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GENERAL DE GAULLE SOUNDS DEATH-KNELL OF FRENCH IMPERIALISM IN ALGERIA

By offering the Algerians the choice between complete independence and an Algeria run by "Algerians" within the French Community, General de Gaulle has recognized the inevitable and if recent history is any guide, then Algerian independence can be but a question of time.

In 1954 the then French Premier, Mr. Mendes-France, offered Home Rule to Tunisia. He was, it would be remembered, categorical in saying that that did not imply independence, but within two years not only Tunisia but also Morocco were independent. At that time it was as clear as daylight that Tunisian independence was inevitable once its neighbour Libya was freed in 1951. History is repeating itself when we remember that since 1956 Algeria, with common borders on the three above-mentioned independent States, has been able to organize an effective military revolt which has led to the sounding of the death-knell of French imperialism. The General has been forced to make a conciliatory statement owing to pressure from the Afro-Asian bloc and the United States of America, where Senator Kennedy, possibly the next President, is well-disposed to the Algerians, as is also the British Labour Party and, in particular, Mr. Aneurin Bevan, the "shadow" Foreign Minister.

The General's statement is studded with the classical pitfalls of imperialist phraseology so familiar to the Muslim world in its recent relationships with imperialist Europe. For instance, he claims that Algeria has never been independent but has been subject to the penetration of Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs from Syria and Cordova, Turks and the French. He deliberately favours the Berbers by excluding them from the list of invaders and he fails to recognize the various Muslim North African federations based on Tlemcen and Morocco as well as the powerful Algerian State of Arouj Khaireddine (d. 1518) and Khaireddine Barbarossa (d. 1546), which owed only spiritual allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan and Caliph.

These views of General de Gaulle present a distorted picture of the history of the status of Algeria. A reference to it will establish that Algeria had a distinct personality of its own even 2,000 years ago, and so recent as 1830 C.E. Carthaginian influence in Algeria lasted from the 2nd century B.C. to 146 B.C. When Rome took over Algeria was annexed to Rome in 40 C.E. In 238 C.E. Roman influence began to decline and the Vandals and Byzantines occupied North Africa before the Arabs.

Two great Algerians, Massinissa of Constantine and Jugurtha, distinguished themselves during the Carthaginian and Roman periods and played very important parts in North African affairs. The Turkish period lasted from 1518-1830, when the virtually independent ruler, the Dey Husain, highly esteemed by the British, was deposed by the French. But for the French, the Amir 'Abd al-Qadir would have set up an Arab State over 100 years ago.

The period of Arab rule in Algeria lasted from the 7th to the 16th century. The Almoravide and Almohade dynasties of Morocco ruled over Algeria and Spain. The 'Abd al-Wahidites of Tlemcen and the Merinides of Fez also ruled over Algeria. These historical facts of the essential everlasting Muslim character of Algeria, which has lasted for twelve centuries, and the spread of Arabic, the General just glossed over.

Further, General de Gaulle divides the Algerians into Frenchmen, Arabs, Kabyles and "Mozabite sect", trying to say that the Muslims of Algeria are divided into three categories. It is an historical fact that the French imperialists have long used the Mozabites as a tool of theirs. General de Gaulle accords them a separate personality which to his way of thinking will continue to sow the seeds of division. He speaks of the "regrouping" of Algerians wishing to remain French in case Algeria secedes from the French Community. This implies that he has in mind the "partitioning" of Algeria as an ultimate solution of the situation. He talks of the protection by the French Army of the oil installations and
oil transport, implying thereby the continued occupation of an independent secessionist Algeria.

Secession would, according to President de Gaulle, result in “frightful political chaos, generalized throat-slitting and subsequently in a bellicose Communist dictatorship”. If such is the General’s conception of the FLN (National Liberation Front of Algeria), then the likelihood of peace in Algeria is indeed far off. The Algerian Muslims will only support a peace treaty mutually worked out by the FLN and the French on the basis of real independence for Algeria. The FLN represents the vast majority of the Algerian people and it must be congratulated on waging war successfully for five years against over 500,000 French troops and numerous auxiliaries.

President de Gaulle wishes to delay the implementation of his scheme for a period of up to four years with a proviso that not more than 200 people are killed a year in the interim period, but who will guarantee that French or French-paid mercenaries will not promote another Melouza in the meantime and thus delay elections indefinitely?

On the constructive side he mentioned that 860,000 Algerian children are now at school as compared with 700,000 in 1958-59, but how many of these are Muslims? In the economic sphere he mentioned that 5,000 Algerians were now employed in the civil service and 50,000 more Algerians were working in France; that France was spending 200 billion francs in 1959 in Algeria on public investments and running costs; that 8,000 hectares or nearly 20,000 acres of land were being distributed to Algerian farmers and that there were 100 applications in the last 10 months to set up factories in Algeria.

We are sure that even President de Gaulle will agree that without the pressure from the FLN these measures of which he talks now so loudly would have been greatly diluted. To add to this is the considerable pressure from the West African members of the French Community, as is also the agitation of Nigeria and Ghana against French proposed atomic bomb tests in the Sahara. Mention must be made of the displaced Algerians, who number about 1,500,000, and the 300,000 Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco, whose plight is appalling.

At the United Nations’ last session, the Algerian resolution only failed by one vote to get the requisite two-thirds majority. The Algerian cause must be pressed with renewed vigour; any relaxation would be fatal. France must be judged by her acts and not by her traditional diplomatic demagogy. The continual support of France in North Africa by the United Kingdom is a public disgrace. No Muslim can condone such behaviour.

No doubt the vast majority of the French people are sick to death of defending with the blood of their youth the interests of the wine growers of Algeria, a country which needs every acre of land to grow wheat for its expanding population. The French have absolutely no right to impose an economy based on wine exports on a Muslim country, such as Algeria. Now that oil exports are growing the loss of revenue from wine would greatly depreciate.

To sum up, the General’s speech will be welcomed with the greatest of caution. The General may be able to dominate the French colonials, but what of the French army, which holds the balance of power and refuses to negotiate with the FLN? Talk of peace in Algeria without the FLN is so much demagogy. But General de Gaulle has buried the bogey of French Algeria once and for all time and for this at least we are grateful.

1 The Mozabites belong to the T’hadite or Kharjite school of thought in Islam. They are Algerian Berbers from the Mzab in Algeria, speaking a Berber dialect known as Mozabite or M’zabie. Their capital is Ghardaia in Southern Central Algeria (population about 17,500).

MAURITANIA AND FRANCE

France intends to secure her position in some territories by any means, even by force, as in Mauritania. French garrisons stationed in that country exceed normal requirements and are more numerous than those in neighbouring territories. Access to certain regions, looked upon as operational areas, are closed to politicians known for their nationalist sentiments.

The administration has been expanded and old-time officials from Morocco and Tunisia have been absorbed into the services after the independence of these countries.

In Senegal, for instance, political activities, in a general sense, are non-existent. The only people allowed to participate in politics are those chosen by the local puppet government. There, Arab broadcasts from outside are jammed and newspapers are banned. A strict control is exercised over local newspapers.

In Mauritania, two French “Ministers” direct the affairs of the territory in “complete harmony” with Moktar Ould Dadah, the French nominated “Prime Minister”. He is credited as being a capable man bat is in fact a mere figure-head despite the prerogatives pertaining to his office. Throughout the entire country there is not one “Commandant de Cercle” who is a Mauritanian. All magistrates, without exception, are Frenchmen.

Honours and material advantages are reserved solely for a few old unlettered chiefs, totally ignorant of what is happening outside their tribe or districts. Mauritians employed in the civil service are victimized if they show nationalist tendencies, and so are business men, many of whom have been ruined by the authorities.

It is obvious that in a situation which pertains in Mauritania today, it is impossible for the people to express themselves freely. The colonial administrators fail to realize that the Mauritians refuse to forget what they are. The national conscience is but the expression of the will of the people to become an integral part of the Maghreb and regain their place within the Kingdom of Morocco.

The situation is explosive, and it is only by a reign of terror that administration manages to maintain the present leaders in office.
THE RELIGION MUHAMMAD PREACHED

By M. ‘ABDUL QADER

"Down through the ages the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which made every capable Muslim perform a traveller at least once in his life, has continued to serve as the major unifying influence in Islam and the most effective common bond among the Muslims. The socializing influence of such a gathering from the four corners of the earth is hard to over-estimate. It affords opportunities to peoples of various races and countries — rich and poor, high and low — to fraternize and meet together on the common ground of faith. Of all world religions, Islam seems to have attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, colour and nationality and the pilgrimage has undoubtedly contributed an important share towards the achievement of that end. It has further provided excellent opportunities for the mutual exchange of ideas and feelings amongst the Muslims."

"No greedy organized bands of ecclesiastics throng the mosques of Islam. It has accorded to every seeker after truth the inestimable privilege of private interpretation and individual opinion — an important human right refused by Christianity until the time of Luther."

Within eighty years of the Prophet Muhammad, the Arabs had subdued the two world powers of the seventh century C.E.

While the armies of Alexander were trampling upon the ancient empires of the East, one people remained undisturbed and unsubjugated. Unlike others, the heathen Arabs sent no humble embassy to the conqueror. For a thousand years more they continued to dwell in their desert home in strange loneliness. Great empires rose and fell around them, but the Arabs remained unaffected and unsubdued.

Even within their peninsula they obeyed no master but their own tribal sheikh, and that too nominally. No kingdom worth the name was ever formed in Arabia except in the south. The Arabs were divided into numerous rival tribes always fighting with one another. Robbery was their profession, murder their sport and pride; cruelty and vindictiveness their national characteristics. Bravery, hospitality, chivalry and cultivation of poetry were the only virtues they could boast of. From remote antiquity up to the first quarter of the seventh century nothing was known of them except that they carried on a profitable trade which attracted the followers of Judaism, Christianity and Manichaeism who established some short-lived kingdoms, particularly in the north and south of Arabia.

Then all of a sudden there came a thorough change. Arabia was turned, as if by the touch of a magic wand, into a nursery of heroes the like of whom, both in number and quality, would be hard to find anywhere else. The Arabs emerged from their desert retreat for the first time as a united people, and began to conquer the world in earnest. Of the two world powers of that age, they completely overthrew the Sassanids and stripped the Byzantines of their fairest provinces. Barely a century was over when they became masters of an empire greater in area than that of Rome in the heyday of its glory.

This revolutionary change had been brought about by Muhammad, the Prophet of God, who began to preach the religion of Islam at the beginning of the seventh century. His creed was extremely simple: the oneness of God. But it worked miracles. Before he died he was the undisputed lord of Arabia, and his teachings had turned the heterogeneous polytheistic tribes into a homogeneous monotheistic nation. Within eighty years after his death the greatest religious empire in history suddenly came into being, completely effacing Manichaeism and supplanting Judaism and Christianity in vast areas; and the muezzin’s call to prayer was sounded over the region from the shores of the Atlantic to the Indus. His name today is borne by more male children than any other in the world and details of nobody else’s life are so minutely imitated by so many men as his. Islam still commands the adherence of one-fifth of the human race.
The faith that brought about the change

Unlike most theological systems to which men have rendered their homage in various ages, no mystery obscures the origin and foundation of Islam. The purity and simplicity of its teachings have undergone no change. Its history has been preserved by the diligence of innumerable writers. The life and characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad, even to the minutest detail, are accessible to every enterprising scholar. Hence there is no difficulty in making due estimation of his work.

Islam is not a new religion, as is erroneously supposed. It is a reformation of the older creeds with such additions and alterations as were necessary to suit the change of time and circumstances. Thus, though the Jews and Christians were accustomed to prayer even before the rise of Islam, prayer for the Muslims acquired a special force and significance. As a collective form of worship it is as yet unsurpassed. Whoever has seen the Muslims say their prayers in self-arranged rows — carrying out the observance with astonishing simplicity, uniformity, order and dignity, at the direction of one Imam and facing one Qibla — will not fail to recognize the educative value and importance of this form of worship in awakening and maintaining a spirit of discipline. For this reason the prayer-ground has justly been described as the drill-ground of Islam. The regular meetings of all the Muslims at common prayers nourished the spirit of solidarity and implanted the feelings of an equality of all men. In Arabia these were quite novel ideas. Solidarity had been limited only to blood-relations. By inducing the rich and the poor to meet on equal terms on the same platform, the Prophet Muhammad struck an effective blow at the narrow family and tribal unions and thereby paved the way for the unity of Arabia which was until then only a geographical expression.

Down through the ages the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which made every capable Muslim perform a traveller at least once in his life, has continued to serve as the major unifying influence in Islam and the most effective common bond among the Muslims. The socializing influence of such a gathering from the four corners of the earth is hard to over-estimate. It affords opportunities to peoples of various races and countries — rich and poor, high and low — to fraternize and meet together on the common ground of faith. Of all world religions, Islam seems to have attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, colour and nationality and the pilgrimage has undoubtedly contributed an important share towards the achievement of that end. It has further provided excellent opportunities for the mutual exchange of ideas and feelings amongst the Muslims.

Besides the common prayers and pilgrimage, the conception of social equality is an innovation peculiar to Islam. "Say prayers and give alms" is a most-repeated injunction in the Qur'an. Help to the poor became a sacred duty, and it was no longer left to individuals to give what they pleased, because the zakat, or poor-rate, became an obligatory duty so that none might remain poor in Islam.

Professor Joseph Hell's tribute to the originality of the Prophet Muhammad

"Never in so rapid and direct a manner," says Professor Hell, "has any religion achieved such world-affecting changes as Islam has achieved. Never has the set-foret of a new religion been so complete a master of his time and people as Muhammad was." The reasons are not far to seek. Islam equipped the Arabs with qualities unknown to them: discipline and contempt for death. "Obey God and His Prophet" is the refrain of many a verse in the Qur'an. The call for discipline was further reinforced, improved and perfected by the practice of prayers in public. Contempt for death was born of the prospects of reward in the life to come for those who fell fighting for the faith. Over and above this the Muslims were converted into a solid fraternity. Thus at one stroke the most vital bond of Arab relationship, that of tribal kinship, was replaced by a new bond, that of faith. A sort of Pax Islamica was instituted by placing every Muslim under the protection of an entire community as against the outside world. Herein lies one of the chief claims of Muhammad to originality. The most important cause of the phenomenal success of Islam was, however, his absolute inflexibility of purpose. Through long and weary years of mockery, persecution, conspiracy and exile, and even during the more trying period of power and prosperity, Muhammad never lost sight of his ideal, namely, the abolition of idolatry, the betterment of mankind and the establishment of the sublime and philosophical dogma of the oneness of God. This was due to his sincerity of purpose, the most convincing evidence of which is furnished by the rank and character of his first Caliph. The early proselytes of all other religions of which history makes mention were poor, ignorant and uneducated persons of unknown origin. The birth of modern sects has invariably been obscure, and their converts of humble rank and servile occupation. But the early followers of Muhammad were all the most wealthy and widely respected aristocrats of Arabia who could trace their lineage, in unbroken line, for more than 600 years.

Islam, the practical religion

"The practical value and consequent importance of a religion consist not so much in by whom or under what circumstances it was founded, but in what it has effected for the happiness and permanent improvement of mankind," says S. P. Scott. Let us examine the utility of Islam in this light. Islam is pre-eminently a practical religion. It offers no unattainable ideals, few theological complications and perplexities, no mystical sacraments, and no priestly hierarchy involving ordinations, consecration and "apostolic succession".

The Prophet of Islam is not a "Son" or incarnation of God, beyond the reach of people, but a mere human being, differing from other people by his prophetic mission. "Tell me who is the God of a people," Euripides used to say, "and I shall tell you what that people is". The God of Islam is of unapproachable grandeur and sublimity. While placed immeasurably above His creatures, their prayers are always offered to Him without the officious intervention of a privileged caste of priests. Islam is essentially a religion of good works and submission to the will of God. It is in its uncompromising monotheism, with its simple, enthusiastic faith in the supreme rule of a transcendent Being, that lies the chief strength of Islam as a religion. Its adherents enjoy a contentment unknown among followers of other creeds. Suicide is rare in Muslim lands.

Islam swept away human sacrifices. It softened the asperities of warfare, extended the prospect of liberty to the vanquished on the sole condition of conversion to Islam, protected the unfortunate captive from violence, and abolished mutilation of the dead. It stamped out infanticide, put a reasonable limit to unbounded polygamy, formulated an equitable law of divorce, shielded the wife from the oppression of the husband, and granted her a right to property. Islam forbade even the slightest indulgence in all intoxicants and illicit connections. The flesh of swine and the blood of
animals were prohibited for hygienic considerations. Islam prescribed ablutions five times a day — another purely sanitary regulation whose important physiological significance few people will contest. Islam declared divination and all games of chance as evil, and proclaimed the virtues of almsgiving, charity, benevolence and forgiveness. It forbad usury, limited arbitrary taxation, and declared trade and agriculture as commendable professions. It impressed upon youth the obligations of polite and courteous behaviour and filial piety. It has made education compulsory upon every male and female; the very first word of the first revelation is “Read”. No greedy organized bands of ecclesiastics throng the mosques of Islam. It has accorded to every seeker after truth the inestimable privilege of private interpretation and individual opinion — an important human right refused by Christianity until the time of Luther; and in certain countries of Europe not asserted until the seventeenth century except in secret and under the threatened shadows of the stake and scaffold. Above all it granted religious toleration to other creeds, a privilege unknown to the civilized West even today. That is why Islam led the world in civilization for 500 years. The unparalleled results brought about by Islam were implemented by the inflexible constancy, the lofty genius and the political sagacity of an Arabian shepherd, deficient in the very rudiments of learning and reared among a barbarous people. “If the object of religion is inculcation of morals, the diminution of evil, the promotion of human happiness and the expansion of human intellect; if the performance of good works will prevail that day when mankind will be summoned to its final reckoning, it is neither irreverent, nor unreasonable to admit that Muhammad was indeed an apostle of God” (S. P. Scott, Moorish Empire in Europe, Vol. I, pp. 126-7).

1 The article is mainly based on the writings of Professor Hitti, Professor Joseph Hell and Mr. S. P. Scott.

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THE DIVINE DIVAN

66

Dost thou despair?
Regard His Mercies everywhere.
Art thou depress’d?
Within His Comprehensive Peace all things have rest.
Art thou bewilder’d? art thou in amaze?
He knows the atom and He knows the starry ways.
Perhaps a weariness comes o’er thee? some frustration?
Tireless He is and giveth strength! then bow in adoration.
Thou hast done so?
There is none so hopeless but the tears of peace,
Silver-glistening, falling, crying, “Joy! joy! joy!”
Straight come welling from the heart,
Which hath tasted blessedness apart
In adoration;
Bliss from sweet reality!
Bliss from God’s Totality
In adoration:
Bliss which never need depart!
Bliss persuasive wheresoe’er thou art.
Belovéd Lord, our Hope, our Guide, O One Adored,
Our Life, our Peace, our only Wisdom, O Belovéd Lord!

67

Lord of the moments, million, million,
Floating before us as the endless ocean,
How they entice us! How we strive to grasp them,
Stay them, fill them each with merit,
Ere they slip behind us, endless as the ocean,
When they’re gone, they’re shining, fill’d with diamond merit,
When they’re gone, may they never be empty, wasted, ashen!
O Belovéd, surely Thou art Lord of the moments,
Million, million, streaming as a bright pathway to paradise.
O Belovéd, help us, grant us grace and mercy
And Thine instantaneous guidance, lest we
See behind us empty, wasted, ashen moments,
Taunting, mocking, clinging, clogging,
Barring us from Thee, Belovéd.
(Penalty the greatest that man’s mind can think!)
O Belovéd, aid us, draw us, lead us, guide us
On upon these shining moments to Thy perfect paradise.

William Bashyr Pickard.
ISLAM A HAPPY MEDIUM BETWEEN MATERIALISM AND SPIRITUALISM

THE AGE OF MATERIALISM

By SAYYID AMIN AHMAD

What Islam denounces

What Islam denounces is materialism without any thought of the soul. It does not denounce materialism as such. Man is the vicegerent of God upon earth. So he has to take interest in all the material things and contribute his mite to make this earth a better place for the human race to inhabit. But he must not forget his soul. He must not forget his end. He must not forget that his own life on this planet is only a temporary affair which is bound to come to an end, sooner or later. Life on earth is only a brief span of our life as a whole. The life beyond is life eternal, compared to which our life on this earth would occupy the same period of time as the twinkling of an eye.

The importance of our earthly life cannot however be minimized. On it depends what kind of life our eternal life is to be. We have to build our eternal life while we are here. This is the only opportunity that has been given to us and an opportunity which if lost once would not come to us again.

When we speak about the Age of Materialism, we mean materialism without any thought of the soul. Man is completely engrossed with material things and is quite oblivious of spiritual values. He even denies the existence of the soul. And yet he knows for certain that his life on this earth is bound to come to an end, one day or other. He finds himself on the horns of a dilemma, and instead of seeking the help of Divine Revelation which has come to mankind through the Prophets of God, he escapes any serious thinking by becoming an epicurean and preaching “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die”, or by deluding himself into the belief that his life on earth would never come to an end, or by not thinking of the end at all.

Is our pride in the age of materialism justified?

The Age of Materialism has dawned upon us with all its evils and we are proud of it. We are proud of our engineers and technicians, although our greatest engineer cannot match, much less surpass, the engineering skill of a humble spider. The spider can from one bank of the river build its own bridge, build it and move towards the other side at the same time. All the time this bridge is under construction it hangs by it, and the bridge, which consists of a slender thread-like substance, supports its weight, which is a thousand times heavier and does not give way. The spider completes its bridge, hangs the other end of its bridge by some object on the other side, and can cross and recross the river at ease as many times as it likes, or if he so likes he can swallow its bridge while returning to the other bank. Has the human race ever produced an engineer who can make a bridge like the spider’s? And yet the poor spider is fit only to be crushed with our slippers. Such is our pride and such is our ignorance.

Take the case of an ant. It can go upwards on a wall with a load eighty times its own weight and successfully reach the top without feeling exhausted. Has the human race ever produced a Samson who can perform this feat of endurance and strength? About the legendary Samson we have heard many stories. But I mean a real Samson.

Compared to the humblest creations of God, man is helpless and yet in his ignorance he thinks that he is the undisputed Lord of the Earth, and now with the advent of the cosmic rockets, even of the skies. And what is this much-talked of sputnik age after all? Just a small increase in our material knowledge and that is all.

We are living in a tiny part of the universe. Our solar system itself occupies a very small portion of the universe and there are millions and billions of other solar systems like ours. Take a comet, for example, which visits our solar system only at times. There are comets which appear at an interval of a thousand years and we know not where they come from and where they go. There are dead stars, whose light is still travelling and has not reached the earth up till now. And compare this vast space with the little of space that we have conquered with our cosmic rockets, and instead of feeling proud we should bend our heads with humility and bow down in reverence to God Almighty, the Creator and Preserver of the entire universe.

Islam and its emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge

Islam strikes the happiest mean between materialism and spiritualism, placing due stress upon both and enjoining upon us to keep our sense of proportion. On the one hand Islam gives the clarion call of La Rabbantiyah fi 'I-Islam (In Islam there is no renunciation of the world) and on the other it enjoins upon all its followers to keep the Akhirah (end) always in view. Islam is not opposed to the pursuit of knowledge or scientific progress. The Prophet Muhammad has said Talab al 'Ilm Faridatun 'ala kulli Muslimin wa Muslimah (pursuit of knowledge is obligatory on all Muslims, men and women). And 'Ilm includes all kinds of knowledge; for the Prophet Muhammad has again said 'Ullabu al-'Ilm wa lau bi al-Sin (Seek knowledge even though it may be found in China).

