ponders over these words the more one has to admire the farsightedness of the late Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The lack of these three qualities amongst the people of Pakistan has produced the present unsettled conditions. To-day the Quaid’s motto should guide the nation towards its goal.

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
PRoPhETHooD IN ISLAM

By M. AHMAD BACHA, B.A.

Principle of the finality of prophethood is next to the doctrine of the Unity in Islam

In order to maintain the unity of Islam, i.e., of its people as a single nation with its identity unimpaired, the principle of the finality of prophethood is the greatest in Islam, next only to the doctrine of unity of God. The Muslim people as distinct from the followers of other religions have this feature of religion in their favour — viz., that the essentials of the faith of Islam are today the same as they were thirteen hundred years ago when they were first promulgated from the valleys of Mount Hira. The essential doctrine of Islam relating to the question of prophets is summarized in the following verse:

"The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. They all believe in God and His angels and His Books and His messengers: We make no difference between any of His messengers and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord, Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course" (The Qur’an, 2:285).

This verse introduces a breadth of view unknown to any other religion and it lays the golden principle of unification of the various people into a league of nations recognizing the prophets of the world, and, above all, with a view to eliminate any invidious distinction between one prophet and another and to lay the axe at the very root of the inter-religious hatred and bigotry; the Qur’an goes further to say that no difference between any of His messengers should be made and that it should be the watchword of a true Muslim that he listens and obeys their behests and from his Lord he craves His forgiveness “as to Him is the eventual course”. Thus it will be seen from the above quotation that wide-open

is the gate of prophethood and that many have appeared regarding whom the Holy Writ enjoins obedience and servitude. In a further passage dealing with Islam and mankind as a whole, a similar teaching is intended to be conveyed by the following verse:

"We said: Go forth from this state all. Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve" (The Qur’an, 2:38).

The whole of mankind is here shown the way by which regeneration can come to them after their fall of disobedience to the Lord. Here it is promised that guidance will come to mankind from the Lord which needs to be communicated to it from the earliest times known to history down to the enduring of the human species on the surface of this earth. Guidance is here promised to all humanity in general and no distinction is made between any one tribe or nation, between one period and another, and between one clime and country. God, the Rabb of all the worlds, is not limited in His beneficence either in showing His mercy to a chosen people or to a chosen age, but He, being the Creator, Sustainer and the Evolver of all the worlds, shows His mercy to all humanity even as He pours the benefits of physical life for the maintenance and development of all mankind. The guidance offered to man is a grace from his Lord given to man by virtue of His beneficence and mercy. It will in conformity with that principle appear that the mercy of the Lord or His grace shown to mankind cannot be withheld after a lapse of time, for the attributes of God are eternal and the need of humanity and its dependence on its Creator is everlasting, even as the need of rain after drought and light after darkness is a continuous repetition of the natural phenomenon. It is therefore that in addition to the Qur’an having
borne testimony to the veracity of all the prophets before the advent of Muhammad, it confirms the truth of the teaching of the Prophet and lays down the applicability of the same prophethood to the end of time in the present cycle of creation. It is here necessary to quote the following verses of the Qur'an:

"He it is Who raised among the illiterates a messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom — although they were before certainly in manifest error — and others from among them who have not yet joined them. And He is the Mighty, the Wise" (62 : 2-3).

In addition to pointing out the truth and characteristics of the prophethood of Muhammad, the above verses indicate the sphere of their applicability into which are included men of his own age and those who come. In this verse it is pointed out as the duty of the prophet the reciting of the verse, the purification and perfection of the soul, the teaching of the book and the wisdom. This is indicated as the function of the prophet and the benefit which he confers upon society, which includes not only his contemporaries but also those that are yet to be. But the question that now remains to be answered is this: If Muhammad is not only the teacher, the admonisher, and the purifier of his age, but also of the ages to come, how is the office to be conducted after his death? The same Muhammad cannot exist for ever, nor does he exist, as the following verse indicates:

"And Muhammad is but a messenger — messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels?" (The Qur'an, 3 : 143).

But if he is exalted to be the prophet not merely of his nation and age but of all ages and all people to come, how then can the function of the "teacher and the purifier" be carried on after him? If one or many are to appear carrying on the duties of the Prophet Muhammad and teaching the same Book as he did and promulgating the same laws as he did, what is to be the status of one or the many that are to succeed after him? In essence are they the prophets or the followers? Or in terms of Islamic literalism, are they the nabi or the unma? Obviously, as this verse shows, the same work of the Prophet is to be carried on even after him and the need for him will continue to recur from time to time owing to the ravaging effects of change in social, mental and moral outlook of the people. Where it is admitted indirectly that such a need will continue to exist, it is asserted that the prophethood which will continue to be given for ages to come will not be other than that of Muhammad.

The difficulties in accepting this principle

The difficulty that now arises is that if persons succeeding Muhammad in this Divine office are to carry on the functions of a prophet, would that not mean the establishment of their own respective systems of law and reform which would amount to the termination of the sacred office of Muhammad's prophethood? This will appear to be in direct conflict or in contradiction with the nature of the prophethood proclaimed in the above verse regarding the sphere of its applicability as including within its scope the ages to come. In a further verse it is more clearly pointed out to all mankind regarding the advent of the messengers of God, presumably after Muhammad, in the following words:

"O children of Adam! If messengers come to you from among you relating to you My messages, then whosoever guards against evil and acts aright with them shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. And those who reject Our messages and turn away from them naughtily — these are the companions of the Fire; they shall abide in it" (The Qur'an, 7 : 35-36).

These verses clearly lay down a principle that if messengers come, obedience to them is obligatory on those who seek freedom from fear and grief. Like all the other verses of the Qur'an, this verse was also revealed to the Prophet, and as the text "if they come to you" implies, it has its bearing to a future age. Though the words "O children of Adam" are used here at the opening of the verse, it cannot be said that this verse applies to the age immediately succeeding the life of Adam, the first individual of that name, but as the context would amply support it, it applies as a general rule of guidance to men of the age of Muhammad and to those that are yet to come. Apparently from this it suggests itself to us that an expectation is held forward regarding the advent of messengers, presumably after Muhammad, the rejection of whom is detested as an abomination of God. Such are, in brief, the difficulties that confront one who sets himself up to solve this great and fundamental principle of prophets in Islam.

A fair analysis

As it has been pointed out, the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad is the great cornerstone laid down to secure the unity and solidarity of the Muslim people and its faith. In other words, if we are to limit prophethood to a particular people or age, we are restricting the universality of the attributes of God; and if we are to lay open the door of prophethood to an indefinite age yet to come, we seem to shatter the very constructive principle of a united society which ought to be the purpose of a religion if it is to purge the world of its sin and misery.

A close examination of the verses of the Qur'an gives ample proof, in addition to those already quoted, of the infinite bounties of God, His grace being unlimited either in space or in time; and a further examination of the verses also reveals the existence of a verse as the one quoted below, on which is based the traditional doctrine of the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of God and the seal of the prophets. And God is ever knowing of all things" (33 : 40).

Summarizing the question, we now have two sets of facts, one setting out the universality of the beneficence of God, the verse extending the mercy of God to all humanity both in respect of time and space; and another, the need of maintaining the solidarity of a people without raising a multitude of teachers or preceptors, and the verse indicating the prophethood of Muhammad as final or as the seal of prophets. The problem of this paper is to attempt an explanation of the various questions raised above and to reconcile the two sets of facts already mentioned from the standpoint of the Qur'an and the sciences of the present-day world.

On taking up the survey of these questions, we have first to bear in mind the principle laid down by the Qur'an in arriving at a solution of points wherein differences might arise. It is not for us Muslims to be dragged here and there by what might be expressed by this individual or that, but it is for us to dive deep into the undisputed authority of the
Qur'án, whose verdict must be final and binding on all. We may not as Muslims be led by the views of personages of our own faith, however distinguished they may be, but it is for us to appeal to a source whose authority is binding on all, including even those of great fame and distinction. We here refer to the following verse:

"O you who believe! obey God and obey the messenger, and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to God and the messenger, if you believe in God and the last day; this is best and more suitable to (achieve) the end" (4 : 59).

Here it is clearly pointed out that in the case of a difference arising in any matter, out of the three sources of the authority mentioned we are permitted to leave the last one and to revert to what God and His apostle have said. Any spiritual leader might have promulgated a system of teaching and that teacher might have been taken as one in authority from amongst you; but if any differences of opinion were to arise regarding his teaching or personality, it is hereby commanded that the seeker or the student should search for a higher source than that of the one in authority, viz., the apostle and God. In this connection we do not propose to take up the teachings of this Maulavi or that, this pir or that, this master or that, but confine ourselves to the words of God and to the words of the Prophet, which are bound to be in conformity with the former. In seeking after a solution of this problem we are first to strike at what might be called the essence of prophet- hood within the meaning given to it by the Qur'án. It has to be pointed out that the use of a particular term in a treatise need not necessarily be the same in significance within the scope of a dictionary. The etymological significance according to the dictionary of its language need not be the same as its use or significance in its technical or specific sense. A particular word comes to acquire by usage a particular sense within a particular sphere of utility unknown to its common significance etymologically. The use of the word nabi in the Qur'án has a specific significance not contemplated by any general dictionary of the Arabic language, and its use is peculiarly indicative in the Qur'án of a teacher, who is given the revelation, which he recites to purify, to perfect and to teach the Book and the Wisdom. It therefore becomes necessary to sift through a number of verses to arrive at the differentia of a prophet which will at once enable us to draw the line of distinction between a prophet and a non-prophet.

The underlying significance of the term nabi

In the ordinary sense of the term, nabi means one who imparts any information regarding the unseen or future or one who foretells, but this does not exhaust the significance of the word nabi in its technical sense, for it is open to any one to claim to be a nabi in the ordinary sense of the term. A soothsayer, a politician, a poet, a wise man or a genius with keen intuition can be classified as a nabi, and it is sometimes in the significance of foretelling or predicting something important of the nature of mental or moral value that the use of the word "prophet" is made in the English language. Carlyle, for instance, would be called a prophet or a prophetic seer in view of his deep intuitive knowledge expounded in an authoritative tone. But a prophet according to the Qur'án is used in a different and a restricted sense. Be it however remembered that the word nabi according to the Qur'án conveys more significance that the same word in its ordinary use etymologically. It is not beyond or apart from the scope of the significance of the nabi to foretell some coming event either as a punishment or as a reward. It is very often that the word "prophet" is used in the sense of one who prophesies or one who foretells, and as such, it may be concluded that according to the Qur'án all prophets are those that foretell or speak of a coming event or of an event yet unborn. But it must also be borne in mind that in view of the term nabi according to the Qur'án being greater in significance than the same term etymologically, they are not mutually convertible. In other words, whereas we can safely assert that all prophets foretell of unseen events or events yet to be, it can never be said that all those who foretell are prophets.

It will be observable in the case of a prophet, as the term nabi has come to be used in the Qur'án, that a prophet is found to exhibit a mode of belief and conduct both for his following which is dictated to him by the authority of his own revelation. It is very often mentioned in the Qur'án that the prophets are found to make references to an earlier revelation, and very often they state as following the earlier prophets. For instance, the Prophet Jesus is indicated as having been given the Torah and Evangel, and likewise the Prophet Muhammad is told:

“A messenger from God reciting pure pages, wherein are (all) right books” (98: 2-3).

“Surely this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses” (87: 18-19).

“He is even told ‘therefore following their guidance’” (6: 91).

In spite of all such statements the Qur'án is often indicated as “a book verifying that which is in your hands”. It is pointed out here that the Qur'án is confirmatory of the truth of earlier revelations. Now, in the light of the Qur'án being called the verifier of the earlier books, it will be understood that the seal of veracity to the earlier revelations is imparted not by virtue of its own merit but because of the Qur’án being confirmatory of it. If Muhammad therefore acknowledged them in conformity with the principles of those before, it is not because they were acknowledged by him as such, but because his own revelations gave to them the test of veracity that the ancient revelations needed. In the same manner it must be understood that in accordance with the verse of abrogation in all such instances where the Qur’án or the revelation of Muhammad is found to disagree with the earlier revelation, the earlier is rejected on the strength of the later revelation of the prophets. If any teaching or act of a prophet is in conformity with the revelations of an earlier prophet, it is not because the latter prophet has adopted the former revelation, but because it is his own revelation, thus picks it out as truth. In other words, it might be said that if any old teaching is adopted it becomes his own teaching, because it is his own revelation that enables him to discriminate between the several revelations existing before and picks out the one that conforms to his own revelation. The same may be said of Jesus. He is found to follow Moses as he himself says in the Bible, but he follows it not because he has accepted the laws or teachings of Moses as such, but because the light given to himself confers the seal of veracity to such part of Moses' teachings which he adopted, and on account of which he is said to have mentioned "think not that I have come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it". But still the Pharisees are said to have complained that Jesus violated the laws of Mo-es which they had generally adopted. Jesus is often found to say, "It has been said unto you, etc., etc., but I say unto you”. From both such manner of saying it will appear that Jesus seems to have acted in conformity with a former teaching only because
his own revelation has set the seal of truth on it; and he is found to have differed only when his own revelation seems to have differed from it, and on the authority of his own revelation he says, “but I say unto you, etc., etc.”

A prophet acts by virtue of and on account of his own revelation

Summing up therefore what I have said above, a prophet in the sense of the Qur’án is one whose own revelation constitutes the basis of his own teaching, and when and if he is found to conform to an earlier teaching or to differ from it, it is only on the authority of his own revelation and because of it. In cases of such disagreement it will, in no circumstances, be contemplated that a prophet will ever think or act in conformity with the earlier teaching. But his own revelation will undoubtedly supersede the former and will form the basis of thought and action both for himself and his followers. In short a prophet is only for whom and for whose followers conformity to his own revelation in preference to all other revelations constitutes the rule of life.

The examination of the various verses of the Qur’án gives ample reason to suppose that a prophet acts by virtue of and on account of his own revelation, though on certain occasions he might be found to refer to an older law and teaching. In the event of his disagreeing as well, he does so only because it is a result of his own revelation, and the truth of his own revelation is in such circumstances given preference to an older teaching, however authoritative it may be. An examination of the teachings and narratives of the various prophets mentioned in the Qur’án by name reveal at once a twofold process of absorption or discrimination of such of the teachings which are in conformity with their own teaching, and amplification or enlargement of those very teachings in order to suit the changed conditions of their own time. It must not, however, be forgotten that, though an analysis of their teaching might reveal seeds of an earlier or other teachings, they (the teachings of the various prophets) are not spurious imitations of another; but they are original teachings of their own; the truth of those teachings comes home to them not because of the appealability of the teachings extant at the time, but because the truth of it becomes recognizable by virtue of their own revelation. Whatever the process of this moral or religious growth may be, it reveals at any rate that the moral or religious idea has undergone a growth or that it has been in the making. The process of this making is necessitated by change of conditions and by the inadaptability or the impurity of the earlier teachings themselves.

Mankind reached a stage when complete and perfect teaching could be given to it

But this change cannot in the present order of creation go on for ever from a cosmic or a teleological standpoint of the universe. Change in itself in the universe is not a mere physical or mental variation aimlessly or spasmodically occurring; but it is an occurrence which exhibits a uniformity of behaviour on account of which the innumerable phenomena of the universe become intelligible and conceivable to us. The growth and origin of the various sciences are a monumental proof of consistent and systematic behaviour of nature itself. Now, therefore, it will appear that those changes, whether of a physical, social or mental order, must be part of a consistent system, and as such they must be capable of evolving or realizing a growth. The growth may not be continuous and everlasting, but that growth may relate to one particular order of creation, one particular stage of society, and when that growth is reached it might carry with it both the deformities and merits of the process of development and in accordance with the preponderance of the one or the other a climax or crisis may be reached, which would raise a people to eminence and glory or to destruction and decay. In the destinies of nations and peoples of the world it is with a view to suit the changing conditions that the great prophets have always given laws and teachings which have ever been in the making. But this change, produced as it is by the laws of its own behaviour or by a cosmic mode of operation, brings up society to a stage of its growth, when soon after the fruits of their own action are to be realized. The fruits may be right or wrong, but when a particular stage of growth is reached change becomes as scarce as possible, when at any time the decision of all past actions or changes in society and the world might spring or burst forward into veritable daylight, either evolving an entirely new world or destroying the old into insignificance. But before such a Nemesis or climax is reached, changes occurring in the form of the suggesting of new ideals and in the form of attaining of new points of growth become few or almost invisible. The teachings then which come to be given on the even or the threshold of the attainment of such a growth bring themselves to a higher one. The crisis is being near at hand, they aim at preserving and augmenting the aspect of good in the growth that has taken place, so that in the new dispensation of society it might adopt a happier and a higher path.

An illustration of a man, for example, will serve well to elucidate the rather abstract points raised in the previous paragraph. A newborn baby, for instance, when it becomes one year of age, requires a particular set of dress, a certain size of shoes, a certain shirt and a certain coat. Soon after the child is found to grow; no longer is the same set of dress useful, but a new one with different dimensions and probably in different styles has to be found. This process of change in the growth of a child is accompanied by a changed set of dress, which needs renovation from time to time. But this process does not take place for ever. There is a stage which we call maturity, and after which the rapid change in the growing infant is arrested, and at last, say when about thirty or forty years of age, any further variation of size ceases to take place and one size of dress is made that needs no adjustment.

In the evolution of a society similar process is observable, and in a particular order certain changes or a set of changes lead to certain consequences or growth, but when a crisis or a Nemesis might be reached a different order, better or worse, might emerge, but within the first order itself after a particular stage of growth is reached, a changed or a different state of society does not take place in the same manner, as growth does not take place in a human being after he reaches the age of thirty or forty. A society in such a stage with its potentialities and faculties worked out needs a teaching or a guidance to suit the matured condition of that society, and the object of such a teaching given at such a stage of human history is to preserve the good that has been evolved by long ages of labour and hardship by the prophets of the past and to complete the favours or the benefits needed, in order to emerge successfully from the crisis that is near at hand and yet to take place. The claim of being such a teaching suited to bring forward society to such a stage of perfection and also suited to preserve a society already perfected, is made by the Qur’án. The following verse on the point is therefore significant:

“This day have I perfected for you your religion
and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5 : 3).

In so far as we are writing here from the point of view of a Muslim it is not proposed either to establish that the Qur‘an was given to an age bordering on modernity, or examine its claim of being a perfect and complete book, but to take all these for granted and to follow up our argument more closely regarding the theory of the prophet. Sufﬁce it to say, however, that Islam accepts the principle of growth in prophethood suited to the growing conditions of the time, and the Qur‘an having been the ﬁnal guidance or the Book given to the Prophet Muhammad, it lays claim to have perfected the faith and to have completed the favours of God to man.

The greatest distinction between a prophet and a non-prophet is that it is Gabriel who brings revelation to a prophet

Retracing our footsteps we have now to go back to the last-mentioned point regarding the prophethood, i.e., Revelation. We have indicated the nature of that revelation which is given to a prophet as a distinctive authority or basis on account of which a prophet exercises the liberty to diﬀer from or conﬁrm an earlier revelation. There is a further distinctive feature of that prophetic revelation in that it is communicated through the angel Gabriel, as a recital which is audible, the medium of such recitation being visible. In this connection it will not be out of place here to make a brief survey of the kind and nature of revelation itself known as Wahy in Islamic literature. It might be mentioned that prophets play the part of a medium of communicating the guidance of God to mankind, and the purpose of such communication is, as the Qur‘an points out, to purify and perfect a man. No doubt one can easily understand as to how the prophets can communicate with man, as they do it in the same manner as any man will do with another. But the diﬃcult part of it lies in the method of communication as between God and a prophet, for God is the unseen of the unseen and the exalted. That method or manner of communication between God and the prophet has been called Wahy in Islamic parlance. But it must be noted that the term Wahy, which literally means a “clear and rapid suggestion”, is not a term exclusively applicable to the prophets. In the Qur‘an the word has been used in a very broad sense; we have instances on the one hand of the use of the term Wahy in the cases of honey bees and of the earth (16 : 68 ; 99 : 5), and on the other we also have instances where the use has been made in connection with non-prophets as well. For instance, the Qur‘an mentions as having sent Wahy to the mother of Moses (28 : 7) and to the disciples of Jesus (5 : 111). From this it will appear that the use of the term Wahy or revelation in the Qur‘an is very general, and even in the case of its association with human beings it does not follow that all such recipients of Wahy are or will become prophets in the term of the Qur‘an. The mere mention of the term Wahy or “communication” or “revelation” does not make one a prophet of God; but in order to ﬁnd out as to what constitutes the prophetic revelation or a revelation pertaining to the oﬃce of a prophet, it is necessary to go into the kinds of revelation.

In pointing out the ways and means by which God communicates with man, the Qur‘an mentions three ways in the following manner:

“And it is not vouchsafed to a mortal that God should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases. Surely He is High, Wise” (42 : 51).

