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Between Ourselves

THE COVER
The picture on the cover is of the Shahi Jami' Ul-Ula Mosque, Isfahan, Iran.

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CALL FOR A MUSLIM COMMONWEALTH

“VISION FOR THE FUTURE”

Address after the ‘Id sermon to the congregation at Woking

by H.E. TUNKU ‘ABDUL RAHMAN PUTRA AL-HAJJ, the Prime Minister of Malaya

This is a great day for Muslims all over the world. Throughout the month of Ramadhan Muslims have denied themselves pleasures and things to which they are used to normally. During this month every Muslim tastes and shares the sufferings of poor people. In this way all Muslims are made to feel equal. They are trained to endure sufferings and hardships during this month of Ramadhan.

This whole month is a month of sacrifice and charity. But charity does not end with the keeping of fasts. Charity means to give a helping hand to all those who need your help irrespective of race, colour, wealth or poverty. It is this charity which gives Muslims a kindly feeling for all. And it is this charity which will help to maintain peace in the world today.

But one should not think that charity ends with Ramadhan. The spirit of charity has to be carried along in many other ways.

It is with this spirit of charity that the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth discussed the apartheid policy of South Africa. At the conference I said we understood that today man has to live as man and treat other men as men also. Man can no longer live divided by race, colour or creed.

Muslim charity means helping and understanding other brother men irrespective of race or colour. One country alone refuses to believe that all men are born equal and that is South Africa.

It seems to me that the soul and spirit of all those who died in that eventful month at Sharpville were a factor in bringing about this conclusion to the talks.

At this conference we talked about the sufferings and inequality of men in South Africa. Just because a man has a different colour he is treated disgracefully. South Africa is a country where a man cannot enter the door of a restaurant, cannot sit in a compartment of a train just because his skin happens to be dark. It is a country where an African is left dying in the road and no one will pick him up.

It is significant that it was in this month that we achieved this great decision. We decided that we should
stand for some objective. And one of the responsibilities of all those who attended the Commonwealth conference was to fight for the equality of all men irrespective of race or colour. Otherwise we would have not achieved anything. In fact all men should be able to live in freedom and should stand equal in the eyes of the law.

The question is being repeatedly asked: Does the Commonwealth become weaker by the departure of South Africa? Certainly not. On the contrary South Africa’s departure strengthens the Commonwealth. If the Commonwealth is to live, then it must endeavour to make the world a place where every man has a right to live with perfect freedom and equality. I am glad to see that the Commonwealth has come to stay as a living force in world politics.

We should try to bring all people to the Commonwealth. The spirit of the Commonwealth must be extended. Prepare to befriend all others without regard to their colour or nationality without regard to whether they are rich or poor, young or old.

We believe that Muslims, wherever they are, are brothers. There is, therefore, every reason for Muslim countries to come together to discuss their problems. There is a need to bring all men together. It is said in the Qur’ân and the Hadith that all men are equal. Here in this congregation we see people from all over the world. Here in this gathering Muslims from all over the world have gathered as Muslims. We are all equal and brothers.

I have a vision for the future. It is of a time when we can meet together, not with the intention of forming one bloc to fight another bloc, but to discuss things for the common good of all. It is my wish to form a Commonwealth of all the Muslim countries, somewhat after the pattern of the British Commonwealth. There is a lot we can do. You can bring pressure on your respective governments and persuade them to form a Commonwealth of Muslim nations for the purpose of coming together, working together and living together.

I am the leader of a small nation and what I say may not have the same influence which you can bring to bear on your respective countries. But we should all pray that the day will come when all our governments will work together.

I wish you all a very happy ’Id or as they say in Malay Selamat Hari Raya.

---

1 Text of His Excellency Tunku ’Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Hajj, Prime Minister of Malaysia’s speech at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, at a gathering of 4,000 Muslims on the occasion of the ’Id al-Fitr on Sunday 19th March 1961.

2 The reference was to the Prime Ministers’ Conference of the British Commonwealth, which was held in March 1961, a few days before the ‘Id festival.—Editor, The Islamic Review

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THE DIVINE DIVAN

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He, beside Whom is none other — He will help thee on thy way.
He, beside Whom is none other — seek Him at the break of day.
He is with thee in thy heart — unto Him thou shouldst pray.
Pour thy soul out freely, then:
Voice thy deepest yearning, when
Thou dost pray.
He, beside Whom is none other — He shall give thee “yea”
or “nay”.
If He give thee “yea”, rejoice.
He, beside Whom is none other — listen to His gentle Voice.
If He say thee “nay”, submit.
Peace shall come, peace with no end to it.
He, beside Whom is none other, knoweth well the perfect way.
He, beside Whom is none other, He will help thee day by day.

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O Thou Beloved, here and now
Accept my love, my life, my all, O Thou!
What sweeter word? There is none else, I vow,
But only “Thou!”
To Thee I turn. Thou art my Help, my Guide, my Joy,
My Respite, Rescue from this world’s wild storms,
My Robe of calm, of peace without annoy,
In darkest winter Thou the summer Sun that warms
My deepest heart with bliss impenetrable, Joy
Serenely and all-embracing, pure without alloy,
O Thou Beloved, deign, then, to accept my song,
The song the many passing moments do prolong.
What sweeter word? There is none else, I vow,
But only “Thou!”

William Bashy’r Pickard.
THE PREACHER OF MORALITY AND THE EMBODIMENT OF SUBLIME MORALS

Buddha prophesied that he would be followed by a great prophet who would possess twelve outstanding moral qualities. Judged by that criterion Muhammad fulfils this prophecy

by THE MAULANA ‘ABDUL HAQUE VIDYARTH

"(By) the inkstand and the pen and that which they write! By the grace of thy Lord thou art not insane. And surely thine is a reward never to be cut off. And surely thou hast sublime morals" (The Qur’an, 68 : 1-4).

Nations can only progress by education and instruction in high morals and deep spiritual values.

Buddha’s greatness is in the glowing light of morality which he preached to the people. He believed that the ability to perform miracles was no criterion to judge a religious reformer, a preacher, or a prophet. Their morals testify to their being righteous. Nations cannot be built with the aid of miracles, but by educating and instructing them in high morals and deep spiritual values.

Muhammad possessed sublime morals. The standard of his morals can be estimated from the impression he made upon the people among whom he lived.

A person can be an eloquent preacher, but there may not be the least efficacy in all that he preaches, or his high-sounding edicts may be impracticable. The Prophet of Nazareth was high-sounding, but he made no effect upon his immediate followers: on the other hand, the Prophet Muhammad, by virtue of his moral teachings, succeeded triumphantly in raising his people to a higher and sublimer status. These were the morals which cemented the separate particles of sand into one solid wall. The life of a nation depends mostly upon the potency of its individuals. Potency is an outward form of honesty, which connotes the evolution of all those capabilities and energies which are entrusted to man by God.

Muhammad is Buddha’s Promised One

Buddha described the promised Prophet as an embodiment of twelve moral virtues, and judged by them the Prophet not only possesses these qualities but is unsurpassed and unparalleled.

1. His unique truthfulness. Naturally man is truthful. And generally, unless he is compelled by self-deceit, panic or fear, he always likes to be truthful.

The most essential quality for all prophets is to be above all selfish desires and fears. Truth and truthfulness are accepted as basic virtues by all religions. Buddha has said: “Don’t tell a lie, speak truth freely, fearlessly and devoutly.”

Muhammad, Buddha’s promised truthful one, was extremely truthful, for he was the embodiment of sublime morals.

In fact, various scriptures such as the Vedas, Zend Avesta, the Torah and the New Testament lay emphasis on speaking truth, but some exceptions have been made
by these scriptures when telling a lie is preferred to saying the truth. And this sort of mis-statement occurs in these scriptures while:

(a) Exaggerating the gods.
(b) Seeking gains at the expense of other religions.
(c) Glorifying seers, prophets and saints.
(d) For selfishness and out of fear.

Ecclesiasts have given masked names to such kind of lying. The Prophet’s life, his heroic condemnation of the superstitions of his country, his courage in facing the fury of idolaters, his constancy in enduring them for thirteen years in Mecca, his incessant preaching, his waging an unequal war, his forebearance in victory, his complete devotion to principles, all bear witness that he by all standards was a truthful man.

And here is the testimony of his enemies.

(a) Caeasar of Rome asked Abu Sufyan in his court: “Did you find him (Muhammad) telling a lie before (he claimed Prophethood)?” Abu Sufyan replied: “No”.
(b) When the Prophet climbed a hill and called the people of the Quraysh and asked: “If I tell you that a great army is coming from the other side of the mountain, will you believe it?” They unanimously replied: “Yes, because we have never found you to tell the slightest lie.”
(c) A great enemy of Islam like Abu Jahl one day said to the Prophet: “We don’t call you a liar; but we call that message which you brought a lie.”
(d) In the Treaty of Hudaybiyya the Prophet agreed that anybody from Mecca embracing Islam and seeking refuge with the Prophet should be returned. In fact this meant sending newly converted Meccan Muslims back into the hands of the enemy after they had sought refuge with the Muslims. But the Prophet was so truthful and honest in his word that he followed the treaty very strictly and meticulously.
(e) The character of a man is shown in moments of weakness. One who talks of his morality and does not admit his weaknesses cannot be called truthful. People have very often eulogised their prophets and seers so much that they have raised them to the status of deities. But the Prophet Muhammad declared a number of times in plain words “I am a mortal like you” (The Qur’an. 10:110; 41:6).

The Prophet’s greatness is in his emphasis on his being a mortal

There is a touching incident in the life of the Prophet Muhammad when a blind man interrupted the Prophet’s conversation with some of the chiefs of the Quraysh. The Prophet took ill of this untimely interruption, upon which he received the following revelation:

“He frowned and turned away, because the blind man came to him. And what would make thee that he might purify himself, or be mindful, so the remainder should profit him? As for him who considers himself free from need, to him thou dost attend. And no blame is on thee, if he purify himself not. And as to him who comes to thee striving hard, and he fears, to him thou payest no regard ” (The Qur’an, 80:1-10).

The Prophet’s inattention to an intruder, while he had not yet finished his conversation, was quite human. Still, he did not chide the intruder for his interruption, but only dis-liked it. At any rate, if it were left to the option of the individual, he himself would be the last person to give permanence to a reproval for his own act.

What a surpassingly truthful one he is, not to have concealed a revelation which exposed his inattention to a blind man, and for it to be written in the Qur’an and repeated and recited for ever. Buddha, when he prophesied that the promised one will be truthful, meant that he will be extraordinarily so, as has been shown above.

2. Self-reliance. We live in co-operation and dependence on one another. But, to demand sacrifices from others without undertaking any ourselves is against the spirit of self-reliance. A distinguished trait of the Prophet Muhammad’s character was doing good to others, but he never expected any favours from anybody. If by chance somebody did any favour to him he would acknowledge it, otherwise he could not fitly be called self-reliant.

There was a commandment for him in the Qur’an: “And do not favour seeking gain” (74:6). It is an insult for both, the one who gives as well as the one who receives. Similarly, if the receiver desists from repaying or recompensing the favour done to him, that is a negation of self-reliance and shameful in the eyes of others.

Self-reliance is an essential part of gentility. Anecdotes reveal how self-reliant the Prophet Muhammad was:

(a) Abu Bakr was an intimate friend and the only companion of the Prophet in the cave of Hira. He was loyal and obedient, and was always prepared to spare anything and everything for his noble friend. The Prophet even repaid him when the Prophet presented him with a camel on his journey to Medina.
(b) The site which the Prophet found most convenient and fit for the mosque at Medina: he paid its cost to the owner, although the latter wished to give it free of cost.
(c) On accepting any present the Prophet used to make some return for it. The King of the Yemen once sent a cloak as a present to the Prophet, and he in return presented another cloak to the king.
(d) In accordance with this feature of the Prophet’s character he refused to accept the poor-rate for himself, his family and his children.