The Saracens held aloft the torch of knowledge at a time when the whole world was steeped in darkness. They unearthed the scientific treasures of the Greeks and gave them to Europe through their translations and writings. In Damascus, Baghdad, Cordova and Granada they lit light-houses of learning which benefited the whole world. It was their unquenchable thirst for knowledge which kept alive in them the spirit of adventure. They produced great explorers, travellers, navigators and astronomers, architects, thinkers and philosophers. The canon of Avicenna was considered in Europe to be an authority on medical science till the sixteenth century. The magnetic compass, which made navigation of the oceans possible, was their invention. They gave to the world Arabic numerals and the science of al-Jabr Wa al-Mugabalah (algebra). The Moors in Spain far surpassed their Christian neighbours in arts and sciences. The greatest European scholars had studied at Cordova while the Arab physicians were in demand in many European courts. Architecture was developed in Moorish cities earlier than in Christian Europe and travellers to this day are struck with wonder at the airy grace of the ruined arches of the Alhambra at Granada.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
THE GRECO-ROMAN INFLUENCES ON EARLY ISLAM

By AFZAL IQBAL

Christianity

The countries conquered by Muslims were full of Christians. Christianity stood divided into many sects or Churches. Christians in Egypt, Nubai and Abyssinia were Jacobites; Nestorians held the field in Mosul, Iraq and Persia, while North Africa, Spain and Syria adhered to the Malankante Church. There was a continuous conflict between the various sects about the fundamentals of religion. The Jacobites conferred divinity on Jesus Christ and believed that the Prophet Jesus Christ was God. According to them man and God had united in one nature. This belief was not shared by the other two sects, which propounded the theory that Jesus Christ had two different natures; one was divine and the other was human. There was agreement in these two schools up to this point but on other details there was constant friction and difference. While one agreed that the person of Jesus Christ represented the ideal fusion of the divine and human attributes the other resisted unqualified divinity being bestowed on the Prophet and suggested that while a part of his person was divine another part was human. They believed, nevertheless, that the divine and human attributes had come together in one person. The Jacobites suggested that the two natures had mixed like water and wine and had become one and the same thing. The Nestorians, however, believed that this unity was like mixing water and oil, suggesting thereby that while the two elements had been mixed each continued to maintain its individual character. The Malankantes, however, believed that the unity of the divine and human attributes represented in the person of Jesus Christ was like the fusion of fire in a heated piece of iron.

We have briefly mentioned these differences in order to establish that Christianity at the rise of Islam was by no means a united force and that it was split into numerous sects and churches which were engaged in internecine ideological warfare. The Qur'an refers to the beliefs of these sects and points out how far removed they were from the teachings of the Prophet Jesus, whom they were seeking to invest with divine authority:

"They do blaspheme who say: 'God is the son Of Mary.' But said Christ: 'O Children of Israel! Worship God, my Lord And your Lord.'"

"They do blaspheme who say: God is one of three In a Trinity: for there is No god except One God. If they desist not From their word (of blasphemy), Verily a grievous penalty Will befall the blasphemers Among them."1

These beliefs of the Christians are eloquently repudiated on behalf of Jesus Christ in the Qur'an:

"And behold! God will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, 'Worship me and my mother As gods in derogation of God'? He will say: 'Glory to Thee! Never would I say What I had no right (To say) ..."2

"Never said I to them Aught except what Thou Didst command me. To say, to wit, 'Worship God, my Lord and your Lord'; And I was a witness Over them whilst I dwelt Amongst them; when Thou Didst take me up Thou wast the Watcher Over them, and Thou Art a witness to all things."3

The ideological conflicts ranging among different sects of Christianity were not confined to the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. A number of other problems were exercising their mind. Will Christ appear on the Day of Resurrection? Will the body or the soul or both account for their actions on the Doomsday? Is man free or is the freedom of his will predetermined by God? A number of allied problems were being discussed and each sect had a different answer. For these answers Christianity had to fall back on Greek philosophy in order to defend itself against the Pagans in the first instance and then the Muslims. Alexandria provided the rendezvous for the ideas of the East and the West. There met a motley crowd of thinkers, poets and philosophers. On the banks of the Nile were born new ideas which were exchanged as freely as the merchandise which came from different parts of the world to Alexandria. Here the Greek thought mingled freely with Oriental beliefs, and here were founded religious sects which were influenced by the old ideology but were inspired by the new. The Greek spirit, precise, critical and sharp-witted, came face to face with the Eastern mind. The Greek thought ignited a new spark, the effects of which soon became visible in the form of Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism, etc. The East was East and the West was West, but the twain did meet admirably in this case. The Eastern mind with its inclinations towards belief in the unseen and the possibility of miracles, and the Greek mind with its keen critical sense of analysis and deep study, came together for the first time. The passionate sensitive feelings of the East mixed with the critical logic of the West, and the result was the spread of a new kind of thought which was evolved in Alexandria during the few centuries after

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1 Nestorius, a native of Syria, was Patriarch of Constantinople from 428 to 431 C.E. He died in 450 C.E. Shahrastani is obviously wrong when he suggests that he lived in the days of al-Ma'mun.
3 The Qur'an, 5:75.
4 The Qur'an, 5:76.
5 The Qur'an, 5:119, 120.
Jesus Christ. The evolution took the shape of mystics or Sufis and idealists alongside a school of scientific and logical research. The era was distinguished by the inclination of religion towards philosophy and the inclination of philosophy towards religion.

Neoplatonism

This school of thought appeared in Alexandria in the early centuries after Jesus Christ. It had a great influence on Muslim thought, particularly that represented by the doctors of logic (Kalaam), the Sufis and the Mu'tazilites. The school grew up mainly among the Greeks of Alexandria from the third century onwards. It borrowed something from all the schools of thought preceding it: “First, it stands in the line of post-Aristotelian system; it is, in fact, as a subjective philosophy, their logical completion. Secondly, it is founded on scepticism; for it has neither interest in, nor reliance upon, empirical knowledge. Thirdly, it can justly claim the honour of Plato's name, since it expressly goes back to him for its metaphysics, directly combating those of Zeno at the Stoa. Yet even in this point it learned something from the Stoic; the Neoplatonic conception of the action of the demiurge on the world and of the essence and origin of matter can only be explained by reference to the dynamic pantheism of the Stoa. Fourthly, the study of Aristotle also exercised an influence on Neoplatonism. This appears not only in its philosophical method, but also — though less prominently — in its metaphysics. And, fifthly, Neoplatonism adopted the ethics of Stoicism; although it was found necessary to supplement them by a still higher conception of the functions of the spirit. Philosophy as represented by Neoplatonism, its sole interest being a religious interest, and its highest object the supra-rational, must be a philosophy of revelation.”

The school was founded by Ammonius Saccas (175-250 C.E.). He started his eventful career as a humble porter and rose to be a teacher of philosophy in Alexandria. Born a Christian, he changed his religion and adopted the ancient paganism of the Greeks. He was the first man in Alexandria who made an effort at adapting the teachings of Plato to those of Aristotle. He is not known to have written any book. In fact, the information about his life is very scant and all that we know is that he died in 250 C.E. The real credit of organizing the school goes to his disciple, Plotinus (205-270 C.E.). Born in Egypt, Plotinus stayed in Alexandria and accompanied his teacher Ammonius for about eleven years. He joined a military expedition and went to Persia because he was keen on learning the philosophy of the Persians and the Indians. He also travelled to Rome in 245 C.E. He died in 270 C.E. The Arabs did not know much about Plotinus, and his school of thought is generally referred to as the Alexandrian school. Al-Shahristani calls him the “Greek master.” His work called Enneads is the primary and classical document of Neoplatonism. His school was divided into many branches; one was in Alexandria, another in Syria, and a third one in Athens.

The doctrine of Plotinus is mysticism. The theoretical part of his doctrine deals with the origin of the human soul and shows how it has departed from its first estate. The practical part lays down the way by which the soul may again return to the Eternal. His system embraces three heads: the Primeval Being, the Ideal World, and the Soul, the phenomenal world. The Primeval Being is One, Infinite, and Unlimited. It is the only real existence and the source of all life. It is Good and all things ought to flow back to it. It has no attributes of any kind. It is above existence, above goodness. Directly or indirectly everything is brought forth by it. Mind cannot grasp it and thought cannot reach it. It has no limits, it is eternal, it does not depend on any other source for its existence, it has created everything but it does not dwell in what it has created. Nothing escapes its will. It is the cause of causes and is caused by nothing. It is in every place and there is no special place for it. It is at once being and thought, idea, and ideal world.

How has this world come into existence? How has this ever-changing universe originated from a source which is constant and does not change? This world was naught when it was created. How is it possible that this act of creation came about without a corresponding change in the Creator? How do we reconcile a changing world with a constant Creator? Did the Creator think and deliberate in the act of His creation? Why did He create evil? What is the nature of the soul? Where did it dwell before it found an abode in the body? Where will it go after it leaves the body? These and many other questions engaged the thought of Plotinus. It is not our intention to discuss it in any detail. We have merely mentioned these questions in order to give an idea to the reader of the nature of the problems which were engaged in the attention of philosophers in the era we are discussing; for this will enable the student to seriously attempt to trace the influence of these schools on the thought of Islam. In the chief cities of the Roman Empire Neoplatonic schools flourished till the beginning of the 5th century. They were indeed the training schools of Christian theologians. After the beginning of the 5th century, however, the fanaticism of the Christian Church could no longer endure the presence of these schools. At Alexandria, Hypatia was murdered, and that was the death of philosophy in Alexandria in the 5th century. In Athens the school was closed by Justinian in 529 C.E. The persecution of philosophy under the auspices of the Christian Church and the Christian kings compelled the philosophers to find refuge elsewhere. Some of them escaped to Persia, where they were welcomed by Anushirwan, who gave them places of honour in his court. Some of them embraced Christianity and wrote about Neoplatonism in a Christian colour. Dionysius was one of them. He claimed to be a student of St. Paul. This was a new conquest in the church theology which began to bear fruit in Christian mysticism. This state of diffusion occurred in the 6th century. After the school was banished officially by the Christian Church, Neoplatonism surreptitiously entered Islam through the Sufis and the Mu'tazilites. One can see the visible influence of the thought on the group of the devoted Companions called the Ikhwan al-Safa whose philosophy of life can be traced to Plotinus.

Syriaic literature

Syriaic was the literary medium of early Christianity. It had its origin in Edessa, the ancient name of Urfa under the Crusaders. In Palestine and Western Syria the vernacular Semitic speech had been replaced by Greek under the Roman dominion and it was not till 705 that Greek was replaced by Arabic as the official language in Damascus by the Umayyad Caliph Walid I. The Syriac language, which is one of the Aramaic languages of Mesopotamia, was the literary language used by all Christians in the area of Antioch and Persia. It had important centres in Mesopotamian cities like Nisibis, Amid, Mardin, Taghrith, etc. Syriac was also the literary language of paganism, with its centre in Harran (south of Edessa). Harran remained a centre of pagan religion and Greek was used there until after Islam. It was here that mathematics, astronomy and Platonist philosophy were taught. The Syriacs, who produced outstanding authors and translators, were called Sabians in the days of al-Ma'mun. The Syriac literature

6 The Encyclopaedia Britannica.
dates from the third century and lasts until the 14th. It comprises homilies in prose and verse, hymns, exposition and commentary, liturgy, apocryphal legends, historical romance, hagiography and martyrlogy, monastic history, biography, general history, philosophy, science and ecclesiastical laws. The most important contribution, however, does not lie in the original works produced in Syriac but in the translations undertaken in the period. Beginning with the earliest versions of the Bible dating back to the 2nd century the series of translations from Greek originals covered a rich field of theology, philosophy, history, science and legends. In a fair number of cases the Syriac version has preserved for us the substance of a lost original text. The Syriac translations became the parent of later Arabic versions of Greek originals. The Syriac writers handed on the torch of Greek learning to the Arabs who in turn transmitted it to medieval Europe. The early Syriac translations were very literal and often did violence to the idiom of their own language. This defect is, however, a merit, inasmuch as it helps in a fair reconstruction of the original text. Later translators, however, exercised greater freedom and freely undertook translation not only from Greek but also from Pahlavi. Of translations from Pahlavi we have such examples as The History of Alexander, which was translated from a Greek original from Pahlavi in the 7th century, the Kalilah wa Dimnah, translated in the 6th century, and the book Sindbad, translated in the 8th century.

It is an established fact that Edessa was the earliest cradle of Syriac literature. Of the most famous Syriac men of literature known to Muslims was Bardaisan (Arabic, Ibn Da'san), who died in the year 237 C.E. He founded a religious school which preached a theory of dualism which was mixed with Christianity more or less on the pattern of Mani. He repudiated the idea of resurrection of bodies and held that the body of Jesus Christ was not a real body. According to this school the body of Jesus Christ was merely a picture of the prophet sent by God. The followers of this teacher were called Al-Daisanah. Bardaisan, the last of the Gnostics, was in a sense the father of the Syriac literature and specially of Syriac poetry. The book of the laws of the country, embodying his teachings, was re-edited in 1907 by F. Nau. Another famous personality was Sergius of Ras'ain. He was easily one of the best Greek scholars and the ablest translator produced by Syria. He died in 536 C.E. He is known of his life. He seems to have lived as a priest and physician at Ras'ain in Mesopotamia most of his life. Among the works which he translated in Syriac are treatises of Aristotle, Porphyry (c. 304 C.E.), Galen, Dionysius and possibly Plutarch. His own original works are less important. There are scores of other translators, and the curious reader will do well to refer to the brief article on Syriac literature in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

The land of the Syriacs was conquered by Muslims in the 7th century. This was the beginning of the decline of the Syriac literature which, however, managed to keep itself alive for another seven centuries. With Arabic becoming the official language, Syriac naturally received a setback, but it left a permanent influence on Islam inasmuch as Greek philosophy found its way in Islam through the original texts translated by Syriacs. We come across outstanding Syriac scholars during the Umayyad period. Famous among these is Ya'qub al-Ruhawi (640-708 C.E.). He was responsible for translating a large number of Greek books on theology. Muslims in this period were averse to learning philosophy and it is interesting to note that Ya'qub had given a religious verdict that it was lawful for Christians to teach Muslim boys. The implication of this verdict is twofold. First, that the Muslims were inclined towards Greek culture spread throughout Syria, Iraq and Egypt, where Alexandria was a notable centre of this intellectual movement. The Syriacs were leaders of this movement and were responsible for running many schools which during the Muslim days acted as important centres of education. It was not during the Muslim régime alone that Muslims came into contact with Syriac influences; they had in fact received this impact long before it. Al-Qifiti in his book Akhbar al-Hukama’ tells us that al-Harith Ibn Kalabah, who was from the tribe of Thanif, went to Persia to learn medicine during the Jahiliyyah period. He practised in Persia and returned to pursue the profession in Arabia. He became a famous doctor. So great was the confidence inspired by him that the Prophet Muhammad used to recommend him to people suffering from complicated diseases. His female slave Sumayyah was the mother of Ziyad Ibn Abihi, the famous Arab General. In his book the Tabaqat al-Arba’iba, Ibn Abi Usaibah’ tells us that Harith, the maternal cousin of the Prophet, had travelled far and wide, like his father, and met learned people in Mecca and other places. He lived with priests and holy men and learnt a lot of ancient wisdom. He pursued the science of philosophy and learnt medicine from his father. He conspired with Abu Sufyan against the Prophet Muhammad in the hope that his wisdom and knowledge would easily replace and resist the revelation of the Prophet!

This contact with the Syriacs which existed before Islam continued with a greater vigour after Islam. We are told that Khalid Ibn Yazid Ibn Mu’awiyyah was one of the best-versed men in science among the Quraish. He was known for his knowledge of chemistry and medicine which he practised with skill. His letters bore testimony to his knowledge. His teacher, we are told, was a Syriac called Marianus al-Rumi. One of the essays written by Khalid Ibn Yazid deals with his teacher and states: “He acquired knowledge from him.” Ibn al-Nadim also endorses this account and tells us that Khalid Ibn Yazid was a versatile scholar. He was an impressive public speaker, a poet of some consequence, a man with prudent and eloquent words. He was the first among the Arabs to be known as an author of many books on medicine, astronomy and chemistry. Ibn al-Nadim talks of having seen some of his books like Hararat, Kitab al-Sahifiyat al-Kabir and Kitab al-Sahifiyat al-Saghir; and a book which contains his advice to his son about the profession. Khalid died in 666 C.E.

It is clear by now that the Persian and the Greek cultures were slowly but surely influencing the growth of Muslim culture. The ideas were spreading irrespective of the religion of the people who imparted them or received them. There existed in this period a constant conflict between Muslims and Christians where their religion was concerned. An endless argument went on about their beliefs. These arguments, far from stopping the influence of the Christian culture and all that was associated with it, helped in disseminating it. It would be wholly wrong to suggest that the cultural influences came suddenly during the Abbaside régime, which of course did a lot to further the ends of culture. On the contrary, the cultural contact which already

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7 Ibn Khalilikan, Vol. 1, p. 211.
8 Al-Fihrist, p. 354.
existed during the Jahiliyyah period became strong with the rise of Islam. No nation can live in isolation, and Islam was certainly not averse to receiving new ideas, which in course of time influenced Islam much in the same way as Islam influenced the different cultures with which it came into contact. Muslim culture is certainly not the exclusive province of the Arabs, for no culture which remains static is worth its salt. The influence of Islam is understandable only because of its elasticity, its adaptability, its capacity to absorb all that was good around it. This process is never one-sided, for he who gives also receives.

Greco-Roman literature

Greece had a unique literature. They possessed some rudiments of literature as far back as the second millennium B.C. The ballads had developed into a school of epic poetry by 950 B.C. when Homer composed the Iliad and Odyssey. The Greek literature was indeed rich with mythological stories, epic poetry, lyrics, elegiac poetry, tragedy, comedy, historical prose, philosophical prose, literary prose, scientific prose, classicism and aticism, and last but certainly not the least oratory and the allied arts. Greece produced philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle and Plato; she produced a historian like Herodotus, and Thucydides, a man who was considered the master of contemporary history and the father of historical criticism.

With the decline of Greek power, Greece became a Roman province. Rome profited by the wealth of learning produced by Greece, which ceased to be as fertile as it was before the Roman domination. However, in the days of decline she produced men like Plutarch and Diodorus. The decline of political power notwithstanding, the philosophy of Greece exercised a notable influence on the thought of Islam. But can the same be said about the influence of literature?

“...In respect to the wealth and the long duration of its Greek intellectual life, Egypt stands supreme. It covers a period of nearly 1,000 years from the foundation of Alexandria down to the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs (643 C.E.). The soil of Egypt proved itself especially productive of Greek literature under the Cross in the same way as the soil of North Africa was productive of Latin literature. Syria and Palestine came under the influence of Greek civilization at a later date than Egypt. In these, Greek literature and culture attained their highest development between the third and fourth centuries C.E. Antioch rose to great influence, owing at first to its pagan school of rhetoric and later to its Christian school of exegesis. Gaza was renowned for its school of rhetoric, Berytus for its academy of law. It is no mere accident that sacred poetry, aesthetically the most valuable class of Byzantine literature, was born in Syria and Palestine.”

While the Oriental influence on Greek literature was marked, the Greek influence on Arabic poetry was conspicuous by its relative weakness. The poetry during the Umayyad period followed the general pattern of Arabic poetry during the Jahiliyyah period. There was the same rigidity of rules — the rhymes and rhythms hardly ever changed, and this was more or less true of what are called poetical subjects. The Arabs had little epic and dramatic poetry in the Jahiliyyah period, and this remained true in the subsequent eras, including that of the Abbasside Caliphs. We hardly come across a poet of Greek or Roman descent who learnt Arabic and wrote anything worthwhile. Persia offers a vivid contrast in this respect. People from Persia exercised a great influence on the growth of Arabic literature because of their readiness to learn the new language in which they wrote as dexterously as any Arab. The contemporary Arab historians accepted the Persian method of writing history in preference to the Greek. In fact till the Abbasside régime the knowledge of Greek literature was so feeble among the Arabs that its influence was bound to be negligible. To them Greek history began with Alexander. All that happened before him was shrouded in the mist of antiquity, which was a vague and romantic chronology of myths and stories of gods. It is a commonplace that Homer was the Bible of the Greeks, and yet the Arabs knew but little of the heroic age. They knew less about Hesiod and Homer, the famous authors of the Greek theogony, although a few confused passages from their works are quoted on occasions by Shahrestani and Baha al-Deen al-Amibi in his al-Kashkul. The Arabs obviously knew far more of Persian literature than they knew of the Greek or Roman literatures. The reason, we feel, is to be sought in the rigidly conservative approach of the Arab to his poetry. The rules governing the composition of poetry were set and fixed, and no freedom could be allowed to experimentalists. The principles of poetry had to be sacredly followed, so that not much room was left for any experimental originality either in the form or the contents. An attempt at relaxing the bonds of rhyme, to add a new rhythm, to create new precedents in selecting fresh subjects for poetry — all this would be scorned at as an innovation and a violation of the accepted principles of poetry. The force of the tradition is realized when we read in Ibn Qutaiba’s Tabaqat al-Shu’ara that no contemporary poet was allowed to depart from the way of the old masters in any aspect of poetry. No poet was allowed, for example, to stand by a dwelling and address it in his poetry. The innovation could not be suffered because the old masters addressed odes only to ruined houses! Similarly, no poet could travel on a mule’s back — in his poetry — because the masters rode on camels only! The poets travelled on mules but they wrote about camels carrying them to their lady love. This conservatism acted as a barrier which prevented the Arabs from acquiring fresh forms like the epic and drama. The Persians were able to influence Arabic literature because they moved themselves among the Arabs and wrote in their language. The Greeks and the Romans did not form part of the Arab life and they did not. Therefore, succeeded in influencing Arabic literature in the same measure as the Persians. The Persian Empire virtually merged in the Arab Empire and the Arabs borrowed freely from the superior social life of Persia. The social life of the Greeks, however, remained a distant spectacle and could not become part of the life of the Arabs. Besides, the paganism of Greece with a multitude of gods could not possibly attract the rising tradition of Islam. Literature is essentially a mirror to contemporary life and since the Arabs did not imbibe much of it from Greece, their literature does not reflect any substantial influences of Greek literature.

Arabic literature was not, however, wholly immune from the influences of Greece, although the impact was certainly not as spectacular and all-pervading as that of Persia. We will briefly refer to three aspects of this influence:

(i) Some Greek words found their way in Arabic. To mention a few of them:

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Qistas</td>
<td>scales</td>
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<td>Sakanjal</td>
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<td>Bitaga</td>
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<td>Qintar</td>
<td>hundredweight</td>
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<td>Batriq</td>
<td>patriarch</td>
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9 Tabaqat al-Shu’ara, p. 16.
(3) He who cannot control himself cannot control anything.

To Aristotle are attributed the sayings:

(1) There is no more useful for the people than a good ruler and there is nothing more harmful than a bad ruler. The ruler is to the people as the soul is to the body.

(2) He who follows the inner weaknesses of his friends never succeeds.

To Socrates are attributed the sayings:

(1) The good self is satisfied with a little good, the evil one is not moved even by a lot of good for its seed is bad.

(2) Mind is a gift but knowledge is earned.

We have an interesting anecdote attributed to Homer. Someone came to him and made a request for a satire against him. Homer refused. The man got angry and told Homer that he had to oblige him. He would go to the Greek Tribunes and tell them that Homer was not capable of writing a satire. Homer came out with an extempore poem. “We have heard,” he said, “that in the island of Cyprus a dog tried to fight a lion but the lion refused to engage him because it was below his dignity to do so. The dog got angry and told the lion, ‘I shall go and tell the other lions in the jungle that you are afraid to fight a dog!’”

These proverbs and parables from Greek literature are only one link between the Greek and Arabic literature. In the course of time we see special compilations of these proverbs, which were very large in number. The books of literature abound in them.

A TALE FROM RUMI’S MATHNAWI

THE PALADIN OF QAZWIN

Now hear a pleasant tale — and mark the scene —
About the way and custom of Qazwin,
Where barbers ply their needles to tattoo
Folk’s arms and shoulders with designs in blue.