The ﬁrst two methods mentioned are not relevant to our purpose, but suﬃce it to say that the former may be revelations made in a dream, very often in the manner of symbols which are suggestive of a signiﬁcance, and the second may be a state of trance or a vision, in which consciousness is not submerged so much as in ordinary sleep. It may in addition also indicate a sight even in a waking state when anything written symbolically, or sound or word involuntarily ﬂowing from the lips. But the third kind is a prophetic revelation where such suggestive words, sounds or symbols are not in evidence but the signiﬁcance is conveyed through words in clear manner, where the message itself becomes audible and the messenger himself is visible. Regarding this mode of delivery the messenger through whom the message is conveyed, the medium, is mentioned as angels, and of whom one known as Gabriel is associated with the prophets. For instance, the Qur‘an says: “Who is an enemy to Gabriel — for surely he revealed it to thy heart by God’s command?” (2 : 97). From this it will appear that the third manner in which God speaks to man is the one in which He speaks to the prophets, where the message is delivered and heard, and the medium of which is Gabriel — an angel. This has not been pointed out as the special case with Muhammad, but with all the prophets whose names have been mentioned and not mentioned in the Qur‘an. In order that any invidious distinction may not be drawn between one prophet and another indicating a remarkable breadth of view peculiar only to Muhammad is the following verse:

“Surely We have revealed to thee as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave to David a scripture. And (We sent) messengers We have mentioned to thee before and messengers We have not mentioned to thee to; and to Moses God addressed His word, speaking (to him)” (4 : 163-164).

From this point it will appear that the revelation given to Muhammad is said to have been of the same manner as of all the prophets mentioned above, and inasmuch as it has been revealed to Muhammad through Gabriel, it is therefore admitted that in the case of all the prophets the medium of Gabriel was employed.

In the same manner as we have said already that all prophets are foretellers or warners of a punishment and harbingers of a reward, and that all foretellers or bearers of good news or bad news are not prophets, we will have to point out that while the recipient of the third kind of revelation becomes capable of the other two kinds, it does not follow that all the recipients of the former two also receive the third kind of revelation. The third is a lofty and pure kind of revelation free of ambiguity and doubt, clear and unmistakable both as regards its expression and its sense. The former two need an interpretation before they are understood and sometimes as they are not clear, occasions are found for their being misunderstood or misinterpreted. It is not to be understood, however, that the recipients of the former two are insincere or that they fabricate those out of their own desires, but they are as sincere as the recipients of the last kind, and the room for ambiguity sometimes arises not from any want of sincerity but from the nature of the method itself, where the knowledge to interpret plays a great part in securing the signiﬁcance of the message itself. The
third or the last kind is a revelation of prophethood, and revelations of the former two kinds are always dependent on the third kind for their veracity and certainty of guidance.

Every prophet is the bearer of a kitab

The third kind of revelation, or the revelation of the words of God through an angel, Gabriel, being of a more permanent character by its very nature and mode of delivery, it has also a greater and more enduring part to play. The prophet gifted with such revelations appears at a time when the world becomes so degenerated that the truth does not become separable from falsehood, and differences of interpretation sap the very essence and strength of society. Inasmuch as the purpose of a prophet is not academical, or to make people confine their activities to intellectual pursuits of a college or the foundering of a school of philosophy, but to point out to the people, including the masses and the intellectual few, the way to live and to act in life, it becomes incumbent on him to point out a way of action and to decide between factions and rending sections of humanity. The prophet's teachings therefore constitute a positive and clear expression of truth asserted with power and authority, rising above all manner of doubts and differences, and formulating a definite code of life. Thus its applicability and utility, being of a permanent and extremely valuable character, come to be preserved in a definite form, which are handed down from generation to generation either orally in a definite form and arrangement, or in the form of a written book. Teachings so collected with a definite form and arrangement and preserved to serve as a guidance to the people constitute the book of a prophet. The book may be orally transmitted from one person to another, or it may be handed over in the form of a written document, or in the form of both. In any case, as the term kitab signifies a thing in which words are arranged side by side, or one in which arguments are collected side by side, the collection of those teachings preserved come to be called the kitab or the Book.

Such books the prophets are said to have been given, and those books are only the result or the product of the revelations peculiar to themselves. The following quotations from the Qur'an will amply bear out what has been said above:

"Certainly We sent our messengers with clear arguments and sent down with them the Book and the measure that men may conduct themselves with equity" (57:25).

And further on in a more explicit manner the Qur'an says:

"And We give him (Abraham) Isaac and Jacob. Each did We guide: and Noah did We guide before, and of his descendants David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. And thus do We reward those who do good (to others): And Zacharias and John and Jesus and Elias: each one of (them) was of the righteous, and Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot: and each one of (them) We made to excel the people . . . these are they to whom We gave the Book and authority and prophecy" (6:85-90).

In the above verse we find mention made of eighteen prophets, and in it we have the great prophets like Abraham and Moses and other prophets as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ishmael, wherein we have mention of a lawgiver like Moses and his associate in prophethood, Aaron. All these are said to have received the book, authority and prophecy. A further verse may be quoted here which is in conformity with the above, and it also indicates how, for all external purposes, the prophets act, how the mode of their acting is based on the authority of that which is revealed to them, and how they guide and command on the strength of the book which has been given to them, and in short the verse may be taken as a working definition of a prophet:

"Mankind is a single nation. So God raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed" (2:213).

Religion was made perfect with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad

With this very brief survey we close the description or the distinctive features of a prophet or nabi in the term of the Qur'an, and now we propose to deal with some of the special features of the Prophet Muhammad and their bearing on the theory of prophethood in general. It will be remembered that we had already dealt with the aspect of perfection of the prophethood of Muhammad and made mention of the following verse of the Qur'an:

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5:3).

The Faith is pointed out as having been perfected and favours as having been completed which would mean that the faith or the religion which has been in the making from time to time immemorial has been perfected, so that there is not a question of a social, moral or spiritual value which will not find an adequate representation in the teachings of Muhammad. The universality of his message in respect of time and of space indicates a character whereby its emergence from the very soul of the universe becomes apparent. In short, in the present age until its conclusion there will not be a question of social, ethical or spiritual order which would not have been dealt with in the Qur'an. The word of God comes to be compared with the deeds of God which are visible in external nature. In the same manner as the physical nature has been discovered by the slow progress of time either in its extent or in its character, the discovery of the earth as well, as a globe with its definite form and its definite setting in the cosmic universe, has been the result of the labour of long ages which has not been without its martyrs and discovers in the realm of science and observation. The word of God as well, regarding its extent and character, took ages before it could have been obtained in its last and developed phase in which it exists in the form of the Qur'an. In the same manner it can be said that the discovery of the earth, which was started by Copernicus and others, has been completed in these modern times, the revelation of the word of God, which seems to have begun from the earliest times known to history, can be said to have been given in its completed form with the revelation of Muhammad. Regarding the innate characteristic of nature and its behaviour, it will be seen that the growing needs of society have continually been discovering new characteristics and properties of nature. Nature or physical nature has been the same throughout; though newer realms were added on to it from time to time, nature as such has been the same in its essence and the properties of matter the same, but the new conditions of society have always made discoveries from the same source, for which it was the great and unexplored mine. All great discoveries of various forces, machinery, telegraphs, etc., were the product of human activity on nature, and what was to the primitive age at one
time a wistful, gloomy or buoyant world, spirit-ridden or presided over by ethereal or invisible beings or genii, is now to the scientist a well-ordered system of modes and behaviours with its definite laws and attributes capable of revealing properties which have become the basis of all scientific discovery and modern civilization. In the realm of thought, of morality and of spiritual experience the word of God or the Qurán serves as nature or as the very deed of God, which to the spiritual scientists reveals immense potentialities, capable of making many discoveries and evolving a perfected state of society wherein freedom and peace will rule. In the same manner as the discoveries of science cannot exhaust the potentialities of nature, so the interpretations and practices of the spiritual wayfarer cannot exhaust the wonder of the holy word of God flowing with life and eternity. Nature has been the same throughout the advances of science, but the discoveries have not exhausted its potentialities, and even as that, the word of God, pure and perfect as in its present form, is and will continue to be the same, though its beauties and its immense potentialities cannot be exhausted by the changing conditions of time.

In the same way as the knowledge of the earth cannot be said to have been complete in the age of the Greeks, of the Romans, or in the Middle Ages, when, to the Greeks, the world meant the land inhabited or ruled by the Greekian race, to the Roman it meant the Roman world, and to the Middle Ages it meant portions of Europe and Asia permeated by Christianity and ridden over by a Pope. The earth was considered flat and circular, bounded on all sides by water which, in its turn, was circumscribed by the high and semi-circular vault of heaven. The sun was dragged from one side to another and kept submerged in water for a period when it was night, and again dragged out when it became day. These notions changed, and we now have the modern conception of the earth being globular, not supported by a pedestal below or hung by a chain above, but going round by itself and also around the sun by the laws of its own nature. This present knowledge of the earth we will call perfect, and it is the period of this discovery that marks the beginning of the scientific knowledge in all the realms of nature.

The coming of the Prophet Muhammad was like the rising of the sun, when several lamps lit during the night are needed no more

The Qurán was revealed to the world at the beginning of such an epoch-making age. In all earlier periods of religious history we have large or small sections of humanity being divided one from another by geographical, linguistic or racial obstacles, when intercourse between one people and another, one nation and another, was an impossibility, and when the village, a class, a tribe or a people was the unit of society. This might be compared to the night when the walls and curtains in a house separate one part from another. During this period it becomes necessary to light every part of the house, every room or hall; in the same manner during that stage of society when the world had attained the fullness of the human and international character, it became necessary for the illumination or the enlightenment of its various people living apart from one another to be given guidances separately through the various prophets appearing amongst the various nations of the earth. But on the appearance of the day, which implies the emergence of the sun, the Several lamps lit in the various halls or rooms of a house become unnecessary and are at once put out. When the world took its new turn from a tribal to a national and an international course, one nation came in contact with another as a result of the modern discoveries of communication, trade and government, the destinies of one people became the destiny of all and the fortunes of one people began to affect the fortunes of another. We have the sea serving as the international highway of communication, and we have today efforts directed to evolve an international currency and an international court of appeal. In a world tending to such unification, different teachers in different sections of the globe will be inconsistent and a curse upon modern civilization. The Qurán appeared at the beginning of such an age, and in comparison with the earlier revelations and by virtue of its immense potentialities to suit the demands of a modern age it claims to be the world-book given by a world-teacher and revealed by the Almighty, the Lord of all the worlds.

Thus it will be seen that Muhammad closes or seals the path of separate prophets by the disappearance of such necessity and by the advent of himself as the world-prophet. In himself as the teacher and the purifier of all the world and in itself as a perfected treasure the healing and the mercy for all mankind, its teachings most carefully preserved in its pristine purity, the teacher serves as a perfect model and the book as the most suited guidance for the needs of humanity. In the present order of society and in the presence of such a teaching as the Qurán, a multiplicity of prophets bringing a new book or a new guide is even unthinkable, for there can be nothing new in the sense in which it is not contained in the Qurán, and there can be no new religion in the sense in which truth has always been the same and which has been presented in its perfection in the Qurán. It is to this that the Qurán refers in the verse already quoted, i.e., "This day have I perfected for you your religion . . . ", and it is to the closing of an age of the anointing of a multiplicity of prophets from time to time that the Qurán indicates in the following verse:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of God and the Seal of prophets" (33 : 40).

The finality of prophethood is not a curse but a boon to humanity

We have said that the Qurán referred to the age of the closure of prophethood when prophets were chosen by God amongst various people from time to time. It might, however, be objected, was prophethood such a curse that God should have closed its doors after a particular age? Or was prophethood not a boon which needed to be given continuously? Apparently the objection seems weighty and convincing; but a moment’s reflection will show that to a thinking person it has no value. The use of the term boon or a favour or a gift cannot be considered absolute — anything is a boon or a favour or a blessing in a given condition or time. In nature and in human experience any phenomenon, as such, becomes a boon, a favour or a blessing, only under modes or circumstances of its applicability. Rain, for instance, can be called a boon or a favour or a blessing only to a parched or dried-up earth, but its continued outpour, resulting in a deluge, will become a certain curse or punishment to society. Food, for instance, is a blessing or a favour to the hungry, but to the one who eats without hunger or with his digestion upset, it becomes poison. Prophethood, even, in the presence of a perfected and complete guidance as the Qurán will become, apart from its superfluity, a source of menace to the unity and solidarity of human society. Continued on Page 33
ESSENTIALS OF SUFISM
By PROFESSOR S. MUZZAFFAR-UD-DIN

Sufism, as a technical term, is defined and explained by saints in different ways. Some of the definitions are given below:

(1) Sufism consists in the renunciation of everything else than God (Dhu al-Nun Misri).
(2) Sufism means thorough dependence on God for life, death, and everything else (Junaid Baghdadi).
(3) Sufism is a combination of all virtues and negation of all vices (Abu Muhammad Jariri).
(4) A Sufi is one who neither likes nor is liked by anyone (Hasan Ibn Mansoor Hallaj).
(5) A Sufi is he who resigns himself entirely to God (Maulana Rumi).

(6) Sufism consists in the abandonment of all the carnal desires. Sufis are those whose souls are purified and who occupy first rank in the presence of God. Sufis are those who neither own nor are owned by anyone (Abu l-Hasan Nuri).
(7) A Sufi is one who does not see anything in the two worlds other than God (Abu Bakr Shibli).
(8) He is a Sufi who blinds himself to everything and gets absorbed in God both externally and internally (‘Ali Ibn Bindar, Nishapuri).

These variations in the explanation of the nature of Sufism only indicate various stages of mystical evolution. In the beginning Sufism merely amounted to piety and chastity, and subsequently other spiritual virtues, such as submission, resignation, love, affection, etc., crept into its conception. Finally self-annihilation and complete absorption in God, followed the suit. In this way Sufism became a combination of all noble virtues. It is not, therefore, strange that different saints explained Sufism in different ways in accordance with their taste and inclination. Some have identified it with puritanism, some with self-effacement, some with absorption in the deity, and so forth. The variations in the definition are verbal rather than real.

Ibn Khaldun, discussing the nature and origin of Sufism, says that the mystical tendency had been in existence during the time of the early Caliphs and some other companions. The elementary form of mysticism consisted of:

(a) purification of the soul;
(b) devotion to God;
(c) renunciation of the luxury of the world;
(d) treatment of worldly life as a transitory stage;
(e) retirement from public life; and,
(f) undisturbed recollection of God.

The learned author further says that in the early period of Islam most of the believers had mystical spirit, but with the accumulation of wealth in later times only a few of them could progress; and these Muslims unmolested by worldly attractions were called “Sufis.”

From the first Sufi Imam, Hasan Basri (d. 162 A.H.—777-8 C.E.), down to the saints of the tenth century C.E., almost all genuine Sufis contributed something towards the development of the esoteric aspect of the Faith. A great number of books have been written from time to time on Islamic mysticism, and anyone desirous to know the fundamentals and essentials of Sufism in detail may refer to these works, particularly Kitab al-Lamr, by the Shaikh Abu Siraj (d. 378 A.H.), Kashful-Mahjub, by the Shaikh ‘Ali Hujwiri (d. 465 A.H.) and Risalah Qushairiya, by Abu l-Qasim Qushairy (d. 465 A.H.).

By a perusal of these books we are led to conclude that Sufism is only the internal aspect of the religion of Islam. The basic difference between Shari’ah (external path) and Haqiqah (internal path) of Islam may be summarized as follows:

(a) In Shari’ah knowledge precedes action, while in Haqiqah action precedes knowledge.
(b) The former is based on studies and experiments, whereas the latter on inspiration and revelation, as God says: “So He intimated to it (the Soul) by inspiration its deviating from truth and its guarding (against) evil” (The Holy Qur’an, 91 : 8).
(c) The basis of the former is affirmation and that of the latter is negation. In the esoteric side we keep on affirming a cause for every phenomenon we come across until we reach a self-existing cause, and this is God. But in the esoteric side we go on eliminating each and every faulty or dependent phenomenon, until we arrive at an independent existence free from all defects, and this is God.
(d) Shari’ah chiefly relates to the body, while Haqiqah relates to the soul. Islam refers to the former as Khalaq (creation), as the Qur’an says: “Behold, to Him belong creation and command”; and to the latter as ‘Amr (Divine Command), as the Qur’an says: “Say: Soul is the command of my Lord”.
(e) A secular scholar makes distinction between means and end, while a Sufi makes no such distinction. In his case means and end are concentrated on one point only, i.e., the Divinity.
(f) A secular scholar aims at achieving rewards and avoiding punishment at the hands of God in this world or the next. But a Sufi aims at God Himself. He loses himself in God, only to live in Him.

The Imam Ghazzali, who developed the mystical ideas into a separate branch of learning, explaining the differences between Shari’ah and Haqiqah, says that knowledge is generally obtained by sense or by means of argument and inferences, but sometimes it is possible that one may be inspired with some knowledge without the help of physical senses or any previous effort in the form of instruction or experience. This sort of inspiration can be obtained by self-exertion and self-purification. The usual method of acquiring success lies in this line in that a man must cut himself off from all worldly things and devote himself wholeheartedly to the Deity. He must withdraw his attention from without and fix it within God. When a man succeeds in getting absorbed in God, he now and then gets a Divine Flash revealing to him everything under and above the sun.

The materialist will naturally find it difficult to believe that things can be known by inspiration or revelation. But it must be borne in mind that in almost every age and every country there have been some people believing in spiritualism. Plato himself believed in the existence of spiritualism. Even now in Europe there is a class of thinkers known as Spiritualists who maintain that knowledge sometimes may be acquired from the esoteric method.

Ghazzali further says that belief in God in some form or another is almost a universal creed. But a very large number of men believe in God by following either the dictates of reason or practices of their ancestors. Naturally, therefore, this sort of belief does not create any great influence on the minds of people. On the contrary, a Sufi believes in God as
a result of self-denial and self-renunciation, and in course of
time he reaches a stage of mental progress when he sees the
Deity all around and finds nothing but the Supreme Being.
This vision of an all-absorbing Deity creates in his mind
some virtues which draw him closer and closer to God.
Similarly, everybody knows that God is the sustainer of
the world and its inmates, and that God has taken over
the responsibility of providing food to every living being (The
Holy Qur'an, 11:6). Nevertheless, human beings frequently
get impatient if their subsistence is delayed any day for some
reason or other. This mentality clearly shows that their belief
in God, as the sustainer of the Universe, does not produce
any effect on their minds. The reverse is the case with real
Sufis, who are always satisfied and never feel anxious for
their meals, knowing as they do that the Creator knows His
business better than anybody else.4

Some of the opponents of Sufism maintain that the
Qur'an and the Hadith (Traditions) have got nothing to do
with Sufism. Of course, the present-day corrupted Sufism
(known as Pirism) cannot be taken as an Islamic institution.
But real Sufism as an instrument of self-purification has been
frequently referred to in the Qur'an and sayings of the
al-Lam:

"The right of inferring spiritual ideas and thoughts
is earned only by those persons who have followed the
Book of God and sayings and doings of the Prophet both
externally and internally. When these people have
successfully moulded themselves in accordance with the
commandment of God and Prophet, God bestows on
them a flash of learning which purifies their minds and
which purges them of passion, lust, selfishness and
avarice."

The chief aim or final destination of Sufis is the "Unity
of Existence" or Pantheism. They do not identify God with
the universe or the universe with God, but they deny existence
to all things other than the Deity, and believe that the only
Existence is God and the rest is only His manifestation.
The Muslim Pantheism should not be confounded with the
Hindu or Buddhist Pantheism, which involves incarnation
of things or transmigration of souls. When a Sufi says, "I am
God and God is I," he never means thereby that the God-
head is incarnated in him or he is embodied in the Godhead.
Incarnation of one phenomenon in another presupposes the
existence of two separate or different entities invested with
form and flesh — a supposition which is absurd in the case
of the Divinity. Mahmud Astrabadi, author of Gulshan-i-
Raz, a well-known book on Sufism, says:

"Incarnation and co-existence are impossible here
because duality in unity is the essence of misguidance."

What a Sufi means is this: There is only one substance
in existence, and that is God. Nothing beyond God exists.
The world we live in and the different phenomena we witness
here are the only manifestations of that Divine Existence.
What we suppose to be existing is nothing but a reflection of
the All-absorbing and All-pervading Deity. Pantheism is,
therefore, that form of monism which declares the entire
universe or nature as a manifestation of the Supreme and
Absolute Being. In other words, neither does God stand
apart from the universe or nature, nor the universe or nature
stands aloof from God. The same author says:

"The universe is an entirely relative term like the
point which runs in the circumference of a circle."

This theory may further be illustrated thus: Keep a
mirror before you and look into it. You will find your
reflection therein. The question is "whether this reflection
is exactly yourself or something else than yourself". Obviously,
you cannot say either; then what is this? The only answer to
the question is that the image you see inside
the mirror is only the reflection of something outside, while
the reflection itself does not exist separately. The same is the
position of God. The phenomena of the world are the
manifestations or reflections of the Deity, but we cannot say
that these manifestations are exactly God Himself, nor can
we say that they are altogether separate from Him.

The same poet says in Gulshan-i-Raz:

"Keep the mirror before you and look at another
figure inside. Observe carefully so as to see what that
reflection is. Neither is (the reflection) this nor that.
What, then, is that reflection?"