3. Politeness in conversation. Politeness and mildness is a great feature of good breeding. God has described it as His mercy. The Prophet was polite, mild and generous. The Qur’an says: “This is by God’s mercy that thou art gentle to them”.

Throughout his life, the Prophet never abused anybody. He never treated anybody with harsh words or hardness. He would convince men most politely, mildly and affectionately, and he stopped others from using harsh language.

The Jews used to speak to him very harshly, but the Prophet never retaliated, and he taught others to be as polite and mild as himself.

4. Being gentle and noble. The Prophet was gentle and noble by birth and temperament. He came from the distinguished tribe of the Quraysh and gentility was expressed in his sublime morals. The house of the holy one in Mecca was guarded by this tribe. Throughout the Arabian peninsula rich caravans were looted; but the Quraysh were so influential and esteemed that their caravans feared nothing.

5. Immune from pride. The Qur’an enjoins upon all Muslims in general and the Prophet in particular not to walk proudly. “And go not about in the land exultingly”
And again: “God loves not such as are proud, boastful” (4:36). “And the servants of the beneficent are they who walk on the earth in humility and when the ignorant address them, they say, ‘Peace’” (25:36). Notwithstanding the elevated position which the Prophet held amongst his own people, he never liked haughtiness or distinction for himself. The most respected Quraysh used to go for the pilgrimage and stay in Muzdalifah, where no one else was allowed to enjoy this privilege.

But the Prophet himself, though a Quraysh, never liked to accept such distinctions. Even before and after his claim to prophethood, he always lived amongst common people, and he never liked a distinguished place to be reserved for him, nor did he like any special shelter from the sun, while others were refused the same.

His companions made an offer to reserve a seat for him but he remarked that whoever reached it first deserved that privilege. He used to participate in any task which others would do.

While the mosque at Medina was being built, he himself worked as an ordinary labourer. Besides, he used to dig trenches himself at the battle of Uhud. And according to tradition he was seen covered with dust in a battle while at work.

In all his deeds he was on a level with his companions. He never used any throne nor dais, but sat with his companions on the same mat, so much so that a newcomer could not distinguish which among them was the Prophet and asked sometimes: “Which among all of you is Muhammad?”

**Absolute honesty of the Prophet inspired confidence among his friends and foes alike**

6. *Above all deceit.* There were many occasions when the Prophet gave a proof of his absolute honesty. Two instances are quoted here.

(a) Before he attained prophethood at Mecca, ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abil-Amsa once struck a bargain with the Prophet and asked him to wait at a certain place where he promised to come and settle the accounts. Somehow he forgot to keep his word. After three days, when he was reminded of it, he found the Prophet just where he had left him. The Prophet, on seeing him, remarked that he had been waiting for him the whole three days.

(b) In the battle of Badr, the Muslims were very few in number and were in dire need of soldiers. Two of the Prophet’s companions, Abu Huzefa and Abu Hassal, while coming from Mecca, were detained on the way by the enemy, but were released on condition that they would not take part in the battle on the Prophet’s side. They narrated the whole thing to the Prophet and he remarked: “We shall abide by the promise; you please go and let your word be fulfilled; we need nothing but the help of God.”

7. *Free from contempt.* The Qur’an said: “O you who believe, let not people laugh at other people, perchance they may be better than they; nor let women (laugh) at other women, perchance they may be better than they, neither find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nickname. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoso turns not, these it is that are the iniquitous” (49:11).

Even other prophets have exhorted individuals not to look down upon one another, but it was only the Prophet of Islam who preached that nations should not disdain other peoples. He gave all mankind a status of complete equality and rang a death-knell to all discriminations of caste, climate, colour and race. He cemented together all Muslims as brothers. He has acknowledged that warrens, messengers and prophets have come to all nations and declared that all nations are the creation of one God.

8. *Not overpowered by wrath.* This was one of the most exalted qualities of the Prophet. In the days of peace as well as in time of war, he was forbearing and patient. On ordinary occasions a man may be forbearing, but to manifest this trait of character at a time when he is in possession of the sceptre and the diadem is rare. Often a man retaliates against those at whose hands he has received afflictions. The Prophet had a different story to tell. When he wielded the great power at the conquest of Mecca, he forgave all the vanquished opponents of Islam. “Say, O ye Meccans, what do you expect of me today?” was the Prophet’s remark to the vanquished tribes who had all along persecuted him. And he forgave them all they had done, especially at the time when he was by all means able to take vengeance since he held the reins of government. Hinda, the wife of a great opponent of Islam, Abu Suyan, was so brutal that she cut open the breast of the Prophet’s uncle, Hamza, and chewed his heart, liver and kidneys out of bitterness enmity. At the conquest of Mecca she appeared in a veil before the Prophet, but was recognized by her smart attitude. But the Prophet did not recall the sad and harrowing event. Hinda at once cried, “Prophet of the true God, your tent seems to be the most beloved one, though it seemed the most repugnant to me before.” The Prophet forgave her.

Generally, on such an occasion, man is enraged and nothing checks him from retaliating for what has been meted out to him before. The savage Arab who killed Hamza was a Meccan. When Mecca was conquered by the Muslims he fled for his life and reached Taif. Even there he could not live peacefully. At last he came to the Prophet. In fact, one who found peace nowhere else found it in remaining with Muhammad. There are so many occasions like these in the history of the most forbearing Prophet which reveal how the Prophet not only held in check his own anger and rage, but also by his mercy cooled down the rancour and rage of others.

9. *Sad over others’ losses.* Mecca was the birthplace of the Prophet, but the Meccans were his great enemies. For three years they kept him imprisoned. They were determined not to let a single grain of food reach him. After many sufferings the Prophet had to leave Mecca. After his flight an acute famine overtook the city, so much so that people ate bones and dead animals. Then Abu Suyan came to him and said, “O Muhammad! your people are perishing.” The Prophet at once raised his hands and prayed for his enemy to be redeemed from this affliction. In the battle of Uhud the Prophet was stoned so much that he was bleeding. But the forbearing one did not resort to curses. On the other hand he prayed, “O God! Forgive these people for they know not.” Unlike other earthly kings, the Prophet neither rejoiced at the loss of others, nor exalted in victories won.

10. *Kind towards people as a mother.* All philanthropists have loved mankind during their lives. But a natural and instinctive love such as a mother has for her children is worth consideration. The treatment of the opponents of the Prophet and enemies of Islam in Mecca may well be compared with the treatment of naughty and disobedient children by their mother. How the Meccans treated the Prophet is not a secret.

The way in which the Prophet showed his instinctive love, affection and earnestness is a clear proof of his merciful
sentiments. He had the utmost sympathy with downtrodden, wretched slaves. An instance may be quoted here. Zaid Ibn Harith was a slave who was set free by the Prophet. Zaid’s father came to take him home, but his love for the Prophet was so strong in his heart that he preferred the love and sympathy of the Prophet above that of his own father. Again, a person once appeared before the Prophet and said: “O Prophet of the most exalted God, how many times should I forgive a slave?” The Prophet remained quiet. He repeated the question, but still the Prophet kept quiet. He asked the same question a third time and the Prophet’s reply was: “Seventy times.”

To forgive a fault and indeed the fault of a slave, and beyond that to forgive seventy times a day, is really something extraordinary. It is only a soul the like of a mother which can be the possessor of so much love and mercy. The Prophet actually put all this in practice. Anas, who was the servant of the Prophet, says that the Prophet in his whole life never even said “Fie!” against him.

11. *Always thinking of good.* The Qur’an says: “Those who remember God standing and sitting, and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: ‘Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain.’ And again he commanded the Prophet to say: “Say: My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for the Lord of the worlds.”

A man who remembers God sitting can never be unaware of his duties and good deeds to other people. It was his very anxiety for the betterment of humanity that compelled him to prostrate himself and to implore God earnestly and humbly in his prayers. Despite all opposition, he prayed and was most anxious and worried for the improvement and the righteousness of his people.

12. *An exemplar for others.* The Prophet Muhammad is the only prophet in the whole galaxy of religious personalities whose life has been written in the minutest detail. People found salvation in following his way of life. This was in accordance with the enjoinment by the Qur’an: “Certainly you have in the Messenger of God an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in God and the latter day, and remembers God much” (33: 21).

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**HOW I BECAME INTERESTED IN ISLAM**

by MARGARET MARCUS

I trace the beginning of my interest in Islam when as a child of ten, while attending a reform Jewish Sunday School, I became fascinated in the historical relationship between the Jews and the Arabs. From my Jewish textbooks I learned that Abraham was the father of the Arabs as well as the Jews. In these same books I read how centuries later when in medieval Europe, Christian persecution made their lives intolerable, the Jews were welcomed in Muslim Spain, and that it was this same Arabic-Islamic civilization which stimulated Hebrew culture to reach its highest peak of achievement. At that time, completely unaware of the true nature of Zionism, I naively thought the Jews were returning to Palestine to strengthen their close ties of kinship in religion and culture with their Semitic cousins. Together I believed the Jews and the Arabs would cooperate and achieve another Golden Age of culture in the Middle East.

Despite my fascination with the study of Jewish history, I was extremely unhappy at the Sunday School. At this time I identified myself strongly with the Jewish people and their horrible fate under the Nazis and I was shocked and pained that none of my fellow classmates took their religion seriously. For instance, during religious services at the synagogue the children would read comic strips hidden in their prayer books and make fun of the rituals. The children were so noisy and disorderly the teachers found it almost impossible to conduct the classes. Meanwhile I delved into the stories of Jesus in the New Testament and was puzzled why so great a prophet who led such a beautiful and noble life had been rejected by his own people. Perhaps my classmates’ complete lack of respect for their teachers was justified. I found them narrow-minded and bigoted, emphasizing their hatred and fear of Christians far more than their love for Judaism.

At home the atmosphere for religious observance was scarcely more congenial. On the Jewish High Holy Days instead of attending synagogue I felt it blasphemous that my sister and I were taken out of school to go out on picnics and parties. When I told my parents how miserable I was at the reform Jewish Sunday School, they joined an agnostic humanistic organization known as the Ethical Culture Movement.

The Ethical Culture Movement was founded in the late 19th century by Felix Adler. While studying for the rabbinate, Felix Adler became convinced that devotion to ethical values as relative and man-made regarding any supernaturalism or theology as irrelevant, constituted the only religion fit for the modern world. I attended the Ethical Culture School for five years. Here I grew into complete accord with the ideas of the movement and looked upon all traditional organized religions with scorn.

Throughout my adolescence I remained under the influence of humanistic philosophy until after graduation from secondary school, when I chose to study at the university a course entitled “Judaism in Islam”. My professor was a Rabbi who tried to convince my students — all Jews — that Islam was derived from Judaism. Our textbook took each verse from the Qur’an, painstakingly tracing it to its allegedly Jewish sources. His lectures were liberally illustrated with films and coloured slides in praise of Zionism and the State of Israel. Although his real aim was to prove to his students
the superiority of Judaism over Islam, he convinced me of just the opposite. As I plunged deeper and deeper into the study of the Old Testament and the Qur'an, the contrast between the two scriptures became increasingly evident. In a sense the Old Testament could almost be considered a history of the Jews as God's special chosen people. Although the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic to an Arab Prophet, its message is a universal one directed to the entire human race.