Once a Qazwini spoke the barber fair:
“Tattoo me, please, make something choice and rare.”
“What figure shall I paint, O paladin?”
“A furious lion: punch him boldly in.
Leo is my ascendant: come, tattoo
A lion, and let him have his fill of blue.”
“On what place must I prick the dept design?”
“Trace it upon my shoulder, line by line,”
He took the needle and dabbed and dabbed it in.
Feeling his shoulder smart, the paladin
Began to yell — “You have killed me quite, I vow:
What is this pattern you are doing now?”
“Why, sir, a lion, as you ordered me.”
“Commencing with what limb?” he demanded he.
“His tail,” was the reply, “O best of men,
Leave out the tail, I beg, and start again.
The lion’s tail and rump chokes me to death;
It’s stuck fast in my windpipe, stops my breath.
O lion-maker, let him have no tail,
Or under these sharp stabs my heart will fail.”

Another spot the barber ’gan tattoo.
Without fear, without favour, without rue.
“Oh, oh! which part of him is this? Oh dear!”
“This,” said the barber, “is your lion’s ear.”
“Pray, doctor, not an ear of any sort!
Leave out his ears and cut the business short.”
The artist quickly set to work once more:
Again our hero raised a doeful roar.
“On which third limb now is the needle employed?”
“His belly, my dear sir,” “Hold, hold!” he cried.
“Perish the lion’s belly, root and branch!
How should the glutted lion want a paunch?”
Long stood the barber there in mute dismay,
His finger ’twixt his teeth; then flung away
The needle, crying, “All the wide world o’er
Has such a thing e’er happened heretofore?
Why, God Himself did never make, I tell ye,
A lion without tail or ears or belly.”

Moral

Brother, endure the pain with patience fresh,
To gain deliverance from the miscreant flesh.
Whoso is freed from selfhood’s vain conceit,
Sky, sun and moon fall down to worship at his feet.

(Translation: Dr. R. A. Nicholson, Tales of Mystic Meaning.)
THE ZIONISTS AND THE BIBLE

A Criticism of the Claim that the Establishment of an Independent Jewish State in Palestine is prophesied in the Holy Scriptures

The land of Palestine was not originally promised exclusively to the Jews

By PROFESSOR A. GUILLAUME

The three points of importance to be examined

I wish to make it plain at the outset that my remarks are directed to one aspect of Zionist claims — the claim to fulfill scripture by the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine — and must not be interpreted in any other way or be taken to prejudice the claim of the Jews to be allowed to make a home in Palestine.

To a superficial reader it well might seem that a Divine promise to give a land to a particular people made some four thousand years ago and often repeated constituted that people owned that land by Divine right. Now if this is the Jewish title to Palestine it must be carefully scrutinized. Accordingly I propose to examine a few texts which are familiar to all practising Jews, and which have profoundly influenced some Christian bodies, particularly in America.

The points which are of importance are: (1) To whom were the promises made? (2) What was the extent of the land which was promised? (3) Was the promise irrevocable or was it subject to any conditions?

(1) To whom were the promises made?

The first explicit promise of Palestine to the descendants of Abraham was at Sichem (now Nablus) in Genesis xii, 7: "Unto thy seed will I give this land". Chapter xiii, 15, when Abraham is standing on a hill near Bethel, has the words: "All the land which thou seest to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever." Chapter xv, 18, is more explicit: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." The promises are repeated to Isaac; and to Jacob in xxviii, 12: "The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." When Abraham made a covenant with God through circumcision (xvii, 8) all the land of Canaan was promised to him as "an everlasting possession". Other passages might be quoted, but these are representative, and others add nothing that is relevant here.

Now it is generally supposed that these promises were made to the Jews, and to the Jews alone. But that is not what the Bible says. The words "unto thy seed" inevitably include Arabs, both Muslims and Christians, who can claim descent from Abraham through his son Ishmael. (Here we are not concerned with the Muslim tradition that Abraham was once at Mecca and left Ishmael there.) Ishmael was the reputed father of a large number of Arab tribes, and Genesis records that Abraham became the father of many North Arabian tribes through his concubine Keturah. It cannot be argued that the words of Genesis xxi, 10-12, necessarily cancel the promises made to Abraham's seed as a whole: "(Sarah) said to Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman: for in all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice: for in Isaac shall seed be called unto thee. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." It is true that henceforth among the descendants of Isaac "the seed of Abraham" was taken to mean the Israelites; but from the beginning it was not so, and the descendants of Ishmael had every right to call and consider themselves of the seed of Abraham.

Moreover, when the covenant of circumcision was made with Abraham (Genesis xvii) and the land of Canaan was promised as "an everlasting possession", it was Ishmael who was circumcised: Isaac had not then been born.

From this brief study of the Divine promise to the descendants of Abraham we see that the first promise necessarily included all the descendants of Ishmael; but that afterwards in the time of Isaac and Jacob the promise was narrowed to their descendants, though not in such a way as to exclude explicitly their Arab brethren; and it is well known that many Arabs accompanied Moses and Joshua into Palestine when the country was partially occupied; and not a little of Moses's success was due to the kindness and hos-
pitality of Jethro the Midianite, who was of course an Arab and Moses's father-in-law.

(2) Extent of the Promised Land

The second question, as to what was the extent of "The Promised Land", is a little difficult to determine. The passages quoted under (1) begin with a vague reference to "this land" from the starting point of Sichem (Nablus), and go on to include all the area from "the river of Egypt" to the Euphrates; the third passage speaks of Abraham's descendants spreading out in all four directions. Here, again, it is important to note that the promise of dominion from the Nile to the Euphrates was made before the birth of Ishmael and before the birth of Isaac, so that this territory was not to be necessarily and exclusively Israelite; and save for the short period when Solomon's authority was recognized in this area (1 Kings iv, 21) it has always been in the possession of the Arabs.

Looking again at Genesis xiii, 15, it is clear that Transjordan was included in the promise of Abraham, because it would be plainly visible from the hill at Bethel; but this promise again predates the birth of Ishmael and Isaac, and so cannot be held to constitute an exclusively Israelite claim to the territory on the other side of the Jordan.

However, in the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses told the people that God had commanded them to go in and occupy the country from the Mediterranean in the west to the Euphrates in the east, and from the Negeb in the south to the Lebanon in the north. These instructions the Israelites did not, or could not, carry out. They could not occupy the coast land which the Philistines held, and they never possessed the ports or the hinterland of Phoenicia. Some centuries later in the reign of David they did gain possession of Damascus, and David entered into a treaty of friendship with Hiram, King of Tyre; so that when Solomon held a great service of dedication when the temple building was completed deputies came from as far north as the region of Hamath and from the south as far as the modern al-Arish. But before Solomon's reign had ended much of David's empire had returned to its former possessors. Everyone is aware that the process of attrition went on until the kingdom of Judaea was confined to a few hundred square miles of land round Jerusalem, and even this was lost to the Babylonians in 597 B.C.

(3) Was the promise irrevocable?

It will have been observed that two of the passages quoted under (1) use the words "ever" and "everlasting" of what is to be a future Israelite occupation of Palestine. The same word stands for both the English renderings in the Hebrew original; and "everlasting" is not the proper meaning. The word (olam) means "a long time", "antiquity", "futurity", and we read of "days of old", "waste places of old", "gates of old", and similar expressions, all of which employ this word rendered above "ever", or "everlasting". Again, a psalmist says: "I will sing for ever," an expression which the most literal interpreter of Holy Scripture can hardly suppose to be the literal meaning.

The adduced evidence shows that Palestine was not promised to the Jews exclusively

Thus, summing up the evidence so far adduced, one is forced to the conclusion that the land of Palestine was not originally promised to the Jews exclusively, and that the first promise was indefinite ("this land") and was subsequently enlarged to include Transjordan, Syria, the Lebanon, and the nomad's land as far as the Euphrates. Lastly we see that there never was an unconditional promise of an everlasting possession; though a long and indefinite period was intended.

We are now led to a stage of history and prophecy which bear more directly on current misunderstandings of Hebrew prediction. Had we no prophetic messages to guide us it would be apparent that these promises of possession of the land of Canaan were not unconditional; the covenant relations between Israel and God demanded loyalty from the people, and individual and corporate loyalty from the people to fail in these respects a terrible doom awaited them. The following words spoken by Moses in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy apply in parts so easily to the sufferings of Jewry in the past few years that many have seen in them a prophecy of our own times: "It shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee and shall overtake thee... and the Lord shall scatter you among the peoples, from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart and failing of eyes, and pining of soul; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee..."

Here it is clear that the Divine promises to the patriarchs have been annulled by the national apostasy; and when the Assyrian captivity removed the population of Samaria, and the Babylonian captivity the people of Judah, the prophets saw in the disasters a vindication of the Divine justice on a disobedient and gainsaying people.

But they taught their people that a remnant would return, and would restore the temple and the religious life of the community; and they looked forward to a time when the earth would be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. It is often forgotten that these men were inspired poets who mingled very practical matters like the Return from the Babylonian Exile with sublime pictures of the desert blossoming as the rose, the lion lying down with the lamb, men bearing their swords into pruning hooks, and forsaking and forswearing war for ever. They also prophesied of the setting up of the kingdom of David.

A distortion of the Old Testament prophecies

Unhappily, the practical was fulfilled and the ideal remained an ideal. Owing to the fact that the things that religious men yearn for were not realized when the Jews returned to Palestine there has been a tendency in the past to interpret not only the eschatological passages in the prophets but also the practical and political prophecies, of some time in the future; and as all prophecies in the Old Testament necessarily and inevitably centre around the Jewish people and their relation to God, the Golden Age is inseparable from the Holy City inhabited by holy Israelites. It would seem to be the hope of some that if the Jews could be returned to Palestine and form a State the Golden Age would, in some mysterious way, appear on earth.

But such views are a distortion of the Old Testament prophecies which predicted a return from Babylon and from all the lands whither the Jews had been exiled. And these prophecies were fulfilled. The Jews did return to Judea, they did rebuild the individual and corporate righteousness of the temple; and after fluctuating fortunes they did secure a brief period of political independence and expansion under the Maccabees. Thus the prophecies of the Return have been fulfilled, and they cannot be fulfilled again. Within the
canonical literature of the Old Testament there is no prophecy of a second return after the return from the Babylonian Exile; because (a) after the Exile all the Jews who wished to do so had returned to the Holy Land, though a great many more preferred to remain where they were and formed the Diaspora which afterwards became the backbone of the Christian Church; and (b) the last of the prophets died centuries before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

It would be possible to criticize the claim that Scripture prophesies Jewish supremacy in Palestine from the point of view of the Higher Criticism of the Old Testament; but this has been intentionally ignored; and the Bible has been left to speak for itself.

Again, it would be possible to use the New Testament argument that the Church is now the Israel of God; but this seems inadvisable. This short study is in no sense a polemic; but a brief examination of what the Old Testament says on matters in which its authority has been evoked.

**KING AL-MU'TAMID OF SEVILLE (1069-1091)**

Al-Andalus was divided and politically weak. On the ruins of Cordova's Caliphate, which lasted from 1031 to 1070 C.E., arose seven independent kingdoms, some of them tributaries to Castile. But during this era of disintegration and corruption, poetry flourished as never before. Christians were busy with military training, and in building large and substantial cathedrals; they devoted no time to poetry or even to pleasure.

The first Spanish epic poem appeared in the twelfth century C.E., when Arabic poetry was already ancient in al-Andalus — a great contrast to the Muslim Ta'ifah kingdoms, where the political crisis brought an atmosphere of carelessness and pleasure. As a poet said, “Drink and rejoice in the gardens; amuse yourself, because life is fleeting.”

The most important king of that period was al-Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbad of Seville. Sensual and sentimental, cruel and energetic, he was a politician and poet at the same time. Nothing could be compared to his court. He appointed other poets as viziers, namely, Ibn al-Qootiyya and Abu 'l-Walid al-Himyari, who composed an anthology entitled Kitab al-Bad' and special audiences were given to poets, who came from every corner of Spain, Africa and Arabia, such as Ibn Khakh and the adventurer Ibn 'Ammar, who dedicated a wonderful panegyric to the king.

But the most representative personage of that time was Ibn 'Abbad's son, al-Mu'tamid, the chivalrous and unhappy king-poet who made Seville a paradise for poetry and splendour. He was the personification of poet in his day, because he composed exquisite poems, lived as a poet, and protected all poets of the Muslim West. His life was a real novel. The Spanish Arabist Garcia Gomez synthesizes his biography in these words: “Marvellous life that of al-Mu'tamid! When he was a young prince and surrounded by mild pleasures, accompanied by his passionate friend Ibn 'Ammar, he governed the Portuguese kingdom of Santa Maria Algarve, annexed to the kingdom of Seville in 1052 C.E. When he ascended his father's throne, he spread lights along the Guadalquivir (Great River) and filled the white palaces hidden amongst the olive trees at al-Kharaf with music. He married a slave — Rumaykiyya — who succeeded in completing a verse for him while she was washing on the river bank near the ‘Silver Prairie’. In order to satisfy her whims for brick-building, he filled the pools of his palace with camphor and amber. Captain of his bodyguard was a witty bandit, 'Grey Hawk'. Al-Mu'tamid conquered cities, mourned his dead children, and killed his best friend, who betrayed him, with a golden axe. To liberate his kingdom from Alphonso VI, he asked help of the Almoravid Yusuf (d. 1106 C.E.), and defeated the Christian army at Zallala (1086 C.E.), a battle which averted the total ruin of Muslim power for nearly 400 years. But Yusuf betrayed him, and al-Mu'tamid, the king-poet, a new David vanquished by an African Goliath, was sent to far-away Agmat near the Atlas Mountains. Here among palm-trees and mud huts he languished up to the time of his death, often bringing to remembrance his palaces and olive trees at Seville. His whole life was depicted in poems.”

Al-Mu'tamid's poems, in fact, reflect the happy hours of his youth, his conquests, his military triumphs, his generous nature, his loves. While at Agmat he composed the most sympathetic and tragic verses of Arabic literature. “My chain, do you not know that I submitted to you? Why, then, are you not moved to pity and to mercy? My blood was your drink and my flesh your food. Do not harass my bonds.”

Such a generous kind and extraordinary poet had a literary court where many important poets were protected, such as Ibn Zaydun of Cordova, the place of his youth, and where his love with Wallada, daughter of the Caliph al-Mustakfi, became famous. The generosity of al-Mu'tamid attracted many poets from abroad — Ibn Hamdis from Syracuse, Ibn al-Mih, Ibn al-Mississi, 'Abd al-Khalil Ibn Wahboon, and among them Ibn al-Labbana, faithful friend who did not abandon his protector in the bitter hours, and who sang “The Ruin of the Sevillian Lords” in stirring verses.

Al-Mu'tamid died at Agmat, composing verses up to the last moment of his life. Death came to him while he was writing his own epitaph:

“Let the clouds soften with perennial mourning
Your gentle earth, oh, tomb of exile,
Which covereth the remains of King Ibn 'Abbad.”

1. An Arabic word meaning "petty".
2. A Spanish distorted form of the Arabic word Wadi al-Kabir (the Great Valley).
LAND REFORMS IN PAKISTAN: A New Social Pattern is Emerging in the Muslim World

Problems

The basic agricultural problems of Pakistan are great. Agricultural productivity in terms of labour engaged in it as well as in units of land is exceedingly low. This results, among other things, in the low levels of income of the rural masses and in inadequate nourishment of the people generally. It has, therefore, been the endeavour of the new regime to improve this situation. The Land Reforms now introduced in the country is the single major step taken in this direction. Agricultural production has to expand not only to keep pace with the rapid increase in population (which according to recent estimates is growing at the rate of 1.4 per cent per annum) but also to improve the present standard of living. Greater food production is needed to improve the diet, and larger surpluses of cash crops are needed for export to earn more foreign exchange so urgently required for the development of the country. Any lack of assured supplies of food to the masses and of cash crops to the export market will create difficulties in fulfilling the programme for industrial development and for the expansion of education, health and other nation-building services.

Land tenure system

One of the most important of the major causes which have hampered agricultural development in Pakistan was the exploitation by the landlords of the peasantry and the uncertainty which surrounded the problems of land tenure. The economic position of the smallholder had deteriorated, and the gulf between landlords and peasants, between the class of rent-receivers and the toiling agricultural serfs, had brought in a critical stage in Pakistan's agrarian set-up. The atmosphere of uncertainty surrounding the problem of land tenure due to the ills of feudualism resulted in a lack of that deep attachment to the land which is essential for its development. The landowner was uncertain about his future and did not, therefore, exert himself to the full. The tenant had neither the means nor the incentive to do more than the minimum required to maintain himself and his family at the low standard which has become proverbial.

The present system of ownership and cultivation of land was evolved over a long period under the influence of changing political and social forces, and had led to the emergence of certain distinct classes in the rural society. At the top of the social rung was the big landlord, or Jagirdar, owning in many cases an entire estate which was exempt from land tax. Generally, he got his land cultivated by tenants who paid rents in cash or in kind or in both. Next in order came the peasant proprietor, who owned a comparatively small area which he cultivated himself with the help of the members of his family or through hired workers. Below the peasant proprietor came the occupancy tenant who, though a tenant, had more or less hereditary and under certain conditions transferable rights on the land he cultivated and was, therefore not liable to ejectment by the landlord. Next came the tenant or the tenant-at-will. He had generally no permanent interest in the land he cultivated. At the lowest rung of the ladder came the casual agricultural worker, who was indistinguishable from any other hired labourer except that he was more ill-organized.

Generally the Zamindar (or landlords) lived in towns, leaving the management of their land to their tenants, who could have only part interest in the crops they raised or in the improvement of land. Landlords enjoyed high economic and social status and with their influence were able to exploit the tenants in various ways, thereby obstructing the process by which tenants could raise their economic and social status. The tenants usually had little means of redress. The landlord was largely interested in the collection of his dues, whether legally recognized or not, and the preservation of his power over his tenants whom he was disposed to treat as his subjects was signified by the word ra'iyat (the which Arabic word means subject).

The conditions of landlordism in the country had a striking similarity to feudalism. The feudal lords exercised their power direct while most of the landlords of Pakistan, no longer enjoying judicial and administrative power, used their position and influence to preserve their authority. This situation is indeed incompatible with a progressive society. The needs of industry, transport and social services demanded that the cultivator should produce not only for himself but also for a nation-wide, and in many cases, for a world-wide market. He must increase his production to the maximum
level with the latest available knowledge and the known techniques in order to achieve and sustain an adequate standard of living for himself in the country. His position, which was always of a key nature, has acquired decisive significance, and he must be provided with an environment in which his energies will be released to enable him to do full justice to the duties he has assumed for the nation.

The energies of the cultivator could not find full scope unless the fruits of his labour were guaranteed to him. He had to be roused by a sense of ownership in the land and its fruits to enable him to do the utmost of which he was capable. He had to be enabled to use the fruits of his labour for his greater comfort and higher social status, and to prepare his sons and daughters for a better life than has hitherto been his lot. These were the primary conditions which had to be fulfilled if the economy of the country, which is based primarily on agriculture, was to develop for the benefit of the people.

**Landlordism is basically incompatible with the aspirations of the modern man**

Economic and social factors are intermingled and interdependent, but frequently social factors become more powerful incentives for the growth of the economy. The feasibility of a higher status for man as a result of the advancement of science and technology is the most welcome fruit of modern industrialism. From slavery and servitude he has passed to a stage in which freedom and dignity have come within his reach. The institution of landlordship, involving large concentrations of property, wealth and power, is basically incompatible with the aspirations of the modern man. A change in this institution in Pakistan warranted an urgent message of reform. It constituted one of the most important problems of Pakistan, transcending in its magnitude and implications almost every other problem, social or economic. Economic development had of necessity to start from here.

It was on the night of 24th January 1959 that the President of Pakistan, General Muhammad Ayub Khan, announced sweeping agrarian reforms for West Pakistan. It was by far the longest and the firmest stride his government had taken in its drive for the uplift of the "small man". These reforms had long been overdue.

Less than 50 per cent of the 62,257,000 acres of cultural area in West Pakistan had been actually sown, and that too produced a very low yield per acre. If the country had had an acute shortage of food-grains needing over two thousand million rupees worth of imports till the end of 1958, the reasons were not far to seek. Then, the 90 per cent of the rural population that lived directly or indirectly on the land suffered from the vagaries of feudalism. There were Jagirdars (estate holders who paid no land tax to the State) owning large estates awarded them by the Mughul or British rulers for services rendered, or for services expected to be rendered. There were the Zamindars (landlords) who, too, in many cases, owned large areas of land and wielded considerable influence. Thus, 0.1 per cent of the owners held among them 15 per cent of the land in properties of over 500 acres each. On the other end of the scale were 65 per cent of the owners together holding just as much land in holdings of less than 5 acres each.

Concentration of land into the hands of the few brought in the worst features of feudalism. The social and economic
ills were not all that resulted. As President Ayub said: "Apart from its social consequences, such concentration of power hampers free exercise of political rights and stifles the growth of free political institutions."

Fragmentation, on the other hand, was no less an evil. Together with salinity and waterlogging it was one of the causes of the impoverishment of land and the cultivator. Three to four acres of land, in some cases, were split up into 12 to 18 fragments.

The President of Pakistan, General Muhammad Ayub Khan, who announced and implemented the sweeping agrarian reforms in Pakistan on the 24th January 1959.

President Ayub’s nine-point programme put an end to just these twin evils — of absentee landlordism and concentration of power on the one hand, and fragmentation of land through inheritance customs on the other.

**Restriction on and limitation to land holdings**

A ceiling is laid on the holdings: 500 acres of irrigated or 1,000 acres of unirrigated land is the maximum one can hold. In pursuance of the programme of land reforms the peasants are given the option to hire-purchase the land thus resumed over a period of 25 years; the landlords are compensated with interest-bearing bonds redeemable in 25 years; Jagirdari (estates exempt from income tax (jagirs)) has been completely abolished, and their holders will receive no compensation for their land; security of tenure is guaranteed to the tenants and the splitting of land into uneconomic units is not allowed, and small allotments are to be amalgamated to form larger, more economic units.

The reforms, by the breaking of concentration of land into the hands of the few and the narrowing down of inequalities, when given effect to, will make possible a more intensive land-use and productive investment. This will simplify the tenure system. The cultivators, with their interest in the land revived, will try new methods, and will exert themselves for greater production. Money saved will be available for industrial development. The enormous pressure on land from 40 million people will be relieved. Fair return to the tenants, commensurable with their efforts, will be ensured, and the way cleared for the expansion of co-operative farming and credit and marketing facilities, and improvement of the conditions of employment of agricultural labourers. The wholesome effect which land reforms are bound to bring about on the socio-economic structure of the country have been universally acclaimed.

As President Ayub has said, Pakistan’s programme of land reform is scientific rather than emotional. While the wings of the landed gentry have been clipped, they have not been left in penury, nor are they denied the right of bequeathal. They can retain a substantial area of land and orchard for themselves and alienate a little more by gifts. But they can no longer eject tenants, raise rents and demand free labour as they used to do; they can at best nevertheless lead a reasonably comfortable life.

**West Pakistan**

The availability and the access to land being the basis of agricultural development, the first question was to find out the extent of available land, and to determine who owned it and how it was being utilized as a factor of production. It had been noticed that in West Pakistan out of a total geographical area of 198.6 million acres, the "area reported" is only about 62 million acres, which is even less than one-third of the total geographical area. The "unreported areas" include the desert land and the "special areas", the largest unreported tracts being in the Divisions of Kalat, Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Hyderabad, tribal areas of Peshawar and D.I. Khan. No data on land utilization is available for the "unreported areas", but it is estimated that they include another 23 million acres of cultivable land, thus bringing the total cultivable area in West Pakistan to 85 million acres. The rural population of West Pakistan is estimated at 27.2 million people, 90 per cent of which is dependent on land. The extent of the available agricultural land and the prospects of its expansion are, therefore, limited.

Availability of capital for development purposes is very low for the present. In order to increase the volume of capital formation, it is necessary that farming should produce a marketable surplus of agricultural commodities. Under the existing conditions, farming left too small a margin for the small peasant proprietors, and the net capital formation on their part was almost negligible. The big landlord invested very little of his income in agricultural production, and thus the technique of production remained as primitive as ever. Therefore, while the area under principal crops, as a result of irrigation and other facilities provided by the government, increased from 24.7 million acres in 1948-49 to 28.1 million acres in 1956-57, production had remained almost static. The per capita production had, in fact, declined. Salinity and water-logging, ravages of floods, shortage of water and unfavourable weather conditions were the causes most often assigned, but the important factor contributing to the present situation had also been the structural defects in the composition of the rural society.