Sufis substantiate their belief in the Pantheistic theory
by a reference to the text of the Qur'an. We find in the
Holy Book that God in the earliest eternity addressing Him-
self to the human souls asked the question, "Am I not your
Lord?" "Yes," was the answer that came forth instantly.
Referring to this conversation between the Creator and the
created the author of Gulshan-i-Raz says:

"Why did God say 'Am I not your Lord?' Who
was after all there to say 'Yes' at that moment?"

The answer to the question is furnished by the poet
himself, who says:

"The knower and the known are none but He, find
out; but the earth gets radiance from the sun."

There is another reference to the Pantheistic view in
the Qur'an. We find that when Moses was given the first
Divine Flash, God manifested Himself to him through a tree
in Wadi a'mman (i.e., the sacred valley). Referring to it the
same poet says:

"Come along in the sacred valley, when all of a
sudden a tree tells you, 'Indeed I am God'. When it
is admissible for a tree to announce 'I am God',
why should not the same be permissible for a blessed man?"

After giving various illustrations of the pantheistic view,
the poet concludes the subject by saying:

"Nothing else than God is God. It is all the same
whether you say: 'He is God' or 'I am God'.'

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1 Tasawwuf in Islam, by 'Abd al-Majid.
2 Muqaddamsa-i-Ibn-i-Khalid.
3 See Ihya al-'Ulum and al-Ghazzali by Shibli.
4 See Ihya al-'Ulum and al-Ghazzali by Shibli.
5 Tasawwuf in Islam, by 'Abd al-Majid.

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SEPTEMBER 1958

13
THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN EGYPT

Effect of Islam

In order to properly assess the effect of Islam on the status of women, one must go back to pre-Islamic conditions. Historians tell us that women in pagan Arabia and similar communities were considered by men to be accessories and possessions that could be bought, sold and inherited.

Multiple marriage was quite customary among the pagan Arabs as well as among earlier communities. Testimony for this fact is recorded in the Bible, which repeatedly relates that many of the Jewish kings had more than one wife. Furthermore, some Arabian tribes in those days went even further in their bigotry so as to bury alive their unwanted newly-born females.

In a very few years, and by a succession of decisive shows, Islam succeeded in destroying this order of affairs. It first recognized woman as an independent being and gave her a most liberal bill of rights and responsibilities. It established her legal personality and allowed her to keep her family name after marriage. It granted her the right to possess property and to dispose of it freely as she wished, without the intermediary of a husband or a male guardian. Further, it went on to allow her to become herself a guardian over minors. It also granted her the right to undertake trades and professions, and to sue others in courts without having to secure the husband's approval.

Such drastic and swift changes in woman's legal, economic and social rights, when judged by any criteria of social change, could be termed nothing less than revolutionary. Actually, a corresponding advance in the emancipation of women in Europe did not take place until many centuries later.

Innovation

While it is true that Islam legislated that a woman inherits from her parents the equivalent of only half of her brother's share, this was a liberal innovation at the time. Prior to this Islamic law these women enjoyed no right of inheritance at all. Moreover, the Muslim woman is not required to spend a penny of her personal income in support of household or children. The man bears the full financial responsibility in the family.

Moreover, the fair and objective analyst cannot but admire the exalted position in social relations to which Islam meant to elevate woman. The Qur'an speaks of the relationship between men and women in uncompromising terms. It portrays this relationship as one of mutual confidence, affection and compassion. Muhammad the Prophet is quoted to have said on one occasion, "The most perfect among the believers are those who are kindest to their womenfolk," and on another, "Paradise lies under the feet of mothers". The direct inference from such statements is one that makes fair treatment of women an article of faith in Islam.

To seek knowledge

Furthermore, one of the earliest injunctions of Islam was to make it the duty of every Muslim man and woman to seek knowledge and acquire an education. The fruits of such a progressive order were strikingly apparent in the important intellectual role that was played by some Muslim women. As early as the first few decades of Islam, A'isha, the Prophet's wife, rose to such distinction as to be sought and consulted by men for her knowledge in theology and Islamic law. In the twelfth century in Baghdad, Shuhda, better known as the "Glory of Women", was one of the foremost scholars of her age. She lectured in university mosques and handed diplomas to famous men of her time. In the field of spiritual achievement, some Muslim women also rose to positions of leadership. Rabia al-Adawiya, for instance, who was a great mystic in Basra in the eighth century, lived to deserve the title of saint, and her spiritual example and guidance inspired many of her contemporaries and followers of both sexes for many generations.

As a matter of fact, Islam did not prohibit women from participating in public and social life. The records show that in the early days of Islam women appeared at public functions, studied and taught in schools, traded in markets, sat on consulting councils of State, and even fought on the battlefields by the side of men.

Contrary to the widespread belief, Islam did not order the seclusion of women. Historians tell us that this custom was borrowed from Byzantium much later and mainly after Muslim society had become wealthier and more sophisticated. It was only then that Muslim women began to be deprived of a life of public usefulness and were relegated to the recesses of comfortable homes.

The veil

It is equally a fact that Islam could not be held responsible for the institution of veiling women's faces. There is today ample solid proof that the veil was an ancient Babylonian custom. Inscriptions on some relics of the Assyrian civilization, which preceded Islam by many centuries, portray women and goddesses wearing veils.

The veil, which did not exist in Arabia in the early days of Islam, became fashionable centuries later in Persia, Turkey and other predominantly Muslim countries. A regressive move, it was introduced as a mark of class distinction. It was used to differentiate the free woman from the slave girl who was exposed to public scrutiny in market-places. As such, the veil was used by Christians and Muslims alike in Middle Eastern society. Yet it was applied only to the rich and middle classes. Meanwhile, the poorer villages and city women, who formed the vast majority of the female population and whose economic conditions required them to pitch in and co-operate with their men in earning their daily bread, lived through this stage for centuries unfettered by veil and seclusion.

So much for a general picture of the status of women in Islam. One may ask the question at this point of how representative of the problems facing Muslim women today are the issues of veil and seclusion, or the possible abuses of marriage and divorce laws. The truth of the matter is that such issues have for a long time been magnified out of proportion in public discussions and have somehow obscured the real underlying problems that need more serious attention.

Real problems

It does not take much time to discover that the real
problems facing women in the Muslim world today are part and parcel of the general social and economic ills that affect both men and women in that world. These ills could have very little to do with the religious creed that one may follow. Nor could they be claimed to differentiate on the basis of sex.

Illiteracy, depressed economic conditions and low public health standards in most of the Muslim world today are to a certain extent the sour fruits of a colonial status that unfortunately arrested progress for centuries. The major job facing the people in those lands, people of all creeds, and males and females alike, is that of establishing a general social and economic uplift for one and all.

In Egypt, the movement for the emancipation of women was part of the general national movement for the liberation of the whole country at all levels, intellectual, political, social and economic. This general movement has been going on for the good part of a century. In its different phases, it had to cope both foreign and domestic oppression and misrule. The words and deeds of such leaders as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad ‘Abduh, Qasim Amin, and Madame Huda Sha’rawi, gave our feminist movement an early start and set it on the right course.

Examples

Thirty-four years have now passed since Madame Sha’rawi, the first Egyptian society woman who dared defy conservatism, dramatically cast her veil into the Mediterranean as she stepped out of the ship that brought her back from a women’s conference in Rome. One by one other society women followed Madame Sha’rawi’s example and pulled down that silken curtain that had separated their class from the free world. Today, the veil is extinct in Egypt.

But even a few years before this process of unveiling the Egyptian women was started, our first group of suffragettes had appeared for the first time in a public demonstration. This happened in 1919, when they left their homes and marched the streets, not in defence of their personal rights, but in support of their men’s demonstrations against British occupation forces. These forces at the time were threatening to shoot at public protest gatherings. By spearheading the men’s procession, and facing the British guns, the suffragettes won the day for the country and offset the British ultimatum. During the following days they picketed Government buildings and British stores and organized a successful boycott of British goods. Such was the courage and determination of Egyptian women when they were still covered by the romantic veil. This goes also to prove that the veil was permissive of progressive thinking and action, and was not necessarily a symbol of backwardness.

Education

In February 1922, Egypt received its first measure of partial liberation from domination. This measure related only to civil and domestic affairs. Up to that year, 1922, and during forty years of full British control and administration of the public school system in Egypt, there was only a single high school for girls, to take care of the needs of the fair half of a population that numbered 14 millions. The total school enrolment then did not exceed 130,000, of whom only one-fifth were girls. During the past 35 years, Egypt has been able to increase that number fourteen-fold.

This striking development, considering the short span of time in which it took place, was not restricted to numbers, but applied to kind, too. Secondary education has become wider in scope and more diversified with the establishment of technical and vocation schools for girls, such as schools for social work, home economics, commerce, fine arts and dramatics. Furthermore, Cairo University, which was the first to be established in 1925, immediately following the relaxation of British controls, admitted girls attending women’s higher institutes. Most of these are studying side by side with men in every field, including engineering colleges as well as medical schools. Many of these, when they graduate with distinction, are sent abroad on Government scholarships to pursue post graduate studies. An interesting example is that of the daughter of an Azhar University teacher who, after graduating with honours in aeronautics, won herself an American fellowship and is now doing graduate work at Pursue University.

As may normally be expected, this progress, especially in its early stages, had to overcome various obstacles that were raised by some reactionaries, of whom we still have quite a few. Credit for the final achievement, however, must go to the perseverance and dedicated leadership of Madame Sha’rawi and her Feminist Union and the ample support they received from liberal men of education like Dr. Taha Husain, Muhammad al-Ashmawi and Lutfi al-Sayyid. Only continuous and concerted efforts made it possible for Egyptian women to enjoy equal opportunities with men in all fields of learning.

The fruits of one generation of education and emancipation of Egyptian women can perhaps be best gauged by the
degree of their present participation in public and private services. Several hundred Egyptian female surgeons, lawyers, gynaecologists, journalists and dentists are successfully practising their professions in Egyptian cities. There are women scholars and profossors on the teaching staff of several faculties in its four modern universities. Practically all the teachers in secondary girls' schools are females. Women are also employed by the Government in administrative and technical capacities in the Ministries of Education, Public Health, Social Affairs and National Guidance, to mention only a few. The terms of their employment in these departments with regard to qualifications, responsibilities and remuneration are identical with those of their colleagues of the opposite sex. In some departments they have already attained the highest service grades.

It is also interesting to note that women in Egypt are now quite active in the fields of industry and trade. For their protection, the Egyptian Government requires their employers to apply to them all the privileges and regulations that are standardly approved by the International Labour Organization of the United Nations. They enjoy equal opportunities. Egyptian labour legislation does not allow any discrimination against women in wages or working conditions.

Egyptian women have done very well by working hard in the social field

What we want to emphasize here is the definite change in the general attitude of the Egyptian people towards women's rights and wrongs. Thirty years ago, a conservative man was shocked every time another woman cast away her veil. Today Egypt's Muslim women are rubbing shoulders and competing with men in almost all fields of work and recreation without meeting objections or causing any eyebrows to be raised. They have won several national championships in sports like swimming, horseback riding and marksmanship. Some of their tennis and basket ball teams are competing favourably in international tournaments.

Egyptian women have so far done best by working hard in the social field. It can be truthfully said that they have contributed their share in bringing about the social consciousness which led to the social revolution which saved the country from certain chaos five years ago.

Examples of organized women's groups for social welfare in Egypt range from the old philanthropic and patronizing type to those using the most modern and democratic approaches in social work. There are at least one hundred social organizations run entirely by women and receiving from the Government a great deal of help and support. Some of these were founded more than half a century ago, thanks to generous endowments by benevolent wealthy Muslims, men and women.

Other societies have sprung up in the wake of our national movement. First among these is the Feminist Union, which I have already mentioned. In addition to its intellectual feminist activities, the Union developed various social projects.

At the beginning of World War II, an important group of women were called upon to organize themselves into a women's branch or affiliate of the Red Crescent Association. While working as an independent unit, these women were very successful in the establishment of nursing schools, clinics and first-aid units. These ladies played a most indispensable role in the medical campaigns against cholera and malaria epidemics which invaded our country a few years ago. They also worked with the same devotion in trying to alleviate the sufferings of the Arab refugees from Palestine.

Mention should also be made of the "Women's Society for Health Improvement," which specialized in a campaign against tuberculosis and in providing assistance to tubercular patients and their families. A fine settlement or preventorium was set up by this Society near the Pyramids of Giza. Hundreds of children from tubercular parents are housed in this settlement and are provided with a healthy atmosphere as well as elementary and vocational education. The fine management of this settlement is another tribute to the efficiency of the new Egyptian woman.

Again, the women of Egypt played a major part during the Tripartite aggression. Not only did they take up arms and fight side by side with their men-folk, but they also gave proof of unusual courage and self-sacrifice in relieving the sufferings of the wounded of Port Said, its destitute inhabitants and homeless children. Their fortitude and kindness did much towards raising the spirit of those wretched victims of aggression.

At last women have reached the ultimate goal they have striven for during the past fifty years. By virtue of the 1956 Constitution, the Egyptian woman has been granted full political rights and privileges. For the first time in the history of Egypt women were able to exercise the right to vote in the recent elections. The election of Mrs. Rawiya Attiya and Mrs. Amina Shoukry as members of the Egyptian National Assembly is positive evidence of the success achieved by Egyptian women through their persevering tenacity.

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16
MUHAMMAD THROUGH
THE EYES OF A CHRISTIAN

Muhammad’s vision was of a world brotherhood uniting all men of goodwill in the One God and One Humanity

By THE REVEREND A. PEACOCK

I am very mindful of what Prophet’s Day means in the life of a Muslim and for this reason I am specially grateful for the invitation to speak at this meeting and am deeply mindful of the honour which you confer upon me. Let me begin to explain my own religious position. I speak to you from the liberal position within the Christian tradition. It is sometimes called Unitarian or Universalist. It is within the Christian tradition that I have gained such religious knowledge and experience as has come to me. It is against the background of the insights that I have received as a Christian that I discover and come to appreciate the insights to be found in religions other than my own. I am conscious that just as I within the Christian tradition have found a faith that has meaning and significance for me, so other men and women in other traditions discover religious knowledge and experience that is adequate for them. This I strive to appreciate, from this I seek to learn all that I can, to such faiths and their scriptures and their teachers I give reverence.

In saying this I am not suggesting for one moment that all religions are much the same, nor am I suggesting that there are no differences between us. There are, and to close our eyes to them won’t help us at all. But while recognising the difference I know too of common areas of concern and agreement and on these I would seek to build approaches of dialogue and meeting so that from such, conducted in the spirit of good fellowship, there may evolve a richer faith for all mankind.

Significance of the Prophet’s life for a Christian

And with this said, let us come to the life of the Prophet. What is there within his life and example that the Christian can appreciate? The first thing to speak of seems to me is his deep insight and courage. Muhammad found himself in a world where irreligion was prevalent. Men were either worshipping many Gods or no God. And because their thought of God was either confused or negative and had no relation to their daily lives, it left much to be desired. Standards were low. Sin was prevalent and the best and the highest were goals seldom attained. Against this irreligion and this irresponsibility in living Muhammad spoke vigorously. He gave emphasis to the truth the Hebrew prophets had long proclaimed, that there was but one God and there was none beside him. It happened to Muhammad as indeed it has happened to many leaders of religion who have sought to purify its outward expressions and to liberalise its creeds and dogmas. Opposition was met with. Where he sought friendship and co-operation, he found opposition and bitterness. So he had to do what Abraham had to do thousands of years before and what Jesus had to do in his time. To use a biblical phrase he had to “come out from among them.” He was forced to separate himself from other communities. His hope of bringing all who worshipped the One God into closer fellowship was not realised. Jews and Christians were not willing to link their lives with those of him and his followers. Thus it was that he had to follow his own path and to do that which he felt God had called him to do.

He dedicated himself to the building up of the Brotherhood of Islam. The people living around him were narrow in outlook and tribal in their affiliations. Muhammad realised that if there was One God and one God only then there could be but one humanity. His vision was of a world brotherhood uniting all men of goodwill in the One God and one Humanity.

Further, Muhammad had the insight to stress that while religious disciplines and ceremony may have a place in the religious life, it was fatal if such disciplines and ceremonies were seen but as ends in themselves. He presented to his people a concept of faith and belief that was simple in its expression even though profound in its basic concepts. He stressed the value of both individual and corporate prayer. He had no time for asceticism or what we call in these days “the other worldly” approach. To him, if religion meant anything at all, it had to come out in human relationships, in daily living, with friends and family, with all with whom life in the community was spent. He preached too a religion of good deeds and this again the Christian must welcome, for such fits in with the teachings of Jesus and especially with the outline presented by the Apostle James, who declared that faith without works is dead, and pure and undefiled religion consisted in attending to the needs of the orphans, the fatherless, the widows, and in keeping oneself unspotted from the world.

The Prophet Muhammad was not a totalitarian

The Prophet was not totalitarian in his point of view. He did not expect everyone to accept what he had to say. He realised there would always be healthy differences of thought and outlook, and thus towards those of other faiths he urged an approach of tolerance. His concern was that there should be belief in the One God and the One Humanity. It may be argued, indeed it is often argued, that as Islam developed, this high ideal was lost. The same comment may be made of all the great religions. As they developed, as followers made their own interpretations, there arose occasions when the pristine beliefs of the founder of great prophets and seers were lost sight of. We who are Christians are very conscious of this and it occasions a mood of humility. But what we have need to stress is “Though men may believe their creed, Truth still preserves its flame. The sage may do a foolish deed, but wisdom shares not in the blame.”

We must see that religions are judged by their highest expressions and as they have been disclosed in the lives of the great personalities.

1 Text of speech delivered at the Caxton Hall, London, S.W.1, on the occasion of the Prophet’s birthday.
The Prophet Muhammad’s life has great relevance to our lives at this moment

I have spoken to you of the deep insights and the courage of the Prophet, of his concern to express the great truths of religion with simplicity, of his effort to rid religion of priestcraft and bewildering and ignorant practices. There is something more now that I want to say. It is something that I am constantly saying to Christian people too. It is no use just looking into the past, absorbing from the lives of great teachers that which appeals to our heart and mind, and speaking of all this with praise. What matters is that we ask ourselves what does the teaching of the great teachers mean to us in our daily lives? What are we doing to put into practice now the teachings so brilliantly proclaimed? What attempts are we making to follow the great examples set before us? What matters about Islam, what matters about Christianity, is its relevance to our lives at this very moment.

Our world is distraught. Men walk everywhere in fear. Will the hydrogen bomb go off or not? Is an area of expansion and prosperity before us or is humanity about to annihilate itself?

Muhammad has a message for the world

In this human predicament Muhammad has a message to Muslims—indeed for all men—as Jesus has, as the great prophets of Israel have. It is this. The world in which we live is not man’s world, to do with just as he likes. It is God’s world. All that we have, all the great given man, all the powers placed within his hand, all these should be used as if they were a trust from on High. Man must not think himself the measure of all things because of the great heights to which he can live when he lives under God. He must realise that his life is always held under God and that in all he does he is a divine instrument when he co-operates.

I have time but to stress one further point. We talk of one world and men everywhere are striving for a more complete form of brotherhood. I am concerned to bring fellowship among mankind through religion. That is why I am Secretary of the World Congress of Faiths and why I am speaking on this platform of the Muslim Society of Great Britain. I would urge Muslims to enter heartily into this great work, into this great adventure of the spirit. The Prophet Muhammad worked for Jewish and Christian understanding. He failed in his day, for others were not willing or ready. Inter-faith co-operation is an imperative of this day and age. Of what use is it working for internationalism in politics, science, art, education, if we remain parochial and sectarian in religion. The world order which is the goal of the forward spirits of this 20th century needs to be undergird with broad principles of religion. For this we must all work. To work for it is in tune with all that Muhammad ever taught.

A writer in a recent work on Islam has said this:

"The human part from day to day has ever been amid the din of life, to hear God's message, to discern its meaning, and to interpret it, and in a difficult and distracting and ever-changing world, to act. The Islam that was given by God is not the elaboration of practices and doctrines and forms that outsiders call Islam, but rather a vivid and personal summons to individuals to live always in God's presence and to treat their fellows always under his judgment."

To me these are significant words and it is because for me they are true that Muhammad has significance for our day and age. He is among those great souls who have made it their prior concern to make men live their lives as if they were always in God's presence and to treat their fellows as if they were always under His judgment. I have in past years learned a great deal from his teachings and gained a great deal from the fellowship of those who strive to follow His way. I am sure of this. When the call of the minaret is heard five times daily in this and other lands, though men may respond in different ways, and though the words of their prayer may be different, there is but One God who hearkens, "and beside him there is none." May His blessing dwell with us all.

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ARABIC EDUCATION IN MALAYA

The Influence of Islam in the Far East

By WAN MANSOR BIN ABDULLAH

Arabic has not only been a religious language, it has also greatly influenced the Malay language.

In August 1957 the Federation of Malaya emerged as the newest independent Muslim State. As in other Muslim countries, the Arabic language is of considerable importance in Malaya. The Muslims in the country read the Holy Qur'ān, which is in Arabic, and say their daily prayers in Arabic. All original religious teachings are in the Arabic language and for practical purposes they have to be translated into Malay, the language of the Malays, who form the bulk of the Muslim population, and the national language of the country.