When my professor explained that the divine right of the Jews to Palestine has always been a central theme of Judaism, I was instantly repelled by such a narrow-minded conception of God. Does not the Qur'an say that "to God belong the East and the West; wherever ye turn there is His face?" Did not the Prophet Muhammad say that the whole earth is a mosque? Zionism preaches that only in Palestine can the Jew feel at home and elsewhere he is living in exile. The claim of my professor that only in Palestine could the Jews make their contribution to human civilization seemed baseless when I pondered over the fact that Moses received his revelation in Egypt, the most important parts of the Talmud were written in what is now Iraq, and some of the most beautiful Hebrew poetry was composed in Muslim Spain. The rigid exclusiveness of Judaism I felt had a great deal of connection with the persecutions the Jews have suffered throughout their history. Perhaps this would never have happened if the Jews had competed vigorously with the other faiths for converts. Zionism is a combination of the racist tribalistic aspects of Judaism with modern secular nationalism. Zionism was further discredited in my eyes when I discovered that Israeli leaders such as David Ben-Gurion are not observant Jews and that perhaps nowhere in the world is orthodox Judaism regarded with such contempt as in Israel! The Zionists have made the worst aspects of Western materialistic philosophy their very own. Only a complete rejection of all moral and spiritual values could account for such a systematic uprooting of an entire people from their homeland and an utter disregard of any sense of justice. When I found that nearly all important Jewish leaders supported Zionism and felt not the slightest twinge of conscience for the terrible wrong inflicted on the Arabs, I could no longer consider myself a Jew at heart.

At the same time my professor convinced me that ethical values had a divine origin and were the absolute eternal truth. I could not understand how people like my parents could cherish moral and spiritual values and then consider their theological foundations irrelevant. If morals were purely man-made, they could be changed at will according to whim, convenience or circumstance. Belief in the hereafter I came to feel as essential not merely because it was comforting. If ethical and spiritual values are of divine origin, we are directly responsible to God for developing our highest potentialities. Each one of us will be called upon to render an account of our life on earth and be rewarded or punished accordingly. Therefore one who has a firm faith in the hereafter is willing to sacrifice transitory pleasures and endure hardship to attain lasting good.

As I studied the beliefs of all the major faiths, I came to the conclusion that originally all the great religions were one, but as time passed they became corrupted. Idol worship, the idea of reincarnation, and the caste system began to permeate Hinduism. Passivity became characteristic of Buddhism, ancestor worship of Confucianism, the doctrine of original sin, the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus resulting in an anthropomorphic conception of God and the atonement by the death on the cross, of Christianity and the exclusive chosen people idea of Judaism. All these ideas which so repelled me were not to be found in Islam. Increasingly I began to feel that Islam was the original religion that alone had retained its purity. Other religions were only partially true. Only Islam contained the whole truth. Above all, Islam provided its adherents with a complete comprehensive way of life in which the relation of the individual to society and the material to the spiritual were balanced into a perfect harmony.

Although I wanted to become a Muslim, my family managed to argue me out of it. I was warned that Islam would complicate my life since the faith is not part of the American scene. I was told that Islam would alienate me from my family and isolate me from the community. At that time my faith was not sufficiently strong to withstand these pressures. I became so ill I had to discontinue college. For a long time I remained at home under private medical care, steadily growing worse. In desperation my parents had me confined to a hospital, where I stayed for more than two years. While in the hospital I vowed that if I recovered I would become a Muslim.

After I was finally allowed to go home, discharged, I investigated all the opportunities for meeting Muslims in New York City and making friendships, and it was my pleasure to make the acquaintance of some of the finest people that anyone could ever hope to meet. I also began to write articles for Muslim magazines and to carry on an extensive correspondence with Muslim leaders all over the world.

As Ramadhan approached my desire to embrace Islam grew so strong that I began to practise the five daily prayers, and am now undertaking the fast for the first time. I am doing this with a firm belief that nothing but good can result in living according to my deepest convictions.
CONCEPTION OF TAUHEED (THE UNITY OF GOD) IN ISLAM

The magic of the power of idols was shattered and the lamp of the worship of natural phenomenon was extinguished for ever by the belief in the Unity of God

by MUHAMMAD ‘UMAR N. ALMANI, M.A.

_Tauheed_, or belief in the existence and Unity of God, is the first and foremost message of Islam to humanity, and Islam is the first religion which gave foremost importance to the principle of _Tauheed_. The following verse of the Qur’an shows the emphasis Islam gives to the belief in the Oneness of God:

“God forgiveth not (the sin of) joining others with Him. But He forgiveth whom He pleaseth other sins than this” (4:116).

Belief in the Unity of God is embodied in the very nature of man

Belief in the existence and Unity of God is embodied in the very nature of man. Even the most savage nations of the world do have this kind of instinct in themselves. Archaeological discoveries have brought to light cultures, civilizations and histories of many nations of the world. In certain cases culture and civilization is alarmingly missing, but not a single instance is forthcoming (save of course the present-day Communism) in which the belief in the existence and Unity of God was not available. This instinct of belief in the existence of God and His Unity was, it seems, infused into the veins of man at the time of his creation. Says the Qur’an in this connection:

“When thy Lord drew forth from children of Adam, from their lions, their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves (saying), ‘Am I not your Lord (who cherishes and sustains you)?’ They said, ‘Yea! We testify! (this)’” (7:172).

This belief, due to outside environment and atmosphere, is sometimes suppressed. Islam repeatedly reminded human beings of their forgotten promise. The Qur’an repeatedly inquired of human beings:

“Is there a doubt about God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?” (4:10).

_Tauheed in other religions_

As stated above, belief in the existence of God was the first lesson taught by all the religions of the world, but this belief was not based on any sound principles.

The pre-Islamic Arabs did believe in the existence of a real and supreme Power, but they did not take God to be the sole master of the Universe.

The God of Jews, Jehovah or Yahweh, was a tribal god, associated with hills and with fighting. He was a “jealous” God, who, while admitting seemingly the existence of rivals, grudged them worship. Many of the acts ascribed to Him at that time seem to us erratic and unjust and even cruel.

The God of Christians, it seems, had delegated His authority to His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ could forgive sins and in many ways assumed authority. Besides this, Christianity is a great Trinitarian religion.

God of the Zoroastrians was divided into two parts. Both these possessed creative powers, one acting positively and the other negatively. Ormuzd is the light and life and source of good, while whatever is false, destructive, immoral, dark and ugly is the work of Ahriman, the evil one.

The Gods of Hindus were many. The hymns of Rig-Veda were mostly addressed to native spirits, such as God of the Rain, of the Dawn, of the Sun, the Wind, the Sky, and so on. In later times the three main gods who had distributed the administration of the Kingdom of God were Brahma, the Creator, Vishna, the Preserver, and Siva, the Destroyer.

Damage done by this mistaken belief concerning the Unity of God

The damage done by this mistaken conception of the Unity of God was immense. It gave rise to “human worship”, in other words called “memory worship”. Due to this human worship, Jesus Christ (may the blessings of God be upon him!), Ramchandra, Krishna, etc., were raised up from the status of man to that of God.

All connections of man towards his Creator, such as his humility towards God, his love for Him, his prayers, etc., were directed from God to some other direction. People knew that the gods were not the Creators of heaven and earth, yet all kinds of prayers and requests were, and are still, addressed to such gods. They were considered to be the givers of tears and happiness. People thought that these gods could intercede for them with God. People began to prostrate themselves before idols, nobles and kings. The Jews, too prostrated for love — the prostration of the parents of Yusuf (may the blessings of God be upon him!) before Yusuf is a glaring instance of this nature.
Somewhere the sun, moon and stars were worshipped, at other places tombs and graveyards were turned (and are still) into places of prayers and worship.

Islamic conception of Tauheed or the Unity of God

But the God of Islam is the sole master of all that is between the heavens and the earth. There is no partner with Him in the administration of His kingdom and His affairs. Not a single atom of the Universe is outside His jurisdiction and control. Trees, stones, mountains, deserts, sun, moon, earth, sky, men, animals — all prostrate before Him and are busy singing His praises. He is all-powerful and all others are weak before Him. All are ignorant, but He is all-knowing. All are perishable — but He is ever-living. He is the King of Kings and Emperor. He is free from all sins and is pure. All kinds of virtues are embodied in Him and no one is like Him. He is far away from any bodily or physical relationship with man. The Qur`an says:

“Such is God, your Lord and Cherisher: to Him belongs (all) dominions. There is no god but He” (34:6).

This and many other such verses in the Qur`an point to the unity, greatness and majesty of God. This light of Tauheed presented by Islam to the dark and ignorant world was so wonderful that all honour and respect of false gods was reduced to nothing before it. The magic of the greatness of idols was broken to pieces and the lamp of worship of sun, moon and stars was put off for ever. Jins, men, stones, rivers and trees appeared small before the greatness and majesty of the One God.

Some arguments put forward by Islam in support of the existence and Oneness of God

There is no doubt about the fact that the world is existing: now there must surely be a power to have raised this world. This wonderful Universe, this multi-coloured nature, this starry sky, this good and nourishing earth, this sun, this moon, these numerous kinds of trees, the vast seas, these high mountains, these countless species of living creatures, this change of seasons, this systematic administration of nature, the set-up of man’s intense power of thinking, the roof of sky, the green floor of earth, the alternation of day and night — all these things, and many more, do point to the existence of One Mighty and Supreme Power. Says the Qur`an:

“Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding” (3:190).

Was this world, with all its wonderful and systematic administration, discipline and secrets, made accidentally by itself or did some wise, prudent and Almighty Power make it with some definite and clear-cut purpose? This question is for the wise to ponder over.

The Oneness of God

As stated above, there are certain people on the surface of this earth who believe in the existence of two, three or even more gods. Islam has rebutted this belief and has advanced very sensible and logical arguments in support of the Unity of God.

Not a single particle of any matter can be created or come into existence unless all the powers of the Universe work in close co-operation and harmony. For instance, one grain cannot grow out from the earth unless the grain itself is fit enough to grow, the earth has the quality and efficiency to give the grain growth, the rain is according to the require-

ment, sunlight is commensurate with the quality of the plant. If all these conditions are not satisfied and all these factors do not work in co-operation, the grain will never grow. Now, if the Universe and the administration of all the aforesaid objects were in the hands of more than one power, then surely, all the aforesaid things could never work in co-operation and harmony. There would prevail complete confusion and complications and a stage would be reached when the administration of the Universe would collapse and things would come to a standstill.

Does not the sun, the moon, the stars, man, animals, wind, water, trees, plants and everything else follow strictly a fixed law and discipline and follow their daily routine as if in the habit of so doing? A little thought will convince men that these objects are parts of one big unit and are moving in accordance with the orders of one Supreme Power. The Qur`an says in this connection:

“Nor is there any god along with Him (if there were many gods), behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have lorded it over others” (23:91).

These arguments establish beyond doubt the Unity of God. Islam rejected all partnership with One God. Says the Qur`an:

“God has said: Take not (for worship) two gods: for He is just one God” (16:51).

To Christians the Qur`an said:

“Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, was (no more than) an Apostle of God” (4:171).

Again:

“In blasphemy indeed are those that say that God is Christ, the Son of Mary” (5:19).

Even for the Prophet of Islam (may the peace of God be upon him!), prince and seal of all the prophets, there repeatedly appeared a warning in the Qur`an:

“Say: I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me that your God is One God” (18:110).

One day when the Prophet of Islam was passing along a road, a man, seeing him, became so much afraid that he began to tremble. The Prophet said to him: “Do not be afraid: I am the son of a Qurai`sh lady who used to eat dried mutton” (Tirmidhi, Vol. 3, p. 48).

But, alas! the world today has forgotten the message of the Unity of God delivered to them by their prophets and brought to perfection by the universal message of the Prophet of Islam. Today again in this civilized world, in some parts the very idea of belief in the existence and Unity of God is condemned and elsewhere man-money and power are worshipped as God. Above all, people have turned their selfish desires into God. Says the Qur`an in this connection:

“Seest thou such a one as taketh for his good his own passion (or impulse)” (15:43).

The greatest idol that is worshipped is concealed in the idol-house (breast) of man, and to break it is the greatest holy war that man fights in the cause of God. To break it is the superlative of belief in the Unity of God. Every human action should therefore be motivated by fear of God, pleasure of God, obedience of God and love of God. The Prophet Muhammad said:

“One who gave for the sake of God, worked for the sake of God, kept enmity for the sake of God,
What Modern Muslims Think...