In West Pakistan, the progress in land reforms has varied from (what was formerly) province to province. Soon after Independence, the governments of the former Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province embarked on tenancy reforms legislation with a view to improving the conditions...
and status of the tenants in general. In 1952, amendment to the Punjab Tenancy Act was passed; it aimed at turning occupancy tenants into the owners of the land they cultivate, fixing the landlord’s share at 40 per cent of the gross produce and regulating khud kasht (owner-cultivated land) which could be held by the landlord and to which a provision of the Tenancy Protection and Restoration of Tenancy Rights Act do not apply. The Amendment Act of 1952 (though never implemented), further laid down that no one owning more than 100 acres of land could have in his possession for self-cultivation any cultivable land exceeding 50 acres of irrigated or 75 acres of semi-irrigated or 100 acres of un-irrigated land. The two enactments in force in the former North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab have now held the field for several years. The North-West Frontier Province is reported to have had a more or less smooth course and a very large majority of the occupancy tenants have been able to acquire proprietary rights under it. The Punjab Law, on the other hand, was not adequate enough to meet the differing requirements of occupancy holdings.

In 1950, the Sind Tenancy Act was passed, which as amended from time to time, abolishes non-statutory charges, fines and rents and gives permanent rights to cultivators of a “survey number” or of at least four acres of land for the same landlord for a continuous period of not less than three years, and other such provisions. The implementation of this Act could not go far due to presumably incomplete or faulty provisions in the Act itself. The position, therefore, was scarcely better than it was before the passing of reform legislation.

The reforms

The new régime, realizing the fact that very little had so far been achieved in the field of land reforms which had a great social, economic and political significance in the country, was directed forthwith by President General Muhammad Ayub Khan to ensure maximum agricultural production by a radical change in the pattern of agrarian system. The President rightly observed that “it was of the utmost importance . . . that we examine this problem in a most dispassionate manner and take decisions which while eliminating social and economic injustice would contribute effectively to the establishment of a progressive agricultural economy.” The object of these reforms, which are, to quote the President again, “an absolute necessity for the survival of the system and values which we cherish and which brought Pakistan into being as a Free State”, is to accelerate the transition from the feudal to a democratic society, in which all energies will be devoted to development of material and human resources with a view to higher standards of living and security. Besides, the reforms propose to devise a rational land tenure policy which will satisfy, on the one hand, the social needs for greater equality of opportunity and social status and, on the other hand, the economic needs for increasing agricultural production. They also aim at providing employment opportunities outside agriculture since there is a growing congestion on land. The pressure of population on land and the law of inheritance are resulting in uneconomic and highly fragmented holdings for which specific measures are being taken in the programme of land reforms. Accordingly, the President constituted a Land Reforms Commission to examine problems relating to the ownership and tenancy of agricultural land and to recommend positive steps for ensuring greater production and social justice as well as security of tenure for those engaged in cultivation. The Government of Pakistan has, on the recommendation of the Commission, decided to implement land reforms in West Pakistan on the following broad lines:

1. Ceiling of Holdings

No person shall own or possess an area of more than 500 acres of irrigated land or 1,000 acres of unirrigated land. One acre of irrigated land being taken as equal to two unirrigated acres.

Exemption: (a) An existing owner may retain, out of his present holdings, such additional area, if any, which would bring the total area retained by him to the equivalent of 36,000 produce index units, (produce index units wherever mentioned means produce index units as computed for the purpose of the scheme relating to the resettlement of displaced persons).

(b) A recognized teaching institution or a university may own or possess such additional area as may be needed for the purpose of research or demonstration.

(c) The Government may also allow a charitable, religious or educational institution, approved by the Government, to own land, including Waqf land, in excess of the ceiling.

(d) The Government may, in the public interest, allow additional areas for stud and livestock farms.

(e) Land under orchards not exceeding 150 acres in area may be allowed to be retained as long as it is maintained as an orchard, in addition to the ceiling area, provided that:

(i) the land under orchard is in compact blocks of not less than 10 acres; and,

(ii) It has been shown as an orchard in the revenue records at least since Rabi, 1956-57.

The imposition of ceilings would as a first step involve the division of an owner holding into:

(i) area which the owner can retain for himself as being within ceiling limit; and,

(ii) area which falls outside the ceiling limit and will be available for resumption and redistribution.

(f) An existing owner whose holding is greater than the area of 500 acres of irrigated land, or equivalent to 36,000 produce index units, may transfer to any or all of his heirs such additional area, if any, as taken together with any area already retained by him, to all or any of his heirs on or after the 14th August 1947, and any area retained under clause (e) above would bring the aggregate area so transferred to the equivalent of 18,000 produce index units.

It is proposed that the landlord will be given the opportunity to select the ceiling area which he wants to retain for himself.

2. Waqfs

A Waqf of the category prescribed in Section II of the Muslim Waqf (Validating) Act of 1913, under which any benefit is, for the time being, claimable for himself by the person by whom the Waqf was created or by any member of his family or by any of his descendants shall cease to exist as such. The land comprised in such a Waqf shall be divided amongst the beneficiaries according to the Muslim Law of Inheritance, as if no Waqf had been created and as if succession had opened on the day of the death of the donor.

3. Compensation

Compensation for lands resumed shall be paid according to the following scale:

- For the first 18,000 produce index units @ Rs. 5 per unit
- 24,000 @ Rs. 4
- 36,000 @ Rs. 3
- 72,000 @ Rs. 2

For the balance,

Such compensation shall be paid through heritable bonds which shall be transferable but not negotiable through banks. These bonds shall be redeemable in 25 years and shall bear taxable simple interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum.

4. Special provision for female dependents

The Commission may, on the application of an existing owner possessing ancestral land, allow him to transfer by way of gift in addition to the area which he can give under paragraph 1 (f) a maximum area equal to 6,000 produce index units to each of his female dependents provided that the Commission is satisfied that any dependent is entitled to inherit her share of the ancestral property.

5. Abolition of Jagirs

Jagirs of every kind shall be abolished without payment of any compensation. Jagirs in favour of religious, charitable or educational institutions approved by the Government may be replaced by financial grants for a specified purpose to be used in the manner prescribed by rule.

6. Occupancy tenants

Existing laws regarding the conversion of occupancy tenants into
owners shall be allowed to run their course. Provision shall also be made for conferment of similar rights on Muslims and other tenants of similar type.

Security of Tenure: (i) No tenant shall be ejected unless it is established in a Revenue Court that he has:
(a) failed to pay rent; or
(b) used the land in a manner which renders it unfit for the purpose for which he held it; or
(c) sub-let his tenancy.
(ii) The right of ejectment on the plea of khud kashit where it exists shall be withdrawn.
(iii) A tenant shall not be ejected from the house provided by the landlord so long as he continues to be a tenant under that landlord.
(iv) In case of ejectment, the tenant shall be entitled to get compensation for improvement he might have made to the land and for disturbance.

7. Consolidation of holdings
Steps shall be taken to consolidate fragmented holdings by introducing a province-wide scheme of Compulsory Consolidation.

8. Size of holdings
As the fragmentation and scattering of holdings lower the quantity of production, the minimum size of cultivable land has been set in terms of the following two categories:
(a) Subsistence Holding: A subsistence holding is a holding of land comprising an area of 16 acres in Hyderabad and Khaipur divisions, and half a square or half a rectangle or 12 acres, whichever is more, in other divisions of West Pakistan.
(b) Economic Holding: An economic holding is a holding comprising an area of 64 acres in Hyderabad and Khaipur divisions, and an area of 25 squares or 2 rectangles or 50 acres, whichever is more, in other divisions of the Province.

In their broad sense, the two categories of holdings represent as units of agricultural land which will provide a minimum income sufficient for the subsistence of a farming family consisting of five members. The main objective underlying the idea of the latter type of holding is the encouragement of the creation of a strong middle class and laying the foundation for owner-operated farms on holdings of economic size. Positive steps will be necessary to maintain the existing subsistence and economic holdings and to bring into existence the proposed economic and subsistence holdings, as defined above, out of the present scattered holdings. This will require, on the one hand, a radical change in the existing laws governing the right of freedom to alienate and the right to physical partitioning of joint holdings, on the other. In the light of these considerations, definite provisions have been made in regard to the impossibility of holdings, restriction on alienations and management of impartible holdings.

East Pakistan
East Pakistan was considerably ahead of West Pakistan in the field of land reforms. The economic and social ills of the Zamindari system of Bengal, particularly under the Permanent Settlement, has been widely recognized for many years. In 1940, the Land Revenue Commission recommended the abolition of the Permanent Settlement and its replacement by the system under which all intermediaries were to disappear and the State was to establish direct relations with the cultivators. The recommendations of the Commission were supported by the Bengal Administrative Enquiry Committee of 1944, and consequently in 1947 the Bengal Estate Acquisition and Tenancy Bill was introduced in the Provincial Legislature of undivided Bengal, but was not passed because of the partition of the province at the time of Independence. After the creation of Pakistan, the Government of East Pakistan took the initiative again and passed the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950, which embodied a series of radical reforms in the land ownership and tenure system. Under the provision of this Act all rent-receiving interests between the cultivating tenants and the State have been abolished and the emergence of rent-receiving interests in future have been prevented. According to this Act there is a ceiling for the khas (self-cultivated) possession of land, which may be either 100 standard bighas (about 33 acres) or 10 bighas per family member, whichever is greater, plus an additional 10 standard bighas for the homestead. These limits can be relaxed under exceptional cases such as farms with power-driven mechanized appliances, large dairy farms or tea or sugar plantations. Legally the State has become the owner of the lands and the tenants are assured of full occupancy right with the rights of transfer to bona fide cultivators. Sub-letting is forbidden. The principle of re-distribution and sub-division of holdings is recognized, and provision exists for the consolidation under certain conditions. For the quick implementation of the scheme summary procedure is provided for the acquisition of big Zamindari estates, while remaining rent-receiving interests are to be acquired under a comprehensive system. The summary procedure for acquisition was intended to forestall the unscrupulous Zamindars who were resorting to a variety of malpractices such as relinquishment of khud kashit lands for small payments, abandoning all claims for outstanding rent, and creation of new rights. The outgoing rent-receivers are entitled to compensation at prescribed rates. The compensation is a multiple of net incomes, from ten times for incomes not exceeding Rs. 500 to twice for incomes exceeding Rs. 100,000. The net income is determined by deducting from the estimated gross receipts of the rent-receivers the various sums payable or costs incurred from land revenue, rent, cesses, agricultural income tax, maintenance of irrigation works and collection charges.

The progress under this Act was very slow in the initial years for various reasons. The Government of East Pakistan, however, decided to acquire all intermediaries interests with effect from 14th April 1956. Although this decision of the Government was challenged in the Court of Law, the litigation ended in January 1957 in favour of the Provincial Government. The Government of East Pakistan is building up its revenue administration at a fairly quick rate to make implementation of the scheme a success. This administration will take measures relating to the preparation of compensation, assessment rolls, and would bring up to date the Records of Rights and would also lay down the principles for determining the rents payable by the tenants and other such important items. The scheme has secured to the Government a substantial increase in revenues from land within a short period. The receipts from land revenue collection were about Rs. 75 million in 1957-58, against Rs. 44 million in 1956-57 and Rs. 17.7 million in 1952-53. The Government of East Pakistan has recently set up a Land Reforms Commission to look into the progress and highlights of the problems of implementation and remove bottlenecks, if any.

Security and freedom for the tiller of the soil
With the promulgation of the West Pakistan Land Reforms Regulation on 7th February 1959, the first link in the chain of measures to create an economically viable, socially free and politically stable and progressive society was established. The decision of the Government for the implementation of the land reforms is epoch-making in character and far-reaching in effect. They would revolutionize the age-old agrarian system and also go a long way to re-modeling the entire pattern of the socio-economic structure of the province. In particular, the Reforms would exercise a most salutary effect upon the morale of the tillers of the soil as the conferment of proprietary rights would give them a sense of belonging and an incentive to work for better yields with redoubled energy.

Agriculture in Pakistan, as in other parts of the world, is not only a source of subsistence but also a way of living with the rural society. The possession of agricultural land
is, therefore, a common urge, and the land, aside from its economic benefits, is associated with special social values. The social status of a man is thus determined by his status in terms of landed property and his right to the use of holdings. The ownership of land has accordingly come to be regarded as a symbol of prestige and its management as an instrument of power and influence. Under the circumstances, those who do not own land are relegated to a socially inferior position with all the disabilities of that position. Naturally the feelings of inferiority and a sense of detachment with the land render the cultivators incapable of taking a real interest in the agriculture and also rob them of all initiative and enterprise.

End of political pressure

The big landlords, their influence now confined, will no more be able to exert political pressure in the affairs of the country. The importance of this can be realized from the fact that the ills of the past governments and the economic malaise in which the country was jetisoned on account of them, were largely due to the influence these landlords had come to wield during the past years. That the past governments, in spite of their solemn promises, had not been able to introduce land reforms, was wholly due to this. With these land reforms, however, an atmosphere has now been created for the landlords to put their energies in the right channel.

Another outstanding feature of the reforms is the abolition of Jagirdivi, which would rid the country of the evils of feudalism completely. In addition to the lands resumed in excess of the ceiling limits, the extensive holding of the Jagirdars would be distributed to the deserving claimants who have the will and capacity to work hard and produce more. Besides, tenants passing days in agony and tyranny under their feudal lords will have no apprehension about unjust exactions and pressures. The sense of security and freedom from interference is bound to provide them with a stimulus for more concentration and larger crop yields.

Towards self-sufficiency

The Land Reforms of West Pakistan, thus, augur well for the happiness of the actual tillers of the soil as well as for the prosperity of the whole country. The abolition of the Jagirdari, consolidation of fragmented holdings, conversion of holdings, conversion of occupancy tenancy into ownership, and the redistribution of resumed land are some of the important factors which would undoubtedly help in boosting the quantum of agricultural production of West Pakistan. As a sequel, the recurring dependence on imports of foodstuffs at the cost of considerable drain on Pakistan’s foreign exchange earnings will be completely dispensed with. In brief, the Land Reforms of West Pakistan will not only ensure wholesome adjustments in the agrarian economy based upon social justice, but in the ultimate analysis they will also have a profound and beneficial influence upon the overall economy of the country.

WHY I AM IMPRESSED BY ISLAM (cont. from p. 23)

Knower” (The Qur’an, 2 : 1). Again and again throughout the Qur’an we are reminded of the Oneness of the Creator, Indivisible, Eternal, Infinite, Almighty, All-Knowing, All-Just, the Helper, the Merciful, the Compassionate. So the Whole becomes a reality; again and again we are requested to establish a satisfactory relationship between Him and us: “Know that God gives life to the earth after its death. We have made messages clear to you that you may understand” (The Qur’an, 57 : 17). “Say, I seek refuge with the Nourisher of mankind to perfection” (The Qur’an, 114 : 1).

One might argue that in order to recognize and believe in God and to live happily in a community it is necessary to believe in Divine messages. Does not a father guide his children? Does he not organize his family’s life so that it may live together harmoniously? Islam claims to be the only true religion that re-enabrates the truth of its predecessors. It claims that the guidance provided by the Qur’an is clear, comprehensible and reasonable. By guiding our way towards achievement of a satisfactory relationship between Creator and created it brings about a co-operation between physical and spiritual forces enabling us to equalize internal and external forces in order to be at peace within ourselves — the most important factor to establish a harmonious state between one living part and another and an important condition towards our striving for perfection.

Christianity stresses the spiritual side of life: it teaches a love that puts a heavy burden of responsibility upon every Christian. The perfect love is doomed to failure if its achievement does not lie within the reach of human nature and contradicts reason and understanding. Only someone who has a deep knowledge of human conflicts and combines it with sympathy, understanding and a sense of responsibility may come near to the perfection of the Christian principle — and, even then, he will have to bury his reason with his love. S. T. Coleridge says in his Aids to Reflection: “He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth will proceed by loving his own sect or Church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.”

What Islam teaches

Islam teaches us to respect God, to submit to His laws entitling and encouraging us to use our reason as well as our emotions of love and understanding, the commandments of the Qur’an, the message of God for His creatures, regardless of which race, nation or social standard, written by one of our fellow-beings close to the circle creator-man, man-man, man-creator and bring it to perfection:

“Say: O people, the Truth has indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever goes aright, goes aright only for the good of his own soul; and whoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a custodian over you” (The Qur’an, 10 : 108).

No other religion professed by a large community have I found so comprehensible and encouraging. There seems no better way towards tranquillity of mind and contentment in life, no greater promise for the future after death. Yet the truth of religion rests with experience: to believe in One God, to believe in the equality of man and happiness beyond this life, to try and do justice, to attempt to understand and forgive and endeavour to make others happy may be one principle, your and my conviction. But:

“At the muezzin’s call for prayer,
The kneeling faithfully thronged the square,
And on Rishkara’s lofty height
The dark priest chanted Braham’s might.
Amid a monastery’s weeds
An old Franciscan told his beads;
While to the synagogue there came
A Jew to praise Jehovah’s name.
The One great God looked on and smiled
And counted each his loving child;
For Turk and Brahmin, monk and Jew
Had reached him through the God they knew.”

Harry Romaine.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
WHY I AM IMPRESSED BY ISLAM

By M. STEINMANN

"No other religion professed by a large community have I found so comprehensible and encouraging. There seems no better way towards tranquility of mind and contentment in life, no greater promise for the future after death."

The human being is part of a whole: man cannot claim more than being just a particle of creation in its magnificent perfection. As such, he can only fulfil his purpose of living by carrying out his function in relating himself to the whole and to other living parts. It is the harmonious relationship between the parts and the whole that makes life purposeful, that can bring it nearest to perfection, that helps a human being to achieve contentment and happiness.

Which place does religion take in this relationship between Creator and creation, between one part and another? Here are some people’s opinions on religion:

“\text{A man’s religion is the chief fact with regard to him; the thing a man does practically believe \ldots the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this Universe, and his duty and destiny there \ldots that is religion}” (Carlyle, \textit{Heroes and Hero-Worship}).

“\text{Religion is the sense of ultimate reality, of whatever meaning a man finds in his own existence or the existence of anything else}” (G. K. Chesterton, \textit{Come To Think Of It}).

“\text{Religion, a daughter of hope and fear, explaining to ignorance the nature of the Unknowable}” (Ambrose Bierce, \textit{The Devil’s Dictionary}).

“\text{The body of all true religion consists, to be sure, in obedience to the will of the Sovereign of the world, in a confidence in His declarations, and in imitation of His perfection}” (Edmund Burke, \textit{Reflections on the Revolution in France}).

“\text{All religion relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good}” (Swedenborg, \textit{Doctrine of Life}).

\text{Every man, either to his terror or consolation, has some sense of religion} (James Harrington, \textit{Oceana}).

At one time or another every human being is confronted with the Unknown, Incomprehensible, with the purpose of his existence. Questioning himself he creates a belief, a conviction — religion in its widest sense.

\textbf{Why do I consider Islam as the most perfect religion?}

\text{Why do I consider Islam as the most perfect religion? First and foremost, it acquaints us with the Whole, the Creator: “In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful: Say: He, God, is one. God is He on whom all depend: He begets not, nor is He begotten; and none is like Him” (The Qur’an, 112:4). “To God is your return and He is Possessor over all things” (The Qur’an, 11:4). “I, God, am the best (Continued on previous page)
AL-MASJID
otherwise known as Qubbah al-Sakhra (The Cave Mosque)

The Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever performed the Hajj (Pilgrimage) or 'Umra (a visit to Mecca in which are performed certain acts of worship) (cf. the Sunna)

A visit to the Dome of the Rock Mosque.

The Sakhra (The Rock) (in the foreground) is an irregular mass of natural rock in the midst of the Haram al-shareef (the Sacred Enclosure) at Jerusalem. It actually forms the summit of Mount Moriah. It measures about 60 by 14 ft. and its maximum height above the floor of the Dome of the Rock Mosque is about 35 ft. It is from this Rock that the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have started his Night Journey on the occasion of his Night Journey (The Qur'an, 17:1).

The picture gives an idea of the beauty of architecture inside. Professor K. A. C. Creswell in his

The beautiful decoration on the interior of the Dome of the Rock Mosque.

The exquisite mosaics in the Dome and two of the thirty-six beautiful windows which pierce the walls lined with panels of quartered marble.

A magnificent view of the Dome of the Rock building, erected of the two oldest and most beautiful specimens of early Moslem Architecture, that have remained intact till today. The Dome of the Rock, with the "Night Journey" of the Prophet, is

The diameter of the Dome above the Rock is 67 ft. The

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture, London, 1938, writes: "On entering we behold an interior of extraordinary splendour, glittering with marble panelling, marble columns with gilt capitals and mosaics — green, blue, gilt and mother of pearl. Straight in front of us are the three arches... The faces and soffits of the arches are decorated with glistening mosaics and beyond is the inner circle of supports, through the arches of which we see the gorgeous decoration of the wooden dome with designs and inscriptions picked out in gold. It is an experience never to be forgotten..."
NEED OF AN ARAB DEVELOPMENT BANK

SHARING OIL BENEFITS

By EMILE BUSTANI

To the world, wars are history’s recognized lines of demarcation. In the Arab world, history was made every time oil was struck. This is how Iraq, Su’udi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrein came into prominence during the years before and after the Second World War. Formerly, world interest in Middle East oil was focused on Iran alone, and in a much lesser extent on Egypt.

Less than 5,000,000 tons of oil a year were pumped out of Arab lands before World War II. Today, over 189,000,000 tons of oil a year flow to world markets. Broken down into countries, the approximate figures for 1956 were:

**TONS PER YEAR**

(i) Iraq:  
(a) Kirkuk oilfields ... 21,000,000  
(b) Basrah oilfields ... 8,000,000  
(c) Mosul oilfields ....... 1,500,000  
   = 30,500,000

(ii) Kuwait  
   = 54,100,000

(iii) Su’udi Arabia  
   = 48,000,000

(iv) Qatar  
   = 5,800,000

(v) Bahrain  
   = 1,400,000

(vi) Egypt  
   = 1,650,000

Total  = 141,450,000

For 1958 these figures were:

(i) Iraq:  
(a) Kirkuk oilfields ... 22,633,000  
(b) Basrah oilfields ... 11,019,000  
(c) Mosul oilfields ....... 1,280,000  
   = 34,932,000

(ii) Kuwait  
   = 69,117,000

(iii) Su’udi Arabia  
   = 58,000,000

(iv) Kuwait Neutral Zone  
   = 4,000,000

(v) Qatar  
   = 8,000,000

(vi) Bahrain  
   = 2,000,000

(vii) Egypt  
   = 2,000,000

Total  = 178,050,000

Compared with the production figures of 1939, this total represents a thirty-fold increase. If we include Iran, then the Middle East supplied 28 per cent of the free world’s oil in 1958.

More striking than the production figures are the estimates of the proved reserves of oil in the Middle East. The United States’ petroleum production in 1956 was 8.1 per cent of domestic proved reserves. Venezuelan production was 6.8 per cent of its reserves, but Middle East production was only about 1 per cent of its reserves. If present trends persist, the Western Hemisphere will run out of oil before the Eastern Hemisphere does. The average oil well in the United States produces only 12 barrels a day compared with 5,000 barrels a day for an average Middle East well.

Moreover, future prospects seem bright. To meet the constantly increasing demands of industry, oil production in the world has been steadily increasing by some 8 per cent per annum. (If the United States of America is excluded, the figure becomes 10 per cent.) To Middle East oil-producing countries and oil companies alike, this increase means more installations, more profits and a bigger share of the international oil market.

The idea that nuclear power will soon replace oil as fuel is wishful thinking. Peaceful uses of nuclear power are still in the experimental stage and it is generally believed that nothing yet invented can replace cheap and easy-to-manipulate oil with its numerous chemical by-products.