Arabic has not merely been the religious language, it has also greatly influenced the Malay language. The Malays, in fact, took their written language from the Arabs; even now Arabic script is still being extensively used side by side with the comparatively new Roman script, while many words of Arabic origin, especially religious terms, are found in the vocabulary and are currently used in speaking and writing. It is widely accepted that Malayan literature owes its existence to the Arabic language.

Malays did not have a written language in the 14th century when Islam went to Malaya

The early Muslim traders, believed to have come through South India, brought Islam and the Arabic language to the Peninsula in the 14th century, at a time when the Malays did not have a proper written language. The Arabic script was then adopted to spell Malay words according to the Arabic rule without the use of vowel letters. However, to suit the Malay tongue some more letters were added to the existing 30-odd Arabic letters in the alphabet. With the coming of the British in the 17th century, English began to take the place of Arabic in influencing the Malay language, both written and spoken. In spite of that, Arabic is still an important language in independent Malaya today. It is still taught everywhere and literally every Malay in the country knows some Arabic.

The Malay child has an early acquaintance with Arabic; he is taught to read the Qur'ān, after first learning the Arabic alphabet, at the age of six or seven, or even earlier. For this purpose he is sent either to a private Qur'ān teacher in the village or to the Government religious school. By fifteen or sixteen he is able to read the Qur'ān and to say the prayers. Unfortunately the Qur'ān is read without understanding, because at this stage the child learns merely to read, without comprehension.

Arabic schools are found in almost every town of the Federation. These schools are usually private concerns or supported by the religious department of each State. They admit pupils from the age of ten or over, mostly those who have attended the Malay elementary schools for four or five years. The lessons taught in these schools include Arabic language and grammar, in addition to the religious subjects which are taught from Arabic texts. Most schools teach all the usual subjects as well. The standard of education is fairly high and some pupils can write and speak fairly good Arabic after studying for five or six years. However the ability to speak and write Arabic depends on the training given by the various schools, some of which encourage their students to take part in the weekly debates in Arabic. Those who have completed their studies in these schools are sent to Mecca or Egypt for further studies. The Government of Su'udi Arabia offers scholarships to students of a particular school in Penang and every year four or five students are admitted into the Al-ma'had Al-Su'udi in Mecca. The others are accepted to work as religious teachers.

Importance of Arabic in University studies.

A few years ago the Muslim College in Malaya was opened, providing higher education in religion and Arabic. Students from elementary Arabic schools are admitted to the College after passing an entrance examination at the end of a year's preparatory course. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught as a subject. The method of teaching is modern. The College has now been made a part of the University of Malaya, forming its Department of Islamic Studies.

In the University itself Arabic has been taught since 1956. A student majoring in Malay Studies has to take either Dutch or Arabic as a subsidiary subject. For this purpose, the teaching of Arabic begins in the second year of the Arts course and continues till the third and final year, at the end of which the degree examination is held. The two-year course in Arabic is aimed at giving the students enough command of the language to enable them to make translations from Arabic to English (or Malay) and vice versa.

Another type of school, which was very influential in religious circles before the Second World War, is the pondok school, a type of residential school where the pupils study religion and Arabic in the most orthodox way. It has been known for students from these schools to have memorized every word of a big Arabic grammar book and yet to have been unable to write or speak a sentence of Arabic. In this school the place of study is the mosque, surrounded by the small cottages in which the students live; pondok in the native language means "cottage".

The biggest problem faced by schools in Malaya is the lack of suitable books. The supply of textbooks comes from Egypt but there has been great difficulty in obtaining them. Books on Arabic literature are scarce and books and periodicals for supplementary reading are almost unobtainable. At the University we are very short of good English-Arabic dictionaries and our studies are handicapped.

The Arabic Language Society at the University of Malaya was formed recently with the aim of promoting the study of Arabic in the University; membership is open to all interested students.

SEPTEMBER 1958
Colonel Nasser admires the view where the Sava river runs into the Danube, while he stands on the old Turkish walls at Kalemegdan Park, Belgrade.

(Centre, top) Colonel Nasser greeted by the people of Sarajevo. The banner reads—“Long live the friendship between Egypt and Yugoslavia”.

Marshal Tito and Colonel Nasser watching the military parade of the Yugoslav National Army at Zemunsky aerodrome.

The women of Sarajevo, with Tito during one of
Colonel Nasser with the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mahmoud Fawzi, who is in the act of signing the visitors' book at the Begov Dzamija at Sarajevo (Bosnia) on 15 July, 1956.

(Centre) Colonel Nasser in Sarajevo being greeted by the predominantly Muslim population of Bosnians, Serbs and Croatsians.

Marshal Tito and Colonel Nasser in conference with their respective ministers at Dedinje.
ISLAMIC MONUMENTS IN YUGOSLAVIA

The Turkish conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina brought about a profound change in all spheres of the country's life—social, economic and cultural. A considerable part of the population went over to Islam. The new Muslims became the mainstays of the new Turkish social order and advocates of Islamic ideology and oriental culture in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The influence of this culture was a decisive factor in the rise and growth of fresh settlements and towns, the development of new arts and architecture, and the new way of life.

It is owing to this that in the times of Turkish rule in Bosnia our towns exhibited—and in some of their quarters do so even now—all the features of typical Oriental towns characterised by extensive panoramas, the wide unrestricted views from houses and flats, the abundance of water and greenery among which rise numerous mosques, with tall minarets breaking the monotony of the panorama and adding to the picturesque-ness of individual parts of the town.

A great many of these quarters, and also some of the parts of old bazaars and shopping centres still remaining, are consequentely important monuments of the Turkish period. Among the most representative examples of historic architectural interest are the mosques, particularly those surmounted with domes built of hard, solid material and which have, as a result, retained their original shape to this day. These mosques and many other institutions of an educational, humanitarian, utilitarian and economic character are gifts of charity called zaduzbina (religious foundation to commend the soul of the deceased) of private benefactors, mostly high military or state functionaries, and also of merchants, craftsmen, civil servants, and priests.

Of a total of about 1,000 mosques now existing in Bosnia and Herzegovina only 20 are surmounted with domes; the rest have sloping roofs and modest minarets mostly of timber; they are, as a rule, of minor architectural interest.

The two most distinctive features of these domed mosques are their four massive walls shaped (on top), with either pendentives or squinches, into an octagonal tambour on which the dome rests, and their minarets built of stone. Moreover, in the middle of the front wall, opposite the entrance gate, is the mihrab (a platform where the Imam performs his prayers) with the number (pulpit) on its left. On the right of the entrance, sometimes all along the back wall, stands the mahvil or musandara (raised platform for the muezzin) on stone pillars. At the entrance to these mosques there is a portico, usually with three smaller cupolas resting on monolithic pillars which are connected by Oriental arches. The minaret is built against the mosque. In the middle of the courtyard stands an ornamental fountain with pavilion-roof, or just a common fountain, where ablutions are performed before prayers. All this is walled off from the outside world.

Most of these mosques were damaged during the World War I because of the removal—by order of the Austrian military authorities—of the leaden covering of the domes, which was subsequently replaced with iron or copper sheets. During World War II the occupying forces made irreverent use of many of these places of worship by turning some into stables, to mention only one instance of damage done to these ancient monuments at the time.

Most of the ancient monuments of Islamic culture are to be found in the town of Sarajevo, which under Turkish rule was, as it is today, the main economic and cultural centre of Bosnia-Herzegovina, though the official residence of the Governor-General was, as a rule, outside Sarajevo (at Banjaluka or Travnik).

The present area of Sarajevo has been occupied and inhabited since prehistoric times. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, a place called Vrbosna was on record as a town protected with defensive works and a fortress of its own (now Bijela tabija). About 1436 the town was conquered by Turkish armies and became the seat of the Voivode (Commander-in-chief) of the Western provinces, with a considerable number of troops in garrison. Vrbosna developed rapidly, and has been growing ever since. Gazi Isabeg (the Voivode of Western provinces, 1440-1463, and the Sandjak-bey of Bosnia, 1464-1470) built in 1457, on the left bank of the Miljacka, a mosque (called the Czar's) with public baths next to it, also a bridge across the Miljacka, the Kolobara hostelry with, east of Bascarsija (the Central Market and open-air bazaar), the Musafirhane where travellers used to get lodging at Bentas and, lastly, a short way off the mosque, his saraj (Court) which gave Vrbosna its present name.

However, it was not until 1521 that Sarajevo came into its own, i.e., with the arrival of Gazi Husrevbeg, the Sanjak-bey of Bosnia, who continued in office, with two short breaks, up to his death in 1541. This prominent figure in the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and her most meritorious Governor, attained fame and popularity not so much on account of his exploits in the field, which earned him the title of Gazi (hero) but rather as a result of his achievements in the field of culture, education and humanitarianism. He was the founder of a great many zaduzbinas and institutions of religious-educational and humanitarian character, as well as their ancillary buildings and establishments, many of which have been preserved.

The best known foundation of his is—

The Gazi Husrevbeg Mosque in the centre of Sarajevo, built in 1530, the finest example of monuments of this kind not only in the town of Sarajevo but in the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina as well.

The building never suffered any serious damage by even the greatest of fires: only the leads on the domes melted, the stained glass broke and the decoration became obscured by soot.

The massive stone pillars of the portico alone—with its five cupolas, the beautiful marble portal and its ancient door of carved timber of exquisite craftsmanship with richly ornamented inscription in gold and the ornate concha of the portal—are but a preface to the richness of architectural forms and ornamental decoration within the interior.

The ground-plan of the interior space shows a somewhat greater breadth than is usually found in domed mosques of the current type, whereas in its vertical profile Turkish architectural art has reached a zenith in our country.
The central floor area has a square base (13 x 13 m.) with the crown of the large dome constructed on it rising 26 metres from the pavement. Within the tambour is a circular gallery with wooden railings which is reached by a staircase built into the two-metre thick wall structure. The gallery was formerly used—before the installation of electricity—in lighting numerous lamps inside the dome.

The central area extends south-eastwards to a separate space of rectangular base, the two being connected by an opening under an arch 10.5 m. wide. The frontal area—with the beautifully decorated mihrab in the red marble wall, and, to the right, the minbar in white sandstone and encorial marble of very fine workmanship—is covered with a half-dome resting upon the arch of the central area. To the right of the main entrance is the musandara (platform for the muezzin) supported by eight marble pillars, surrounded by wooden railing.

The main body of the mosque extends right and left to two lateral areas with a square base of 6.5 x 6.5 m., these being connected with the former by arches covered with domes rising 14 m. from the pavement.

The decoration of the mosque, dating from 1775, which had been badly damaged by the great fire of 1879, was restored in 1886. The work was done by Munich craftsmen who, unfortunately, failed to produce a type of colouring or ornamentation in keeping with the original style of Oriental architecture.

Of the many other buildings erected by Gazi Huseyebeg we will confine ourselves to mentioning those connected with the mosque or those situated in its immediate vicinity.

**Gazi Huseyebeg’s Tourbe** stands in the courtyard right by the mosque.

The tourbes found in this country are usually either enclosed structures with any kind of roof (similar to small houses or cottages) or with a rounded dome-like roof (looking like small mosques without minarets), or open structures with pillars supporting a domed roof. The size of the structure, the style and quality of construction, showed the influence and rank of the deceased. The most imposing of these structures in Bosnia-Hercegovina, as is the case with other Turkish monuments, date from the culminating period of Turkish architecture in the times of the famous Kordja Mimar Sinan (1489-1578), which coincided with the period when the Turkish Empire was at the peak of her military power, fortunes and glory.

Gazi Huseyebeg’s Tourbe is typical of the enclosed mausoleums erected over the graves of famous men in the 16th century. In the middle of the inner space lies the sarcophagus of the Gazi covered with a cloth embroidered in gold. On a special stand near it is placed a copy of the Mushaf (Koran) in beautiful handwriting.

**Muratbeg’s Tourbe.** Close to his tourbe, Gazi Huseyebeg had a smaller one—on a hexagonal base—for his freedman and best friend Murat-bey Tarditch, born at Sibenik, who died as Sandjak-bey at Pozega (Slavonia) in 1549 after winning fame in the wars against the Venetians and Austria. His body was transported to Sarajevo and laid to rest in this tourbe. Incidentally, he was the first mutueleyiya (Director) of Gazi Huseyebeg’s Vakuf (foundations and property) and was known to have lived on cordial terms with Jurje Tarditch, his own brother, a Roman Catholic priest at Sibenik, who on one occasion paid him a visit in Sarajevo.

**The Gazi Huseyebeg Mekteb** (School), in the north-east corner of the courtyard, an educational institution for children to be given instruction in Muslim teachings (until 1897), was erected in 1530. The building was damaged beyond repair in the great fire of Sarajevo in 1841. It has since been completely restored, and the premises are now used as offices for the staff of the mosque.

**The Gazi Husrevbeg Sadryan** (fountain with pavilion), in the courtyard of the mosque, was also built in 1530. It was supplied with water from the springs of Crnilo, within 6 km. of the town, conveyed by a pipe-line made of baked clay.

The present fountain was built in 1893 to replace the old one which had fallen into disrepair. Every effort was made to restore it to its original condition, e.g., blocks of stone were brought over from the island of Bratich (Dalmatia), a timber pavilion was constructed, with a vaulted roof resting on eight wooden pillars, and a modern system of water supply (from the town water-main) introduced.

**Warm water fountains** for ablutions in winter time are installed in the west wall of the harem. Water is boiled in a large metal container in a separate room and conveyed by means of horizontally laid pipes. These fountains date from the same period as the mosque.

**The Muvektihanah** (lit., Hour-house) standing in the north-west corner of the harem, was built in 1859 from the sources of the Gazi Husrevbeg Vakuf funds. This is a small structure fitted with instruments for measuring the elevation of the sun, thus showing the hour of the day for the faithful to perform their prayers.

**The Gazi Husrevbeg Medresa, or “Kursumlija”** (from “kursum” meaning lead, the metal with which its roof was once covered), stands in Saraci Street, opposite the entrance gate to the harem of the mosque. “Medresas” were secondary and higher schools for the study of mainly theological subjects. Every town or larger country place boasted at least one medresa of the secondary school type. The most famous among these was the Kursumli Medresa, of the high-school grade. It was erected in 1537 and, being dedicated to the Sultana Selzdukja, the mother of Huseyebeg and daughter of the Sultan Bayazid II, it came to be called “Selzdukja’s”. Though only slightly damaged by fires and still standing as it was before, the restorations done in 1910 did much to rob it of its beauty and originality of design (doors, windows, etc.).

The imposing portal, with its stalactite ornamentation, gilded lettering, and archway, lead into the forecourt, enclosed with arcades on the four sides, with a small ornamental fountain standing in the middle. Around the fore-court are 12 lecture rooms, each covered with a dome, and, facing the entrance, there is a domed “dersana” of considerable size, once used as a lecture hall. The chimney stacks, rising high above the domes and covered with pointed roofs, are a special feature of the building.

**The Gazi Husrevbeg Imaret** in Medzelti Street, to the west of the courtyard, dates from the same period as the mosque. Imarets were hostels and rest-houses, founded and endowed by individual benefactors, where poor travellers used to lodge free of charge for a period of three days; the remains of meals and rations would be distributed among needy local citizens. The Gazi Husrevbeg Imaret provided free meals for the Vakuf staff and the Kursumli medresa inmates as well.

The Imaret comprised a bakery, which still exists, a kitchen, now a store-room for kitchen utensils, a room for the Director of the Imaret, and a store-house for grain. Close to the building once stood the **Musafirhana** (Travellers’ Hostel) where poor travellers would be given free lodging for three nights.

The Musafirhana was abolished in 1886, but the Imaret continued to provide food for the Gazi Husrevbeg Vakuf staff up to the outbreak of the last war.

September 1958
Also linked with the area of Gazi Husrevbeg’s mosque and of cultural interest is—

The Sahat-Kula (Clock-Tower) which stands close to the Imaret. It was erected at the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century from the resources of the Gazi Husrevbeg Vakuf funds.

Since few people owned watches in those days, the “Sahat-Kulas” came to be so useful that public-spirited men felt prompted to have these utilitarian objects erected in a great many places.

In 1875 a new upper part was built to the Gazi Husrevbeg “Sahat-Kula” when the present clock, purchased in Britain, was installed.

The Gazi Husrevbeg Public Bath. Since the Muslims, for religious reasons and ritualistic observances, had to pay much attention to bodily cleanliness, efforts were made to provide all places and towns with an adequate clean water supply system. Dwelling-houses or premises used to have a room reserved for ablutions, or ordinary personal washing, called “banyitza.” In addition, there were in most places public baths built by some benefactor or other. In the 16th century there were in the town of Sarajevo—besides a number of public fountains—six public baths, the most monumental of which was the Gazi Husrevbeg’s, situated in Marshal Tito Street (opposite the Roman Catholic Cathedral). This was established in 1540; it was provided with water brought from the water-works at Crnili springs until the 19th century when the Municipal Water Board took over. The baths continued to be used until 1916 when it was closed down because of wartime restrictions and financial difficulties.

The building also had a separate wing reserved for women. At the beginning of the 19th century two additional sections were built to provide space and facilities for ritualistic washing for men and women of the Jewish faith. The masonry is of stone and brick with two large and eight smaller domes. Since the baths were closed down the building has been used for various purposes and now needs putting in repair.

The Ali-pasha mosque, in Marshal Tito Street, opposite the new building of the Higijenski Zavod, is a typical example of the domed mosque of the period. Owing to the demands of modern town-planning schemes, the mosque has been deprived of much of its original setting, the lack of which is partly compensated for by the fact that the lawns and greenery of the surrounding area still remain and a considerable number of 15th-16th century tombstones have been left standing. The mosque is a foundation of Ali-pasha’s, a Governor-General of Bosnia and Herzegovina; it was built after his death in 1560. Of small dimensions yet displaying beautiful architectural forms and harmoniously proportioned, it is a classical example of the 16th century Turkish style of architecture in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The base of its interior space is a square with 9.5 m. sides, which is exactly the height of the tambour cornice measured from the floor of the mosque. The capitals and bases of the portico surmounted by three minor domes, the portal with the inscription over the door, the interior appointments and arrangements (mihrab, minber, mahfil), and all details are characterised by simple yet fine and exquisite workmanship. The decoration dates from 1893.

Inside the harem of the mosque stands a minor fountain with, next to it, the grave (a sarcophagus with stela) of Gazi Ali-pasha, the founder of the mosque.

Careva (the Czar’s) Mosque stands on the left bank of the Milyatska (Pariske Komune Strand). The building was completed in 1566—with funds provided by Sultan Sulejman—a few years later than that of Ali-pasha’s mosque.

This was formerly the site of a smaller mosque built by Gazi Isabeg (in 1457) who had given it the name of Mehmed II who was then Sultan.

The old mosque was burnt down in 1480 when Vuk Grgurevitch of Jajce, a town then held by the Magyars, invaded part of Bosnia, putting Sarajevo to fire and sword.

This mosque also belongs to the same type of domed structures as that of Ali-pasha’s, being built in almost the same style. Nevertheless, in its outward appearance it differs to a considerable extent from the rest of domed mosques, to be found in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in that there were, in addition to the arcades in front of it, the same series of arches at the sides of the building—though under a flat roof. To the great detriment of aesthetic appearance, these lateral arcades were walled up (in 1847) and replaced by the “tëmts” (lateral wings) that still survive.

The interior space has a square base of 13 x 13 m. The most conspicuous feature of the portico columns is their slenderness and the exquisite workmanship of their capitals. The minaret, with its “serefe” (circular balcony) of beautiful stalactite ornamentation is one of the finest of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The arcades on both sides of the court were constructed only in 1912 when the present building of the Ulema-medzlis (Board of Islamic Community administering and controlling religious, educational and cultural life of Muslims) that shuts off the court from the Obala Pariske Komune was erected.

The Gazi Husrevbeg Library, now housed in the new Ulema-medzlis building, to the left of the entrance, was founded in 1537. It is the oldest institution of its kind in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Originally a possession of the Gazi Husrevbeg’s Kursumli Medresa and used by its staff and students, it has since been made into an independent public institution of Gazi Husrevbeg’s Vakuf, which has helped to extend the scope of this important source of intellectual and cultural values in these parts.

The present inventory comprises the orginal stock of volumes, donated by the founder, in Oriental languages (Turkish, Arabic and Persian), as well as a large number of additional copies acquired from vakufs, medresas, and private libraries all over the country, e.g., from the famous Karadzozbeg library (Mostar), and those of Mehmed Handzic, Muhamed Enveri Kadic with a most valuable collection of manuscripts in Oriental languages, and others.

At present, the library has a collection of over 4,000 handwritten works in the Turkish, Arabic and Persian languages, some 3,000 various documents written in Turkish, as well as about 100 “sizdiz” (Law reports or minute-books of Sheriat (religious) Courts with official textual records of all “fermans” (letters patent, edicts) and similar decrees given by high authorities). In addition, the library contains a large number of printed volumes in Oriental and various European languages, mostly works belonging to the field of Oriental studies.