RELATIVISM IN ISLAM

Law and jurisprudence in Islam should be flexible enough to conform with the historical growth of Muslims and their varying needs and situations

by M. 'ABDUL 'ALI

Truth remains unchanged. Human reaction to it in practical life changes with the growth of collective mind

We use the term "Relativism", not in its technical philosophic sense, as it was used by the Greek philosopher, who gauged "the extent of the universe by the measure of man", but we do so in a general scientific sense. Keeping this in view, not only every social and political institution, but every idea, social and political, changes with the historical content. That is to say, the laws of social and economic sciences are embedded in history and conditioned by it. What is true of one period is obviously not true of another. The application of some formal rules will yield different results in different social environments. But this does not mean that truth is also a variable thing. No, the reaction to it in practical life changes with the growth of collective mind. We approach it differently, and apprehend it differently: its basic character remains intact. The standard to distinguish progress from regress had already been laid down, only the emphasis, the moral undertones and overtones, undergo a change according to the varying development in our social and intellectual background. What we should endeavour in a particular age is to emphasize these moral tones, and give the correct emphasis: over-emphasis or under-emphasis, or no emphasis, would inevitably lead to confusion, chaos and stagnation. With this passable yardstick, we proceed to examine Islam, and some of its basic concepts. If we err in drawing some apparent conclusions, our premise is wrong, or perhaps our approach is a little different. But we are seekers after truth, and light does not always enter by the front window.

"There are contingencies," as Professor Coulton has observed, "in which scepticism is the mark of fear, belief the mark of courage." The converse is also true. We in this age must, therefore, judge for ourselves when such contingencies arise, and in the light of these adjust our attitudes. Rigidity of outlook and form would lead to lassitude and decay and the dynamic character which characterized early periods of Islam would be lost to us. Any major creed like Christianity or Islam, that have made a powerful impact on the world, have two aspects: the revolutionary and the constructive, the negative and the positive. Broadly speaking the tendency in any great movement is for the revolutionary aspect to predominate in the early stages while the constructive later. Primitive Christianity was revolutionary until it brought about the disruption of the old Roman civilization, then it created a new and positive world order of its own, and later modified its outlook. The Reformation began by being revolutionary and destructive and ended by becoming the basis of a new social order. We can indicate similar aspects and tendencies in political and economic creeds too, but that would be entering upon a wider field of survey than actually warranted.

Basic conceptions in Islamic ideology

Islam too in its early stages was essentially revolutionary but after the fall of Mecca, its positive and creative phase began and continued till after the Caliphate of `Omar. After that its positive character was essentially lost, and the doctrine was mixed up with regional politics, which alone

REFERENCES
1 Readings from World Religions by Champion and Short, p. 51.
2 Ibid., pp. 198-203.
3 Ibid., p. 81.
4 Ibid., p. 11.
made or marred history, depending upon the personality of the individual who happened to be then at the helm of affairs. It can be said without fear of contradiction that after Omar the course of Islamic history changed from its broad stream to various uneven channels. But we shall begin from the source and follow the main stream as far as it was able to water the world panorama.

Islam’s basic claim was the unity of God to be expressed in the unity of man; for that to be real, the man-made gods, both material, political and mental, had to be smashed and even liquidated.

“Do not unite God with gods,” says the Qur’ān. That was its revolutionary phase, and when that was done, a new order, social, political and economic, was to be installed and made effective under the “sovereignty of God and none other”, as the Qur’ān puts it. That was its creative and positive phase. Luckily for Islam, the prophet of Islam was alive, and at the helm of affairs when both phases put in their appearance. It was not left to another, as in Christianity, to implement what he had preached. I say it was the unique privilege of the prophet of Islam to have practised what he preached, and then to have implemented those ideas and practices in his own lifetime. He raised its superstructure in his own lifetime, although in subsequent periods it was mulcted here and there.

Islam’s second appeal is: To study nature and study the history of nations or the experience of man from age to age. That appeal has a double purpose. First to reinforce the belief in God and his greatness and sovereignty and thus to locate man’s place in the universe, and secondly by the study of historical and social growths man should evolve and formulate his own way of life on the right lines. Says the Qur’ān:

“How many a community that dealt unjustly have we shattered and raised up after them another flock?”

It further says:

“And how many a community have we destroyed that was thankless for its means of livelihood, and yonder are their dwellings which have not been inhabited after them save a little” (28 : 58).

And again the Qur’ān reminds:

“How many townships have we destroyed while it was sinful so that it liveth (to this day) in ruins” (24 : 54).

The emphasis on history is not a sudden modern development, but the pages of the Qur’ān are pregnant with it. The story of Adam, his rise and fall, the history of Moses and his people, the arrogance of the Pharaohs, the Noah’s Ark and Solomon’s domain over the creation of the earth — all this is indicated to give man a perspective into the social processes that correspond to the historical processes. If God is supreme and unchanging and the laws of nature are absolute and timeless, the laws of social and economic sciences are embedded in history and conditioned by it. Says the Prophet:

“Ye are in an age in which if you abandon one-tenth of what is ordained ye will be ruined. After this a time will come when he who shall observe one-tenth of what is now ordered will be redeemed.”

What does this mean? It clearly and unequivocally states that during the time of the Prophet, admittedly a transitional period, when old ideas and values had given place to new ideas and values, everything ordained was for the good of the Arabs and was desirable in that setting, and in that traditional background, and when that setting changes, the bare fundamentals sufficed: “Ye are in an age” emphasizes beyond doubt, the relationship of social changes in the context of history.

The third basic point in Islam is: The subservience of individual judgment to divine inspiration. It is surrender to God, after you have tapped and strained your mental faculties to their utmost. It is not passive fatalism, it is not intellectual inertia or indifference to mental and physical activities, but it is an acceptance of human fallibility. The age of enlightenment, whose motto is “Dare to be wise, dare to use your intelligence,” seeks to arrogate to the individual, whether a leader of a nation or a mere campaigner, the supreme right to judge for himself and take a decision, even when the fate of nations is at stake, and the individual judgment and authority is regarded as the ultimate source. That fundamental error led to the crisis and paved the way to confusing thought and installation of false gods, and the creation of false values. It created Pharaohs, Neros, Caesars, Alexanders, Stalins and Hitlers. But the individual judgment, as the so-called ultimate source, carries, as a modern writer states, “the argument to its logical conclusion and proves that this source is also tainted. The process of debunking is pursued to the point where the debunker is himself debunked”. The reasons of the individual can have no independent validity. In the Qur’ānic terminology, “True guidance is guidance from God that to others may be imparted the like of what hath been imparted to you. Will they wrangle then with you in the presence of God?”

Also, “Our Lord is He who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it right” (20 : 50). Further, the Qur’ān clearly states, “And verily there cometh unto you from me a guidance, and those whosoever followeth me there shall be no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve” (11 : 38).

That is to say, the whole creation moves under Divine guidance, from one stage to another, from one state to another, or in the words of the Qur’ān, “From state to state, shall ye be assuredly carried forward”. That is what Tennyson meant by “Far off Divine purpose to which the whole creation moves”. Moves it certainly, provided you follow His guidance and standard, provided you catch up with the spirit of time and draw lessons from history and the “bygone folks, whose sinful townships have we destroyed,” says the Qur’ān. It would then be a smooth course. But if you ignore history, ignore the spirit of time, and the basic standards laid down by the Qur’ān, then you suffer, then your path becomes tortuous, you toss and drift with the currents of history and amidst your own misdeeds.

The ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity and social justice, eulogized by the 18th and 19th century revolutions in Europe, do not bear any comparison, even though comparisons are odious, to the 6th century revolution brought in the hearts and minds of Arabs by the message of Islam. All the other revolutions that aimed at political, economic or social readjustments were invariably stricken by class-consciousness of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. At best, they glorified the “common man”, leaving him to his faults any prejudices. They glorified him without purifying him. Islam, on the other hand, touched the spiritual content of humanity in a practical way and with it crossed the national, social and class barriers. Muhammad studiously
refrained from splitting humanity into social or any other groups. At the summit of his power he declared:

“No man is superior to another: the Arab is not superior to the non-Arab, the white to the black and yellow. They are all sons of Adam, equal by birth and position.”

Then he continued:

“No man has a right to rule or dominate over the other, and impose his will on the weak and ignorant.”

And further he says:

“No man can act as intermediary between God and man, for God is equally accessible to all and needs none to interpose between Him and His creation.”

But that is not considered sufficient. The Qur’ān lays down, “The best among you is he who is the most righteous.” and that “The best of provisions is the right conduct.” And what is a right conduct? “It is not merely to turn your faces towards the East or the West,” says the Qur’ān, but the right conduct lies in “To believe in God and the last day and the angels, and the books and messengers and practice charity out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy and the wayfarer.” And again and again the Qur’ān states, “The best among you are the righteous,” and that is, “those who believe and do good work and establish worship and pay the poor dues, their reward is with the Lord.”

But lest the partisans create a monopoly of it, the Qur’ān clearly emphasizes that “righteousness alone is the main criteria”.

Addressing itself to those who wished to exclude everyone from paradise, who did not carry their label, the Qur’ān says, “And they say: None shall enter paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian. Those are their fancies. Say, produce your proof if ye are truthful. Nay, whosoever submits his whole self to God and is doer of good, he will get his reward with God nor shall they grieve.” Mark the word “whosoever”. It does not set a label on a good or a righteous man. It does not pin him down to a particular race or a group or a community; good deeds and righteousness is not the monopoly of a particular religion: “All good men, whether they know it or not, live in Islam”, was the most profound observation of Carlyle. Of course, by Islam he meant, and we understand, the Islam of the Qur’ān, the Islam of the Prophet, and not the tinted Islam of the professional priests.

The universal approach of Islam

The problem then is how to sort out the permanent from the temporary, the transient from the abiding. For righteousness cannot be merely practised by individuals, or a limited group of individuals in isolation. It has to be practised in a growing and expanding society, so that the message of Islam is spread to humanity at large and does not remain the preserve of the few nations and groups. When Muhammad declared:

“After this a time will come when he who shall observe one-tenth of what is now ordered shall be redeemed”
THE HOPE OF ISLAM FOR WORLD UNITY*

No other society has such a record of success as Islam has in unifying, in an equality of status, so many and varied races of mankind

by ABDUL TAIB BIN MAHMUD

Islam inculcates a proper appreciation of life in its followers

Islam is not merely a faith, but a way of life, denoted by the Arabic term al-Din.\(^1\) The Qur’an is not only a revelation of topics exclusively religious in nature, but also a body of divine injunctions on moral, social and legal questions. Bosworth-Smith aptly calls it “a poem, a code of law, a book of common prayer, and a Bible in one”.\(^2\) Therefore Islam must be taken as an all-embracing system covering what is commonly understood as religion, social conduct, law, and the general problems of the world.

Such a synoptic system cannot but give to the Muslim a distinctive attitude towards the life here and hereafter. Islam shares with Judaism and Christianity in the highly spiritual belief that the good spirit in man will survive death in a life of eternal bliss and peace. But Islam does not overlook the importance of the world this side of the grave. Being the creation of a Loving God and the manifestation of His wisdom,\(^3\) the life on this earth merits the serious consideration, and even to a certain degree the devotion, of the believer. The divine gift in man of the power to master the forces of nature\(^4\) should be used for the elevation of mankind. Thus the Qur’an enjoins:

“Seek with the wealth, which God has bestowed on you, the Home of the hereafter, forget not your portion in this world: but do good, as God has been good to you.”\(^5\)

This proper appreciation of life is also seen in the historic approach of Islam to the problem of religions. There is no exclusiveness in the Islamic claim to be the recipient and transmitter of God’s Divine Truth. While it preaches the finality of its message, which is to modify the teachings of its predecessors and to clear the errors resulting from human interpolation, Islam recognizes the presence of a great deal of truth in other religions. The Qur’an has borne testimony to this by saying:

“The same religion has He (God) established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah, on Abraham, Moses and Jesus, namely, that you should remain steadfast in religion and make no divisions therein.”\(^6\)

Muhammad himself has admitted that he is no bearer of “new doctrines”\(^7\) and that he is only one, though the last one,\(^8\) in the series of messengers that God has sent to the human race.\(^9\)

The office of Muhammad is again and again emphasized in the Qur’an as but “a plain warner” and a bearer of God’s revelation.\(^10\) Belief being a matter of internal conviction,\(^11\) his duty was fulfilled as soon as he had called “Men to the way of the Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation” and reasoned with “them in the most gracious manner”.\(^12\)

It is the choice of the individual whether to believe or to disbelieve;\(^13\) for the Qur’an has unequivocally declared:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion.”\(^14\)

In putting this divine declaration in exemplary practice, Muhammad gave the Jews in Medina “the same standing”\(^15\) and adopted them as “one community”\(^16\) with his followers; he guaranteed the Najarans Christians the liberty to exercise their religion;\(^17\) he preserved the freedom of his Zoroastrian subjects to pursue their religious conviction;\(^18\) and on his death-bed he reminded his followers:

“Observe scrupulously the protection accorded by me to non-Muslims.”\(^19\)

As can be seen in the history of Islam, this policy of tolerance was with very few exceptions maintained by the successors of Muhammad wherever they gained power in the world.