Years ago many believed that the use of coal would dwindle to a minimum as more industries turned to oil for fuel. Extensively used in various forms, oil proved to be a convenient and cheap fuel that a large number of industries now find indispensable. In spite of this, demand for coal today is greater than it ever was before, although the cost to the consumer is much higher.

**Influence of Arab oil**

The influence Arab oil exerts on international markets is of paramount importance. Some 75 per cent of Western Europe’s crude oil requirements come from the Middle East. This alone should give a clear indication of the importance of Arab oil to the industry and economy of Western Europe and Britain. When the Suez Canal was blocked and Iraqi oil ceased to flow across Syria, industrial plants in Western Europe were on the verge of a complete standstill which would certainly have affected output, imports, the balance of trade and employment. Britain and most other European countries were forced to ration petrol and immediately embarked upon a wild search for other sources of supply. But for emergency supplies from Venezuela and the United States, most European industries would have been completely or partially paralyzed.

At the time of the Suez crisis industry in Western Europe welcomed the use of Venezuela’s and the United States’ costlier oil, rather than close shop. But economy-minded owners of the numerous refineries scattered all over Europe could not afford a long-term supply of crude oil from Western Hemisphere sources. Such a policy would mean a big drain on dollar resources and an increase in prices which would effect sales, output and profits.

These facts highlight not only the economic and financial importance of Arab oil to world markets but also its strategic influence on world prices, world consumption and overall oil policy. Millions of non-Arabs depend on the flow of Arab oil for their daily bread and the maintenance of their present standard of living. Something we all ought to ponder upon is: “To what extent will Arabs be able to make use of the importance of Arab oil to Europe and the Americans?”

But another question that we as well as the West should ask is: “Will the Arabs take an objective attitude towards their clients, the oil consumers of Europe and America, and if they do not, what results will their ‘non-objectivity’ give?”

Of course this question cannot be detached from the larger context of Western policy towards the Arab world. The Syrians would not have blown up the pumping stations if Britain and France had not attacked Egypt, and as long as Arabs have reason to fear that if Western countries can-
not get what they want in the Middle East by peaceful means they will resort to force, they will naturally regard the stoppage of oil to the West as their "ultimate retaliation". Ultimately only one thing can ensure the continued and untroubled flow of Arab oil: the placing of Western-Arab relations on an entirely new basis of respect and non-coercion.

While it is true that Western Europe depends to a great extent on Middle East oil, the importance to Middle Eastern oil countries of Western European demand for oil should not be forgotten. The oil has no value in the ground; it is given its value by the machines in Western Europe that use it. Thus it is true to say the Middle Eastern oil-producing countries are almost as dependent on West European demand as West European demand is on Middle East supply, the only significant difference being that in time of crisis a highly-developed economy suffers far more than an under-developed one.

**Oil concessions**

Although the Arab world's contributions to human progress are many and varied, it is today better known for its oil than for anything else. Yet a striking fact is that no Arab government or individual, with the exception of Egypt, holds any percentage of any oil concessions granted by an Arab government. The Iraq Petroleum Group of Companies holds concessions covering Kirkuk, Mosul, Basrah, Qatar, the Trucial Coast, Muscat and Oman and Aden, and is equally owned by British, French, Dutch and American oil interests, together with Mr. Gulbenkian's trustees, who hold 5 per cent of the shares. Britain and Holland are associated in the Dutch interest, and as the Iraq Petroleum is a group of British registered companies, Britain holds most of the political strings of this gigantic oil empire.

British oil interests were the sole owners of the oil concessions in Iran. This has changed today, and thanks to Musaddiq, Iran owns the oil-fields and the Americans have a 40 per cent interest in the Consortium, which operates the Iranian oil-fields and refinery. The Iranian Government, however, is the owner, and intends to be the operator of the new oil-field which was discovered in the vicinity of Teheran.

Americans alone hold the concession in Su'udi Arabia. In Kuwait, British and Americans jointly hold the oil concessions, while the Bahrain Oil Company is totally owned by American oil interests.

American interests own the lion's share of oil concessions in the Middle East. The British come next with France and Holland trailing behind but seemingly content with their share. Taking the amounts paid to oil-producing countries on the 50-50 basis, profits made by American oil interests would amount to at least £180 million sterling per year. Britain's similar share of the profits would be £80 million sterling per year. French and Dutch oil interests would net £20 million sterling per year respectively.

Since 1960 royalties and payments to oil-producing countries have been appreciably increased. Conscious of the need to reach full understanding and co-operation with the late King Ibn Su'ud and his government, Aramco, on 1st January 1950, spearheaded a profit-sharing move which was welcomed by all Arab oil-producing countries. Today, thanks to Aramco's vision, all Arab oil-producing countries receive 50 per cent of the profits made by the oil companies.

Prior to the application of the 50-50 profit-sharing principle, the average return per ton never exceeded 4 shillings gold. Now, it is over 40 shillings. With oil production upped thirty times and royalties per ton increased more than five times, revenues made by the oil-producing countries have reached fantastic figures.

The 50-50 profit-sharing principle has been until now generally accepted. It was even applied when a recent agreement covering oil-transit profits was concluded between Syria and the Iraq Petroleum Company. Differences over the application of this principle exist at present between the Lebanon and this British oil company.

This sudden increase in oil wealth has caused much disruption in the Arab world. Serious problems have been created which must be settled if peace and stability are to be secured in the years to come. Political, economic and social factors are involved. The big powers, standing guard behind the giant oil companies operating in the Arab world, have shirked their responsibilities, relying on day-to-day evasion of difficulties rather than a constructive long-term policy. They have relied on Arab disunity to make such a policy unnecessary, not realizing that Arab disunity will not last for ever. They have argued that Arab political instability makes any long-term schemes of collaboration between the West and the Arab world out of the question, forgetting that the instability is partly of their own creation, and, even more, important, that even if such collaboration is a risk it is a lesser risk than to continue to ignore or evade the whole problem. Even if the transit countries can be by-passed, there is no way of by-passing the Arab countries in which oil is produced.

Soviet Russia, taking advantage of mistakes committed by the West, has succeeded in infiltrating into the Middle East. The Soviet economy has never depended on Arab oil; the major Communist objective is to block vital oil deliveries to the West. Russia apparently knows better than the West how to exploit Arab nationalism, and has plunged into a programme of help and friendship for the Arab world.

What we must all strive for is a stable oil policy ensuring the steady flow of oil to Arab Mediterranean terminals.

Oil has not been an unconditional blessing to the Arabs. It is a blessing when royalties are invested in development projects. Up to the present, Arabs have never been able to use to the full the economic and political value of their oil wealth. Divided among themselves, they fell easy prey to foreign interference and infiltration. Foreign elements succeeded in controlling many political and economic aspects of Arab life; naturally they nurtured schism among the Arab peoples since that seemed to work in their interests.

Thus oil came to symbolize to many Arabs in the transit countries a plague which should be eliminated. They believe that oil was and still is a stumbling block on the road to independence. Is it so?

The fact that only an insignificant percentage of oil royalties in certain Arab countries went to development projects did not help dispel this feeling. Personal whims and pleasures of the ruling families accounted for a large part of these royalties in the less developed countries.

The transit countries (Jordan, the Lebanon, the United Arab Republic (Syria and Egypt)), with their denser populations and higher standards of living, receive meagre transit dues which are out of all proportion to the fabulous sums paid to the producing countries. Some find this equitable: they argue that producing countries must naturally be paid much more than transit countries. But Arab nationalists who believe in one homeland consider that all Arabs, wherever they are, should have the same duties and enjoy the same rights. Growing Arab nationalism binds all Arab peoples and countries, even if the Arab League fails to do so. This is why the Arabs in the transit countries fell that, out of right and
not out of sufferance, they are entitled to enjoy the same benefit from oil royalties.

But fairness apart, there is no doubt that funds put at the disposal of the transit countries, Jordan, the Lebanon and the United Arab Republic, can be better used at present than by any of the producing countries. The extent to which Kuwait, or Bahrain, or even Su'udi Arabia, can be "developed" — even with unending capital — is limited. The transit countries, on the other hand, have all begun to industrialize already. The level of technical skill and of education is higher than in the producing countries. The yield on capital investment would be higher and faster.

**Political instability**

If for the Arabs the political interference caused by Western desire for their oil has greatly detracted from its value, so in much the same way the value of Arab oil to the West has been detracted from by political instability in the Middle East.

Refineries were formerly built close to the oil-fields. The Abadan Refinery, the largest in the world, supplied European and Eastern markets with a good percentage of their requirements. The huge Bahrain Refinery handled all the Bahrain oil production together with millions of tons of imported crude oil from Su'udi Arabia. The refinery at Ras Tanura in Su'udi Arabia, owned and operated by Aramco, is another major refinery. Profits made on some of these operations were enormous, but fear of political instability in the Arab world played its part in bringing about a major change in oil refining policy.

New refineries previously scheduled to be built in Arab lands went up instead in the consuming centres of Europe and elsewhere. World markets shifted their dependence on refined oil from this part of the world to European producers. Abadan and Bahrain refineries began operating on a smaller scale and expansion projects were dropped or curtailed. Whilst it is true that a new refinery has been built at Little Aden, this is a long way from the sources of crude oil and its main function is to provide oil for the bunkers of the ships which refuel in the port of Aden.

Generally speaking, the Middle East has lost its importance as a refining centre, and has become mainly an exporter of crude oil.

To the Arabs, the fact that fewer consumers are using oil refined in the Middle East means less profits, less investment capital and less inducement for new business in the Arab world.

The oil companies saw in the blocking of the Suez Canal and the blowing up of pump stations in Syria a direct threat to their existence as profit-making concerns. Because they suffered heavy losses, their defensive reaction was prompt and stiff. They sought means of eliminating the possibility of similar losses in the future, and the decision to build larger (50,100,000 tons) tankers capable of using the Cape route economically was taken.

In taking such a decision political considerations have clearly overshadowed economic and commercial ones. Oil companies know that large tankers cannot dock at some of the oil-loading ports in the Middle East or at most European ports. Large sums of money will have to be spent to make this possible.

**Arab Development Bank**

There is one very practical way out of this dilemma, both for the Arab countries and for the West. That is collaboration in the formation of an Arab Development Bank, which will ensure the availability of capital to the transit countries, thus giving them a real stake in the continuance of the flow of oil to the West.

Here, therefore, is the practical suggestion that I advance. Deduct 5 per cent of the yearly profits of oil operations before distributing royalties, taxes and profits to either the oil-producing countries or the oil companies. These sums would form the capital for an Arab Development Bank which could finance development and industrial projects in the Arab world. The World Bank or other international banking institutions might be asked to help in organizing this bank. Arab oil-producing countries and the oil companies would be represented on this bank's board of directors. In fact this would be owned by the oil countries and the oil companies, who would together be the shareholders.

A National Development Company or Corporation would then be formed in each Arab State. The national government in each State would hold 50 per cent of the shares while the remaining 50 per cent could be floated in the State. Private citizens would, in the initial stages, buy the shares at par.

These National Development Corporations would be chartered by the government in each State to carry out development schemes and projects and to borrow the required funds from the Arab Development Bank. Studied proposals would be submitted by the National Development Corporation to the Arab Development Bank, and the latter would consider the application made for the required loans. All these transactions should of course be handled in a business-like manner, but the rate of interest charged should not be more than 2½ per cent.

The Arab Development Bank, thus constituted, would be strictly a business concern and not a charitable institution. The reason for keeping the rate of interest low would be to make the national governments of the transit countries feel that there is a tangible advantage in borrowing the required funds from this bank, and consequently that some kind of a contribution is involved.

The National Development Corporation could also represent and help private concerns which needed funds for private development and industrial projects. The Development Bank would provide such loans to private concerns with the formal guarantee of the National Development Corporation. The National Development Corporation would guarantee the private concerns (for which they would charge them a percentage fee).

Though half-owned by the national government, some of the projects promoted and financed by the National Development Corporation could be sold, at a profit or premium, to purely private enterprise. This is recommended in order to minimize the number of State-owned enterprises, since it is clearly the case that private concerns manage business much more efficiently than government or semi-government agencies.

If a 5 per cent cut were agreed on, the sum that would be paid yearly into such a Development Bank would be, at a conservative estimate, £35,000,000. This would represent an equal investment from each side: the oil companies and the producing companies. Within the second five-year period, this same percentage would mean an annual investment of over £70,000,000 (the increase being due to higher production).
But in any case, let us always remember that "this is not a donation, nor money thrown away. It is an investment that will produce benefits".

Left here, the proposal is incomplete because it provides for benefits coming from one direction only. To make them mutual, transit countries ought to enter into "Internationally-recognized treaties with the oil-producing States guaranteeing the pipe-lines crossing their territories". Thus the possibility of a haphazard decision to stop the flow of oil to any terminal or through any pipe-line would be completely eliminated. Such decisions would rest in the hands of a group representing both the oil-producing and the transit countries together; both types of country would review all oil problems and differences and dictate oil policies. Let both sides, transit and producing countries, form an all-Arab Oil Council. I believe that such a council would safeguard Arab oil interests as well as oil companies’ rights, and it might prove useful as well in other constructive fields.

Benefits

Summed up, the benefits from this simple suggestion would be:

(1) To oil-producing countries:

(a) A stable oil policy which would mean the continuous flow of oil to world markets and a whetted interest on the part of oil companies in increasing production and, consequently, make possible increased royalties and taxes.

(b) A remunerating investment from their participation in financing development projects throughout the Arab world.

(c) Removal of jealousy amongst the "have-not" States, and, therefore, the creation of better understanding and co-operation.

(2) To oil companies:

(a) A stable oil policy and the guaranteed flow of oil to world markets.

(b) The satisfaction of having contributed to the development and welfare of the Arab peoples.

(c) Increased production and consequently higher profits.

(3) To transit countries:

(a) Low interest capital coming from friendly neighbouring countries to finance development projects. This is bound to improve inter-Arab relations and enhance understanding and co-operation through the area.

(b) Increased dues as more oil flows to world markets. Whatever the criticisms of this proposal may be it surely must be admitted that some alternative to the present situation must be found. No one can say that "all’s right with Arab oil". So let’s do something before it is too late.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE ARAB DEVELOPMENT BANK

1. Who would own the Arab Development Bank?

Oil companies and oil-producing countries would be the shareholders in this Bank. Holdings would be in proportion to investments made by individual oil companies and oil-producing countries.

2. What oil-producing countries are involved?

The oil companies and oil companies involved are:

(1) Iraq: with its oil companies, Iraq Petroleum Co., Basrah Petroleum Co., Khatene Oil Co.

(2) Sudan Arabia: with the Arabian-American Oil Co. (Aramco), that holds the concession in this country, and the Getty Oil Co., that holds part of a concession in the Neutral Zone.

(3) Kuwait: with its main oil company, the Kuwait Oil Co., owned 50 per cent by the Gulf Oil Co. of the U.S.A. There is also the American Independent Oil Co. that holds the Kuwait share of the concession in the Neutral Zone.

(4) Bahrain: with Bapco, which is entirely American-owned, and holds a concession of oil and refining in Bahrain island.

(5) Qatar: with the Qatar Petroleum Co., which is owned by the same shareholders as the Iraq Petroleum Co.

3. Why isn’t Iran included?

Because Iran is not an Arab country, and no pipe-lines carrying Iranian oil through any Arab countries exist at present.

4. Could Iran participate in financing the proposed Bank in the future?

That possibility should not be excluded, but at present it would be better to limit this Bank to Arab interests.

5. How would the Bank be organized?

The World Bank is an excellent example that should be followed when organizing the Arab Development Bank. I believe assistance in this field must be sought and I feel confident the World Bank would not hesitate to help, especially in the early stages.

6. Why did you include the oil companies in this Bank? Why shouldn’t you limit this operation of mutual assistance to the Arab governments only, without the oil companies?

Arab oil operations are undoubtedly profitable to Arab oil-producing countries as well as to oil companies. Healthy relations must prevail between these companies and the governments and people of oil-producing and transit countries if oil operations are to continue to be profitable. There is little doubt that the participation of the oil companies in financing and promoting this Bank would lead to an atmosphere of co-operation in which all oil operations would be beneficial. All parties involved should feel that oil is a boom to all concerned. In better terms, the proposed Bank would be a joint partnership between three parties: the oil companies, the oil-producing countries and the transit countries.

7. What transit countries are involved?

The Lebanon, Jordan and the United Arab Republic.

8. Why do you consider Egypt as a transit country?

Tankers loaded with Arab oil pass through the Suez Canal before reaching European markets. It is hoped that a pipe-line will carry oil through Egypt in the future.

9. But isn’t Egypt an oil-producing country too?

Yes, Egypt produces small quantities of oil, and must therefore be considered as an oil-producing country. As such, Egypt must also contribute towards the financing of the proposed Bank. On the other hand, Egypt should also largely benefit from the loans to be provided by the Arab Development Bank in order to finance the many development projects ready for implementation.

10. What would the capital of the National Development Corporation be?

Present development projects and the country’s needs would...
be the determining factors in this case. The Lebanese National Development Corporation would operate with a capital of £2,000,000; that of Egypt would have £5,000,000; that of Syria £3,000,000, and that of Jordan £1,000,000. These figures are quoted to furnish an example of the different sums involved, and themselves are far from being an answer to the existing needs. Each Development Corporation would be free to decide upon the amount of capital required. The capital may be increased if future needs require such a step. Private citizens would be given the opportunity to invest in these National Development Corporations, and the national government would be expected to match private enterprise. This would make the national government and the private investors equal shareholders.

11. Why should governments be involved in this banking affair? Would it not be better to have the National Development Corporation entirely owned by private citizens?

The World Bank does not extend loans except to governments. Should any loan be made to any private concerns, these must be guaranteed by the governments concerned. The Arab Development Bank must be instituted along similar lines. In fact, this would be a much better arrangement, because it combines both government and private enterprise. The national character of development projects render the participation of the national government a necessity.

12. Would it not be dangerous to have most of the big development projects in a country owned, and even monopolized, by the government and a group of wealthy private citizens who could afford to buy the biggest number of shares in the National Development Corporation?

It is presumed that the National Development Corporation would sell out to private concerns some of these projects after their completion.

13. Would all development schemes in the country be the monopoly of the National Development Corporation? And would a private concern be able to borrow money from the Arab Development Bank?

Development schemes and projects would certainly not be monopolized by the National Development Corporation. Private concerns wishing to contract loans with the Arab Development Bank for a development scheme could do so provided it is carried out through the National Development Corporation and with its guarantee. Private concerns would have to pay a small fee to the Development Corporation. Consequently, the rate of interest would be higher than the 3 per cent taken for loans made to the National Development Corporation. Private concerns may have to pay 5 or 6 per cent or whatever the rate of interest acceptable by the local banks.

14. Why should the Development Bank make loans at a small rate of interest?

The main idea behind the institution of this Bank is to enhance the development of countries where, unfortunately, no oil has been struck. It must be remembered that these countries often contribute by transiting oil through their territories and through providing export facilities. No appreciation or gratitude towards the oil companies would be needed if the rate of interest was equal to that of the World Bank. Transit countries would certainly recognize the contribution made by both the oil-producing countries and the oil companies in this field.

15. Would appreciation and gratitude be the only benefit drawn by the oil-producing countries and the oil companies?

Emphatically no. Together with the founding of this bank, treaties will be concluded, singly and severally, between the transit countries and the producing ones. These treaties will guarantee the protection of oil installations in the transit countries. This would certainly be a much better arrangement than the one existing at present and entered into by the national governments and the oil companies. There is little doubt that this would be conducive to a healthy atmosphere in which co-operation can exist.

16. What sums of money would be yearly invested in the Development Bank?

The 5 per cent cut would bring in this year £35,000,000, a handsome amount earmarked for loans; it is thought that the present production of oil will be doubled within the next 6 or 7 years. Consequently, the 5 per cent cut which will now bring £35,000,000 would, around 1965, become equivalent to £70,000,000. Taking an average of £50 millions per year, the total sum which would be invested during the next ten years would be half a billion sterling pounds.

17. Would the Arab Development Bank do anything in other Arab territories which are not transit countries, such as Libya and the Sudan?

In the early stages, the Arab Development Bank should limit its activities to the transit countries, but as an Oil Council is to be formed from the oil countries and transit countries, it is quite possible that at a later date the countries concerned would see fit to spread the benefits of oil to sister countries.

18. What is the feeling in the oil-producing countries? Are they likely to accept? And if not, why not?

I believe that any resistance from any of the producing countries to participating in this bank would be overcome if the advantages of the proposal were made clear to them. Some of them have already been contacted, and have shown willingness to adopt the scheme.

19. What is the feeling of the oil companies? Are they in favour, and if not, why not?

Some of the oil companies, when approached, did not show great enthusiasm, for two reasons:

1. They do not want to part with 5 per cent of their profits to lend it at 2½ per cent rate of interest when they can use it in other directions more profitably.

2. They do not wish to be involved in a joint scheme with the Arab countries which may, as they say, "bring them headaches in the future".

I am sure that those who think along these lines are not far-sighted at all. Again, I feel certain that when the advantages of stability in the Arab oil areas, further security of pipe-lines and oil installations, have been made clear to them, they will wholeheartedly participate in this investment bank.

NEW BOOKS TO READ

Pakistan — A Political Study by Keith Callard 30/-
The Koran Interpreted by A. J. Arberry 2 vol. 45/-
Sufism by A. J. Arberry 10/6
Science, Democracy and Islam by Humayun Kabir 12/6
THE LONDON AGREEMENT ON CYPRUS: RATIFICATION BY TURKISH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Turkish Grand National Assembly ratified on 28th February 1959 the London Agreements on Cyprus on 4th March by 347 votes to 138, with two abstentions.

Speaking on the motion, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Fatin Rustu Zorlu, said that in the Government's view the London Agreements on Cyprus provided adequate guarantees of the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community and of the security of Turkey. He emphasized that the Turkish community would now enjoy an equal status with the Greek community in Cyprus, and would be completely free to develop its religious, educational, social and economic institutions. He added that the Turkish Government also considered that the British bases in Cyprus constituted additional guarantee of permanent peace in the island.

THE LONDON AGREEMENT ON CYPRUS:
MR. ZORLU'S ANALYSIS

Background to the Agreements

"As you all know, since 1821 the Cyprus problem has been a source of antagonism between Turkey and Greece. Now again it has broached the President and the Prime Minister. There is, however, no doubt that this problem might have gone through far more violent phases and might have brought about far more serious consequences. But even during the gravest moments of the struggle, the friendship established during the time of our great ancestors, the Leader Ataturk and the great Greek statesman Venizelos, and the realization by the statesmen of both sides that the two countries were dependent upon each other for the preservation and defence of their national existence, prevented the two sides from resorting to extreme attitudes. . . .

"Three agreements were initiated in Zurich between the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Greece. The first agreement concerns the principles relating to the establishment of the State of Cyprus; the second constitutes a Treaty of Guarantee between Turkey, Greece, Britain, and the State of Cyprus; and the third is in the nature of a Treaty of Alliance between the Republic of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey.

Basic Structure of Republic of Cyprus

"The basic principle of the agreement signed with Greece is that Cyprus is to be declared a Republic with a President and Vice-President, and that under this Presidential régime the two communities shall retain their independent status and co-operate within the framework of the new State under equal rights and conditions.