Besides being of great age, many of these manuscripts are remarkable for their artistic bindings, masterly scroll-work, arabesques and calligraphic lettering.

Bashcarshiska (of the Central Market) mosque, situated in the market-place between the Kazandziluk and Bravadziluk Streets, built about the middle of the 16th century, is a foundation of Hodja Durak’s, hence its official name “The Hodja Durak Mosque.”

It is exactly like the Alipasha mosque in design and character, though of a much lower architectural standard. Its wooden dome was burnt down in 1697 when the Austrian General Eugene of Savoy, after defeating the Turkish armies at Zenta, invaded Bosnia and set Sarajevo on fire. The
mosque has since been restored and the present dome built. Prior to 1945 it had a portico covered with three minor cupolas—similar to other domed mosques—which fell into disrepair and had to be replaced with the present portico under a timber roof. It is because of this and the erection of new buildings around it that the mosque has been robbed of its aesthetic appeal.

An outstanding feature of the interior is the beautiful workmanship of the capitals of the pillars below the mahfil.

Cekrćijska Mosque is situated at the top of the Bascarsija (Central Market Square), near Kovaci Street, and was built in 1526. It is a foundation of Hadji Mustapha Muslihadin’s who was known by the name of “Cekrćija” (Reel-man) because, as report had it, he had been a producer of the reels used in spinning and weaving. His mosque is the oldest domed one in the town of Sarajevo, for only the stone minaret of the older domed mosque in Skenderija Street—erected by Mustajbeh Skenderpasic in 1517—has been preserved as part of the oldest example of architectural art in Sarajevo.

The somewhat flattened shape of the dome, which is a conspicuous feature of this mosque, also goes to prove that the structure dates back to the building period prior to Mimar Sinan. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the minaret is incorporated instead of being built against the mosque. The present timber and portico and shops were built after the original domed structure had been burnt down, so that the mosque is now left without a courtyard.

The recent decoration, rather common and tasteless, dates from 1945.

The Buzadzic Mosque, in Abdullah ef. Kaukicja Street, is a foundation (1555) of Hadji Hasan Buzadzic who was, reportedly, a “buzadzija” (procedur and seller of “buza”—cooling drink of sweetened maize juice, milk and water). In 1917 the lead was removed from the dome and cupolas of this mosque too, with the result that, in 1923, the old domed structure, which was beginning to crumble away, had to be replaced with the present timber roofs.

The Ferhadija Mosque was built in 1562. It was named after its founder, the Bey of Bosnia Sandjak, who also built the adjoining mekteb, fountain and Imaret.

In 1917, as usual, the lead from its roof was removed to be replenished with tin only in 1923. This circumstance caused much damage to the building and its interior decoration (due to the action of rain). Moreover, the erection of large buildings in the immediate vicinity (e.g., Europe Hotel) spoilt its original setting and imposing appearance. Yet even so, the mosque is still one of the most beautiful structures of its kind in the country. The interior decoration and appointments (mihrab, minber and mahfil) are most beautiful, the portico with the little domes on monolithic columns and original capitals giving an added effect to its beauty.

In addition, there are in Sarajevo some 70 mosques with common roofs and minarets of stone or timber. Though without any particular architectural significance, they nevertheless show interesting structural details, e.g.

The Magribija Mosque, situated in Magribija Street at Marin Dvor. It was built by the Sheikh Magrib about the middle of the 16th century. During the great fire of Sarajevo in 1697 (caused by Prince Eugene of Savoy) the mosque was burnt down to be rebuilt and restored by the people in 1766.

The entire portico of the mosque, with the pillars and arches, is built of wood, the timber ceiling being unique of its kind in the country.

The Hadji Sinan Tekija is situated in Sargdzija Street, below the old burial-ground behind the Sarac Ali mosque, at some distance from the town centre.

“Tekijas” are buildings where dervishes of different orders once performed their rituals. Seeing that such religious organisations no longer exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of these buildings have either been pulled down or allowed to go to ruin. The Hadji Sinan tekija is the only example of monuments of the kind—in a relatively good state of preservation—to be found in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Hadji Sinan tekija was erected in 1640 to serve as a memorial of the conquest of Bagdad. The building was carried out—with the help of funds reportedly provided by Sultan Murat III—by Hadji Sinan-aga, a rich Sarajevo merchant and father of Silahdar Mustapha-pasha, the Grand Vizier of the Turkish Empire.

The building and the wall enclosing the court are constructed of finely dressed stone. The main part of the tekija is made into a simhaana, a mosque-like interior used for the performance of dervish rituals. There is also accommodation for the Sheikh (the Principal) as well as a guest-room. The ceiling of the simhaana displays an ornamental design in the shape of Suliman’s Great Seal composed of special Arabic characters (called kufa), which represents the emblem of the 12 foremost dervish orders. Another such emblem is to be seen on the wall over the entrance door.

The writing on the walls of the tekija, near the entrance gate, was done in about the second half of the 18th century by Mehmed Melija, a famous Sarajevo calligrapher and poet. Part of the inscriptions—sentences taken from the Qur’an—and most of the decoration of the simhaana as well, which is reported to be as old as the tekija itself, have been destroyed.

During the bombardment of Sarajevo in 1943, the wall surrounding the courtyard was destroyed and the building, too, suffered considerable damage. In 1953 the wall was rebuilt and the building partially restored.

The tourbe in the burial-ground above the tekija is that of the founder and his wife.

The Old Moslem burial-grounds are worthy of notice not only because they represent important monuments of historic and cultural interest but also for their being an integral part of the picturesque aspect of old Bosnian “mahalas” (streets, quarters). It is a matter for regret that so many of them had to be sacrificed in the interests of modern town-planning schemes.

Typical of the many picturesque burial sites in the town of Sarajevo, and finest of all is—

The burial-ground at Alifakovatz where a number of distinguished persons of the Old Sarajevo lie buried. Particularly striking are the two tourbes of the open type with the cupola resting on four stone pillars. As was the general practice in 1917 the Austro-Hungarian authorities had the lead removed and replaced with sheet-iron.

In the tourbe that stands lower down, lie the remains of a 14-year-old boy, Mehmed Jusuf, the son of a Sarajevo cadi, Ahmed-effendi Jahjafeenditch. The tourbe higher up the burial-ground is that of Jusuf-pasha—reportedly descended from the famous family of Cuprilitchi—who had fled from Istanbul, because of an alleged offence against the law, and who lived in Sarajevo under an assumed name until his death in about 1750. The two tourbes were erected in 1779 by the father, previously mentioned, of the little Mehmed. At the mother’s request and to commend his son’s soul to the AlmIGHTY, the cadi also built the Alifakovatz fountain which is still in public use.

In addition to the burial-ground at Alifakovatz, mention should be made of a series of Muslim graveyards at NAdkovaci that have been used for burial from as long ago as the 15th century and which, therefore, display a great
variety of tombstones. Some of the “nisani” (stelae), dating from the 15th century, are big, unshapely and roughly dressed, with the same symbols which are to be found engraved on most Bosnian standing tombstones; others, from a later date, are finely dressed, with delicately chiselled calligraphic inscriptions and beautiful ornaments. It is in these graveyards that numerous members of well-known Sarajevo families lie buried; some of these families have died out long since.

Fountains. Owing to Muslim ritualistic observances (five daily ablations before prayers) clean water has always been in great demand; consequently, despite the fact that there were a great many wells available in courtyards, additional wells and fountains, especially the latter, had to be built, particularly in the vicinity of mosques, in Sarajevo and other places as well. The fountains were the result of personal effort by individual benefactors; water was carried from more or less distant springs in underground pipes made of baked clay or hard wood.

Thus Gazi Husrevbeg—to mention only one instance out of many—built a fountain at Nadkovaci (in 1531), still in good condition, which was supplied with water from a distant reservoir at Crnilo springs. Today, most of the fountains in Sarajevo obtain their water supplies from the Municipal Water Board.

The Vekilharc Mosque fountain, below Alifakovatz, dating from the same period as the mosque (about the middle of the 16th century) fell into disrepair and was restored in 1800, as its inscription records, by Mustapha Fevzi, a cadi of Sarajevo. It was once supplied with water obtained from the Pjenkovac springs below Bembasa.

In addition to the above, a number of Sarajevo fountains dating from the 16th century have been preserved, e.g., the Bakarevic fountain in the masonry of the Kecedzi Sinni mosque, the White fountain near the White mosque at Vratnik, the Sumbul fountain in Sumbulcusa Street by the wall of the mosque, the fountain in Terzibasina Street, to the right of the entrance to the mosque, the fountain in Hadziabinica Street, the one in Gornja Pehlivanusa which was once supplied with water from the Javniks springs, and many others.

A GLANCE AT THE WORLD OF ISLAM

THE LEBANON

Talks on new Cabinet

Politicians resumed their contacts on 5th September in preparation for the formation of a new Government which will assume office on 24th September.

The gradual return to normal life in the country after the easing of the strike was accompanied by intense political activity as both opposition and pro-Government circles conferred separately. From opposition sources comes the confirmation that Deputy Rashid Karami has been named the opposition candidate for the Premiership.

Karami talks

A meeting at the house of opposition leader Saeb Salam discussed further the elements to be included in Karami’s Cabinet. Karami after the meeting conferred with Speaker Adel Osseirain, reportedly on the new Cabinet. Osseirain said later that he had found some of the opposition’s demands “reasonable”, while others needed further study. He would not comment on his talks with Karami.

Army rule

While the opposition insists that they should form the new Government, pro-Government deputies again reiterated that they would only support a completely neutral Cabinet.

A third school of thought, including the Third Force, of which veteran politician Henri Pharaon is a supporter, suggests that a military government should be formed for a brief period to bring about complete order and stability in the country.

Meanwhile, President-elect Fuad Chehab has not committed himself on his preference about the nature of the future Government. He is reported to be still sounding a number of politicians in the hope that final agreement may be reached by 24th September.

ALGERIA

Algerian Army kills 162 French soldiers

The Army of Algerian Liberation Front in a communiqué released on 3rd September said Algerians killed 162 and wounded 72 French soldiers in ten battles in Algeria from 23rd to 25th August. The communiqué said Algerians shot down three French planes and destroyed a military train with mines.

In Paris, the police said that 14,000 Algerians in France had been put through a security “screening” since sabotage began on 25th August in support of the nationalist movement in Algeria. In the same period, according to a police communiqué dealing with the situation in France, four nationalists have been killed and ten wounded, 29 national agitators have been arrested and 17 North Africans forbidden to leave certain areas.

The police said there was a temporary lull in activities in Paris, but there was an attempt at sabotage at Ales, in Southern France. In Marseilles two Algerians were arrested after explosives had been found in a house. In Oran three persons were slightly injured when a shunting engine and two wagons blew up on a mine placed on the tracks near Bou Hanifa in the Sostaganem department north-east of Oran.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

Japan offers United Arab Republic $20 million loan

Tokyo, 4th September.—Japan offered the United Arab Republic a $20 million credit at 5 per cent interest. The offer was made at a meeting between a visiting United Arab Republic Industry Minister, Aziz Sidky, and Tatsunosuke Takasaki, Minister of International Trade and Industry.

Japanese sources said Sidky had asked for a credit of $30 million, at a lower interest. Takasaki told newspapermen, “Both sides reached a general agreement, and I think we can smooth out differences at our next meeting on 10th September.”
Sidky heads an eleven-man United Arab Republic mission which arrived on 3rd September for a two-week visit. It is seeking Japanese credit and co-operation to implement the United Arab Republic five-year industrial development plan.

**Industrialization of the United Arab Republic**

Earlier, Japanese Prime Minister Kishi told the visiting United Arab Republic mission that Japan will do all it can to help industrialize that Arab nation. Finance Minister Eisaku Sato told newspapermen that Japan has tentatively decided to furnish the United Arab Republic with $18,583,333 worth of equipment for its shipbuilding, cotton spinning, canning and caustic soda industries on a deferred payment basis.

Aziz Sidky, head of the mission, invited the Japanese Premier to visit his country, to which Kishi was reported as saying he would like to do so if he could arrange an absence from Japan. Kishi also told newspapermen, "I also suggested Japan may invite President al-Nasser".

**Oil resources**

Sidky indicated he would like to sign a credit agreement while in Tokyo. He also disclosed his country is prepared to discuss exploitation of oil resources around the Red Sea "if the Japanese side wants to do so". He added that if Japan is interested the delegation is also ready to discuss the possibility of setting up factories and an oil processing plant. He said the United Arab Republic is not only interested in cotton spinning but also in producing woollen and linen textiles. The United Arab Republic group is also stated to tour industrial Japan and inspect electrical machinery companies, shipyards, an insulator company, heavy industry plants, textile mills and numerous other factories.

The United Arab Republic has economic co-operation agreements with the Soviet Union and East and West Germany, Sidky said.

**Nasser approves Ten-Year Development Plan for Syria**

President Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser has approved a ten-year economic development plan for the Syrian region, the Syrian Minister of Planning, Hassan Jbara, announced on 4th September. The cost of the programme was estimated at 2,186,000,000 Syrian lire. Jbara added that a budget for this programme had been approved by a special law, from which 80,000,000 lire would be spent this year on the projects already started.

The Ghab project authority is now being strengthened to enable it to complete drainage and land reclamation works within two and a half years, he said.

Last November Syria concluded an assistance agreement with Russia for the execution of 19 economic development projects. The cost of these projects, including the building of dams, power stations, irrigation schemes, a railway network and bridges, was estimated at about 2,000,000,000 Syrian lire.

**Syria to organize Press**

The Syrian Director of Propaganda and Information, Fuad esh-Shayeb, will leave for Cairo on Saturday to attend meetings of the higher council of radio stations in the United Arab Republic. He called on Vice-President Akram el-Hourani on 4th September in that connection.

An authoritative source at the directorate said that while in Cairo, Shayeb would resume discussion of the proposed reorganization of the Syrian press after allocating 1,000,000 Syrian lire in the general budget for that purpose.

A number of Syrian newspapers decided earlier this year to cease publishing after talks with Abdel-Qader Hatem, President Gamal Abd al-Nasser's adviser on press affairs. He said that compensation would be paid to the newspapers and employment would be found for the staff, or pensions given to those who reached the age limit. The newspapers are still publishing, however.

**Health improvements in Damascus**

The Syrian Ministry of Health has carried out extensive improvements in Damascus hospitals and health centres, Dr. Rushdi Al-Tarazi, the Secretary-General of the Ministry, announced on 1st September. He put the present number of beds in Damascus hospitals at 4,500 and the number of clinics at 168, compared with 1,800 and 50 respectively before the recent improvements.

He added that the State laboratories were producing considerable quantities of anti-cholera, smallpox and typhoid vaccine.

**Egypt opens new plant for heavy ammunition**

President Nasser, speaking at the opening of a heavy ammunition plant on 4th September, said the Iraq revolution put Arab nationalism "on the road to victory, and nobody can intimidate us". He was addressing an audience of Cabinet ministers, army officers, plant officials and workers at Helwan, ten miles south of Cairo.

He said: "We will achieve real freedom for the whole Arab nation, with the grace of God. We will go forward towards building up a co-operative and solid Arab nation for the welfare of all the Arabs."

**Self-reliant**

Nasser said the arms plant is important for the United Arab Republic because "I remember in 1948 when we were fighting in Palestine and our ammunition was limited. Israel had plenty of arms and showered us with bombs, while we had to save our ammunition because we did not have enough to return their fire."

"Guns without ammunition are mere pieces of iron. We felt bitter. We lived for the day when we could rely on ourselves for the manufacture of arms and ammunition."

**United Arab Republic-Tapline talks start on 10th September**

The American-owned Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline) Company has agreed to begin negotiations on 10th September with the United Arab Republic over this country's demand for higher revenues, the Syrian Minister for Planning, Hassan Jbara, announced.

In 1956, Tapline offered to share its net profits equally with Su'udi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and the Lebanon, through which the Company's line passes. But lengthy negotiations failed to produce an acceptable formula and so the United Arab Republic decided to act unilaterally.

**Press comments on ammunition factory**

Syrian newspapers commented on 5th September on the opening of an ammunition factory in Egypt. An-Nusr said: "Arab nationalism has been liberated from the arms monopoly which was imposed by imperialism. We can now feel assured that all our land, sea and air weapons are capable of working without the fear of facing any ammunition shortage and without waiting for supplies from outside."
Strong army

Alif-Baa said: “Looking at the past when the imperialist powers denied us arms and ammunition in order to give the Jews the upper hand in the military affairs, we can see the big difference today. Now we have a strong army which every Arab feels proud of. We have enough arms and ammunition. We are proud that we have a military force which is capable of defending our peace and contributing for peace not only in the Middle East but in the world also.”

THE YEMEN

The Yemen-United Arab Republic link is an established fact

President Nasser and Crown Prince Badr of the Yemen took the first step on 3rd September in activating the Egyptian-Yemeni federation proclaimed in a jointly signed charter of the United Arab States last March, as they presided over the inaugural session of the 12-member council. The Yemeni legation in Egypt has closed down as the two countries formally entered the federative State. Opening the Federation Council, President Nasser said the Arabs were united in demanding the liberation of Jordan, the Lebanon, Algeria and “the Arab south”.

TURKEY

President Bayar in Afghanistan

President Celal Bayar paid a ten-day State visit to Afghanistan to return that paid to Turkey last year by His Imperial Majesty Muhammad Zahir Shah. Accompanied by Mr. Fatin Rustu Zorlu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, he was given an enthusiastic welcome when he arrived in Kabul. At a dinner given in his honour by His Majesty on the evening of his arrival, the two Heads of State spoke of the long friendship existing between the two countries. The President toured the country visiting places of scenic beauty, as well as new industrial undertakings. He also paid a visit to the tomb of Nadir Shah, the founder of Afghanistan, and to the mausoleum of Babur Shah, the great Turkish ruler who conquered India. Mr. Zorlu left Afghanistan for the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York.

Turkish Finance Minister’s talks in Washington

Turkey’s Finance Minister, Mr. Hasan Polatkan, completed his talks in Washington with U.S. Government economic and financial experts, including Mr. Robert B. Anderson, Secretary of the Treasury, and Mr. C. Douglas Dillon, Assistant Head of the Economic Section of the State Department. A joint communiqué expressed the American Government’s satisfaction at the progress achieved since Turkey’s programme for economic retenchment was put into effect at the beginning of August. During his stay in Washington Mr. Polatkan also had meetings with Mr. John Foster Dulles, and the Directors of the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Development and Reconstruction, and the Export-Import Bank.

The communiqué, issued on 12th September, stated that Mr. Polatkan and the representatives of the American Government reviewed the progress achieved since the programme of economic stability was put into effect by the Turkish Government on 4th August 1958. “Mr. Polatkan expressed the determination of the Turkish Government to continue its efforts in this direction,” it continues. “The American authorities are convinced that in view of the energetic efforts made in the context of the new plan for economic stability, there would be sufficient supplies to meet the needs of the Turkish economy, and that these efforts would help the economy to assume greater strength and stability.”

“During the meetings, the Finance Minister, Mr. Hasan Polatkan, also discussed the problems involved in the application of the various aid agreements signed with America as announced on 4th August 1958. The total aid under these agreements amounts to 234 million dollars. As a result of these discussions, it has been decided that a sum of 75 million dollars will be used to finance imports during 1958. In addition to this, it was decided to give to Turkey, as a present, the sum of 225 million Turkish liras needed for financing operations made in local currency.”

An agreement was also signed between Turkey and the Import-Export Bank on 12th September, by which the Bank will provide Turkey with a credit of 37.5 million dollars to secure the financing of projects in the private and public sectors. A credit of 10 million dollars has also been granted by the Development Fund.

Dr. Kucuk on Turkish support for British plan

Dr. Fazil Kucuk, Chairman of the Cyprus is Turkish Party, has emphasized that the new British plan for Cyprus does not invalidate Turkey’s final solution for the problem which is based on the principle of partition. He did so in the course of a statement to the press in Ankara.

Dr. Kucuk said he had been invited to Ankara following the Turkish Government’s decision not to oppose the implementation of the new British plan for Cyprus. He wanted to take the opportunity to say that the Cypriot Turks, determined and confident in their cause, were more united than ever.

“As you are aware,” Dr. Kucuk continued, “the recent bloody strife between the Greeks and Turks has ceased for the past month. The Turks always resisted attacks in self-defence or were obliged to retaliate. Unless we are attacked there is no question of strife. If they do so we will defend ourselves.

“I take this opportunity to dwell again on our position on the new British plan. Above all, I want to point out that our partition thesis remains, because our rights and security can be guaranteed only through the partition of the island. As pointed out by Mr. Zorlu on many occasions, we believe that our partition thesis is compatible with the partnership idea put forward by Britain. The new plan which the British Government said it was determined to implement does not invalidate our partition thesis which is about the final form of settlement for Cyprus. At the same time the plan accepts the existence of two different communities and invites our motherland’s Government to accept responsibility in the administration of the island. We will not refrain from cooperation within the bounds of justice for the preservation of our existence or from responsibility in the implementation of the plan, which contains the principles I have mentioned above. I believe that sharing of common responsibilities by Turkey and Britain in our geographical regions and the co-operation of these two Powers is very beneficial for world peace.