In Western Asia, this tolerant policy won for Islam the love and in many cases the conversion of the subject peoples.\(^20\) In Spain, it brought about spells of intermarriages\(^21\) and fusion of race and culture.\(^22\) In Russia, it inspired gratitude even by the Roman Catholic Pope John XII.\(^23\) And in all other parts of what now have become the Islamic world, it gained for Islam masses of converts and permanent cultural influences. So prevalent was the practice of tolerance among the Muslims that even the Christian knights coming with the Crusades were induced to adopt a likewise tolerant attitude towards Islam.\(^24\)

Furthermore, Islam does not stop at tolerance. By its very name Islam is a religion of peace.\(^25\) It enjoins on the Muslims “to incline towards peace”,\(^26\) wherever their enemy

* Text of a talk delivered on the 15th January 1961 at the Adelaide Town Hall on the occasion of World Religion Day.
is so inclined, even if it entails disadvantages on the Muslims.59 But the Islamic conception of peace is not the same as pacifism. A Muslim must therefore make a constant effort to prevent morality from evaporating into impractical idealism or sheer sentimentality.58 It is the duty of every Muslim to lay down his life, if needs be, in the cause of right, and in abolishing “persecution”, “aggression” and “oppression” and in protecting not only mosques but also “clerics, churches and synagogues”.68 which are the symbols of the freedom of conscience.

Islam’s approach to human problems is from a non-sectarian viewpoint

Since Islam recognizes the individual and voluntary nature of belief and that all religions enjoin what is good and forbid evils, the Islamic approach to problems of this world is from a non-sectarian viewpoint of moral criterion.29 Justice is strongly advocated in all dealings with all men.

“Let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably,” enjoins the Qur’án.30 To fulfil social obligations justly and honourably is an indispensable part of the faith. It is forbidden to a Muslim to revile other religions, or to blindfold his reason with fanaticism.32 The human race is one family under a common Father, called by what name He may be — Yahweh, God or Allah. As the Qur’án puts it:

“All mankind is but one community.”31

Difference of race, or colour, is merely a phenomenon in the rich variety of the Divine Creation.33 Such small groups as family, tribes and nations are indispensable bricks in a bigger human structure.34 Muhammad once said in explaining this conception of the unity of the human race:

“In no way is an Arab superior to a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab to an Arab; neither is there any superiority of the black over the white nor of the white over the black, except by virtue of their fear of God.”35

“Surely,” he said on another occasion, “your God is one, just as your human father is one? You are therefore all brothers.”36

The Qur’án tells us that “Whosoever submits his whole self to God and is a door of good,”95 be he a Jew, a Christian or a Sabian,40 will be entitled to God’s reward.

From the beginning of human history there have always been a people, who as the Qur’án describes them, “Direct others with truth and dispense justice therewith.”95 The Jews as a nation were holding God’s “Special Favour”94 by virtue of their moral zeal.35 The Christians are referred to in the Qur’án as “the nearest . . . in friendship to the Muslims” because of their devotion to God and their spirit of self-denial.96

The same God Who revealed the Torah92 and the Gospel94 gives to the world the Qur’án.94 While the Muslims are by the unifying force of Islam welded into “a single brotherhood”,98 the Islamic hope is not for unity exclusive to its followers. Muhammad was sent by “the Lord of the worlds”99 . . . as a mercy to all creatures.100 Just as God’s sunshine and rain are not confined for the benefit of any particular people or creed, so should His mercy not be denied to non-Muslims.101 Thus the Qur’án enjoins, as an expression of love for God,44 charity to the needy, the unemployed,66 the travellers, the refugees, the widows and the orphans. Speaking of this mercy, Muhammad said:

“The mercy I am talking about is not a mercy for any one of you, limited and personal, but a general mercy for all people (humanitarian and social), mutual assistance, loving each other, and having pity for all creatures of God.”103

Yes, it is a mercy that embraces all God’s creatures of whatsoever race or faith. This humanitarian ideal of the Prophet found devout adherents in his successors, even in their capacity as head of the Islamic world. Thus we find the first Caliph giving generous allowance to Christian priests in Egypt,104 and establishing “social security in favour of non-Muslim subjects at the expense of the Central Exchequer”.105 Under the Umayyad rule, Christians were entrusted with posts as high as that which we now know as Secretary of State.106 Later, under the Turkish rule, “the rank, the immunities, the domestic jurisdiction of the patriarchs, the bishops, and the clergy, were protected by the civil magistrates: the learning of the individuals recommended them to employments as secretaries and physicians”.99 and, as Gibbon showed, some of the Christians were raised “to the command of cities and provinces”.107 “Under Sulaiman, the various Christian sects were represented in the council of the Empire.”108

The need for unity of the human race is greater today than ever before. If Christians could sink their theological differences with Muslims beneath the realization of their common origin and their duty to mankind, the two faiths could be a great unifying force of the world

At no time in the history of mankind has the need for unity been more felt than in this age of hydrogen bombs and inter-continental missiles. Attempt has been made by political as well as non-political bodies to divert the catastrophe of an impending world war. Religions, too, should participate in such a movement, but with the view of achieving the long-term solution of world unity. The Jews of today have shown, in their attempt to unify their scattered race all over the globe, a dazzling example of human brotherhood. One could only wish that such a spirit of unity be extended to those outside the faith. In the God who sent St. Peter to the Gentile Cornelius96 we find a universal God no different from the Muslim “Lord of the Worlds”. If only the Christians would sink their theological differences with the Muslims beneath the realization of their common origin and their duty to mankind, the two faiths could be a great unifying force of the world.

Secularism, though originating in the escape from religious fanaticism, cannot handle the overwhelming task of unifying the world without the help of the spiritual influence of religions, as secularism lacks the lofty ideals which it chooses to ignore in its endeavour to grapple with stark reality.

However, Islam has that practical outlook, that tolerance and that non-sectarian view on world problems which may appeal to secularism. After all, Islam at its formative stage had been universal enough to accommodate with the stern simplicity of the Semitic, the mysticism of the East92 and the highly speculative philosophy of the Greeks.4 The Islamic law is the product of the fusion of the Hellenistic,65 Sasani66 and Qur’anic elements, and has been highly praised for its flawless logic.57

But the Islamic jurists could not keep up with the fast growth of the Empire and so failed to set up proper procedures and organic institutions for the smooth working of the law.6 The spirit of democracy was ever present in the Qur’án,69 but its application lasted only from the time of
the Prophet Muhammad to the fourth Caliph. The personal ambitions of their successors replaced it with absolutism.

The age-evolved Western democratic institutions might help to make up this procedural deficiency. But only with the co-operation of the West! And the question is: is it in the interest of the West to give this co-operation?

Professor Gibb of Oxford University has given the answer when he said:

“Islam has a (further) service to render to the cause of humanity. It stands, after all, nearer to the real East than Europe does, and possesses a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and co-operation. No other society has such a record of success in unifying in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavour, so many and so various races of mankind. . . .”

“I have the opposition of the great societies of the East and the West is to be replaced by co-operation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition. In its hands lies very largely the solution of the problem which Europe is facing in its relation with the East. If they unite, the hope of a peaceful issue is immeasurably enhanced — but if Europe, by rejecting the co-operation of Islam, throws it into the arms of its rival (Communism) the issue can only be disastrous for both.”

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PEN PALS

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APRIL 1961

17
FIRST AFRO-ASIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE IN CAIRO

by DR. M. F. GIBRIL

Women from sixty countries in Africa and Asia met at Cairo, Egypt, to discuss their common problems and their role in the struggle for national independence, freedom and peace. Almost one thousand women — political leaders, social workers, women of different ages and careers — came to Cairo in response to invitations of the Permanent Secretariat for Afro-Asian Solidarity, to attend the first Afro-Asian Women's Conference (14th-23rd January 1961).

Reports were sent to Cairo from various Asian and African countries, dealing with the problems and status of women in each of them.

The idea of convening this Conference originated at the first Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, held in Cairo in December 1957. Miss Bahia Karam, Secretary of the Women's Section at the Permanent Secretariat, visited several Asian and African countries where she studied the problems facing women's organizations in each.

In March 1960, delegates from sixteen countries met in Cairo in a preparatory committee, that agreed that women of Asia and Africa should participate in preparing five studies:

1. The disparity in education between boys and girls and mass communication: "Soviet Union, Algeria, Palestine and Burma";
2. The role of women in the family and community: "China, Ceylon, Guinea, Iran and the Sudan";
3. Equality between men and women in the economic field: "Ethiopia, Japan, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan";
4. The political and legal rights of women: "India, Korea, the Lebanon, Aden, Cameroons and Morocco"; and,
5. The role of women in the struggle for national independence and the maintenance of peace: "Open to all countries".

Elaborating the idea of the conference, Mrs. Shrimati Rajan Nehru, representative of the Indian Solidarity Committee and Chairman of the International Preparatory Committee, said: "In developing Afro-Asian co-operation, we, women of Asia and Africa, have a great part to play. We are both citizens and fellow-workers with the men, but we have an additional responsibility. We are mothers, and the shaping of the future generation in Asia and Africa depends to a great extent upon us. The problem which faces us is not only to strengthen our own position in society and to claim equal opportunities with men. We claim these opportunities and are strengthening our position in order that we may play a full part in the building of our nations."

A joint statement on the objective of this conference said: "The aim of this conference is to establish for Afro-Asian women their natural rights. The position of women in Asia and Africa varies from one country to another. There are certain factors that control this position, and what we are interested in doing in our conference is to study these factors, and achieve, through our deliberations and exchange of views, a unified policy."

Women coming from the two vast continents brought with them local art objects, dolls in local costumes, models showing the development of national dress, paintings, etc. These objects were exhibited at the Gezira Youth Welfare Centre, Cairo. Also, delegations entertained each other with their national dances, songs and music. They went sight-seeing in Cairo, visited the Suez Canal Zone, textile factories, schools and hospitals. They were invited to visit the Syrian region of the U.A.R., where they spent two days.

Following their four-day round of sessions and committee meetings, a long list of resolutions was issued.

These resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, were:

- ALGERIA: The conference denounces de Gaulle’s plebiscite and the massacres it led to. It appeals for more support to the Algerian nationalists and calls for the recognition of the Algerian Provisional Government.
- THE CONGO: The conference denounces all imperialist manoeuvres in the Congo.
- PALESTINE: The conference declares that Israel is the base for imperialism threatening world peace. It supports the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the return of the refugees to their homeland.
- Complete equality with men in all fields.
- To call upon women to reduce the consumption of luxury goods in favour of industrialization.
- Abolition of enforced marriage.
- To work for a legislation limiting the number of wives to one, and stopping man from abusing his right to divorce.
- Education should be national. No foreign culture should be imposed on the educational system.
- Women should enjoy the right to vote and to be elected, irrespective of their standards of education.
- Women should also enjoy equal opportunities with men to participate in the affairs of State and appointment to public posts.
CALL FOR UNITY OF MUSLIM COUNTRIES
No territorial, political or material considerations should separate Muslims from Muslims

President Nasir of the United Arab Republic and President Field-Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan of Pakistan stress the spiritual ties of Muslim countries

President Nasir said, "Relations between Pakistan and the United Arab Republic were developing and are getting from good to better. Tensions of 1956 have gone. There are no complexes in the relationship now. There is no room for suspicion any longer and there was now complete trust between the two."