"According to this agreement:
(a) The President will be Greek and the Vice-President, Turkish. The President and the Vice-President shall have the right of final veto in matters concerning foreign policy, national defence, and security; in other matters they shall have the right of suspensive veto.
(b) High officials and army commanders shall be appointed with the agreement of both the President and the Vice-President. The Civil Service shall be composed of 70 per cent Greeks and 30 per cent Turks.
(c) The independent Republic of Cyprus shall have an army of 2,000 men, of whom 60 per cent shall be Greek and 40 per cent Turkish.
(d) In addition there will be an internal security force of 2,000 men. In the initial years 60 per cent of this force shall be composed of Greeks and the remaining 40 per cent of Turks, but subsequently the proportion will be 70 and 30 per cent respectively.
(e) A Legislative Council, or House of Representatives, shall be set up in the proportion of 70 per cent for the Greek community and 30 per cent for the Turkish community. Apart from this, there shall be two separate Communal Chambers exercising authority in religious, educational, teaching and cultural questions, and questions of personal status. In all these questions the Communal Chambers shall be vested with legislative and administrative powers, the right to set up judicial tribunals, and the power to exercise authority and control in cases where the interests and institutions are of a purely communal nature, such as economic associations, municipalities, etc.
(f) A Supreme Constitutional Court shall be appointed in connection with the application of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus. This Court shall take decisions in conflicts of authority which may arise between the Communal Chambers and the House of Representatives. A High Court of Justice shall also be established as the highest organ of the judiciary. The latter shall consist of one Turk, two Greeks and one neutral.
(g) The Constitution expressly states that the union of Cyprus in any form with any other State shall be totally excluded. Also a Treaty of Guarantee shall be concluded between the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey, Greece and Great Britain. The constitution of Cyprus shall be guaranteed by Turkey, Greece and Great Britain. In the event of any breach of the provisons of this constitution, Turkey, Greece and Great Britain shall have the right to intervene jointly or separately.
(h) Apart from a tripartite Military Headquarters shall be established in Cyprus by virtue of a separate Treaty of Alliance to be concluded between Turkey, Greece and the Republic of Cyprus. The command of the tripartite Headquarters shall be assumed in rotation and for a period of one year each by Cypriot, Greek and Turkish Generals.
(i) Independent Turkish municipalities shall be set up in the five largest towns of Cyprus.

Turkey's rights guaranteed by Treaty

"As you can see, both Turkey's interests in the island and the rights of our co-racists in Cyprus are now under guarantee.

"The fact is that the newly-created Republic of Cyprus will be unable to unite with Greece or any other State. This condition is to be expressly stated in the constitution of the State of Cyprus. As I pointed out, a treaty guaranteeing the constitution of Cyprus shall be signed between the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey, Greece and Great Britain, and, in the event of any breach of the constitution, these three countries shall have the right to intervene jointly or separately. If, for instance, the Republic of Cyprus, contrary to the provisions of the constitution, were to attempt to unite with Greece, then Turkey would be entitled to intervene at any time and in any way which it saw fit. You must appreciate that this understanding constitutes a strong and sufficient guarantee against the possibility of the island falling under foreign domination.

"Furthermore, under the provisions of the agreement, any political activity on the part of the State of Cyprus that might prove harmful to our interests has been forbidden. If, for instance, the Cypriot House of Representatives or the Government were to adopt a decision against the interests of Turkey, it would always be possible for the Vice-President, who will be a Turk, to veto such a decision in a final way and thus render it invalid. In this respect a provision has also been incorporated into the agreement to the effect that the Republic of Cyprus shall not be able to join pacts or political organizations of which Greece and Turkey are not already members.

"As one can see, in the light of the explanations so far given, the question of guaranteeing Turkey's strategic interests, which was one of our sources of anxiety in respect of the Cyprus problem, has now been settled and secured in every respect, and in the most perfect manner under the present agreement.

Protection of Turkish Cypriots

"I shall now pass on to the second question which has been for us a source of concern, namely, the assurance concerning the protection of the rights of our co-racists in Cyprus.

"The Turks will not be in a minority in the new Republic of Cyprus. On the contrary, they will have the status of a community whose interests will enjoy the same protection as those of the Greeks in the running of the island's affairs. There is no question of leaving the Turkish community under the domination or administration of the Greek majority. The Turks of the island, with their racial attributes, their religion, culture, customs and traditions, and their legislative, executive and judicial powers, constitute an independent community in every way. The provisions of
the agreement in this respect are of a nature to guarantee all the rights of the members of the Turkish community.

It is clear that the agreement make it impossible for decisions to be taken by the island’s administration in the legislative and executive fields, that would lead to results incompatible with the interests of the Turkish population. The decision to elect a Greek as President and a Turk the Vice-President is important in a formal sense only, but from the point of view of basic principles, there will be no difference between the position of the President and that of the Vice-President. These two leaders, who shall be elected by the two communities in respect to their “representation,” and the example of their co-operation, promote the establishment of harmony and solidarity between the two communities.

In fact that the majority of the House of Representatives will be in Greek hands, the Vice-President is important in a formal sense only, but from the point of view of basic principles, there will be no difference between the position of the President and that of the Vice-President. These two leaders, who shall be elected by the two communities in respect to their “representation,” and the example of their co-operation, promote the establishment of harmony and solidarity between the two communities.

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Further, the Vice-President will have the right of suspensive veto regarding decisions taken and laws passed by the House of Representatives in respect of other questions. This means that if it should happen that a law passed by the House is incompatible with the interests of the Turkish community, the Vice-President shall be entitled to return that decision to the House for reconsideration.

Therefore, the question may arise: What would happen if the House of Representatives chose to insist on its decision? Would that mean that a decision or a law against the interests of the Turkish community would have to be put into effect?

"No, it would not, my honourable colleagues. For in the event of such a situation arising, the decision or law in question shall be referred to the Supreme Constitutional Court, whose establishment is enshrined in the constitution and shall be applied only as directed by that Court. Naturally the Supreme Court will hold an impartial position, as it will be composed of one Turk, one Greek and one neutral. As you can see, from the point of view of the working of the House of Representatives, the provisions of the agreement constitute a full guarantee of the rights of the Turkish community. I should also like to point out that by its very constitution the legislature is in a position to ensure greater rights for the Turkish community.

Further, any modification of the electoral law, the adoption of any law relating to municipalities and of any law imposing duties or taxes, shall require a simple majority of the Greek and Turkish members of the House of Representatives taking part in the vote and considered separately. These measures will ensure the establishment of harmony between Greeks and Turks, and will prevent actions incompatible with the rights of either side.

Communal Chambers

"Again, from the legislative point of view, there is another body that will help to protect the rights of the Turkish community. Each community is to have its own Communal Chamber. The Turkish Communal Chamber shall independently exercise its authority in religious matters, matters of education, concerning questions, and matters of personal status. It shall also have the right to supervise Turkish municipalities, religious institutions and co-operative societies, and to impose personal taxes in order to maintain and control the communal bodies or associations. This is a very important point because it means that in questions which concern them as a community, the Turks will be entirely independent, and will administer themselves without any outside influence. This is true to the extent that the island’s House of Representatives will have no authority to take decisions, or to promulgate laws, in communal matters.

The Turkish Community and the Executive

"I shall now examine the powers with which the Turkish community will be vested under the executive system in the island. In this field the rights of the Turkish community have been fully guaranteed, as the Turks are to share the executive power in the island with the Greeks under equal rights and conditions.

The agreement envisages that executive authority shall be vested in the President and the Vice-President and that, for this purpose, they shall have a Council of Ministers composed of seven Greek and three Turkish Ministers. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the government of the Republic of Cyprus will consist of four Turks and eight Greeks. In this connection, too, a more equitable system has been accepted, rather than one based on the proportion between the representative sizes of the communities in the island.

Another point which is important for us from the point of view of executive authority is this: The Vice-President, who is to be a Turk, has the right of suspensive veto in the case of laws emanating from the House of Representatives, but also regarding decisions of the Government. Therefore the Government will not be able to adopt decisions incompatible with the interests of the Turkish community. In the event of the Government taking such a decision, the Vice-President will be able, by the use of his veto, to prevent its application.

"Furthermore, one of the following Ministries — the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Finance — shall be entrusted to a Turk. But this may be replaced by a system of rotation if agreement is reached between the President and the Vice-President.

In high official positions, the heads of the armed forces and security forces shall be appointed by the President and the Vice-President acting in agreement. The Civil Service shall be composed of 70 per cent Greeks and 30 per cent Turks. But the departments of Attica, Agriculture, the Inspector-General, the Treasurer, and the Governor of the issuing Bank, and the assistant heads of the Armed Forces, the Gendarmerie and the Police may not belong to the same community as their principals. For instance, if the Attorney-General is a Greek, his deputy must be a Turk.

Justice and the Turkish community

"I shall now examine the rights of the Turkish community within the context of judicial powers.

In this particular respect, the Turkish and Greek courts will perform the duties of Courts of First Instance. That is to say, civil disputes in which both the plaintiff and the defendant are Turkish shall be tried by a tribunal of judges belonging to that community. The same principle applies to civil disputes between Turks. The same principle applies in cases of disputes between Greeks.

Above these tribunals, a High Court of Justice shall be established as the highest organ of the judiciary in the island. As I have already indicated, the High Court of Justice shall have two Greeks and one neutral. Civil disputes which may create controversy, namely, those that are likely to arise between a Turk and a Greek, shall be tried by a military tribunal whose composition shall be determined by the High Court.

Military provisions

"Let us now look at the military provisions of the agreement.

"Cyprus will have an independent army of 2,000 men, of whom 60 per cent shall be Greek and 40 per cent Turkish.

"The security force will be 2,000 strong. They will, at first, be composed of 60 per cent Greeks and 40 per cent Turks. But subsequently the respective proportions shall be changed to 70 and 30 per cent. No such change is in question for the army. Both in the composition of the army and in that of the police force, the percentages have been determined not on the basis of the distribution of population, but on the basis of principles of equity. Of the military provisions of the agreements, the most important is the one which concerns the establishment of a Tripartite Headquarters in Cyprus. The Headquarters, to be set up with the participation of Turkey, Greece and Cyprus, will comprise a contingent of 450 Greek officers and men, and a contingent of 650 Turkish officers and men. The three Headquarters shall have charge of the training and training of the Cypriot army. The command of the collective Headquarters shall be assumed in rotation and for a period of one year each by a Cypriot, Greek and Turkish General Officer.

Other provisions advantageous to the Turkish community

"Apart from provisions which I have just referred to, there are in the agreement other important conditions which are to the advantage of the Turkish community. Among these are the following:

Separate Turkish municipalities shall be established in the five biggest towns of Cyprus; Turkish and Greek shall be the official languages of the island; Turkey’s national feast-days shall also be celebrated in Cyprus; and the Turks will have the right to raise the Turkish flag side by side with the flag of Cyprus.

"As the preceding enumeration has already demonstrated beyond doubt, the Cyprus problem has been solved in a manner most compatible with the interests of Turkey in the island, and with the rights of the Turkish community.

The Turkish Community will not be in the position of a minority, but will live in an atmosphere of progressive co-operation and enjoy equal rights and conditions. By virtue of the rights which they possess in the island’s foreign policy and national defence, they will share the opportunities inherent in the national interest of the mother-country. As a result of the recognition of their rights as a community, the Turks will be able to administer themselves, and maintain their national identity, their religion, their language, their traditions and customs.

The Turkish Government will help the Turkish community in the economic, financial, cultural and other fields; it will meet all the needs of our compatriots and be a source of strong support in helping them to preserve their national identity. ..."
MARRIAGE IN INDONESIA

The Place and Importance of the ‘Aadat (Customary) Law in Indonesian Social Life

Indonesia’s Unique Capacity for Synthetic Adaptation

Indonesia is predominantly a Muslim country, but in the long history of the archipelago Islam is only one of many religions and cultures which have flourished on Indonesian soil. The earliest beliefs were of ancestor worship and animism, but with the coming of the Hindus from the second century B.C., many forms of Hindu culture were introduced, which included Brahmantic, Vishnuite, Shivaite, Buddhist, Hinayanist and Mahayanist forms. These Hindu concepts did not replace altogether the earlier beliefs, rather they were assimilated and became integrated with them, and the same can be said of the Islamic faith which was introduced into Indonesia from the twelfth century, for although today it is widespread, followed by some 90 per cent of the population, regional customary rules and beliefs still exist side by side with it, relics of an earlier organism of society based on indigenous beliefs and cultures.

‘Aadat law areas

As a result of this long process of integration over the very wide area which is Indonesia, there exist today nineteen quite separate ‘aadat, or customary, law areas, comprising a wide diversity of custom and tradition. The customs embodied in ‘aadat law have much relevance to marriage, and indeed all aspects of social organization, whilst the Muslim religion has a distinctly separate place in the life of the people. This distinction between religion and social organization is perhaps less true of those areas which have adopted the Christian religion (about 4 per cent of the population is estimated to be Christian), and those areas which still profess Hinduism (chiefly the island of Bali).

For the Muslim in Indonesia, the religious marriage ceremony, conducted by a Muslim official and viewed more as a contract between individuals — the bridegroom and a representative of the bride — precedes the ‘aadat ceremony at which the marriage is solemnized. This latter ceremony is accompanied by many symbolic practices, designed to bring good luck, happiness and prosperity to the couple. Moreover, prior to the actual ceremony of marriage, ‘aadat law will have regulated many questions concerning the proposal and the engagement.

The woman plays an important part on her wedding day in all parts of Indonesia, and in customary law she possesses very definite rights, particularly in regard to marriage and inheritance. Nowadays, polygamy has become a rare practice, discouraged by the spread of Western ideas, but the figures for even as long ago as 1930 show only 2.9 per cent polygamous marriages for the whole of the country. Whereas formerly, the woman had no say in the choice of a husband, the decision being made for her by her parents, it is now normal for the couple to reach agreement before they seek the permission of their parents. It is still, however, considered essential to have this consent, and it is the parents who make all the arrangements for the marriage.

Islamic law makes no provision for an engagement period, and recognizes no legal obligations with regard to it, but the practice of making an engagement gift, which serves as a “binder” in the eyes of the community, is common to nearly all parts of Indonesia. This may consist of a gift from
the man to the woman, or an exchange of presents as amongst the Bataks, Minangkabaus, Dayaks and Torajas. Only amongst the Minahasans is such an engagement binder not found.

Marriage without an 'aadat payment is very exceptional in Indonesia, and where there is no such payment it is usually the result of Christian influence. In the patriarchal Batak society the payment serves to sever the woman's ties with her own clan and transfer her to her husband's clan. In Bali the payments remove her from the power of her domestic gods. Elsewhere, such as among the Dayaks, Minahasans, Atjehnese and in matrilineal societies, the marriage payments are in the form of reciprocal gifts. This is the custom in Java also, and here in addition a token marriage portion, known as the mas kawin, is customary.

**Overall pattern of the wedding**

There are many local differences of custom with regard to marriage in the island of Java, but a very definite overall pattern does emerge despite these differences. In Central Java, traditionally the man's father, but now far more often the man himself, conveys the proposal to the girl's parents, and if it is accepted he will make gifts of clothing, jewellery and, of recent years, a ring, to the girl, these gifts constituting the official engagement. The choice of the wedding day is a complex procedure, both here and all over Indonesia, and great care has to be taken to choose an hour, day and month which, according to ancient beliefs, is auspicious both for the bride and the bridegroom. As elsewhere, the wedding party is given by the bride's family, although the expenses may be shared by both families, and all the women of her family assist in the preparations for the wedding, which may last for several weeks.

A week before the day a sedanuran, or party, is held by the bride's parents, at which the blessing of her forefathers is sought — the remnants of the influence of ancient ancestor worship — and from this time until the wedding day the bride may not see her future husband. On the eve of the wedding, tradition dictates that the bride be bathed by a group of older women, all of them happily married and blessed with many children, so that all the signs for the marriage are favourable, and the bride's hair is dried with the smoke of incense.

The decorations of the house are intricate, all bearing the symbolic meaning of bringing love, happiness, fertility and wealth to the couple. A sugar plant decorates one side of the gate or entrance, to bring happiness, and on the other side a "king" banana tree is placed, symbolizing the important position the couple will hold on that day. The verandah is decorated with yellow coconut leaves, whilst inside the house the bridal sofa is covered with yellow silk and decorated with white flowers, leaves, fruit and sheaves of rice, symbols of purity, prosperity and fruitfulness.

On the wedding day the bridegroom arrives accompanied by friends and relatives, and is welcomed by a gamelan orchestra playing a composition special to weddings, the “Maunggang”. The Muslim ceremony and registration of marriage may have taken place at the mosque, but in many cases a Muslim official comes to the bride's house to officiate and at this ceremony a dowry is paid by the bridegroom, consisting usually of a token sum only.

The bridegroom then enters the room where the bride is waiting, but on the threshold it is traditional for him to have to break an egg underfoot. The bride must then wash his foot, showing by this act that she is willing to obey him and will share all his difficulties. Another tradition is for the couple to pelt each other with sirih or betel leaves. According to a legend a bride's sirih once dropped on her husband and he was immediately transformed into a snake. Nowadays the meaning is taken to be that since the groom is not so transformed his love is real and pure.

The real solemnization of the marriage follows, when the couple, seated side by side on the bridal sofa, are pronounced man and wife to the assembled guests and receive their congratulations. The couple stay for about a week in the house of the bride's parents and then they are summoned to the home of the bridegroom's parents, where a second party is held for them which very often includes a wayang performance.

This is the traditional pattern of a wedding in Central Java, and, indeed, with variations, in the whole of Java. One such variation exists in the village of Wrawang in West Java and is of particular interest since it embodies a custom, that of a betel-chewing ceremony, which recurs again and again in other parts of Indonesia. In carrying the proposal the father of the man takes with him a betel-chewing set which consists of betel leaves, betel nuts and other ingredients, and if the proposal is accepted the girl's mother wraps the betel-chewing ingredients in the leaves and distributes them to all the neighbours, and this serves as a formal announcement of the engagement. As in most rural areas of Indonesia the young couple have obligations towards their future parents-in-law. The man must help in the rice-fields, especially at harvest time, whilst the girl must prepare special dishes to give her prospective parents-in-law whenever they celebrate.
for example, an anniversary, or ‘Id al-Fitr (the end of the Muslim month of fast).

Patrilineal society

The Batak society of North Sumatra is based on an extended family or kinship system known as the “marga”. The people are divided into clans and inter-marriage between members of the same clan is strictly forbidden, violation of this rule being punishable by banishment from the community. A “bride-price” type of marriage is practised, in which the money paid to the bride’s clan by the bridegroom serves to sever her ties with her own family and transfer her to his. She is then entitled to lifetime support from her husband’s clan, even if he dies before her. Batak society is patrilineal, and inheritance is through the male line only, but it is the custom for a father to make some provision for his daughters at the time of their marriage.

The Batak have perfected the art of extemporizing love songs in the “pantun” metre. These songs are sung in the form of question and answer between men and women, and it is a great disgrace to fail to make an appropriate answer. The songs are renowned for their beauty and are sung on many traditional occasions. In the Simelungan district they are sung at wedding parties, and the young people also hold special meetings at which to sing them. Many proposals of marriage are offered and accepted in this way.

Matriarchal system

In the Minangkabau region of Sumatra there is found a matriarchal family system, where the woman is head of the family group and owner of the family property, although the estate is actually managed by a man, often the eldest brother. The marriage customs are thus different in many ways from those of other areas of Indonesia, but, like the Bataks, the members of one clan may not intermarry, since they are regarded as brothers and sisters of one large kin-group. There are also further prohibitions enjoined by ‘adat law, the object of which is to prevent bad feeling among the family or clan. For instance, if a man is divorced he may not marry any relative of his ex-wife, nor may a member of his clan marry his former wife during his lifetime.

With the matriarchal system the marriage proposal usually comes from the girl’s family, and it is they who pay the dowry which has to be produced at the wedding ceremony. In one district of Minangkabau it is the tradition for the bride’s family to send dishes of yellow rice and beef to the bridegroom’s family just before the wedding day, the purpose of these gifts being to strengthen family ties. The bridegroom, upon marriage, goes to live in the family house of his bride, where the couple will occupy one room. The husband must then assist the ‘mamak’, or elder brother, who runs the estate, and eventually he will be admitted to the village meetings and become a full member of the community, but if his wife dies before him he will return to his own family, having no right to inherit her property. The children remain with the wife’s family.

Family council

In one of the larger islands of the Nusa Tenggara group, Sumbawa, the marriage proposal must first be discussed by a council of the man’s family and relatives. From this council a delegation, well versed in all matters of customary law, is sent to the girl’s parents, and, as in West Java, they take with them the ingredients for a betel-chewing ceremony. If the proposal is accepted the girl’s parents will make known the amount of dowry required, and this is again the subject of a family council before agreement is reached. Again as in other parts of Indonesia, the wedding day has to be chosen with great care, in accordance with age-old religious beliefs. When a decision is arrived at the girl begins to cry and wail, and her family beat out an accompaniment to the doleful noise on their rice blocks. In this way the village community is informed of the impending marriage of the girl, and the tradition is supposed to denote the mixed feelings with which she approaches the event, her sorrow at parting with her parents allaying the joy.

In Bandjarmasin, in the south of Kalimantan, an area peopleed by immigrants from Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi, and where the customs bear marked resemblance to those found in Java, there exists a special custom with regard to long engagements, although it is only the well-to-do members of the community who can afford to practise it. The ceremony is called “hairyman” and consists of visits between the two families and the exchange of specially prepared dishes. There are specific days for the performance of this ceremony which fall on Muslim festive days. It can be performed at most five times in the year, three times during Ramadan (the Month of Fast), once at the end of the Fast, and once on the Feast of Sacrifice (‘Id al-Adha).

Tolerance and adaptation

Islamic and Christian marriages to some extent provide an escape from the strict rules and obligations enjoined by ‘adat marriages, particularly amongst those who live away from their own local community, but although there has been some breakdown in traditional customs, especially in urban areas, the force of tradition is still a powerful one. In general Muslim and Christian leaders try to operate within the framework of the ‘adat system, once again showing that capacity for tolerance and adaptation which appears to be characteristic of the Indonesian way of life, but because of the all-embracing character of the Christian marriage ceremony and regulations Christianity does tend to be more independent of traditional customs than the Muslim religion.

Outside the towns and cities, ‘adat law remains strong, regulating not only the marriage ceremony but also the rights of the partners in marriage, the laws of inheritance and other questions of social organization. Such ‘adat customs are essentially local, and their individuality can in large measure be attributed to isolation and lack of communication, but it is to be expected that with the improvement of communications, the spread of education and mass media of information, there will inevitably be some loosening in the force of tradition. But, just as many different cultures and religions have been adapted to produce a synthesis of culture which is termed “Indonesian”, therefore it is not unreasonable to prophesy that ‘adat customs will survive to some extent and that they will continue to lend variety to the Indonesian scene, adding colour and interest to the marriage ceremonies of the different islands of the Archipelago.
AN IRANIAN LEADER IN HUMAN THOUGHT

Mahmud Shabistari (1250-1320 C.E.), Philosopher-Poet

Shabistari believed that to find God one had to free oneself from one's flesh. The way to God passes through two major stages: first, self-denial and complete sanctification of the soul; and second, union with God. When a man reaches the second stage he becomes a perfect human being.

By V. SIMONIAN

One of Iran's leading poets, a philosopher quite well-known in its western part, is Mahmud Shabistari, born in 1250 C.E. in the small town of Shabistaran near Tabriz, Azerbaijan.

When Mahmud was a small boy, the hordes of Mongol heathens invaded Iran and other Middle Eastern countries. Hulagu Khan, the grandson of Ghengis, chose Tabriz as the capital of his newly-founded empire. This made Iran's northwestern city famous and, year after year, many Europeans began to arrive there to visit the fabulous capital of the great Khan.

There are very few facts known about Shabistari's life. It is generally agreed, however, that he spent most of his time in Tabriz, leading a quiet, modest life, and then died there in 1320 C.E.

His most famous works are Gulshan-i-Raz, Haqq al-Yaquin, Risalat-i-Shahid and Mir'at al-Muhaqqiqin.

Shabistari was a very modest man who never boasted of his vast store of knowledge. He said he was not ashamed of being a poet, but added, most humbly, that a poet like 'Attar, another great contemporary, would come but once in a hundred centuries.

He wrote Gulshan-i-Raz, a poem containing about one thousand couplets, in 1311. In this work Shabistari tried to answer several controversial questions regarding Sufism. The book was taken to Europe by two travellers in 1700 and was soon published in several languages.

In Gulshan-i-Raz, Shabistari discusses the nature of "Thought," "Instinct," "Dogma," "the Essential and the Possible," "the Part and the Whole," and many other subjects related to the mystical doctrine of the Sufis. This book is considered to be one of the greatest works ever written on Sufism.