Participation by Greece in such co-operation would not disturb us, provided it does not harm the existence and development of Cyprus and the interests of our motherland. We are looking forward with courage and confidence, feeling that our rights and aspirations are secure and satisfied that our motherland and our Government will always support us,” concluded Dr. Kucuk.
Radio Ankara answers Greek Radio allegations

Allegations by Radio Athens of Anglo-Turkish "collusion" in Cyprus were rejected by Radio Ankara in a recent broadcast. We give a summary, with quoted passages, below:

A new example of absurdity, additional to that of the Athens press, has recently emerged. This is that of Athens Radio, which is engaged in praising and inciting the gang of murderers, EOKA. "In its broadcasts yesterday Athens Radio, which speaks the language of EOKA, referred to the nine Turks who were acquitted of a murder charge. Drawing certain unhealthy conclusions, which is its speciality, the radio claimed that the Turks are protected by the British. According to the EOKA Radio, the Turks are trying to destroy the Greeks with the help and consent of the British."

The claim that there is collusion between the Turks and British is merely an allegation. Anyone, even if he is mad, can make certain allegations. "Where in the world can one find a country or an organization which does not follow a policy consistent with its interests? Turkey has always had an independent foreign policy, known to everyone. Turks have entrusted their future in Cyprus to the Government of Turkey and they are confident of their position. Like everybody else, they know that the Cyprus issue cannot be solved by the directives of priests, the demands of so-called EOKA leaders for this or that, or bloody activities. They are calm and confident; they have not resorted to savagery and bloodshed; they await the result of Turkey's contacts with the Powers concerned."

While all world radios, including Athens Radio, speak of EOKA terrorism, it is unjust and unreasonable to say that the Turks engage in crimes in co-operation with the British. In what bloody incidents have the Turks been involved? In what Turkish quarter are terrorists and murderers being sought?

The Greek radio, caught red-handed, does not hesitate to place the blame on innocent people. Athens Radio says that, no matter what support they give to the British, the Turks will eventually be expelled from Cyprus. "Note this absurd statement. At least they should have co-ordinated their EOKA propaganda, and not brought shame on themselves by contradicting the views, designed to deceive world opinion, expressed by their priests and politicians." Only recently, their black priest was trying to convince everybody that Turks and Greeks could live in Cyprus together and co-operate as they did before. What about the utterances of this defiled man, and the assertions of the Greek press and radio?

"Apparently, then, the statement that Turks and Greeks can co-operate in Cyprus and live together is an empty one. The wolf awaits the lamb; all these assurances were made with a view to getting what was wanted. Then, after autonomy, set up concentration camps, shoot Turks, and starve or kill the real owners of the island." They mean to commit all the atrocities they committed against Turks in the Dodecanese and Western Thrace as soon as the status of autonomy is obtained.

"But these are vain efforts, because the Turkish Government is deeply concerned for the security and future of the Turks in Cyprus. Turkish opinion is well aware of the Greek way of thinking and acting before the war of independence and does not forget how empty the allegations about Turkish-Greek co-operation in Cyprus are."

THE WORK OF AL-SHAIFI‘I

He was a brilliant man and exercised the greatest single influence on the development of Islamic Law

By ABDUR RAZZAQ HUNWICK

When the Prophet died he left behind no organized code of law, nor any judicial institution. During his lifetime he had been the sole source of the new Islamic law and on the executive side of the law he had taken the place of the pre-Islamic Hakam. For the first century after his death law was still by arbitration, and there was no clear idea of a unified law, in the sense of a code of law, nor yet of a unified basis on which law was to be built other than the Qur’ān. In these times judges based their judgments on the Qur’ān, customary Arab law and existing law in the conquered provinces. In the final analysis everything depended on the opinion (Rā'y) of the judge.

During the second century certain men tried to apply the principles of the Qur’ān to legal relationships in order to make an Islamic code of law. They took existing legal practices and vetted them — accepting them, rejecting them or modifying them, as they considered necessary.

There were two main schools — one in Medina, the original homeland of the Muslims, and the other in Kufa, the new garrison centre of the Islamic Empire. Differences arose inevitably due to distance between the two towns, and basic differences in the two populations. In Medina there were many descendants of Companions of the Prophet and the life of the town had changed little since the days of Muhammad. In Kufa, a new city, there were new practices and situations to be dealt with, and Iraqi, Persian and Arab elements mixed somewhat uneasily together.

As a result two schools of legal thought, later to be known as the Maliki in Medina and the Hanafi in Kufa, grew up, differing in theory and practice of the law. The doctrine of Difference of Opinion (Ikhilaaf) came to be accepted and may have given rise to the much-quoted Hadith: "Difference of opinion in my community is (a sign of) Divine Mercy" (Ikhilaaf Ummatii Rahma).

Into this growing confusion was born the Imam Abu ‘Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Idris al-Shafi‘i in about the year 767 C.E. He was born in Ghazzah of a tribe of the Haashimī branch of the Quraysh and was brought up in humble circumstances by his mother in Mecca, spending much of his time among the Bedouins, where he gained his deep knowledge of pure Arabic. He studied the Hadith and Fiqh in Mecca and is said to have known the Muwatta’ on Malik Ibn Anas by heart. In 787 he went to Medina and studied under Malik until the latter’s death in 796. He was subsequently appointed to a post in the Yemen, where he was involved in ‘Alid intrigues and was brought before the
Caliph Harun al-Rashid. He was pardoned, and attached himself to the Hanafi Muhammad al-Hasan al-Shaybani. Thus it may be seen that al-Shafi’i had a very good grounding in the two dominant law schools which he was later to criticize so sharply. In 804 he went to Egypt as a pupil of Maalik, retaining his position as a teacher under the patronage of ‘Abdul-Malik ‘Abbas; among his pupils was Ibn Hanbal. In 815 he finally settled in Egypt, where he remained until his death in 820. During the ninth and tenth centuries the teachings of al-Shafi’i gained many adherents in Cairo and Baghdad, Mecca and Medina. Under Salaah al-Din (c. 1169) his school was the chief madhhab of Egypt, and by the fourteenth century the Shafi’i school predominated in the heartlands of Islam. Nowadays the school predominates in Southern Arabia, Bahrain, East Africa, Malaya, Indonesia and some parts of Central Asia.

Writing in the Encyclopedia of Islam, Heffening says: “Al-Shafi’i may be described as an eclectico who acted as an intermediary between the independent legal investigation and the traditionsism of his time.” He states that when approving of the Ahl al-Hadith and the Ahl al-Ra’y. This is not quite a full statement of the work of al-Shafi’i, as we shall later show. First we must define two groups between whom Shafi’i steered his legal course. The Ahl al-Ra’y were those people who claimed that formal traditions from the Prophet, by which they mean those who had a formally perfect isnaad, even if they had only one transmitter in each generation (Khabr al-Wadid) superseded living tradition (a term to be defined later in connection with al-Shafi’i’s attitude towards Traditions). This group was not confined to a particular area. The Ahl al-Ra’y, whose stronghold was in Kufa, were speculative jurists who recognized the authenticity of Traditions but who also held to be valid what the insight of an individual jurist, who supported himself on Tradition, recognized as true. However, apart from these two opposing groups, al-Shafi’i also criticized the law school of Medina, which seems to have based itself on the living tradition, ratified by the local consensus (Ijma) of Medina. In his Risadaa he investigated the principles and methods of jurisprudence and is generally regarded as the founder of the Usul al-Fiqh. He tried to regulate the unregulated use of opinion by confining it to analogy (Qiyas) and by laying down strict rules for that.

Al-Shafi’i and Traditions

By the time of al-Shafi’i the only stable elements of the law were the Qur’an and the Sunna. The acceptance of the Qur’an as a basis of law may be taken for granted. What, then, was the concept of Sunna at this time? Before al-Shafi’i it represented the traditional, ideal usage of the community and formed what may be called their “living tradition”, on an equal footing with the kind of customary or generally agreed practice as it had been prior to Islam. The term “living tradition” is quite broad, and on one side is closely allied to the old meaning or Sunna, i.e., precedents of ways of life from the forefathers and on the other side to consensus, i.e., what the community agrees upon and practices expressed in the accepted doctrine of the school. For al-Shafi’i, the Sunna had only one meaning, the Sunna of the Prophet, not a usage established by custom or the consensus of the community. This is the meaning which the Sunna has in the classical theory of Islamic law, and al-Shafi’i may be regarded as the originator of the concept. Al-Shafi’i only admitted as valid Sunna that information which he received in the form of a formal Tradition with a chain of authorities terminating in the Prophet himself. To his predecessors, this type of Tradition was the exception to the rule of generally accepting Traditions from the Companions or successors and then interpreting them in the light of their living Tradition. The Medinese school and others had already used Traditions from the Prophet as a basis for many decisions, but had often neglected them in favour of reported practices, or opinions of the Companions or their own established practice.

To discuss or question an authentic Tradition of the Prophet was, as far as al-Shafi’i was concerned, wrong. He said, “If a Tradition is authenticated as coming from the Prophet we have to resign ourselves to it, and your talk and the talk of others about how and why is a mistake. The question of how and why can only be applied to human opinions which are derivative and devoid of authority; if obligatory orders, by asking why, could be subjected to analogy or to the scrutiny of reasons, there would be no end to arguing and analogy itself would break down.” However, even al-Shafi’i had to admit that sometimes two “authentic” Traditions clashed and even contradicted each other, and he had a threefold method of solving such difficulties. If possible the two Traditions should be harmonized, taking into account the different circumstances which gave rise to differing rulings on a certain practice. If they cannot be harmonized on these grounds then the one in keeping with the Qur’an or other undisputed Sunna of the Prophet is retained. If this method fails then the one with the better Isnaad is followed.

Traditions and the Qur’an

The ruling of al-Shafi’i was that a text of the Qur’an can only be abrogated by another Qur’anic text, and the only thing which could repeal a Sunna of the Prophet was another Sunna. The Qur’an does not contradict the Traditions, but the Traditions of the Prophet explain the Qur’an and specify the meaning of general statements. Al-Shafi’i held that the best interpretation of a Qur’anic text was that to which the Sunna of the Prophet pointed. His firm faith in the authority of the Sunna is based on those passages of the Qur’an which make obedience to the Prophet a duty, e.g., 4:69:

> Wa man yati’i Allaha wa-rasuuul fa ulad’ika ma’ alladihiina ‘anam-Allahu ‘alayhim min an-nabiyyin wa-salsal quwaa wa-shshuhada’ wa-ssalihin wa hasun ulad’ika ra‘ifinan.

(“Whoever obeys God and the Prophet will be among those on whom God bestows His favour from the Prophet, the Truthful, the Faithful and the Righteous. A good company are they.”)

Everything legally relevant which the Prophet allowed or forbade was also allowed or forbidden by the Qur’an. Ibn Ishaq tells us in the Siira that on the last day of his life the Prophet stood up in the mosque after the morning prayer and said, amongst other things, “Lam uhilli illa ma ahalb qua’an wa lam Uhharram illa ma ahharram al-Qur’aan” (“I have only made lawful what the Qur’an made lawful and I have only forbidden those things which the Qur’an has forbidden”). Al-Shafi’i considered that the Traditions of the Companions could be used as subsidiary arguments, and he sometimes made use of Traditions from the Successors, especially the Caliphs, as additional material. The attitude of al-Shafi’i towards Traditions is best summed up in his own words in his Kitab Ikhtilaaf Madhik wa-Shafi’iT, where he says: “As long as there exists a ruling in the Qur’an and the Sunna those who are aware of it have but to follow it. If it does not exist we turn to the opinion of the Companions of the Prophet or one of them, and we prefer the opinion of Caliphs. If no opinion is available from the Caliphs the other Companions have a sufficient status in religion to justify us
in following them in their opinion, and we ought to follow them rather than those who come after them."

**Consensus (Ijma')**

The old idea of consensus, which was common to both Medina and Iraq, distinguished between the consensus of all Muslims on essentials and the consensus of scholars on details. Consensus was regarded as the final authority which ratified any decision, and it was not subject to error. However, the Tradition, "My community shall not agree upon error," does not seem to have been in circulation at this time. The Iraqis and the Medinees tended to project their agreement back into the past and to claim the consensus of the Companions. The Medinees idea of consensus was only regional, i.e., that of the Medinees themselves. They claimed that they were closer to the life and thought of the Prophet through his having lived there and through the abundance of Companions who lived there. Al-Shafi'i attacks their idea of consensus with his typical method of arguing with an imaginary opponent thus:

_Al-Shafi'i:_ "There were, in Medina, 30,000 Companions, if not more. You relate a given opinion from perhaps not as many as six separately or in unison, while the great majority held different views. Where is the consensus? Give an example of what you mean by majority!"

(Consensus now seems to be the opinion of the majority and not the unqualified agreement of all. Even silence from a certain number was later taken to indicate approval, and this was technically called "tacit agreement" (Ijma'a Sukutut)."

**Opponent:** "For example, five Companions hold one opinion in common and three hold a contrary opinion. Follow the majority."

_Al-Shafi'i:_ "This happens only rarely and if it does happen are you justified in considering it consensus seeing that they disagree?"

**Opponent:** "Yes, in the sense that the majority agree."

But the opponent concedes that nothing is known of the opinion of the rest of the 30,000, and al-Shafi'i asks him if he thinks that anyone can validly claim consensus on points of detail. The Iraqis claim that consensus must be of all Muslims, but in practice their consensus was just as regional as that of the Medinees.

The attitude of al-Shafi'i towards the consensus of scholars developed throughout his life. At first he accepted it on points of specialized detail; then he refused it any authority and finally he denied that such a consensus was possible, for he said that it could never be ascertained since all the Muslim scholars could not be found in one place at one time. However, he admitted the rightness of the consensus of the whole Muslim community on fundamental points, for he asserted that it was inconceivable that the community should agree on something contrary to the words of the Prophet. It may be from this statement that the apparently spurious tradition, "My community shall never agree upon error," grew up. For al-Shafi'i the idea of consensus was not really a basis of formulating law, but rather a subsidiary proof, if proof were needed, of the validity of certain fundamental practices. The idea of the consensus of the scholars on "obscure" points was rejected by al-Shafi'i for the reasons shown above.

**Personal opinion (Ra'y)**

_Ra'y_ in its broadest sense may be used to cover any method of arriving at a legal decision other than through the text of the Qur'an or the Sunna of the Prophet, for all else is based on personal opinion and is less than certain knowledge, and this, in the final analysis, is al-Shafi'i's definition of it.

It seems that in the first century after the Hijra, _Ra'y_ was used to a great extent. In fact, since there was no established set of laws or precedents within the bond of Islam it had to be relied upon. A man acting in a legal capacity could only give a judgment in accordance with what he knew or thought. There were no legal texts to refer to, nor were there there yet any collections of Hadith. It is like one's going to a desert island to introduce English law there, being one's self a private citizen with no specialized knowledge of the law beyond what one thinks is correct or what one has heard is right, and having with one no legal books to refer to. This parallel is by no means complete in the sense that a code, if so it may be termed, of English law has been established, and in the first century after the Hijra there was in no sense a code of Islamic law, but it may suffice to show in what sort of position the "lawyers" of that time were placed. The only thing which could ratify their decisions was the agreement of the other lawyers. They simply worked on what was customary among the people, trimming the customs and practices or expanding them or denying them "legal" validity in accordance with their conception of an Islamic code of law.

Maalik, as we have shown, based his doctrines on the Qur'an, local Sunna, and local consensus, and lastly and often ultimately on _Ra'y_, which he uses for points on which there are no Traditions; secondly, to confirm Traditions from the Companions and later authorities; thirdly, in order to interpret Traditions restrictively; and lastly he even makes _Ra'y_ prevail over Traditions if expedient. He uses it either in the form of an analogy or in an arbitrary fashion approaching what was later known as Istihsaan both in the Medinees and Kufan schools.

In his late period al-Shafi'i rejected pure _Ra'y_ in favour of strict analogy and declared that no man could give a decision unless he were thoroughly acquainted with the bases of analogy (Qiyas), which are the Qur'an, the Sunna, Consensus and Reason ('Aql). He would not allow _Ra'y_ to be used concerning a Hadith and stated, "No one is authorized to apply reasoning or questioning or anything tainted with personal opinion (Ra'y) to a Tradition of the Prophet.""16

**Istihsaan**

This literally means to consider something good, and is an argument of the Hanafi school to settle _Fiqh_ rules in conformity with the requirements of everyday life, equity or social conditions. It was used to bypass the logical results of strict analogy when they were not thought suitable to the particular time or place. As far as al-Shafi'i is concerned this term is pure tautology, and is to be equated with _Ra'y_. Al-Shafi'i argues that the Qur'an says that man is not left without guidance, as in the passage from 75: 36:

"A tahsabu l-Insaan an yutrika suda."

("Does man think he is left unguided?")

This guidance is either explicit as in the Qur'an or implicit in the Sunna of the Prophet. He who uses _Istihsaan_ acts as though he were left without guidance and comes to the conclusion which suits him. This argument hits at the very basis of the Islamic concept of law and shows how com-

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pletely different the law of Islam is in its aim and nature from the laws of the Western world. In the West men make laws and the laws change according to the way in which they wish to behave. Further, the law in the West is only concerned with a man’s public behaviour or in his dealings with another man in so far as they affect society at large. In Islam the law is based on immutable moral standards, and it is the law which shapes society. A man is not only blameworthy if his action affects society, but he is worthy of punishment if his behaviour in any way infringes the moral standard of the Islamic code of law. For example: in the West a man may live with another man’s wife and be an habitual drunkard. If he performs his misdeeds in his own house and his drunkenness causes no one any harm (but himself), nor does the woman’s husband choose to file a lawsuit against him, he may continue thus for an indefinite amount of time. Islamic law could not allow such a state of affairs to go on, and subject to trustworthy evidence, both the man and the woman would be punished for their immoral acts. The principle of Istithsaan opens the door to society shaping the law within what it thinks is permissible (within certain limits), and this is opposed to the basic principle of Islamic law.

Analogy (Qiyas)

Qiyas is the only type of reasoning which al-Shafi‘i permits, and it is to be used only when no solution to a problem can be found in the Qur‘an, Hadith or genuine consensus. It is not itself a source of law (Asl) but a derivative (Faru‘). Analytical must be based on one of the other three sources and no analogy may be made from an analogy nor may an analogy be made from a case which is an exception to a general rule. Sunnas of the Prophet are not subject to interpretation by analogy nor can anything which the Prophet has forbidden be allowed by analogy; however, it can be used as supporting evidence. It may be used as a ground for choosing between conflicting Traditions, and al-Shafi‘i also uses it to confirm his rejection of a Tradition previously eliminated on other grounds. In the case of conflicting analogies the consensus of Muslims decides which analogy is correct.

The strongest kind of analogy is the deduction from the prohibition of a small quantity of the equally strong or stronger prohibition of a greater quantity. Or conversely from the permission of a great quantity to the even more unqualified permission of a smaller quantity. To determine the grounds of the analogy there must be an element common to both the original and the derived case, and this al-Shafi‘i calls the Asl. In the classical theory it is called the ‘Il‘la or effective cause, e.g., the Qur‘an forbids the drinking of grape-wine (Khams). What is the ‘Il‘la? It is that grape-wine intoxicates and clouds the mind. Therefore, by analogy anything which intoxicates is forbidden.

In conclusion we may say that al-Shafi‘i was not so much an eclectic as a reformer and reorganizer. While working on the established bases of law he sought to define them more closely and to regulate their use, setting up for them an order of precedence. His main object was to wipe out the differences which existed and to abolish the very idea of Ikhtilaaf. In his Risala he says: “The basis of legal knowledge (Ihtilal al-Ilim) is the Qur‘an, the Sunna of the Prophet, the consensus, the A‘thar (Traditions from the Companions and Successors), and the qiyas based on these. The scholar must interpret the ambiguous passages of the Qur‘an according to the Sunna of the Prophet, and if he does not find a Sunna, according to the consensus of the Muslims, and if there is no consensus, according to the qiyas.”

There are really only two bases of law for al-Shafi‘i, the Qur‘an and the Sunna, and he bows to the superior authority of the Qur‘an. Consensus and analogy are quite subsidiary, although the decisions reached through them are equally binding. In his attempt to abolish Ikhtilaaf he must be said to have failed in the sense that there emerged no unified system of Islamic law presenting one correct solution to every problem. At the same time it must be admitted that al-Shafi‘i was a brilliant man who exercised the greatest single influence on the development of Islamic law.

REFERENCES
1 In the transcription of Arabic words in this article the following points should be noted:
   (1) The letters alif, waw and yaa are indicated by aa, uu and ii respectively. Hamza is indicated by ‘ and ‘ain by ‘.
   (2) Due to the limitations of the printing press no distinction can be made between Haa and Hay (the former the sixth and the latter the twenty-sixth letter of the Arabic alphabet), and other pairs of letters commonly distinguished in European works by a dot under the “stronger” of the two.
   (3) Well-known words, e.g., Hadith, Qur‘an, are written in one of their accepted forms.
   (4) The name of the subject of this article, properly al-Shafi‘i, has been spelt al-Shafi‘i throughout for the sake of brevity.
   2 Schacht, Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence, p. 13 1.22. To this work I must immediately acknowledge my great indebtedness. Schacht’s Origins has no rival in modern criticism of al-Shafi‘i, and I have freely made use of his information.
   6 Op. cit., p. 6 120 1.32.