Stressing spiritual ties uniting Pakistan, the United Arab Republic and other Muslim countries, President Nasir said: “If something ever happened to Pakistan the entire Muslim world would be disturbed.”

Recalling his old proposal of arranging a get-together of leaders of Muslim countries at the time of the Hajj, President Nasir said such a plan would succeed if politics were kept out of it. Both the United Arab Republic and Pakistan have done some work in promoting the study of Islam in the light of modern world requirements, and there are good prospects of collaboration between the two as desired by President Ayub Khan.

On Arab unity, President Nasir said, “The idea of unity among the Arab people went back to the eleventh century and all the talk about my wanting to invade other territories or getting rid of kings was utterly wrong. By Arab unity I mean no more than solidarity of the Arabs so as to be strong enough to face the challenge of the modern world. I would not accept the offer of unity of any Arab country if it came as a result of a coup d’état or if my own country was opposed to it. Nor would I accept integration of a country in which a large minority is opposed to it. The constitutional question is the main obstacle to Arab unity as it involves the question of personalities.”

In laying emphasis on the need of unity among Muslims, the President of Pakistan said: “Pakistan will continue to support the Arab cause without seeking any return or reward except goodwill. So long as we can adhere to the cardinal attributes of Islam, no territorial, political or material considerations will separate Muslim from Muslim. It is my sincere and humble prayer that God may bless Muslims all over the world with unity of purpose and conviction which their faith enjoins and their destiny requires in the ideologically competitive world of today.”

President Nasir in his reply said: “My visit to Pakistan earlier this year was an attempt to instal a wide bridge for relations between us, and your visit to us today is what appears to be the completion of the installation of the bridge from the other side. What we claim is that great friendships do not grow merely because of identity of views regarding all problems but rest on the basis of mutual understanding, joint respect and an impartial look at the basic facts of every country’s policy as they appear to those responsible in that country.”

In his reply the President of Pakistan presented a bouquet of flowers, and said: “Flowers which do not grow on trees but which grow in the hearts of brothers and friends. . . Let us pray to God that these flowers of goodwill and fraternity may never fade and their fragrance may always remain fresh.”
WHEN BROTHERS

Glimpses of Field-Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan of
United Arab Republic

President Field-Marshar Muhammad Ayub Khan talking to prominent editors of
Cairo newspapers on 8th November 1960.

Left  President Field-Marshar Ayub Khan being presented
      on 9th November 1960 by the Minister of Education of
      Egypt.

Right  President Field-Marshar Muhammad Ayub Khan
       9th November

Below  President Field-Marshar Muhammad Ayub Khan
       reception held in his honour by the cd
Muhammad Ayub Khan's visit to the
Public and Su'udi Arabia

President Field-Marshall Muhammad Ayub Khan addressing a news conference at Mecca on 4th November 1960.

Muhammad Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan.

Mr. Kayal al-Din Hussein, Secretary General of the United Arab Republic, being presented with the Ph.D. degree honoris causa at Cairo University Convocation on 4th November 1960.

Ayub Khan replying to an address of welcome presented to him at a ceremony at Jeddah by the citizens of Jeddah on 4th November 1960.
IN MEMORIAM

KING MUHAMMAD V OF MOROCCO

by FOREST E. BARBER, M.A.

On 26th February, 1961 C.E., the Muslim world was greatly shocked and deeply saddened by the sudden and entirely unexpected death of His Majesty King Muhammad V of Morocco. The King died in Rabat after a nasal operation. He was fifty-one years of age. Thousands of his loyal countrymen wept when an announcement of the King’s death was broadcast to the nation by his eldest son and heir, Crown Prince Moulay Hassan, and vast crowds of mourners, greatly overcome and showing evident signs of their deep emotion, were winding their way to the royal palace to honour their late sovereign.

His Majesty postponed a visit to the Near and Far East in order to undergo a nasal operation which had been announced as a minor one. Sources in the palace at Rabat said that the King died as the result of a “cardiac accident”. Every effort was made to save his life — efforts which continued for more than three hours.

The operation on the King’s nose was completed at 11:55 (G.M.T.), but ten minutes later His Majesty’s heart suddenly stopped beating. The surgeons present immediately opened the thorax and began to massage the King’s heart while other doctors were summoned hastily to the operating room.

Adrenalin injections were administered and the King’s heart resumed its beating, but then suddenly stopped again. While further massage was quickly applied to the heart, damage to the brain seemed to have occurred because of the interruption of the blood supply. Hope for His Majesty’s life was abandoned at 3:30.

Various members of the Moroccan Government had waited in a room adjoining that in which the King lay and Crown Prince Moulay Hassan was at his father’s side when he died. As soon as the death of the King had been announced, the Cabinet met and invested the Crown Prince as ruler with the name King Hassan II.

The entire Moroccan nation was in full mourning the evening of the King’s death. Huge crowds pressed around the palace in Rabat. While all the palace doors were closed, vast crowds penetrated into the outer courtyard and threw themselves against the main door to the palace. Moroccan women uttered shrill, piercing cries of mourning. Some women even threw themselves down and rolled on the ground in their anguish.

A communiqué issued by the royal palace late the same night announced that the funeral services for the King would be held on Tuesday 28th February. The delay in the funeral services was expected to give many leading national figures residing in other parts of Morocco time to reach Rabat.

In addition to the Crown Prince Moulay Hassan, King Muhammad V had another son, Prince Moulay Abdallah, who is engaged to Lamiah Sol, daughter of the former Lebanese leader, and four daughters — the Princesses Aicha, Malikka, Nazah and Amina.

The character of King Muhammad V

King Muhammad V of Morocco was one of the few monarchs of our times who ruled as well as reigned. To the strong personality of this sovereign, Morocco owes its present political independence.

His Majesty easily excelled by virtue of his personal character, his political sagacity, and his personal charm. He was a most pious Muslim, patient in the trials which beset him, competent in dealing with the troubles which beset a monarch, tenacious in contending for the rights of his people and nation, calm in adversity and moderate in triumph. Deeply conscious of the fact that he alone was the symbol and embodiment of Moroccan sovereignty under the so-called protectorate forced upon his unwilling nation by the French, he conceived it as his God-inspired mission to lead his nation towards modern political freedom and to resist all efforts on the part of the French to keep him from this task.

His Majesty was quite conscious of the feudal type of society prevailing in Morocco at the time of his birth and which continued for much of his reign. He strove to reduce
the great, sometimes overwhelming, distance which separated Morocco and the Moroccan people from the contemporary world by devoting much effort and thought to creating Moroccan schools and by setting an example in the contemporary education of his children, more especially of his daughters, who were encouraged to be active in all the pursuits of European young ladies of rank and who never appeared veiled.

The King’s descent and education

Sidi Muhammad ben Yusuf was descended from Sultan Moulay Ismail, who reigned from the year 1672 till 1727, consolidating the present dynasty of the Alouite Sharifs at the time of the downfall of the Saadian line. He succeeded to the throne of Morocco on the death of his father, Sultan Moulay Yusuf, on 17th October 1927 C.E.

Only seventeen years of age on his accession to the throne, Sidi Muhammad had received a thorough education in Muslim law at the Qur’anic schools and imbibed the wisdom of Islam there. He also obtained a certain amount of French education, though he never studied in France. Those who knew him best in those early days state that he was especially interested in reading the history of Morocco and Islam, and in studying biography. Early in his life Sidi Muhammad had given evidence of possessing personal dignity and other attractive desirable personal qualities. His youth and reputation rendered him personally popular among the Moroccans and the Europeans alike. Of a gentle disposition and an extremely pleasant and refined appearance, Sidi Muhammad was greatly revered by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. His father, Sultan Moulay Yusuf, was a strict Muslim, and Sidi Muhammad was brought up in the strict observances of his faith. During those early years of his life, the King learned to hunt, to shoot, to play tennis and to swim.

When Sidi Muhammad reached the age of sixteen, he was married to a young lady who had been selected by the family and they started raising their family. Of the King’s children, all but the little Princess Amina are children born of the first wife.

Muhammad V ascends the throne

At the close of the last century, Morocco fell into the clutches of the French, and France proclaimed a protectorate over this nation. The Treaty of Fez in 1912 promised “constant support to His Sharifian Majesty against all dangers which might threaten his person or throne or endanger the tranquillity of the State”. It was soon seen that this was more than a protectorate; in verity Morocco was a French colony. Most Moroccans would have liked to throw the French out, but France was a leading world power and the Moroccans were not strong enough to drive the French from the land.

At the same time these events were taking place in Morocco, another event occurred which was to dramatically alter the life of Sidi Muhammad. On 17th October 1927, his father, the Sultan, died, and the next day the ‘Ulema of Fez assembled to elect his successor. The ‘Ulema consisted of the leading religious leaders and authorities on Islamic law. At that time in Morocco, any member of the Royal Family might be chosen as Sultan. This law has since been changed and Muhammad V named his eldest son Crown Prince and heir to the throne.

Sidi Muhammad was but seventeen years of age at the time he ascended the throne as Sultan, and for far too many years his power was exercised by the French. The young Sultan had not been exposed to the prevailing revolutionary ideas one reads about in history books and talks about in student circles in European universities. But the young Sultan possessed wonderful characteristics and virtues of which the French were blissfully unaware or which they chose to minimize. One was his great ability to listen and to learn; another was his truly remarkable ability of observing. These two traits combined made it possible for Sidi Muhammad to grow over the years to the stature of a great leader of men.

The first years of his reign showed little or no sign of the political turbulence that was to come later. The position of Sultan had been shorn of actual governing power, but not of authority, and Sidi Muhammad ruled as an absolute monarch with the addition of a strong traditional prestige as a known descendant of the Prophet of Islam. The young Sultan, as his father before him, took his duties seriously, constantly receiving his Ministers of State, and presiding at the weekly Council at which all pending matters were discussed. He was also president, and took an active part, on the Council of Islamic Education. His task as Sultan of Morocco was at first easier than had been that of his father. When Sidi Muhammad became Sultan in 1927, the nation was rapidly being consolidated, and with the exception of one or two outlying and desert or highly mountainous regions, the whole of Morocco recognized the Sultan’s authority.

There was also a strong streak of obstinacy in this young Sultan which came to light during the last World War. When Muhammad V was called upon to enforce the anti-Semitic legislation of the Vichy Government of France, he courageously refused to do so. He remarked that he was the ruler of all Moroccans, including the quarter-million Jews, and he declined to enforce laws which discriminated against any group of his subjects.

After the fall of France in 1940, Sidi Muhammad received much attention from the Germans and later from the Allies, especially from Franklin Roosevelt. A climactic peak in his career came on 22nd January 1943, when Sidi Muhammad dined with the American President and Prime Minister Winston Churchill. This was certainly the first time in his life the Sultan had been permitted by his French overlords thus to confer in private with high officials of sovereign lands. Perhaps the French were powerless to prevent this private meeting.

President Roosevelt was greatly impressed by the Sultan, and forthwith urged him not to continue to permit foreigners to rob and exploit Morocco’s resources, but rather to encourage the Moroccans to develop their land for themselves.

The course of events in the Middle East and the formation of the Arab League also affected his career, and he saw himself suddenly a leader of the Arab world in North-West Africa. On a visit to Tangiers in the Spring of 1947 he spoke of Morocco’s right to “restitution of full sovereignty” and his son, Prince Moulay Hassan, made a speech on Moroccan independence. His association with the nationalist movement, the Istiqlal, became increasingly obvious, and in 1951 certain tribesmen, influenced by the French, who wished to diminish or destroy the rising
popularity of the Sultan, were persuaded to demonstrate against the government.