Expressing his concept of God, in a foreword to his Gulshan-i-Raz, he says: "Truth is One; it gives thought life and illuminates this world and the hereafter."

He believed that life, in all its variety, is part of a Great Source — the One and Only to whom everything living eventually returns.

"God is present everywhere and forever. In every small particle a bright soul can see the glory of the Ultimate Power," he said.

Asked whether God was separate from the world, he replied that the world was only a small spark of the Great Fire and, although seemingly separate, it was part of the Great Whole.

In his opinion, to find God, to get an insight into the existence of God, is only possible through thought and meditation. Thought can assume two forms:

1. Cold logic and dialectical reasoning; and,
2. Knowledge growing from within the soul.

Through mere logic and dialectics God cannot be found, as logic is based upon man's intellect and his senses, which can only see and feel the material and are incapable of freeing themselves of the material world.

If God hid His way from a person, the chains of reasoning and argument of a mortal would lead him into entanglements from which he could not free himself.

On the other hand, if the seeker could finally convince himself of the Oneness of God, he would get a first glimpse of Light, which would gradually develop into perpetual enlightenment.

Answering the question of a friend who asked if God could be found through cold reasoning, Shabistari said: "Logic and reasoning, when faced with the dazzling Light of the Eternal One, become blind, like a blind bat which cannot see when the sun shines."

He believed that the human mind becomes impotent when faced with Eternity, just like Man, who cannot look the sun without losing his sight for a while. "But," he said, "Man can look at the reflection of the sun in the water. When man realizes the weakness, the impotence of reason, then can he receive Light which will illuminate his soul and heart."

He believed that Man was "the life of the earth" and that Man had inherited God's virtues, that corruption, darkness and vanity were also born into Man. "These," he said, "Man must try to overcome."

Shabistari believed that to find God one had to free oneself from one's flesh, the corruptible. "Only through the sanctity of the spirit can Man ever find his Creator," he said. "The way to God, therefore, passes through two major stages: first, self-denial and complete sanctification of the soul; secondly, union with God. When a man reaches the second stage he becomes a perfect human being."

The following short specimen shows the kind of question and answer, also an identical illustration, that the reader can find in Gulshan-i-Raz:

**Question**

"What Sea is that whereof the shore is speech? What pearl from out its depths our hands can reach?"

**Answer**

"The Sea is Being; speech its shore, the shell Words, and its pearls Heart's Wisdom, wot thee well. Each wave a thousand royal pearls doth pour Of text, tradition and prophetic lore. Each moment thence a thousand waves are tossed, Yet ne'er a drop therefrom is ever lost. Knowledge is gathered from that Sea profound:
Its pearls enveloped are in words and sound.
Ideas and mysteries descending here
Need some similitude to make them clear.”

Illustration
“In April’s month, thus was it told to me,
The oysters upwards float in Umman’s sea.
Up from the depth unto the Ocean’s brim
Ascending open-mouthed they shorewards swim.
Mists from the sea arise and veil the land,
And then in rain dissolve by God’s command,
Into each oyster-mouth a rain-drop creeps:
The shell doth close, and sinketh to the deeps.
With heart fulfilled it sinketh down again;
A pearl is formed from every drop of rain.

Into the depths himself the Diver hurls,
And to the shore brings back the lustrous pearls.
Beings the sea; the shore our human frames.
God’s Grace the mist: the rain God’s Holy Names.
Wisdom’s the Diver in this mighty deep.
Who ‘neath his cloak a hundred pearls doth keep.
The Heart’s the vase wherein is wisdom found:
Heart’s wisdom’s shell the letters, words and sound.
The moving breath like lightening doth appear,
And thence words fall upon the hearer’s ear.
Break, then, the shell: bring forth the royal pearl:
The kernel keep: the husk on ash-heap hurl.
Lexicon, grammar and philology
All these mere accidents of letters be.
Whoe’er on things like these his life doth spend
Doth waste his life without an aim or end.”

WHAT THEY THINK OF US . . .

Followers Of The Prophet
By LEONARD MARTIN

This feature presents thought-provoking views — good and bad — expressed by non-Muslims about Islam and the Muslims. We welcome comment from our readers on the material we publish on this page, to reply, where necessary, to the unjustly hostile attacks against Islam.—Editor, I.R.

“There is a Mohammedan mosque at Woking, and there may be others in Britain; but in general few people know anything of the Muslim religion, which is one of the great religions of the world, and whose adherents number hundreds of millions.

“I have for many years resided in a city which counts several thousands of Muslims among its polyglot population, and I have therefore been able to observe their conduct and their peculiar religious customs, which make quite an interesting study.

“How, it may be asked, does the general behaviour of typical Muslims differ from the rest of the civilized community? The obvious reply is, ‘Not at all’. They have their good, bad and indifferent citizens, just like the rest.

“The Muslim religion is a truly prohibitionist one, alcohol being forbidden. The great majority is, in practice, truly teetotal, and this means an absence of the many crimes and offences which are a result of the excessive drinking of spirituous liquors — no little gain to any community. Especially when it is remembered that learned judges often declare from the bench that most crime is a direct result of over-indulgence in our old pal, Al Cohol — a name with quite an Islamic flavour.”

“Here let me say that sometimes you do hear it said that when a Muslim does want to patronize a bar, he just leaves his tarboosh off and puts on European headgear. Most Muslims in our community wear a tarboosh or fez, of a brilliant scarlet colour, and this is the most obvious way of identifying one; but of late years many leave it off except on State occasions, and when they go to work, so there is then no quick means of identifying them from the rest of the population.

“There was a yarn once current in the East that Mohammed turns in his grave every time one of his followers takes an alcoholic drink: so, to make matters right, they always take another on top of it, or even multiples of two, so that everything remains in statu quo!

“Another good feature of the Muslim religion is its insistence on scrupulous bodily cleanliness and hygiene, which is particularly beneficial in the warm climates in which most Muslims appear to live, for it does not seem to be a religion of cold or arctic climate. In our community many of the males wear linen undergarments: they are supposed to wash before and after every meal, including teeth, and to obey many other intricate ceremonies with an eye to bodily purity.

“The well-off women dress much like everyone else, and have a penchant for the latest fashions, except that on Friday, their Sabbath, some may go about veiled, and they also do this on other special occasions. This custom, it should be emphasized, is a comparatively modern one in our community, and was introduced by certain of the priests, who, like priests in general, are known better for their ultra-conservative attitudes than for any modernizations. Irreverent boys call these veiled women ‘ghosts’, which is quite apt.

“Polygamy is theoretically still possible; but the high cost of living, and even the expense of keeping one wife in clothes and the best in shoes, has made the Muslim husband much like the rest of us — compulsorily monogamic. This polygamy, of course, not recognized by the law, which allows one wife only, and considers the rest of the ‘wives’ as concubines; these plural marriages, if any, are performed by the priest, not by an official of the State, as all our

1 Courtesy, the Editor, The Freethinker for 15th April 1955.
2 al-Cohol is an Arabic word.
Family Life and Business Ethics of a Muslim

Since marriage customs in Islam have always been a source of confused interest in the West, a few of the practices that have become law will be discussed. The mahr or bride-price is a thoroughfare to pagan times, when it was customary to buy a wife. This was greatly modified in intent, but the form remained. Only a portion of the mahr is paid at the wedding, and it is supposed to be used by the father of the bride to fit her out. If the marriage is dissolved, the remainder must be paid to the bride’s father — an effective deterrent to hasty divorce. Although the Koran states that a man may have four wives, it qualifies this with the requirement that he must treat them all with equal justice and equity. So while legalizing polygamy, in its innermost sense, the sharia makes it impossible. In actual practice the custom of multiple wives has nearly disappeared, due both to the expense involved and to public disfavour.

Divorce is comparatively easy for a male Muslim. It is only necessary for him to pronounce his intent on three separate occasions and the marriage yoke is lifted. It is still difficult for a woman to divorce her husband, but present-day practice makes it more feasible than in the past. The Prophet said that divorce is the most disagreeable of the things permitted by God to man; therefore all attempts should be made to avoid it. Temporary marriages called muta were permitted by the sharia, but practice dictated that respectable people enter into such contracts for a term of no less than ninety-nine years.

The Koran prohibits adultery and penalizes the guilty with one hundred strokes of a rod or confinement in a house until death. The latter penalty sounds especially harsh, but since conviction requires four witnesses it is not surprising that it is seldom inflicted.

“When in the Western world women were considered chattels and it was seriously doubted that they possessed a soul, Islamic law already permitted them to own property. Widows received a share of the husband’s estate, but daughters had to be content with half of a son’s portion. In the light of modern practice, it seems obvious that such inheritance laws would be unfair, but until comparatively recent times in the West it was only the sons who received legacies.

“Islamic business and trade operations, too, are dominated by the moral character of the sharia. The payment of interest and all forms of usury are definitely illegal in Islam. However, postal savings have now been permitted, although many pious Muslims still refrain from accepting the interest. Any type of business transaction that involves an element of chance, and therefore could be considered speculation, is proscribed by law. Included in this category is the fruit of an orchard before it is ripe, a heap of grain that has not been measured, or a runaway slave who might not be recaptured. Again, as is so often the case, strict legal considerations are supplanted by custom, and transactions that contravene the letter of the law are permitted. Thus we find that contracting for a yet unmade object is allowed if fixed specifications are laid down and the buyer has the right to refuse payment if they are not met.

“The religious aspect of the sharia might be illustrated by the fact that mortgage is permitted because it helps to relieve the condition of debtors — at least temporarily. Deposit on a desired object has overtones of morality in that this payment helps the seller to preserve his property. If one is guilty of fraud, one risks the double penalty of God’s displeasure and man’s punishment; a fact that again emphasizes that the law is both civil and religious.”

(Rom Landau, Professor of Islamic and North African Studies, College of the Pacific, California, in his book Islam and the Arabs, London, 1958.)
AN AMERICAN’S 23 QUESTIONS ON ISLAM WITH
A MUSLIM’S ANSWERS TO THEM*

III
By An Egyptian Scholar

Question 17: Scripture or sacred writings. Any writing or books in your religion whose source is considered sacred or of divine or supernatural origin?

Answer: The Qur’ân is the Word of God and the sacred Book of Islam. God revealed it in Arabic through Gabriel to our Prophet, who was made to repeat it so that he might never lose remembrance of it.

The word and meaning of the Qur’ân, a miracle in itself, are direct revelations from God, who proclaimed its matchless and miraculous character. God has also guaranteed that it would be immune to alterations and tampering, and that it would remain under His protection.

This has been borne out by the events.

The Collections of Traditions of the Prophet come next to the Qur’ân; for they contain the words and deeds of our Prophet. As we follow and imitate our Prophet’s example in every respect, his words and practices are held particularly sacred by us.

Question 18: Divine Authority. Is a special authority from God necessary to function in performing ordinances or rituals in religion?

Answer: In the performance of the five daily services of worship, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca and alms-giving, a Muslim needs no special authority from God or guidance from any authorized person. He can perform them by himself. However, there are Imams duly appointed to conduct the Friday and Bairam (‘Id) services, which must be performed jointly by the congregation, as well as the regular five daily services of a mosque.

At the joint performance of part of the five daily services of worship in a mosque, an Imam, if there is one, officiates. If there is no Imam, then any member of the congregation who knows how to conduct the service acts as a substitute. Such a person, however, has no other distinction than his knowledge and virtue.

Question 19: Present-day leadership of your religion. Is this leadership acknowledged? By what part of believers? What title is given to your leader?

Answer: The last of the Prophets, Muhammad, who brought the Message of Islam to mankind, is acknowledged as the foremost leader by all Muslims. They also venerate his companions and disciples, and the great doctors of Muslim theology who propagated his teachings.

A religious leadership like the Papacy, therefore, is not acknowledged in Islam. But there are religious officials appointed by the Government who lead the regular services of a mosque or perform other religious duties. Such religious officials include:

(a) Imams who conduct Friday and Bairam services, as well as part of the regular five daily services of worship in mosques;

(b) Preachers who in mosques deliver sermons on worship and doctrine;

(c) Muftis who direct the affairs of religious organizations in every province or sub-province, and also answer questions on religious matters asked by individuals or Government agencies; and,

(d) The President of Religious Affairs, who, as the head of all religious organizations in Turkey, is appointed by the President on the Prime Minister's proposal.

Question 20: Miracles. Supernatural happenings among men or people. Compared to miracles done in ancient times.

Answer: Miracles are supernatural actions which prophets do with divine permission as a proof of their prophethood. They demonstrate that God is capable of dealing as it pleases Him with the universe which is His own work and with the laws prevailing therein, and that everybody and everything are impotent before the Divine Power and Divine Will.

While admitting the external causes, the orderliness of nature, and the ordinary causes and phenomena, Islam also teaches belief in the Divine Power and Divine Will which predominate over those causes and phenomena. It is the Divine Will that governs the universe and the laws thereof.

Thus a miracle is the result of the Divine Will manifesting itself in unwonted manner. For, the manifestations of the Divine Will will be seen in the usual phenomena and external causes are manifestations that appear at the proper time. But, the Divine Will sometimes manifests itself directly with no apparent material cause, such as the resuscitation of the dead, the splitting in two of the moon, a sudden outpouring of water from fingers and dry stones, or voices issuing from inanimate things. It is difficult to account for such phenomena by the known laws of nature or by ordinary causes. In fact it is this difficulty which gives them their miraculous character.

A miracle is a wonder which consists of the replacement of a mentally possible order and arrangement by another possible order and arrangement for a divine reason and motive.

To conclude from the uniformity of natural laws and from the want of variations in the occurrence of the known and tested phenomena that they are absolutely immutable would be a misunderstanding of the scope and character of the Divine Will.

No sensible people can fail to comprehend that the laws of nature are probably mutable, liable to change when necessary. Such change, however, cannot be described as mere chance or vagaries of nature.

Prophethood could only be established by miracles. Therefore, there has been no religion without a prophet or a prophet without a miracle.

* For the first 16 questions see The Islamic Review for April and May 1959.
Our Prophet, like the other prophets, performed miracles on the strength of the Divine Will and Permission.

Nevertheless, saints who rose from the ranks of our Prophet’s followers and who approached God spiritually through prayer and virtue, could perform certain extraordinary deeds with the spiritual strength they derived from our Prophet. But, there is much difference between such extraordinary deeds and a miracle.

Remarkable feats of man based on scientific knowledge or on any material means cannot be compared to the miracles of prophets or the extraordinary deeds of saints, as there is no relationship between them.

Question 21: Is a church organization necessary? Is a tangible organized body or group necessary to constitute an acceptable church according to your religion?

Answer: As may be gathered from Answers 10 and 11, the four approved sects or denominations of Islam today are not organizations based on any political or administrative purpose or arrangement. They represent slightly different interpretation and application of the religion. In fact Islam does not regard the establishment of denominations as a religious necessity. The four denominations referred to above were probably a mere product of the need and importance which individuals felt in their religious and social lives.

The four great doctors of the Muslim theology, acknowledged and revered as the founders of schools, formulated guiding principles from the main sources of the religion and later generations accepted them as teachers in recognition of their skill and wisdom in this respect.

Thus, in Islam each of these four forms of religious interpretation and practice is called “school” and its founder “Imam”; and any Muslim who follows the teaching of one of these Imams is considered as belonging to that particular Imam’s school. There are no sects in Islam.

Question 22: Origin of Man. Where did man come from? Through evolutionary development or did he have some supernatural beginning in the shape or form he is now in?

Answer: In Muslim belief, God created the bodies of Adam and Eve as the first human beings on the earth, giving them life. All men and nations have, without exception, descended from these parents.

The elements constituting the human body, whatever stages they may have passed through in their development, have always retained their human character.

The same is true for the other living beings. No genus possesses the nature and characteristics of another genus. Even birds flying in the sky form separate sub-groups in their genus with different characteristics. Thus, the evolution and development of each genus takes place within itself.

Islam, therefore, does not accept the point of view that a living being can in the course of time take an entirely different form and nature as a result of evolution.

To suppose that the human race, which is endeavouring to conquer the universe, was brought about by the evolution of some animal, would be tantamount to paying no attention to reason and logic, and to the laws of nature which are operating before our eyes.

Were the Law of Evolution a natural law, it should be uniform and continuous. But while it is apparent for all eyes to see that man begets man and ape breeds ape, with no change from one to the other, how can it be acceptable to sensible people that the Law of Evolution produced man yesterday from an animal and then left both alone?

Thus, Islam looks upon such concepts as mental aberration, calling man man, and animal animal.

Man came to this world as man, lived and died here as man, and is still doing the same. Nevertheless, we believe that God in His Providence made all the living beings in general and man in particular capable of development — the former physical development, the latter both physical and spiritual development.

Question 23: Prayer. Do you have set forms — individual thoughts — definite times when to pray?

Answer: We have definite times and definite forms for each prayer.

Prayers obligatory by ordinance of God are: (a) ritual prayers; (b) fasting; (c) pilgrimage to Mecca; and (d) alms-giving.

(a) There are various kinds of ritual prayers. Of these five daily prayers, Friday prayer is absolutely obligatory. Bairam (Id) prayers and ‘int’ prayers performed before the dawn and after midnight are necessary. All the other forms of ritual prayers are recommended but not enjoined by the religious law.

Ritual prayers require fulfilment of certain conditions both before and during their performance.

Ritual prayers are performed according to prescribed rules. One of the requirements of ritual prayers is that they should be performed at definite times — dawn, noon, midday between noon and sunset, sunset and nightfall.

There is much wisdom in the prescription of definite times for the performance of the five daily prayers.

It is always possible for men in the battlefield of life to commit guilt and sin as they plunge into contention and rivalries. Through such blindness men have suffered great moral and material losses. There is much need for some means whereby to rouse man from his sleep of blindness, reminding him of the fact that some day he will have to account for all his actions.

The daily ritual prayers are thus enjoined as a means of reminding us five times a day that our actions are being constantly watched.

(b) Fasting throughout the month of Ramadhan is also a prayer prescribed by the ordinances of Islam.

It is observed between daybreak and sunset by abstaining from all food and drink, and from actions that invalidate it. This brings man much material and moral good.

(c) The prayer of pilgrimage, incumbent on every well-to-do Muslim who fulfills certain requirements, is performed once in a lifetime by visiting the holy places at Mecca at definite times in accordance with established rites.

(d) Alms-giving is a prayer prescribed by Islam for well-to-do Muslims as a religious tax, calculated and paid to the poor annually on the basis of personal income.

The benefit and wisdom of these prayers in social life are admitted by all.
ISLAM AND FAMILY PLANNING

By A. R. M. ZERRUQ

The three-fold object of marriage in Islam

Marriage, in Islam, has three objects: procreation, sexual gratification, and piety. Procreation being the first object, it is said, the perfection of marriage owes not so much to consummation as to the begetting of children. This idea is hinted at when it says in the Qur'an, "O Mankind! reverence your Cherisher-Lord Who created you from one being, created its spouse from the same being and from them spread innumerable men and women..." (4 : 1). From another verse, "I have not created jinn and men except for worshipping me" (51 : 56), it is evident that God always would wish population-increase in order that human beings might adore and worship Him. Thus the main purpose of human creation is the worship of God, and for this reason, it does not behove a Muslim to pamper prevention of conception without good reasons.

We may devise family planning for the prevention of the steady growth of population because we fear that the world's supply of food might not be equal to the demands of the increasing inhabitants of the earth. Scientists have expressed concern over the steady growth of population all over the globe. It is feared that the world population will be twice as much by the year 2000 C.E. as that at the present time. Another reason adduced strongly in favour of family planning is the limited space available for the accommodation of the ever-growing families all over the globe. But from the point of view of the evolutionary theory, scientists hold that the earth is expanding. These are, however, points worth considering, but this vast universe, into which countless human beings have come and gone, and are coming into it from day to day, will not fail to answer the needs of its inhabitants provided the earth's resources get their due nourishment. God, the Nourisher, has created the earth for developing its resources for the use and refined life of man. All that is needed is the conservation of the earth's resources from generation to generation without working them to waste and destruction.

Periodic wars can make havoc of the earth's produce (not to mention the stoppage of the exchange of foodstuffs between countries which are political rivals of one another) and consequently can impoverish the earth's population. The exchange of goods between East and West worked smoothly and Europe was secured against shortage of foods until the last Great War, the ravages of which have tightened food exchange consequent on the devastating effects of the war on the agricultural output of food exporters. From the foregoing facts, it will be seen that the economic development of a nation is sapped by periodic wars which greatly tell on a nation's agricultural and industrial production.

The solution, then, to the problem of population-increase does not lie mainly in family planning. It depends largely on the cessation of hostilities between nations, agricultural outputs being increased by food exporters and a country's harnessing its resources for the economic development of its people. In these respects, men as well as women should help to improve the economic conditions of their countries. Cottage crafts in rural areas, farming and home gardening can help to reduce the family budget. In the past, most homes had owned cows that fed the family and their own gardens satisfied the vegetable needs of every family. Today, a family goes shopping for such needs.

Birth control in Islam

In Islam, family planning by means of birth control is not looked upon with favour. It regards preventive measures against conception as reprehensible although it has a propensity to the method called "Coitus Interruptus." There is, however, no rigid rule about the method one uses for controlling conception. The faith grants a dispensation to people who are absolutely in need of it. For reasons of certain diseases of the heart or of the kidneys, tuberculosis, diabetes, or of mental disorders, contraceptive methods are considered desirable because in such cases the motive behind using them is to prevent such diseases from turning all the worse as a result of conception.

Some Muslim jurists permit abortion in exceptional cases, but others consider it forbidden by reason of the fact that God sends an angel to breathe life into a foetus. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, thus, "Verily, the creation of you in your mother's womb is made into sperm-formation in forty days, then, it is made into a clot of congealed blood, and then into a foetus, and after that, an angel is sent to breathe life into it." The Qur'an bears out this saying when it says, "Then We made the sperm-formation into a clot of congealed blood, and of that clot, we fashioned (it) into a foetus, and then, We formed of that bones and clothed them with flesh, and after that, We made it grow into another creature" (33 : 14). Obviously, for this reason, Islam regards abortion as "a hush-infanticide" if practised purely on economic and social grounds. Poverty in Islam, is not a good reason for controlling conception, because in such a case the faith expects the State to provide the poor people with adequate free lying-in homes, free milk-feeding centres, children's hospitals and such other pre-natal facilities as are essential especially for the common run of humanity.

In my opinion, as stated above, the dissemination of contraceptive knowledge would not alone solve the problem of population-increase. Even modern contraceptive methods, be they chemical, mechanical or surgical, work but with partial success; and an ideal contraceptive still remains undiscovered. To those who believe in Providence there is nothing strange about such a partiality of success since they believe in God's pre-ordained scheme of things that never fails to take effect whatever man might try to foil it. If it be in the will of God that a child should be born to someone, nothing can act as a hindrance to it.

That countries which have a steady growth of population must use the resources of medical science to arrest it is conceded by all sane-thinking people; but what is important to remember in this respect is that even such a use should be in accordance with the spiritual laws regulating Muslim family life. Indeed, for this reason there is a cry for more emphasis on spiritual aspects of the sex relationship and less preoccupation with the physical and the mechanical. One would possibly dispute that such a concept is an encroachment on one's personal liberty; but "Freedom," as the saying goes, "is not the right to do as you please, but the liberty to do as you ought.

1 See Faaunar al-Tadlieen on Fath al-Mu'een, p. 253.
2 For detailed information see Population and World Food Supplies by Sir E. John Russell.
3 "Lo! God changeth not the condition of a people, until they (first) change it themselves" (The Qur'an, 13 : 11).
4 See Faydh on 'Umdat al-Salik wa 'Uddat al-Nasik, p. 190.
6 See the Kitab ar-Ra'een of the Imam Nawawi.

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER 1959 41
A MILLION DISPLACED PERSONS IN ALGERIA

By A. CHANDERLI

French colonialism has left a new legacy in Algeria: more than one million displaced persons.