PRAYER IN ISLAM

By MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN

1. The Significance of Prayer
2. The Main Prayer—Fatiha
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society. As we have seen from the standpoint of the Qur'an that the book is always a necessary concomitant of prophethood, no prophet can appear without a book, and in that case we will have more books than one, each claiming perfection. As it is, amongst all the existing revealed books of the world the only book claiming perfection is the Qur'an, for it does not say, as Jesus seems to have said, "I have many things to say unto you but I shall not say them now.

In the case of another book appearing after the Qur'an it must be one either claiming perfection as the Qur'an or not claiming it. If it is not one claiming perfection it has no reason to be chosen above the one already claiming such a perfection, or the imperfect one has no reason to be preferred to the perfect, and the imperfect one can teach nothing which the perfect cannot. If the new book or the new prophet claim to be perfect then we will have two prophets or two books to follow, in which case it would imply the splitting of humanity into two separate sections, one claiming to be the rival of the other. This, in its turn, would have the effect of reverting to decay and degeneracy, while the world will have to relapse into a state of primitive society, rending society into pieces, molecules and atoms and thus drifting to destruction. Two things of the same species cannot be considered perfect, because the very highest notion of perfection induces uniqueness, and thus it is assumed that the perfect book must be unique or one even as the perfect being is unique or one. In the same manner as multiplicity, plurality, divisibility of the divinity impairs the unity which is a necessary corollary of perfection, so also in the face of the assumption of the Prophet Muhammad and of the Qur'an as the perfect, it will be destructive to assume either the appearance of the prophet, old or new, or of the production of a book claiming itself to be its like or its rival.

The theory of perfection as enunciated in the verse:

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion"

needs some further illumination if the unique characteristics of the prophethood of Muhammad are to be fully appreciated. It will be readily observable, reading through the pages of the Qur'an, even by a superficial reader, that it is overflowing in its references to the other religions and the books given to the various other prophets of the world. Reading through its pages one gets the impression not of traversing through some antiquated region of religious thought and morality, glittering here and there or even in abundance in its horizon with words of wisdom. But the impression obtained is of reading a twentieth-century book, treating now of comparative religion, now of comparative morality, now of life, now of the hereafter, in short, of every aspect of human life and conduct whether in this life or in the next. The spirit of such a comparative enquiry, be it remembered, is not carried on with any spirit of disagreement, but out of sympathy, love and union. The course adopted by the Qur'an is not of holding up to ridicule or of narrating the history of the various prophets with the implied or avowed object of discerning a sin, which, to suit the theological purposes of a religion might be supposed to have been inherited by every human being, to which even the prophecies were, according to the Qur'an, by no means an exception. In the very opening verses of the Qur'an, not merely is the universality of prophethood promulgated, but it is made an essential part of the doctrine of Islam, that the Muslim should believe not merely in what has been revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, but also in what has been revealed to those prophets that went before.

The Qur'an says in the following verse:

"Those who believe in the Unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them; and who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee and of the hereafter, they are sure. These are on a right course from their Lord and these it is that are successful." (2: 2-5).

Verses of the same significance can be quoted from almost every part of the Qur'an, and one such verse having already been quoted at the opening of this essay we now refrain from quoting it here again. But be it noted here that when it is said "we believe in God, and the angels, and the books and the messengers," the messenger is always associated with a book, and a messenger so associated becomes a nabi or a prophet in the usage of the Qur'an. This at once indicates that those prophets were pure and true and that revelations were given to them, as in the case of Muhammad. Such a reference to all the prophets arises out of the universality of the faith of Islam, as a consequence of which all the prophets are brought into the united fold of a single religion. This universality was necessitated by the fact of its finality, for, in so far as a new religion and a new book ceased to be given to the world, the line of all divergent religions, bring within itself these teachings and the personalities of all the religions of the world. The very nature of its finality needed that it should be universal, and as universal, that it should bring within its scope all the teachers of the world, and therefore it has been said by the Qur'an:

"Surely this is in the earlier scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses" (87: 18-19).

"Wherein are (all) right books" (98: 4).

Previous scriptures, unlike the Qur'an, were not perfect, and besides that, they did not remain free from interpolation.

By its reference to the earlier teachings and by its indicating the fact that the teachings of old have been absorbed into it, the Qur'an indicates that those earlier teachings, amongst other reasons, by their being superseded by a superior and a more perfect teaching, have ceased to be a guidance to mankind. It is indicated that times themselves having changed, and the subject matter of their teachings have been reiterated in their pristine purity with amplifications to suit the changed conditions of the time, the Qur'an sets the seal or closes the source of their utility as a perfect book of guidance and religion.

A further fact that has often been necessitated the previous books being superseded was their not having been kept intact without manipulations and interpolations by the hand of man. This is so generally known that it is admitted by even the adherents of the various religions that there has been a free admixture of human alloy with the divine word. This is a fact to which the Qur'an itself has drawn the world's attention when it says "and it was owing to the truth and gravity of such assertion" that the Qur'an had enunciated the theory of abrogation regarding the earlier revelation. The impurity of the earlier books made them unsuited for human beings to follow, and no wonder, as we have pointed out, that none of those books ever claimed to have been perfect or universal, and in so far as their applicability was limited to a particular people or an age, the means of their preservation were also limited to a particular age or period. When those books had outgrown the needs of their own time, the means of their preservation disappeared as well with them.

In the case of the Qur'an, however, it has been admitted by

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even the most adverse critics of Islam that they (the non-Muslims) "believe the Qur'an to be as much the book of Muhammad as the Mahomedans believe it to be the book of God". Apart from all these, to be a Muslim the divine promise given in the Qur'an itself is a sufficient source of authority to him, and he reads in the Qur'an the following verses:

"Surely it is a bounteous Qur'an, in a book that is protected" (56 : 77-78).
"Nay, it is a glorious Qur'an, in a guarded tablet" (85 : 21-22).
"Surely We have revealed the Reminder and surely We are its guardian" (15 : 9).

Reading the above, one wonders at the reason of such a promise having been given in this book while it is singularly absent in the earlier revelations of the prophets. The reason is not far to seek. The Qur'an has not merely to play a larger mission but also a longer one, or perhaps the largest and the longest. Its guidance is to all humanity and its utility is for all time to come, and this because it is final. The final book needs to be preserved, and therefore the promise of God has been given that it will be preserved for all mankind as it had been given to Muhammad. The need for any fresh revelation, therefore, constituting the book of a prophet, never arises as the book itself is preserved and suited for all times.

The significance of the term Khatam al-Nabiyyin and a few misconception removed

The theory of perfection and of completion of the prophethood of Muhammad brings us nearer to the finality, reference to which is made in the following verse of the Qur'an:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but he is the Messenger of God and the Seal of the prophets" (33 : 40).

In this quotation a peculiar illustration is adopted in which the terms of physical relationship are employed to indicate a spiritual relationship and at the same time the latter is pointed out as higher than the former. Muhammad is said to be not the father of a male descendant but that he is the Messenger of God and the seal of the prophets. Lineage or descent is commonly understood as implying a physical relationship of father and children, but it is denied here in the case of Muhammad, and in its stead it is mentioned that he is the messenger of God and that he is the Seal of the prophets. By the use of the word lakin in the verse, which is here translated as "but", the superiority of the substituted or spiritual type of relationship is pointed out, and by the words "Muhammad is the messenger of God", he is indicated as the spiritual father to whom is also given the appellation the "Seal of the prophets". The illustration more fully applied would mean that the prophets bear towards their followers, who are technically called their ummah, the relationship of father and son, and the prophets as between themselves resemble brethren or brothers, in as much as they have received their inheritance, i.e., their spiritual illumination, from a common source — God — without any human medium. They are as amongst themselves brothers in as much as they receive nothing from one another, and their respective ummah or followers are their respective children, who inherit the benefits of their respective prophets and thus obtain their purification and wisdom.

It is at this point sometimes argued that as the descent of a physical order is denied to Muhammad a different order of spiritual sonship is promised and that sonship is sought to be given through and by Muhammad, who is to set the seal of validity or give currency to the succeeding line of prophets. But it should be observed that in the face of the principle of perfection or completion of prophethood already discussed at length by us, this interpretation can under no circumstances be imposed upon the verse now under consideration. Perfection, as we have said, left no avenue or aspect of prophethood yet to be explored, and perfection needed its unique nature to be maintained, which would otherwise shatter the solidarity of a single nation or a people. The prophet, as it is evident from the illustration of the verse, is one that has his own spiritual children, who are called his ummah, and if it is now sought to lay the road open for new prophets in a manner, it must be admitted with it also that they must have their respective ummah or spiritual children. Either the formation of an ummah with a prophet is to be admitted after Muhammad, or a prophet must be admitted, but he should be left without an ummah. From the very nature of the illustration the prophets are described as Messengers of God obtaining a superior line of descendants, and as the prophets are raised to impart wisdom and guidance to mankind they obtain their followers, who come to be called their ummah — for if no such form or number of followers were given, no prophet can have the persons to exercise his prophethood upon. As a man without children cannot be called a father, so a person without his own ummah cannot be called a prophet. The very term prophet, or nabi, is a relative one, as king, mother and master are relative terms. Just as there can be no king without subjects, no mother without a child, and no master without a servant, so there can be no prophet without an ummah.

If it is alleged, however, that the formation of a new ummah is as much permissible as the formation of a new prophet, then it would mean that obedience to the new prophet becomes necessary because he gets the right to form a new ummah as much as Muhammad himself. Men would henceforth cease to be called the children of Muhammad, or ummah of Muhammad, but the children or ummah of X or Y or Z. This shatters at once the very foundations of Islam, and the very significance of the verse under consideration, that Muhammad is given the spiritual sonship or an ummah for all time, will be repudiated. It has also been pointed out in the illustration that the prophets as brothers owe nothing to each other by way of spiritual perfection or wisdom, but that they receive their guidance or wisdom from the Divine Being Himself without the medium of any human agency. An ummah, however, obtains its guidance and the ministering of its spiritual needs from its prophets, whose children they become spiritually. A prophet, on the contrary, assumed as being given the perfection, the book and the authority by another prophet or Master Prophet (the continuance of which Master's prophethood and of his ummah is assumed), is not merely self-contradictory but even unthinkable. As will be seen from our description of the prophet, the term in itself in the denomination of the Qur'an is one who is guided independently by God, and who acts for himself and makes others to act not on the strength of anyone else's revelation, but on his own. To say in the terms of the Qur'an that one is a prophet and that he has acted in conformity or in subordination to the light of another is to say the impossible, the contradictory. In addition, when the Master's light is still brilliant and when the régime of the Master Muhammad is as potent and effective as before, what part can the prophethood of any disciple play? If a prophet in other words can be alleged to receive his guidance from some human source of a teacher, or from the revelation of another teacher, what function has he to perform when already persons better than himself are here on earth? A prophet comes to bring guidance from God when the light
already on earth is waning, dormant and dull. But to say that a prophet has arisen, and to say that he was made such by the light of another, is inconceivable, or to say the least unthinkable. For of what use is he as a prophet when his Master's light is on earth to illumine the world? 

It is sometimes very hastily asserted that it is by no means derogatory of the Prophet Muhammad if more prophets were to be raised after him, because, as it is alleged, by the words "Seal of the prophets" it is indicated that the prophet will not arise independent of Muhammad but that he will be himself a follower. It is therefore conformity to the precepts of the master that enables one, it is also said, to receive the office of prophethood, not from God but from Muhammad. Muhammad, in other words, according to them becomes a prophet-making-prophet and as such the holder of a seal which he uses to give currency to all the succeeding line of his followers in order to raise them to the office of prophethood. By this it is finally sought by them to inculcate a belief that the advent of such prophets would only enhance the glory of Muhammad rather than shatter his position. On the surface of it, such an argument is appealing and is consequently illusive or deceptive. But in the first instance it must be borne in mind that if such a bold theory is asserted, it is for the advocates of this view to establish the fact that one can be both a believer and a prophet. It will be readily observed by our readers by now that a prophet is by no means the follower of another, and that his own revelation, for all his thinking and action and both for himself and his followers, constitutes the basis of his authority. But when it is pointed out that a person who has for several decades of his life even until his death made another revelation, the revelation of Muhammad, for instance, still basing authority, he would be called the recipient of the spiritual beneficence of Muhammad, the child of his teaching, the proof of his veracity, and not himself the prophet. It is not here sought to inculcate that a disciple who might have risen to the highest stage of spiritual glory does not preach or warn others, but what is here pointed out is that in all his actions he recites the verses of another, he purifies in the name of another, he perfects in the name of another, he teaches the book and the wisdom of another. In short, by all that he is and by all that he does he proves what the prophethood of another is, and what blessings it is capable of bestowing.

The glory so visible even in the life of such an ardent disciple will only imply the glory of the prophethood of Muhammad even as the nature of the fruit will indicate the value of the tree. But it would under no circumstances force the confounding of the follower with the prophet, or the master with the disciple. To say that one can be a follower and still be a prophet is to say that one can be a woman and still a man. The very word prophet excludes the possibility of an obedience to another in the sense of the Qur'an, and in its terminology to say that one is a follower is to say that he is not a nabi or vice-versa.

For the purpose of illustration we would refer to a phraseology common in Islamic literature. The path of a pious disciple and of a virtuous man who has fully resigned himself to the will of God is described as the path of fana, or absorption in God. We come across phrases like fana fi-llah and fana fi-al-rasul. The former term indicates that one who has thoroughly effaced himself in the Divine Being brings out or emits characteristics indicative of his close association with the Divine. He performs sacrifices and achieves great glory, to which one would say with admiration that it is "divine". In spite of such eminence and in spite of such glory and greatness observable in such a man, we would not say, though he has effaced himself into the Divine, that he has himself become the Divine. Such is the case with a disciple who follows his Messenger. The disciple might indicate glories and perform greatness worthy to be called prophetic, still we would not say, though he is absorbed into the master, that he has himself become the master. It is here necessary to bear in mind that the office of prophethood is not a thing achievable by effort, but it is an office bestowed by the divine grace. An office comes to be filled up by choice from amongst those that are considered qualified by the choosor, and when it is chosen or filled up, to say that it can be obtained by effort as a consequence of mere exertion (ikitsah) is to misconceive the office of prophethood itself. There may be a number of poets in a country and one might endeavour to excel another by labour and by effort, but the office in a state of a poet laureate is not realised as a result of one's continuous effort but is conferred by the will of an authority who is competent to bestow it. This cannot, however, mean that any number of persons in that state can continue to make an endeavour in the art of poetry and that they would as a natural result be transformed into laureates.

In the next instance, the objections mentioned above in support of the permissibility of prophets rising out of the followers of Muhammad, it would appear as though the function of prophet-making has been delegated by God to Muhammad. This would imply that the Divine Being adopts a course contrary to His own perfection. God must have delegated a part of His own authority either because He was tired, or that He was incompetent to accomplish a function which He was doing before or that He gave it away to another out of sheer love and admiration, or that He must have parted with it, finding that it was incompatible with His own nature. In the case of the first it cannot be assumed that God will do something which will be destructive to His own perfection, and in the second instance it cannot be thought that God delegated a part of His function out of love for another, thus creating a diversion regarding the source to which applications for prophethood are to be made and Himself setting an unworthy example of associating another with Himself, or in the third case, it cannot be said that He held for a time an office that was incompatible with His divinity, which later wisdom taught Him to delegate to another. In this case it would imply that this wisdom is subject to experience and to destruction, as in the case of all human beings. Apart from the absurdity of assuming the delegation of a divine authority to another, the Qur'an itself indicates that a prophet is not man-made but God-made, and hence it has been said in the Qur'an, "God knows how to make the apostleship". Reverting now to the original verse quoted,

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of God and the Seal of the prophets" (33:40),

the verse is to be construed not as has been pointed out already, but in altogether a different sense, a sense in conformity with the complete theory of prophethood as enunciated by the Qur'an, and the theory of the perfection of the prophethood of Muhammad. It is indeed sure that with the negation of a line of physical sonship a better and a loftier descent of spiritual lineage has been promised to be given to Muhammad, but this cannot on that account be construed to mean that Muhammad, instead of God, will become the prophet-maker. But it can only be said that the beneficence and the spiritual benefits that hitherto were imparted by the various prophets in the various parts of the globe have been sealed or closed. Apart from the intellectual
development of a religion the spiritual benefits which are generally the treasures concomitant with the advent of a prophet, have now ceased to be imparted through any door excepting that of Muhammad. The words khatam al-nabiyyin indicate owing to its significance of finality that the prophethood of all those that have gone before Muhammad has ceased to be operative and that the spiritual children of Muhammad or the recipients of his grace will continue to live under the shade of his prophethood, the branches of which would extend to the end of time.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

"It is through Muhammad and under his stamp that united humanity is to recognize finally and completely the one true universal God, fostering and guiding the one indivisible and universal humanity."

Greatest figure of religious history

One of the greatest figures of religious history, who has since come to be worshipped as the incarnation of God, said: “A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country and in his own house.” (Matthew 13:57).

To this universal rule, the Prophet Muhammad proved the one and only exception. In the early days of his mission he had the unstinted support of his economically independent wife. In the fearful opposition of the Quraish, extending over his thirteen years of preaching in Mecca, he enjoyed the loving protection of his unbelieving uncle with his whole clan. His devoted though small band of followers suffered all sorts of inhuman persecution rather than recant, and would even migrate to distant and unknown lands rather than make any compromise with their enemies. And when on the death of his wife and uncle he was forced to leave Mecca for Medina, a strong band of admirers who would sacrifice their all for him and his religion was already there to welcome him in their midst. Opposition had to be there because of the radical reforms which his religion proposed. But neither was faithful support and ungrudging sacrifice wanting from those who had any spiritual vision left in them. As soon as the veil of misunderstanding that invariably surrounds the personality of all true reformers lifted at the end of the few wars of defence which the Prophet had to wage, the total admiration of the nation came flowing to him like a river in flood.

So much so that when, towards the very close of his life, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, he found himself in the midst of a vast concourse of ardent monotheists like himself, numbering 124,000, paying a similar visit to that sacred ancient house of God. He delivered an historical sermon on this occasion, which, for its briefness and meaningfulness and its deep grasp of the realities of life, surpasses all the sermons of all times. And at the end of the sermon he asked his God, who had appointed him for this task, “O Lord! Have I conveyed your message?” We are not told what reply he got from Heaven, but the human beings that were listening to him with awe and emotion replied in one voice, “By God, surely you have”. Thus the Prophet of Islam was first established in honour and prestige in his own country and people before his faith saluted forth in the world and brought into his fold whole nations of men and women that would equally sacrifice their all for him and his religion. It is a unique feature of his prophetic mission and as such constitutes a miracle that supports his claim to prophethood, and an historical miracle at that, the truth of which can by no means be challenged.

This is, however, not the only miracle he wrought. Himself a stranger to the art of writing, he still launched a literacy and education movement which not only salvaged the sunken cargo of ancient learning but produced a new world of philosophy and science, art and architecture, that is still a wonder of the world. Leaving no assets, even of a penny, his work still filled the whole world with opulence and satisfaction. Without any issue, he yet became the spiritual father of an endless succession of prophet-like saints who have been serving as the only steering-wheel for spiritual humanity all these centuries and who will continue to so till the end of time.

Reforms of the Prophet Muhammad

As for his reform proposals, the more humanity advances in years and experience, the nearer it approaches them in one way or another. His monotheism is gaining in popularity everywhere, whether it be among the idol-worshiping Hindus or amongst the mass-worshipping Christians. Scientific knowledge of things is forcing this idea on those who are the least inclined to religious thinking. His marriage laws are finding favour in all religious communities despite the opposition of their respective scripture and priestly classes. His idea of the divine origin of all religions is fast catching the imagination of the civilized world and thus inter-religious societies and conferences are becoming the fashion of the day. In the field of economic thinking, both Capitalism and Communism, that have together filled the world with injustice and unrest both by their extremism and their mutual hostility, are gradually finding their meeting point in the balanced and just socialism of the religion of Muhammad. Last, but not least, Muhammad's idea of the brotherhood of nations and races, symbolized in the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, is but dimly reflected in such imposing international bodies as the United Nations Organization and the Hague Court.

Mighty prophecies fulfilled

But miracles and reforms apart, a prophet is expected to make prophecies as well. He must be able to see future events of the world in a way no other man can. That is one of the proofs that his reform proposals are not from himself but from the All-Knowing God. The range of such prophecies and their accuracy determine the magnitude of his mission. All prophets make prophecies. Muhammad has his prophecies too. As in all other affairs connected with his mission, Muhammad is clear, precise and emphatic when he makes his prophecies. Leave aside the short-range prophecies in the Qur’an. They are too numerous to be mentioned. Take only those that extend to our own age and see how grand they are, how glorious. While the Bible says nothing about the Pharaoh with whom Moses had to contend, at the point of his drowning and after the event, the Qur’an, the scripture of Muhammad, says:

“But we will this day deliver you with your body that you may be a sign to those after you, and most surely the majority of the people are heedless of Our communications” (10:92).