It is a fact that the main victim of France's colonial policy in Algeria has been the civilian population. During the four and a half years of this colonial war, which France terms a "pacification", approximately 500,000 civilians have been killed or seriously wounded as a result of French bombardments, reprisals and repression; 100,000 are imprisoned or held in concentration camps; and more than 300,000 are refugees in the neighbouring countries of Morocco and Tunisia.

But, in addition to the "traditional" methods of "pacifying" Algeria — the tortures, razing of villages, summary executions, etc., there now exist "Regroupment Centres", centres where thousands of children have died, where thousands are so ill that "medication can no longer help", and where all are condemned to a slow death from famine.

This is the horrifying situation revealed in a special report by French officials, recently released to the public and published by Le Monde on 18th April 1959. The shocking conclusion of this report is: "Because of the necessities of the pacification, one million men, women and children are in imminent danger of famine."

Situation desperate

These are the one million Algerian civilians who have been "resettled" by the French army in heavily guarded regroupment centres. Almost one out of every eight Algerians has been forced to leave his home to take "refuge" in these zones of population "concentration". Observers who have visited some of these centres fear that the situation is even more desperate than revealed by the French official's report, and that the number of those "resettled" may be actually well over the million admitted. Mgr. Rodhain, Secretary-General of the French "Secours Catholique", estimates the actual number of displaced persons as nearer 1,500,000.

At first, in an attempt to cut off the population's material and moral support to the Algerian Army of National Liberation, the French forces had organized economic blockades of certain areas. But, as the population continued to give aid and shelter to the nationalists, the French army resorted to this scheme of mass "resettlement" in guarded centres. This began on a large scale in November 1957 and was intensified during 1958. In effect, almost two-thirds of the evictions took place during 1958. As the centres were created on the initiative of the military authorities, the only criterion followed was the military "necessity".

Obviously, no consideration was given to the economic or psychological needs of the persons affected. The result has been a veritable homicide committed against one million helpless civilians. The report submitted to the French Delegate General, Mr. Delouvrier, cautioned euphemistically: "The means of existence must absolutely be furnished to these people, to avoid a catastrophic end to this experiment". Mr. Delouvrier has now duly forbidden the continuation of this "experiment" without his express authorization.

But what of the one million "guinea pigs", many of whom have already perished, or are permanently disabled, both physically and morally? Is that what General de Gaulle referred to when he declared recently: "...there are only signs of improvement during the past year... Everything is not perfect... but an immense work has been done." Is this the "civilizing mission" of France?

The French military authorities have created a curious distinction between "voluntary" regroupments and "non-voluntary" ones. The report of the French official comments that "several precise cases demonstrate that these terms must be understood in a very particular sense: the regroupments considered as 'non-voluntary' are those carried out hastily during the course of a 'clean-up' to permit the complete clearing of a region... On the other hand, the 'voluntary' regroupment is one where the decision is taken by the military forces exclusive of any concurrent military operation. In these cases, more precautions are taken. It is even possible that a sort of lodging is prepared before the population arrives..."

In many cases, the former villages are completely destroyed, or declared to be a "forbidden zone". Deprived of their income, with no means of work, the villagers are thus deprived of their human dignity, for they are reduced to a state of total dependence. Furthermore, the rations distributed are irregular and extremely meagre.

The report states: "Not official, they (the rations) are due to the goodwill of a local official or officer... and may cease with his departure. The other forms of assistance — clothing, social services, and especially medicine — are subject to the same interruptions without notice." The sanitary conditions are "generally deplorable". Although no exact statistics on the mortality rate exist, it is admitted that in certain regroupment centres, one child dies almost every day, and as a general rule, it is suggested that when a regroupment centre contains about 1,000 persons, every two days one child will die". In one of the most desperate cases, the medical report declared: "The general physiological state of the population is such that medication no longer can help."

One of the most tragic aftermaths of World War II was the existence of great numbers of displaced persons. Fifteen years later, the effects of this disaster and the problem of rehabilitation still remain in Europe as living reminders of the horrors of Fascism. Fifteen years later, this same human tragedy has been created in Algeria by French colonialism.

The Algerian Front of National Liberation has called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to bring this matter to the immediate attention of the member States of the United Nations and the Commission of Human Rights. The Algerian Front of National Liberation urgently appeals to everyone to use all the means at his or her disposal so that the world will not ignore the plight of these victims of French colonial policy, and France's refusal to seek a negotiated settlement in Algeria.

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Islam’s special feature is its inclusiveness of the truth of all that has preceded it

By THE LATE DR. KHALIFA ‘ABD AL-HAKIM

“If Islam and Christianity could join their forces to meet this challenge, materialistic atheism shall have no chance to destroy the most valuable spiritual heritage of mankind. The Unity of God must be demonstrated in the unity and solidarity of humanity rooted in God.”

The basic tenet of Islam

Muslims in general know much more about Jews than what the Christians in general know about Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. Political conflict and tension extending to more than a millennium with the unhappy episode of the Crusades made it extremely difficult for the West to make an objective and dispassionate study of Islam and its Prophet. It is a simple fact of human nature that passion tends to distort the vision of truth. Let me put in a few sentences the simple creed of Islam so that its comparison with Christianity and the teachings of Jesus Christ may become clear: it will then become easy to grasp how vast an area of agreement exists between these two world religions.

The basic tenet of Islam is the Unity of God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. Human reason cannot comprehend completely either the essence or the nature of the attributes of this Absolute Being who is Immanent in His creation but also transcends it. A Muslim, therefore, is required to have a simple faith in the existence of God and certain attributes of Him. The most oft-repeated attribute of God is Beneficence and Mercy. He is Rahman and Raheem, both words derived from Rahmah, which is difficult to render by a simple word in any language because it includes in its connotation all that we mean by beneficence, mercy, tender emotions and love. Here is the starting point of agreement between Islam and Christianity, because Jesus also gave love as the basic attribute of the Heavenly Father and identified God with love. The Qur’an says that this attribute of God is all-comprehensive. According to the Qur’an, God is also supremely just, but His justice is either a derivative of His mercy or is tempered with it. The Muslim’s daily prayer, which he offers five times during the day and the night, puts in a nutshell the whole creed of Islam, and it is a prayer which any theist Muslim or non-Muslim could utter with equal conviction; thereby the universality of Islamic theism is demonstrated. Here is an English translation of it which cannot do full justice to the rhythm and the spiritual resonance and vibration of the original:

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
(1) All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Worlds.
(2) The Beneficent, the Merciful.
(3) Master of the Day of Requital.
(4) Thee alone do we serve and Thee alone do we beseech for help.
(5) Guide us on the right path.
(6) The path of those upon whom Thou has bestowed favours.
(7) Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray. Amen.

Why so few Muslims get converted to any forms of dogmatic Christianity

Islam is the most undogmatic of all creeds. It requires belief primarily in an omnipresent, omniscient, merciful Providence, amply demonstrated in His Creation: and the human reason, with all its limitations, when properly exercised, can lead a man long away from the Creation to its Maker. Therefore, the Qur’an is replete with incitation to observe the beauties and uniformities of nature which bring before the mind Law, Order and Purpose. But according to the Qur’an, the Merciful Creator, Providence and Guide of all existence did not leave man to grope for him only through his senses and his circumscribed reason. He granted a special vision and a special revelation to chosen individuals in all human communities so that they may act as Messengers and Witnesses. Some great prophets are mentioned by name, but it is said that countless communities have had countless prophets, all proclaiming His Unity and Glory and showing man the path that leads to Him. So the special feature of Islam is its inclusiveness of the truth of all that has preceded it. No Muslim can remain a Muslim if he does not at the same time believe in the truth as revealed through Abraham, Moses and Jesus. People in the West wonder why so few Muslims in any part of the world get converted to any form of dogmatic Christianity: they ignore the simple fact that every believing Muslim already considers himself to be a good Christian, with the only difference which he considers to be vital, that he does not completely identify Jesus with the Universal Creator and Providence, although the Qur’an uses the highest epithet for him, calling him the Spirit of the Lord. According to Islam, the relation of Jesus or any great soul to its Creator cannot be symbolized as relation of father and son because this human relationship is inadequate to express the reality and is apt to be misleading.

Apart from this difference, which most of the Christians consider basic, the rest of belief about human origin and destiny is common between the followers of Jesus and of Muhammad. The Qur’an has repeated at more than one place that good Christians and Jews and others who believe in God and the Moral Order which extends beyond the grave, have all attained salvation for which the Qur’anic phrase is that “They shall be beyond all fear and beyond all grief”.

Let me quote one of these verses in its English translation:

“Surely, those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians — who ever believe in God and the Last Day and do good deeds — they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve” (2 : 62).

Islam’s recognition of kinship of Christians with Muslims

Islam, from the very beginning, emphasized its kinship with the pious, virtuous and God-fearing Christians. Let me quote again from the Qur’an. Addressing the Prophet Muhammad and his followers it says:

“You will certainly find nearest in friendship to those who believe (the faithful Muslims) those persons who say: We are Christians: this is because there are priests and monks among them and because they do not behave proudly (i.e., their characteristic trait is humility)” (5 : 82).

The Qur’anic revelation strove to create universal peace, particularly among all theistic creeds and revealed religions,
by accepting the basic truth of all, but knowing that some differences of dogma and ritual shall always remain, tried to
formulate a basis on which all could come together and co-operate in the spiritual uplift of humanity. The offer still
stands which can form a basis of amity and understanding between all theistic religions. Here is a quotation from the
Qur’an:

“Say: ‘Of followers of the Book (the Old and New
Testaments); come to an equitable proposition between
us and you that we shall not serve any but God and we
shall not associate aught with Him; but if they turn
back (and would not co-operate even on these basic
principles), then say that bear witness that we are
Muslims” (4: 63).

WHAT OUR READERS SAY . . .

PAKISTAN A SECULAR STATE?
234A/19 Kazi Street,
Saddar Bazaar,
Lahore Cant.,
Pakistan.

Dear Sir,

There has been a great deal of controversy over whether
or not Pakistan should be a secular State. It is commonly
argued that in case Pakistan is declared a secular State,
Islam will be eventually relegated to oblivion and the State
will become essentially atheistic. The fact that a majority
of people abhor the secular State idea provides no justification
for acceptance of the conception of a religious State. Merit
alone should determine the acceptability of a theory.
Sentimentalism should in no way be allowed to creep into
the orbit of political thought. Should we bypass the limits of
rationalism we would, eventually, suffer from mental chaos
and vacillation. The real hurdle which stands as a rock in
our way towards a secular State is our lack of proper
social training and outlook, our pronounced belief in
theocraticism and, above all, the most important of all,
our wrong educational system, which reminds one of
a political rod with which the British measured the spiritual
and intellectual aptitudes of Indians. Free inquiry, personal
judgment and development of creative faculties — the three
great qualities which education must impart—are conspicuous
by their absence in our society. A creative genius is solely
the product of educative forces. Our educational system has
tended to produce men who are neither creative nor
receptive, but only retentive. They have transformed, or have
been forced to transform, their brains into a watertight
compartment wherein only elements of inherent thoughts are
retained and there is no opportunity for currents of "foreign
ideas" passing in.

What is a secular State? A secular State does not imply
a Godless State. A secular State can be more religious than
the one which professes to be religious. India, America,
Britain and Russia are examples in point. India is
theoretically a secular State, yet it is saturated with Hindu
culture and ideology. Pandit Nehru is, no doubt, wedded to
humanitarianism, yet he is possessed of a strong sense of
Hindu morality and, as such, is a devout, religious-minded
Hindu. In one of his speeches he warned his countrymen
against importing religion into politics, but the fact remains
that he has his own religion and philosophy which alone
determine the political entity of his country. Similarly,
America, Britain and France are secular States, yet it cannot
be denied that they are staunchly Christian in their national
and international characters and the authority (though almost
curbed) of the Church is apparent in the lives of the two
peoples in one way or the other. It is generally taken for
granted that Russia is a Godless State where the sovereignty
of God or of any other superhuman power is not recognized.
That is true. But one wonders when one finds that the
professions of Communism are of a thoroughly religious
character. The Soviets have, as Max Eastman, a Kremlin
proponent against the West, said, “a significant logic”, a
clear-cut philosophy, which is adhered to there in all its
belligerence more than in any other country of the world.
That Communism has a world “appeal” and that it has
assumed the role of an avowed international force, testifies
to its following a particular religion. The secret of the sur-
vival of these ideologies and, for that matter, even paganism
in all these countries, has been a strong sense of unity which
is shattered by psychological complexes in case religion is
professedly imported into politics. Pakistan should be a
secular State only in this sense. It is far better to import
religion into politics after having declared Pakistan a secular
State than to make religion a scapegoat for political vagaries
in a religious State. The present collapse of political life in
Pakistan bespeaks this conception. A secular Pakistan alone
can be progressive, prosperous and well-knit. If a man-made
ideology like Communism can be a blustering driving force
in a Godless State, there is no reason why a God-made
universal system like Islam should not be a source of
inspiration in a secular Pakistan. A new attitude of mind,
and not a new system of thought, is needed to put this theory
successfully into practice.

The demand for a religious State becomes bottomless
when the Pakistan Basic Principles Committee proposed that
no constitution should be imposed on any religious com-
7
munity without its consent. This provision in the Basic
Principles Committee report discounted all possibilities of
evolving a basis of agreement in the sphere of constitution-
making. To seek a ground for mutual harmony in this regard
is to chase a wild goose. It is, therefore, only too advisable
to place religion aside, instead of using it as a ball in the
political field.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Manzoor Qadri, has
aptly remarked in one of his recent speeches that “it was not
easy to frame an Islamic constitution” because “the greatest
obstacle in the way of framing an Islamic constitution was
the existence of 72 sects among the Muslims and their
different interpretations of the Qur’an and the Sunnah”. The
Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Muhammad Munir, has pointed out that "... people should be made to understand what rights the constitution gave them and how sacred they were. They should realise the importance of their rights. Unless it was understood, it was of no use talking of framing a constitution."

What is Islamic constitution? Islamic constitution does not necessarily suggest an inelastic and watertight written codified system of human conduct. It is more than a constitution on paper alone. Quoting Mr. Manzoor Qadir again, "if people themselves lived according to the Islamic way of life and preferred collective interest to individual ones, avoid corruption, bribery, negligence of duties and other anti-social activities, the constitution of the country whatever it might be would become automatically Islamic." What is the point of branding a constitution Islamic if people of the country indulged in un-Islamic activities? Thus, it is only the will of the people to adhere to the Islamic way of life that can make a constitution Islamic. It is therefore only too proper to pave the way for the cultivation and fulfilment of this noble but hitherto most neglected ideal among the people instead of blindly and unintelligently clamping a constitution on them without making them understand its real spirit and objectives.

We have before us the noble example of Turkey emerging as a secular State after struggling against the forces of reactionary conservatism. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey separated the Church from the State and consequently the entire Turkish life now seems to be ultra-modern. Yet it cannot be safely argued that the Turks have shunned Islam or that they have turned atheists. They are devout Muslims fully conscious of the spirit of the times. A nation cannot survive unless it has before itself a definite objective to be achieved. The means employed to achieve this objective should, however, be elastic and not rigorous. Turkey must be a lesson for us in this regard.

Paradoxically enough, religion has come to be sub-consciously taken as a force of destruction in the world. The fault lies not with religion but with the temperaments of those who practise it. Contemporary history has amply proved that those who have enthusiastically adhered to religion have, almost without resistance, capitulated to the forces of disruption and decay. Those who hold that a secular Pakistan will fail a prey to the forces of lawlessness and disintegration are labouring under an illusion.

Yours sincerely,

NASEER AHMAD.

* * *

"DOES THE QUR'AN COUNTENANCE THE IDEA OF THE CLOSURE OF THE DOOR OF REVELATION?"

Cairo, Egypt.
20th August 1959.

Dear Sir,

I read with intent interest "An American Question on Islam" (vide The Islamic Review for April 1959). The answer to Question No. 5 on Revelation as given by the Egyptian scholar requires, I feel, further elucidation. I request the courtesy of your columns to say a few words on this important question of "Revelation", or wahy in Arabic. The categorical statement by the Egyptian scholar, which reads: "If this term is used in the proper sense of the word, it should mean God's sending through some angel or by other means religious laws to His Prophets chosen from among men. The first revelation was given to Adam and the last one to Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, after whom the door of revelation has been closed for ever. Since it is impossible for any mortal being to receive revelations after Muhammad, claims to Prophethood or Messiahship, or communication with God through revelation, are false and devoid of foundation" (italics are mine), is liable to give the impression to a Muslim and non-Muslim alike that the conception of God in Islam is that of a mute Being who never vouchsafes to speak to His righteous people. Such a view is logically unacceptable to a Muslim, who believes not only in an ever-living God, but a God who hears, sees and speaks to His righteous people.

That the Prophet Muhammad is the last of the prophets, and no prophet whosoever shall appear after him, is undoubtedly one of the cardinal principles of Islam. The door of the prophetic revelation has closed for ever after the Prophet Muhammad; for, with Qur'anic revelation the law has been brought to the highest degree of perfection, and henceforward the Qur'anic law shall most certainly be the law of life.

The question that arises centres round the Arabic word wahy, or Revelation when translated into English. This word is used in the Qur'an in a generic as well as specific sense.

Revelation is a universal fact. It is granted even to inanimate objects (41:11) and the lower animals (16:68), so that what they seem to do under a natural inward urge, termed Instinct in the language of science, is in reality the guidance given to them by Divine revelation. But much misconception prevails with regard to the revelation that is conferred upon man. It is wrongly supposed to be limited and confined to prophets only, and that others have not been allowed any share in this Divine blessing. For such a view is not warranted by the Qur'an, which teaches, on the other hand, that Divine revelation has been vouchsafed to non-prophets as well, both men and women; for example to the mother of Moses (28:7); and the disciples of Jesus (5:111). Divine revelation, according to the teaching of the Qur'an (42:51) is conferred upon man in three different ways:

1. Inspiration or infusion of an idea into the human heart. It is technically called wahy khafiyy or inner revelation, and is common both to prophets and non-prophets.

2. God's speaking to man "from behind the veil". It included ru'ya (dream), Khashf (vision) and ilhaam (when voices are heard or uttered in a state of trance). It is also a common experience of both the prophets and the non-prophets, the saints and the sinners. The Qur'an tells us of the vision of a king (Pharaoh) who was not a believer in God (12:43).

3. And the third kind is the highest and the most developed form of revelation. It bears law, and was granted exclusively to prophets through the agency of the Angel Gabriel. In the parlance of Islamic terminology it is called wahy matlahw or revelation which is recited in words. Being of a progressive nature, it advanced by successive stages, and reached its point of culmination with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad.

The Divine institution of prophethood came to a close in the person of the Prophet Muhammad, the law having reached its highest point of perfection, as proclaimed in the Qur'an (5:3): "This day have I perfected for you your
religion and completed on you My blessing.” But the door of non-prophetic revelation will remain wide open for all times to come. The Prophet Muhammad said: “There had been people among the children of Israel who were spoken to by God, in spite of the fact that they were not prophets; and if there is any such man in my ummah, he is ’Umar (the Sahih of Bukhari). Bukhari has another authentic tradition in his Sahih which elucidates this point further: “Nothing remains of prophethood but nabah-sharat (glad tidings); and when asked by the people what was meant by nabash-sharat, the Prophet said in reply: ‘Pure and true dream’. On another occasion he explained that a believer’s ru’yyaa was one of the forty-six component parts of prophethood.”

To sum up: Whereas the door of the prophetic revelation has been sealed and closed for all times to come, after the Prophet Muhammad, the door of the non-prophetic revelation will ever remain open, and the righteous servants of God will continue to receive nabah-sharat, i.e., glad tidings for those who walk in the way of God’s pleasure, and warnings of a painful doom for those who take the wrong course, and transgress.

Yours sincerely,

H. H. KHAN.

* * *

AN APPEAL FOR MUSLIM REFUGEES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Wiedner Hauptstrasse 85/6,
Vienna, Austria.

Dear Fellow Muslim,

This letter, written in Austria, is an unashamed petition for your support. We have a desperate problem. Here in Europe a number of Muslims have abandoned Islam for other faiths.

Ever since the close of World War II, Christian and Jewish organizations have had representatives stationed at the frontiers, waiting to receive escapees of their faiths. They have provided clothing, medical aid, spiritual solace and legal representation. The refugees have been aided with employment and immigration opportunities. But there are Muslim families which have lain in Austrian refugee camps for more than twelve years.

Until the arrival of the Jam’at al-Islam, whatever relief or aid was received by Muslim refugees came from, or was administered by, Christian or Jewish groups! This cannot be explained away. Muslims, not Christians or men of other faiths, must bear the shame and the guilt.

As a result, the Muslim community in Austria has seen seven adults and fifty-five Muslim children baptized and lost to Islam. Forty-five children of Muslim birth were taken into the Catholic Church; ten became Protestant.

Austria at the close of World War II became a land of exodus and transit. Along here, in 1945-46, passed hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing from the East. Among the refugees were Qazaqs, Qirghiz, Uzbeks, Caucasians, Crimean Tatars, Volga and Polish Tatars, Bosniaks, Albanians, Roumanian Tchitaks, Bulgarian Pomakens, Azerbaijanis, North Africans, and a hundred others: Muslims, men, women and children; wounded survivors of German fighting units; non-combatants; shattered families; orphans.

Today, thirteen years later, refugees are still arriving! Non-Muslims have sent their own world-wide relief organizations; these have sent representatives to Austria and other frontier countries to aid their lost, their dispossessed and their orphaned. The Jam’at al-Islam, inescapably inadequate in the face of problems besetting the Muslim world today, is their lone counterpart.

The Jam’at al-Islam arrived late, very late. Muslim representation for Muslim refugees in Europe was an obligation which should have been assumed years earlier — but we had neither the means, the unity, or the personnel. Today the problem before us is formidable. The education of Muslim children in Austria must be given immediate attention. It falls to organized Muslims to take action.

The Austrian Government, rightly, urges that all minors be provided religious instruction; the cost to be borne by the religious community. Here, in the Austrian countryside, Muslim children are frequently urged to take part in religious services and instruction provided by other faiths. There is no ulterior motive; the population and the authorities consider that it is disgraceful that minors be destitute of such training. Inevitably, conversions follow.

The intervention of the Jam’at al-Islam, the appearance of members of our Council in the refugee camps, and our representation, has for the moment brought a halt to apostasy. But Muslim refugees must be provided with regular religious instruction and must be led in prayer. They must know that they have not been forgotten by the world of Islam. Muslim children in Austria must be given the guidance of religious leaders whose education and personality are not less than that of priests and educators sent here by non-Muslim missionary organizations.

Help us halt further apostasy. Help us restore morale. Help us recover children who, born Muslim, have been led into paths of confusion.

We are planning a Muslim lower-grade school in Vienna, the first in Europe. Providing a full curriculum, 1st through 8th year of schooling, the institution we envisage is to have accommodation for resident students and will accept day students. No longer will Muslim orphans be reared in missionary institutions!

The school we plan must meet the most rigorous scholastic standards. Teachers will be recruited from all parts of the world. Religious instruction will be under the supervision of a qualified Imam, German, English and Arabic will be the required languages. As projected, the school will at the outset provide primary education. Later on, God willing, we will add an institution which will carry our students forward to university level.

But now we must make a beginning. We must not delay. The Jam’at al-Islam already has undertaken representation for all Muslims in Austria. We have the co-operation and goodwill of the Austrian Government. Now we must have the support of fellow Muslims.

Out immediate need is Austrian Schillings 1,125,000 (Pounds Sterling £15,641; U.S. Dollars 43,462). Help us.

Eventually, we must have a Muslim school providing facilities for 250 resident students and 200 day students. We must be in a position to accept pupils from all parts of Europe, wherever Muslims may have settled. We must never have to reject a Muslim orphan. Our sacred objective cannot be realized overnight, but progress will be directly influenced by support we receive from the world of Islam.

Here in Austria we are in the midst of the many “Voluntary Agencies”. Here, too, are offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. A demonstration of Muslim unity in Austria will be a demonstration before the eyes of the world — for the glory of Islam!

THE JAM’AT AL-ISLAM,
Allislamischer Verein,
Humanitäre und kulturelle Organisation
Sektion Österreich.

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