The mummy of the Pharaoh Rameses II has as by a miracle been traced in our own day. It is preserved and displayed in the Egyptian Museum of Cairo for anyone to see and examine. Does it not proclaim the prophethood of Muhammad in a manner and in a language which no logic in the world can ignore, far less defy? The Qur’an also
prophesied that the Christian nations of the world will in due course find themselves plunged in the basest form of materialism and fall upon one another like the angry waves of the sea. It is a situation which has eluded the vision of the Christian seers all these two thousand years. But the prophetic eye of Muhammad saw it from a distance of thirteen hundred years. And no sane Christian will deny today that Muhammad’s prophecy has proved true to the letter. There is, however, an aspect of this prophecy which still awaits fulfilment and will in due course be the greatest historical sign of God. It is that the Slavonic section of the Christian world will come into a final and deadly clash with the Teutonic section. God’s ways are always inscrutable, but they are irresistible all the same. So far Russia, Czarist or Red, has always been on the side of the allied powers. So far there has not been any open and clear clash between the two races in spite of their so-called ideological conflict. All efforts are being directed on both sides towards an avoidance of any such clash. But what is revealed in the Qur’ān is the decree of fate that no power and human ingenuity can avoid. It is a prophecy of a great prophet, reiterated in the age through one of his worthiest followers. Let the intellectual world think in silence, remembering all the while what another great prophet of God has said about such things: “Not a jot or a tittle shall pass, till all be fulfilled.”

West will turn to the faith of God
But this mighty prophecy, awful as it is, is only one side of the picture. The other side is supremely beautiful and exhilarating. There is a supplementary prophecy to the effect that the materialistic West, renouncing its tri-theistic and atheistic cults, will turn to the true faith of God and become a source of spiritual inspiration for the rest of the world. Signs are not wanting that while the West is fast drifting towards the political cataclysm predicted by the one prophecy, it is also undergoing a spiritual change answering the contents of the other. Thus does the world situation before us tend to furnish a fresh and illuminating proof of the prophetic mission of Muhammad for this generation and the generations that are to follow—a mission that comes as the fulfilment and final consummation of the missions of all the prophets of God since the beginning of our spiritual history. It is through Muhammad and under his stamp that united humanity is to recognize finally and completely the one true universal God, fostering and guiding the one indivisible and universal humanity.

**Book Review**

**HOW FRENCH IMPERIALISM DROVE INDO-CHINA INTO THE ARMS OF THE COMMUNISTS**

*THE STRUGGLE FOR INDO-CHINA,* by Ellen J. Hammer. Published by Stanford University, California, for Pacific Relations. Price $5.

This is a most significant work on French misrule over the 30 million Indo-Chinese (there are over 25 million Vietnamese and 4.5 million Laotians and Khmers).

Since this book was published the French have suffered the greatest defeat of any Western Power in the East since the Japanese victories over the Americans, British, French and Dutch in the years 1942-3. The French lost 15,000 troops in this battle, in which they made the absurd mistake of setting up a fortified position in a “bowl” surrounded by mountainous territory. They did not envisage the possibility of the Viet-Minh forces receiving heavy artillery from China, and in spite of having no opposition in the air, the French were forced sooner or later to cede the airstrip on which they depended for their supplies. The French had hoped to prevent the invasion of Laos by placing these troops at a strategic point on the route from Tonkin to this country, but they played into the hands of the Viet-Minh commander, the brilliant, ruthless Communist Guyen van Giap, by denuding the Tonkin rice delta and the important town of Hanoi of 15,000 seasoned troops.

As a result the Catholic autonomous districts south-west of Hanoi had to be evacuated and the Vietnamese Premier, a sincere nationalist but anti-Communist, lost the greater part of his supporters, who had defended their territory against the Viet-Minh and the French alike until they were disarmed through the foolish short-sighted policy of Marshal de Lattre de Tassigny in 1952. The Bao Dai régime lost by these

French blunders the best part of 2 million supporters who looked to the United States to free them from French and “Communist” imperialism. They wished to build up their own national army, for any support from French imperialism was detrimental to the national cause. At Dien Bien Phu many Algerian and Moroccan troops were captured by the Viet-Minh, and at Caobang on the Chinese frontier many Moroccans had been killed defending French imperialism a few years previously. After this disaster, the French Government was forced to negotiate a humiliating evacuation of Tonkin before all her troops in this area got surrounded or wiped out. The Vietnamese nationalists who were opposed to the Viet-Minh Communists in the north only hoped for American intervention to save them, but deprived of a friendly base in the Catholic part of Tonkin and knowing that the densely populated rice delta was infiltrated by large numbers of Viet-Minh guerrillas, this was no longer a matter of practical politics, and there was of course the undermining spirit of jealousy of America by the poor arrogant French imperialists.

The Geneva agreement divided the 25 million population of the Viet-Nam into two, while Laos and Cambodia retained their national governments. In the south the nationalist Premier, Diem, was subjected to intolerable pressure by a French Vietnamese, General Y-uan (Shwaan), and the commander of the French-equipped and trained Vietnamese troops, General Binh, whose father, Nyugen van Tam, was known as a French stooge and a ruthless ex-police chief, and was the most hated man in the whole of the Vietnam. He was also up against General Le Van Vien, the head of a gang of ex-pirates, the Binh Xuyen, who supported the Emperor Bao Dai, while the Cao Dai religious sect,
which was formerly pro-Japanese and anti-French, offered added resistance, as did the ersatz religious sect armed by the French, the Hoa Hau sect. All this took place in Cochin China, where the only hope of the nationalist lies in the formation of a genuine nationalist independent régime free from all French interference and the formation of a genuine national army on a non-sectarian basis.

In the north the Viet-Minh, no doubt with Chinese encouragement, played for a French loan and talked of protecting French economic interests in an attempt to cause trouble between France and the United States, and France and Emperor Bao Dai. On the other hand the United States brought pressure to bear on Premier Diem to broaden his government before it consented to supply him with a loan; the United States officials seemed incapable of realizing that the genuine nationalists support Diem, and that these Vietnamese war-lords and their armed thugs are only the fifth column of French imperialism and indirectly the best propagandists for Communism in Indo-China.

The French and Americans wasted over £2,500,000,000 in eight years of war, and hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese and 60,000-100,000 French colonial troops died as a result of this “dirty” war, as it was dubbed by an American diplomat.

Doctor Hammer’s book is a well-balanced account of France’s lost opportunities in Indo-China, where as a defeated nation, had she followed Britain’s lead in Burma (Burma is a better example than Pakistan or India, for like Indo-China it was occupied by the Japanese and on the eve of armed military as well as civil revolt), she would have saved the lives of thousands of people and preserved and possibly expanded her economic interests.

The Viet-Minh, which under Communist leadership had opposed the Japanese, were more conciliatory than the nationalists and Trotskyists in 1945 and 1946. At that time there was a strong Communist Party in France, and Maurice Thorez, its leader, was for a time Vice-Premier. The official Communist Party hoped to achieve power by legal means without resort to arms. At this time the United States was on friendly terms with the Russians and the United Kingdom had lost favour because of the Anglo-Indian occupation troops under General Gracey. The American authorities openly espoused the cause of French imperialism and were of confining their activities to rounding up Japanese prisoners of war and “maintaining order”. The British paved the way to the return of the French in Saigon, the biggest city in the Vietnam. The people, whose Emperor Bao Dai had been granted independence by the Japanese in 1945, had no intention of accepting foreign rule, and especially French rule, which was associated in their minds with brothels, opium and gambling and drinking establishments, the heavy hand of the rubber magnates and the Bank of Indo-China and the burden of supporting a host of French officials. The Communist leadership under the remarkable leader Ho Chi Minh deposed the Emperor and made him a political adviser of the Republic. The extreme Communists, or Trotskyists, whose leader, Ta Thu Thau, although partially paralysed from the effects of a hunger strike when jailed by the French, represented the greatest threat to the Viet-Minh leadership in Cochin China, wished to fight the French to the finish, as they had no illusions about the intentions of the French people, Gaulist, Socialist or Communist. If they had had their way it is doubtful if the French would have lasted six months, let alone eight years, in Indo-China. Ho Chi Minh’s party murdered the Trotskyist leaders, but had to work out a temporary agreement with the Socialists and above all the nationalists of the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang Party, also with the Dong Minh Hoi — or Revolutionary League of the Vietnam, fostered by the Chinese nationalists.

In 1946 Ho Chi Minh went to Paris to negotiate a settlement with the French Left-Wing Government, but the French Resident-General in Cochin China, the ex-Carmelite priest and admiral, T. D’Argenlieu, set up a separatist régime in Cochin-China and in spite of the intelligent moderation of Monsieur de Sainteny in Hanoi, French forces occupied Haiphong by force, and in December 1946 the Viet-Minh hit back, and war waged until August-September 1954.

Many Frenchmen and Vietname people believe that if peace and independence had been accorded to the Vietnam in 1946, the Communists would have been kept in check by the nationalists and Trotskyists, and some think that like Aun San in Burma and Tito in Yugoslavia, President Ho Chi Minh would have broken with Moscow, although this remains a mere supposition. But the French, when they found that they could not defeat the Vietnamese with the forces at their disposal, looked round for some Indo-Chinese quislings who would help them divide the people against themselves, such as General Yuan and the Cochin-Chinese separatist, Le Van Hoach. The Fontainbleau Conference and the Dalat Conference in 1946 were both torpedoed by these separatist machinations, the work of the Right-Wing Gaulists, who wished to satisfy their megalomania by restoring France to the position she held in the reign of Louis XIV, when her possessions stretched from the Indies to the United States and Canada. The French Socialist dominated ministry which replaced de Gaulle when he resigned made the mistake of not attempting to force through an agreement with the Viet Minh in 1946 at Fontainbleau, and in allowing D’Argenlieu to remain in power in Saigon; thus they soon found themselves involved in a hopeless war, while the French electorate became more and more Conservative and Communists, who if they had been sincere would have resigned from the government over the failure of the Fontainbleau conference, were forced out of office.

The French then carried on interminable discussions with the ex-Emperor Bao Dai, who had retired to Hong Kong. The Vietnam was recognized as an associated State of the French Union in March 1949 and the Emperor returned under French protection in June 1949, but by that time the Communists had driven the Kuomintang out of China and it was obvious that the Chinese would give increasing help to the Viet-Minh, which had come completely under Communist control. The French continued to prevent the Vietnamese nationalists from having any effective control and the Vietnamese diplomatic representation was completely controlled by French stooges. Once the Korean war was over, the Chinese were able to switch sufficient arms southwards across the Yunnan frontier to assure the military victory of the Viet-Minh in Tonkin and its penetration to the Thailand frontier. The French, working against the Vietnamese as a whole, made the major mistake of not keeping the troops behind the Viet-Minh army and harrying it from behind when it invaded Laos, and this strategic error led to Geneva, the coming to power of the anti-imperialistic radical, M. Mendes-France, the granting of Home Rule to Tunisia, and the return of the legitimate Sultan Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf to Morocco. For the ordinary French people were sickened with the costly military adventures of their politicians and financiers and militarists, and France is a big enough and a rich enough country to contain all the French people who have been forced to realize that imperialism is hopelessly out of date.
French investments in Indo-China in 1938 amounted to about $360,000,000. The French captured Cochin China in 1862 and made it a French colony. Tonkin and Annam were declared protectorates in 1884 and separated from Cochin China, although the inhabitants in the three provinces, the Vietnamese, were in the eyes of a reputable French writer, Monsieur Ch. Gosselin, "the most homogeneous people imaginable, from the mountains of upper Tonkin to the frontiers of Cambodia, from the ethnic point of view as well as from the political and social standpoint". Laos, which has a population of 1,500,000, was declared a protectorate in 1893 and Cambodia in 1863.

The first emperor of the Nguyen dynasty set up a dynasty in the Viet-Nam, becoming emperor under the name of Gia Long in 1802 with the help of French troops and a French bishop, the Le Van Hoach dynasty fled to exile in China. Most of the Vietnamese were Buddhists of the Mahayana or Great Vehicle variety, which came from China; but their Buddhism was diluted by an animism and intermingled with Confucianism and Taoism. There were some 2 million Catholics among them. Most of the inhabitants lived in the fertile Red River delta in Tonkin and the Mekong River delta in Cochin China, the north depending on the south for some of its food (rice). The Emperors Ming Mang (1820), Thieu Tri (1834) and Tu Duc (1847) all opposed the French. Another Emperor, Ham Nghi (1883), was deposed and Thanh Thoi (1888) was deposed in 1907. A nationalist movement was started about this time by Phan Boi Chau and Prince Cuong De, both of whom fled to Japan; they founded the first political organization, the Phuc Quoc. Even earlier, Phan Dinh Phung "directed the struggle with unexpected brilliance for two years until his death". A guerrilla leader, Hoang Hoa Tham or De Tham, carried on a long drawn-out resistance in the Tonkin mountains; he was a forerunner of Nygen van Giap, the military commander of the Viet-Minh. The Emperor Duy Tan was sympathetic to Tran Cao Tan, who led a revolt of scholars and lower-grade mandarins against the French in 1916. The conspirators in the last forty years have been largely confined to the concentration camp of Poulo Condore, where they lived under deplorable conditions. On 9th-10th February 1930 the garrison of Vietnamese soldiers at yen Bay on the Chinese frontier killed their French officers. This revolt was led by the Vietnam Quoc Dan Dang Party, usually called the VNQDD. Its leader, Nguyen Thai Hoc, was executed after the failure of the revolt, but he became posthumously the national hero of the Vietnam and his party was supported by the Kuomintang, while later the Japanese tried to win its support. When Boa Dai became Emperor in 1933, his Premier, Ngo Din Diem, was forced to resign shortly afterwards: he was then "a young mandarin of thirty-two, already widely respected for his honesty and ability". Later he refused to become Premier under the Japanese unless complete independence was accorded to his country, and in 1946 he was imprisoned by the Viet-Minh and offered a post in Ho Chin Minh's government, but he refused. His brother was killed by the Communists.

At the present moment the French are trying to oust him from the premiership and to replace him by the brilliant 39-year-old scientist, Prince Buu Hoi, who is reported to be friendly with the Viet-Minh. Premier Diem has the support of General Eisenhower's administration, but he has been asked by the Americans to come to terms with the French trouble makers such as General Yain and General Hinh.

After the failure of the yen Bay revolt, the Indo-Chinese Communist Party and the Trotskyists became very powerful, especially in Saigon-Cholon, where Ta Thu Thau, the Trotskyist leader, and Nguyen Van Tao, a leading Stalinist Communist, were both elected to the Municipal Council and later carried out a joint hunger strike in jail. Ho Chi Minh was one of the most prominent members of the Communist International in South-East Asia, and was for a time imprisoned at Hong Kong.

Before the French came, although there was a central government whose authority was unquestioned, its control over the province was "strong and continuing" only in religious affairs. There were few large landowners and there was no hereditary aristocracy, but rather a frequently changing mandarin class of educated officials, many of whom had risen from the ranks of the peasantry. Most peasant families grew enough food for themselves and "a little more". Education was widespread and so was the co-operative spirit, communal lands were divided amongst the taxpayers. The poor, the sick and the old were provided for and food was stored for years of famine. "The village had its tradition of self-rule, albeit under a select minority."

When the French took over this area of 287,000 square miles, the disparity between rich and poor grew. The 40,000 Europeans monopolized the administration and mined the coal, zinc, iron ore, phosphates, tin, manganese, wolfram and zinc. They made millions out of the rubber plantations. They introduced taxes on the poor and monopolized the sale and production of salt, opium and alcohol. "The French administration had a substantial interest in spreading the use of opium and alcohol because it profited directly from their sale. It assigned each village a quota of alcohol which it was required to consume." In 1934 villages which had not consumed enough alcohol were punished! Needless to say, the Viet-Minh abolished these vile practices in the territory under their jurisdiction and won the gratitude of the people: they also provided them with some sort of education and almost wiped out illiteracy. It is true the French built the Trans-Indo-China Railway and 2,908 kilometres of railway track, but the roads were built to suit the military and economic interests of the French. Large land holdings were encouraged. In Tonkin under the French the Tonkin peasant owned between nine-tenths (62 per cent) and four-tenths (30 per cent) of an acre. 6,500,000 people lived in the Red River delta of Tonkin squashed into an area of 5,900 square miles. This area was infiltrated by the Viet-Minh divisions and the French were forced to allow the Viet-Minh to withdraw rice from the delta under their very eyes.

In Cochin-China the peasant became a tadrien or sharecropper who had to give more than half his produce to usurious landlords; the French also ruled with the help of a hereditary mandarin aristocracy of their own creation and a new landlord class and the cai or plantation foremen. The seeds were thus sown for the peasant-Communism which now controls China and which was backed by an "industrial working class" of not more than 221,000. Once the Communists got the backing of the peasants their success was assured.

The French lost prestige in Cambodia and Laos when they were forced by Thailand aided by Japan to cede part of the territories of these countries to Thailand. On 1st September 1945 Prince Pretsareth declared Laos independent, and when the French troops came back after the war the Laotians started an Issarak, or Free Latotian movement.

The author gives a brilliantly documented and painstaking account of all these happenings. This book is not only timely, it is one of those admirable and excellent products of American scholars who have so greatly contributed to our
knowledge of contemporary history in Asia.

One leaves it with the impression that the Vietnamese Communists will not want to become a part of a vast Chinese Communist empire, but what will be the impact of Communism on Thailand, Burma and Malaya, and after that on the sub-continent of India once peasant-Communism has triumphed in Southern Indo-China? Also, what will be its impact on the Muslim world?

Since this book was written Mr. Diem's government has consolidated its position in the South of Vietnam (Cochin-China), where U.S. military support of nationalism has replaced French imperialism. It is to be hoped that the Algerian Liberation Army will sooner or later inflict another "Dien Bien Phu" on the French Army and thus force France to negotiate a peace recognizing Algeria's independence.

What our Readers say...

ISLAM AND NATIONAL TRAITS
7 Dr. Omer Sheriff Road, Bangalore 4, India.
12th August 1958.

Sir,

A very interesting question was raised by an English Muslim correspondent of yours in The Islamic Review for October 1957 with regard to the right of non-Arabic-speaking Muslims to pray in their own language. It is quite correct that this question was raised in the very early stages of Islamic history, that is to say, when Islam entered Persia. The first jurist of Islam, Abu Hanifah, who was himself a Persian convert, conceded that right to Persian proselytes. Permit one to take the opportunity of pointing out that many Persian customs and usages were adopted in Islam. Take, for instance, the Purdah, or seclusion of women. This is a purely Persian custom and has nothing to do with Islam. Those who have read the Book of Esther know how the Persian Queen forfeited her position merely insisting on Purdah, which her inebriated consort wanted to break. Let me quote Plutarch on the subject of Purdah among the Persians. Plutarch flourished in the first century of the Christian era. He says in his first book under the subject "Themostacles":

"The barbarian nations and amongst them the Persians especially, are extremely jealous, severe and suspicious about their women, not only their wives but also their bought slaves and concubines, whom they keep so strictly hidden that no one sees them abroad; they spend their lives shut up within doors, and, when they take a journey, they are carried in closed tents, curtained on all sides, and set upon a waggon..."

I give below a list of Jewish, Magian, Hindu and Christian beliefs and customs that have crept into Islam as it spread among those peoples.

Jewish. (1) Sacrifice; (2) Circumcision; (3) Clean and unclean foods; (4) Death penalty in adultery, apostasy and witchcraft; (5) Legality and misappropriation of usury and property of the Gentiles; (6) The Shari'ah or legalism; (7) Formalism; (8) Ritualism; (9) Doctrine of abrogation; (10) Misnains; (11) God made on the pattern of man; (12) Priesthood.

Christian. (1) Apocalypse with the eruption of the anti-Christ and advent of Jesus Christ; (2) Immortality and the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ; (3) The uncreated and co-existent word; (4) Redemption through prophets and saints; (5) Martyrdom.

Hindus and Persians. (1) God's spirit migrating and sojourning in holy men; (2) Transmission of a good deed or sin from a living man to a dead man; (3) Child marriage; (4) Concubinage, which was a common practice of the Jews and Christians also; (5) Purdah and degradation of women; (6) Saint worship; (7) Tombolatory.

Your correspondent wants authority for these innovations. Well, there is no authority beyond the Qur'an, which everybody can read and understand. What is beyond it is neither religion nor Islam and one can adopt any course one prefers or under which one is born and bred. One should only accept the unity of the Creator, immortality of the soul and the universality and finality of Islam. Nothing beyond this is essential for faith or practice. The early Muslims, no doubt impressed by the Jewish and Christian hierarchies, copied them in many things. And for this they fabricated numberless traditions or sayings of the prophets. Some are good, but the rest are absurd and reflect the mind of the fabricators and their age. English Muslims must go by the Qur'an and their own common sense.

Yours truly,

S. M. AHMED.

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