The exile of the Sultan

In August 1953, the French Government took sudden action. The Pasha of Marrakesh, Thami al-Glaoui, as leader of the pro-French element, had proclaimed Muhammad Ibn Mouslay Arafat the Imam of the Faithful, a title reserved to the use of the reigning Sultan. Sidi Muhammad was speedily informed by General Guillaume, the French Resident-General, that an order had been drawn for his exile together with his two sons. The French made it plain that they would not uphold his rights at the risk of civil war.

Corsica was at first the home of the Sultan in exile, but in January 1954 he was removed from there accompanied by his sons and his wife, for a destination which in time was disclosed to be Madagascar. At the same time it was revealed that he had given an understanding to abstain from all political activity.

Morocco reacted to the kidnapping of her Sultan by armed attacks on the French. Crops were burned, trains were wrecked, shops were blown up, people were attacked, and mosques were nearly empty on Fridays.

The United Nations was asked to consider the matter. Each time this body failed to provide a solution. During the period from 1953 to 1955, many of the Berber tribes became the staunchest and most bitter enemies of the French, and a number of their tribal leaders announced themselves as in favour of the return of Sultan Muhammad V.

When Thami al-Glaoui called for the immediate restoration of Sidi Muhammad to the throne, all resistance by the French became useless, and he was quickly restored.

Restoration to the throne

His triumph was complete. His enemies were swept away and the French régime had no supporters left. The Istiqlal Party emerged as the strongest political force in the land and soon a United Morocco appeared. The Sultan at once formed his own Cabinet and carried out needed political and judicial reforms. The French and Spanish protectorates swiftly came to an end. On 2nd March 1956 the French and Moroccan Governments signed a declaration at Paris proclaiming the full independence of Morocco.

In August 1957, Sidi Muhammad changed his title from Sultan to King. His political ascendancy at home was maintained by a combination of persuasiveness and reform. A division in the Istiqlal Party in 1959 did not undermine the King's position. He was conversant both with the Western scene and with Arab problems. He toured Middle East capitals last year and was cordially received by all rulers. This firm basis of understanding lent subtlety to his diplomatic efforts and moderation to his foreign policy.

The new ruler, King Hassan II, who is thirty-one, has commanded the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces since independence. In the view of many political observers he faces a heavy burden in a country where political rivalries are acute.

King Muhammad V, truly mourned by his nation, will be forever remembered as the author of her independence and the architect of Moroccan leadership in Africa and throughout the Muslim world.

HIS MAJESTY KING HASSAN II

His Majesty King Hassan II was born in Rabat on 9th July 1929. From childhood he was prepared by his father for the responsibilities he was later to assume as leader of Moroccan youth and as the right hand to the late King in affairs of State.

To this end he received modern education at a high school in Rabat where he studied alongside young Moroccans drawn from all regions and all conditions of life in the country. His studies included the Arabic language and literature and also the normal curriculum of a modern school. In addition, he was given personal training in statesmanship by the late King himself. Later the Prince graduated with honours in law.

He also devoted his attention to music and the arts. Morocco is a land of sportsmen and the young Prince is one of the finest horsemen in the country. In addition he is an accomplished tennis player.

Exile and independence

The King shared his father's exile in Madagascar. On the restoration of independence he played the leading part in the creation of the Royal Armed Forces of which he became the Chief of Staff.

Apart from his manifold duties as Chief of Staff he devoted keen attention to all youth activities in which, whenever possible, he participated personally.

Responsibilities of State

On several occasions, during the late King's absence abroad, King Hassan assumed full responsibility for the State. On 9th July 1957 he was formally invested as Crown Prince and Heir to the Throne.

On 26th May 1960 he assumed the Vice-Presidencies of the new government formed under His late Majesty's leadership.

During 1960 he led the Moroccan delegation to the fifteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly. The many facets of Morocco's policy in the realm of foreign affairs and her considered views on the various crucial issues threatening international peace and stability found an eloquent expression in His Royal Highness's address. He submitted to the General Assembly a programme for disarmament and a plan for the constitution of a United Nations Aid Fund to help countries which are in process of development.

Sidi Muhammad V (first from left) with His Majesty Sidi Hassan II
COMMUNISM AND THE ARAB WORLD

"If the West and particularly Britain can help the Muslim world to regain its unity and cohesion, we shall not only have established an unbroken line of resistance to Communism from Casablanca to Karachi; we shall have gained the friendship of one of the greatest powers in world politics for generations to come—the reawakening strength of Islam"—Anthony Nutting

by IQBAL AHMAD

COMMUNISM — a brief survey

At the moment Communism is the most dreaded word in the Western world. The general impression that this word owes its existence to 19th century philosophical thinking is not correct. In fact it is far older than that. In the past there were numerous small communities which practised a form of Communism of their own. But these practices were inspired by religious beliefs.

It was in 1848 that the word “Communism” acquired a new meaning. Karl Marx and F. Engels used it in their famous Communist Manifesto to introduce a new system of social and economic organization identical with Socialism.

In that Manifesto the authors predicted that the ghost of Communism would haunt Europe. No doubt their prophecy seems to have come true. But Communism is no longer a ghost. Today it is a living reality which threatens more countries than those on the continent of Europe.

Communism has the same effect on hungry stomachs, and hungry minds too, as a lighted match would have on a huge store of oil. I have purposely mentioned oil to lead you on to think of the Arab world. Every industry in the world today is in some way or the other dependent on a regular supply of oil. The Arab world has three-quarters of the world reserves of oil hidden under its soil. The United States of America is the largest producer of oil. But she has very little to spare for anyone else. She even imports oil. The Arab world is the second greatest producer of oil. Great Britain gets two-thirds of its oil from Arab countries. It is the calculated opinion of experts that if this supply were to stop, Great Britain could only replace one-tenth of it from other sources.

So, Communism and the Arab world, the two factors which form the basis of this subject, are not only controversial subjects, but are extremely delicate issues as well. If they are not handled and considered carefully, they could prove very explosive and disastrous, particularly to Great Britain, as events proved in 1956.

Until the 19th century, history was considered to be a mere collection of incidents and events. Afterwards, thinkers in the West started to search for basic laws that determined the course of human history. One of such thinkers was Charles Darwin, who in 1859 put forward his theory of evolution in his book The Origin of Species. In 1867 Marx published his famous book Das Kapital, which seems to exercise more influence on the minds of men today than any other secular book — and more than many religious books.

Karl Marx gave the idea that human history was a struggle between contending classes, and that this forms the principal driving force in the development of human society. For example, Marxists claim that what matters is not the battles, religious outlook and intrigues of Oliver Cromwell, but the study of Cromwell’s place in the development of British production and distribution, the understanding of why at that period, and in Britain particularly, the struggle developed against feudal monarchy, and the study of the changes brought about in that period.

If Communism had remained a philosophy, attempting to improve the lives of people all over the world through dedication and service, I don’t think there would have been any reason for antagonism against Communism. To improve is a basic human instinct. If Communism offered a better proposition, why not accept it? No serious-minded person could have any objection to what F. Engels wrote:

“...Our task will first of all consist in transforming their individual production and individual ownership into co-operative production and co-operative ownership, not forcibly, but by way of example, and by offering social aid for this purpose.” (Italics are by the writer.)

If Communism had remained like that, there would not have been all this trouble that we are having now.

We perhaps do not realize it, but the pattern of social reform in Great Britain is very much in line with the philosophy of Communism. Looking at Great Britain, it seems that a high degree of economic collectivism could co-exist in the world alongside the fluid capitalism of the United States of America. It is also apparent that of themselves, the American and Communist economics would not drive the world to the madness of the arms economy or the greater madness of war. It is possible, that if suitable conditions were provided, both these systems would mutually influence each other and humanity would benefit far more by a blending of the two systems.

Unfortunately, Communism is today judged by the power and prestige of the Soviet Union. It is the unflinching and determined drive for power of the Soviet Union and Communist China that is dangerous and causes fear. In my opinion it is the cult of Stalin that has done a lot of harm to Communism.

Another thing that causes fear of Communism is the pattern in which Communist governments are established. A small group of intellectuals capture power, and after ruthlessly wiping out all opposition, dominate the whole country. This is how Communism was established in Russia itself.

Communism was born in the heart of London. It was primarily meant to cure the economic evils of the industrial countries of the West, but it still failed to be accepted as a creed or an ideology by Western nations. It, therefore, looks very unreasonable for Communism to try to shape the future of the people in the Western hemisphere.

1 Text of a talk given by the author under the auspices of the Fifty-Nine Society held at the Kensington Central Library, Philimore Walk, London, W.8, on Thursday 12th January 1961.
Communism and capitalism — mutually influencing each other

Although the West may appear opposed to Communism, the fact remains that the idea of liberty of the individual, which was the cry of the Western world against Communism, does not hold true today. In all countries, regardless of their political complexes, people demand more and more security against unemployment, through State assistance, subsidies and other means. They demand social services such as health insurance and old age pensions. They demand public education and reduction in the inequalities of wealth by graded taxation. The position today, whether people in the West like the idea or not, is that an individual worker must join a union or he stands the risk of losing his job. Communism has had its influence.

It would not be right to presume that only Communism has influenced the Capitalist structure and that Capitalism has not had its effect on Communism. The other day I read a Soviet publication, which claimed that Russia had the shortest working hours in the world. It claimed that the Soviet worker had to work for 40.5 hours a week whereas the American worker worked for 40.5 hours a week. One often hears Kitka Khushchev talk of his great anxiety to raise the standard of living of his people. In the same way there are many factors which indicate that Communism is also being influenced by Western Capitalist ideas.

The Arab world

It is extremely difficult to define the Arab world. There are Arabs and also a League of the Arab States, but there is no Arab State of which all Arabs are nationals. An Arab may be described in his passport as of Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian, Egyptian, Iraqi or Su’udi Arabian nationality. Professor Gibb, of Harvard University, has defined Arabs as follows:

“All those are Arabs for whom the central fact of history is the mission of Muhammad and the memory of the Arab empire, and who in addition cherish the Arab tongue and its cultural heritage as their common possession.”

If this definition were accepted in the present context I would have to discuss a whole belt of countries stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Unfortunately the space here is limited, so by the term “Arab world” I would be referring to countries of the Middle East like Su’udi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Republic, Iraq, Kuwait, etc.

Importance of the Arab world

In America a building 200 years old is ancient. In England you find only fragments of anything that is more than 1,000 years old. But in Egypt you will find tombs which are 5,000 years old. The walls of these tombs are covered with pictures and writings beautifully cut in rock. Not only gods and kings are portrayed in these pictures, but there are fishermen hauling their nets full of fish or spearing crocodiles, there are groups of donkeys, cattle, geese and other animals, and there are even the liveliest scenes of ordinary life like cooking, cutting corn and blowing glass. The statue of Rameses I, which had been lying prostrate for a long time, has now been re-erected in front of the main railway station in Cairo, to remind visitors of the great historical past of this country. Arrangements have also been made to floodlight the Pyramids for the benefit of passengers who may look down as they converge on this Clapham Junction of world airlines. Syria has treasures of almost equal age and beauty. Iraq is admitted to be the cradle of civilization. The Nile, the longest river in the world, is the lifeline of Egypt. The Tigris and the Euphrates, the famous rivers of Biblical tradition, flow through no less important parts of the Arab world. Damascus is reported to have the most fascinating museum in the world. Out of the Seven Wonders of the World three of them are in the Arab world, viz., the Pyramids of Egypt, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, 60 miles south of Baghdad, and the Pharos of Alexandria, a marble watch-tower and lighthouse on the island of Pharos in the harbour of Alexandria.

Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, or most of the world’s outstanding religious personalities, were born in this region. In Su’udi Arabia there is the Ka’bah, which not only forms the religious nucleus for one-seventh of mankind but is also traditionally believed to be a house of worship built by Abraham. The Arab world constitutes a very important part of the Muslim world, which stretches from Casablanca to Sumatra. How strong the faith of Islam is in this region is obvious by a quotation from the Reverend C. S. Milford of the Church Missionary Society:

“While the remains of the old faith are everywhere to be seen — including those of the Graeco-Roman religion, which has left its impress in the magnificent colonnades . . . in Lebanon and . . . Jordan. It is equally true that the great living religions have dominated the region for the last 2,000 years. And it is here that the Christian comes face to face with one of the great tragedies of history. This land in which Christianity had its birth, and which was the scene of many of its early triumphs, is today a post-Christian land . . . . Throughout the Near and the Middle East, as also along the coast of North Africa, the flourishing Christian Churches of the early centuries died out. With shame it must be confessed that many of these communities actually welcomed the Muslims as deliverers from . . . oppression . . . The grim fact must be recognized that in spite of devoted missionary work by many Churches . . . during the last century or more, hardly any Muslims have been won for Christ” (The Middle East — a Bridge or a Barrier?, pp. 8, 9 and 10). (Italics appearing in the quotation are by the writer.)

The Arab countries also have a strategic importance. We all know the importance of the Suez Canal in international trade. The Arab world is strategically situated between the Communist bloc and Africa and between Europe and Asia. Its religious importance should not be under-estimated. President Nasir of Egypt makes this clear on page 72 of his book The Philosophy of the Revolution:

“The pilgrimage (to Mecca) should be a great political power. The forces of the world should resort to and follow its news; as a regular political congress wherein the leaders of the Muslim States, their public men, their writers, their leading industrialists, merchants and youth draw up in this universal parliament the main lines of policy for their countries and their co-operation together, until they meet again.”

The economic importance of the Arab countries for the West because of its huge oil reserves has already been mentioned.

The struggle of ideologies

Ideas do not fight each other in pure space, but through organized groups. The success of Communism today is due to the ability of Lenin to collect around him a group of determined leaders. The prestige of the ideology
of Communism is due to the strength of the Soviet Union. Of the ideological forces which have exercised deep and lasting influence, three stand out in importance. The first is the idea of a classless Socialist society. The second is the liberal and enlightened humanitarianism of recent centuries, which owes its existence to the meek and gentle teachings of Christianity. The third is the ideology of Islam.

Most international conflicts show a mixture of power politics and ideological factors. This is also true of the Middle East. In this region the struggle of these three ideological systems is more apparent than anywhere else. In the past there have been the Crusades, the Muslim wars, and the wars of the Inquisition. Of more immediate concern to our own generation is the Communist creed, which believes that the establishment of a classless society is impossible without a final struggle between Capitalism and Socialism, and which also believes in violent revolutions to secure the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Middle East offers the most vulnerable battleground for this ideological struggle. Of course in the Middle East, oil does not remain an economic issue, but becomes a political factor, thus literally adding fuel to the fire.

**Arab nationalism**

Unfortunately the West has underestimated the importance of Arab nationalism. In the same breath it must be said that the Russians have overestimated the extent to which they can exploit this nationalism to their own interests. The British think that the Arabs should consider the British as their greatest benefactors for freeing them from the domination of the Turks. But because of various factors, which I shall mention later on, the Arabs think of the British as the new Turks. The suspicion is so strong that a British journalist recently remarked that the young Arab of today sincerely believes that the British Foreign Minister and his colleagues have nothing else to do but read books the whole day through about how to deceive the Arabs. Slowly and gradually the Arabs are getting unified. The meeting of the Arab League recently held in Baghdad shows healthy signs of Arab unity.

Arab nationalism has a long history. It really began in the 70's before Britain occupied Egypt. It has its roots in religion. It was an Arab movement for preserving Islam by regenerating it, and was associated with al-Azhar, the oldest university in the world. It had as its leader an extraordinary immigrant, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. He was one of the most creative personalities of Islamic civilization and it is surprising how little curiosity there is about him in the West. Fusing with this religious ardour was a purely political movement of national feeling, which had begun as an offshoot of Western nationalism.

Because of the misunderstanding about Arab problems that prevails in the West, Nasir, instead of being considered as an exponent of Arab nationalism, which is his true role, is considered to be a Communist. It is surprising how simple facts can be easily overlooked. When Nasir visited Moscow, Krushchev in a well-publicised statement said that Nasir is not a Communist and that he understood Nasir and Nasir understood him. Nasir also has been on friendly terms with Yugoslavia, which has never pleased the Kremlin. The Arabs are not political innocents after years of bitter experience. They know that Russian aid may be without strings, but it is just as much without strings as a cat's cradle.

The crux of the problem in the Middle East is that, with this immense source of wealth, the Arabs no longer want to remain camel drivers or bedouins of the desert. They are most eager to progress, but for their progress they must have help. If the West does not give help, then they will be forced to seek help elsewhere. A young Arab bitterly complained to a visiting M.P. a few months ago that the West prefers to let them go to Russia rather than give them aid. It was the withdrawal of the Western loan for the building of the Aswan Dam which led to the nationalization of the Suez Canal and the tragic events which followed.

Arab nationalism no doubt is beset with great difficulties. What is important is that, under its influence, the spirit of the people has become better, and this is a very significant point to remember. Under Arab nationalism, Egypt has made tremendous improvement in housing and education. Industry has received stimulus. Output of books has increased. The Arabs proudly claim that in literature they are so up to date that even Boris Pasternak's book Dr. Zhivago has been translated into Arabic. The al-Azhar is growing in importance. The millenary of this historic institution will be celebrated with the opening of new residential quarters for the students a mile north of the mosque.

**Communism and Arab countries**

Stalin had divided the world into two camps, and therefore until 1951 the USSR kept aloof from the Middle East. Even the Communist parties in Middle East countries remained ineffective. Krushchev had more penetrating views. He discovered that there could be three zones. In 1955 Bulganin and Krushchev toured India, Burma and Afghanistan. Shepilov toured the Middle East. These were epoch-making decisions taken by the Kremlin.

Geographical positions can make a lot of difference to a people's way of thinking. To the West the Arab world is in the East. That is why they call it the Middle East or the Near East. But to the USSR the Middle East is in the south. And in the south, the USSR has vast populations in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan whose emotional and cultural ties are with the Arab world. Now and then, when the Soviet Union thinks it will help them in their publicity campaign against the West, they let Muslims from this area travel to Mecca for the pilgrimage. But they are also conscious of the fact that this flank is not such a strong one. On this flank are Turkey and Persia, who form vulnerable points on the long border of the Soviet Union. The primary interests of Russia in the Middle East are first to safeguard its own border and secondly to have a grip on a vital spot of Western trade and commerce so that it can create the maximum nuisance for the West.

For a long time Soviet propaganda kept on proclaiming the hypocrisy of the West in its insistence on the need for the defence of the Middle East against Russian attack. In October 1956 it was the West which attacked the Middle East. Again, the West exaggerated reports of Soviet arms build-up in Egypt and Syria and the despatch of Soviet volunteers. This had the opposite effect of what was intended. It appeared that the Soviet government was ready to fight their battles, not only against the West, but against Israel too.

It was thus the follies of the West that gave the Soviet Union a unique opportunity to exploit the situation in the
Middle East to their advantage. The most serious factor which is not helping matters in the Middle East is the wide divergence of views between America and Britain. Britain thinks that President Nasir or, as a few think, that Israel is the cause of all the trouble in the Middle East. In either case, in Britain’s view it is local nationalist ambitions which seem to rank as the foremost danger in the Middle East situation. In the American view, the main danger is in the ambitions of the Communists. It will perhaps be correct to assume that both these factors are simultaneously inherent in many Middle East situations.

A serious failing which is not helping the West is that its system of research and information on Arab countries is very slow and somewhat outdated. On the other hand the Soviet Union has at its disposal vast resources of organized research into every kind of Middle East problem, and it has a large number of trained expert personnel for employment in Middle Eastern countries. This superiority has enabled the Soviet Union to appeal to the Arab countries more effectively than the West.

But Russia has one serious disadvantage in this struggle for power in this region. The Western language and culture, and its vast and intricate network of banking and insurance are deeply rooted in Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, Soviet plans for economic and cultural infiltration of the Middle East are beset with difficulties.

At the moment Arab nationalism is the strongest factor in Arab countries. It is so strong that even the Communist parties in those countries are treading the path of Arab nationalism. In Iraq particularly, Communism tried to put up a strong fight to establish itself, but it failed to replace the strong religious feelings of the people for Islam, and also the spirit of Arab nationalism.

There are other factors too, which will not allow the countries of the Middle East to fall into the Soviet orbit. The supply of oil produced from oil-fields in the Middle East has outrun the demand. Oil in the Middle East is now a buyer's market instead of a seller's market. The Soviet Union has appeared in the international oil market, and Arab countries know well that they will get no help from Moscow. That is why Iraq did not follow the example of Dr. Mussadiq. So the position at the moment is that, although the West relies on the supply of oil from Arab countries, the Arab countries also rely on the West for their main source of revenue. And these mutual interests hold the West and Arab countries together.

The progress of Communism has been considerably slower in Muslim countries than in Europe. By the end of the Second World War there were small active Communist groups in French North Africa, Syria, the Lebanon, Egypt and Iran. Religion has been a strong barrier against Communism in the Middle East. Moreover, the influential sections of the population, the upper and middle class, are mostly nationalistic. In Turkey a strong nationalistic régime has practically stamped out Communist organizations in that country. In spite of the progress Communists made in Iran during the occupation of the Soviet Union between 1942 and 1946, there are relatively very few Communists in Iran. In Syria and Egypt, the Communist parties are outlawed. Although at times the governments of Arab countries flirt with Communism, the growth of Communism in Arab countries is negligible. Looking at the Muslim world as a whole, in the two most populous Muslim States, Pakistan and Indonesia, there has been very little Communist agitation so far. In Pakistan it is significant to note Communism has no apparent existence.

Communism in the Middle East is trying to compromise with local Arab feelings so that eventually it may be able to exercise complete domination in that area. It is worthwhile for any Muslim living in the Middle East to remember the following words of Walter Z. Laqueur:

“Communism is an essentially dynamic movement. It does not want to stagnate and cannot afford to . . . The Arab movement towards unity will be supported as long as it can be used as a weapon against the West, but hardly any longer. . . . A conflict thus seems inevitable in the long run” (The Soviet Union and the Middle East, p. 345).

Israel — the Western dagger in the heart of the Arab world

I am conscious of the fact that, in dealing with the Arab world, I would have to discuss one or two very sensitive issues, particularly where Israel is concerned. I therefore prefer to quote the views of others on this most controversial issue of the Middle East, particularly the views of Arabs themselves, because they feel that it is a Western dagger in the heart of the Arab world.

Nabih Amin Faris, a Palestinian Arab, and Mohammed Tawfik Husayn, an Arab from Iraq, in their book The Crescent in Crisis, say:

“Israel is the most serious danger to which the Arab world has been exposed since the period of the Crusades. With outside support, official and private, Israel stands today as a spear stuck in the heart of the Arab fatherland. Since its creation, Israeli plans have been admittedly to bring all Jews to Palestine. . . . The Zionists’ ultimate goal has often been stated as an Israeli extending from the Euphrates to the Nile. Israel, too, is a veritable wedge which has split the Arab world in twain, separating the lands of the fertile crescent from the African Arabs in Egypt and beyond. With superior vitality, technical skill and outside aid, Israel hopes to strangle budding Arab industries and to open the vast market to its own.

“The future of Israel could in all likelihood be similar to that of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem in the 12th century. As outside aid and support diminish and Arab unity and strength grow, Israel’s zero hour would arrive and its final fate will be sealed. The story would then become another chapter in the long history of the Holy Land” (p. 175).

The words convey very strong feelings, which, to say the least, are very bitter, and it will not be wrong to maintain that these words portray the sentiments of every Arab of today.

It is essential to pose the question why such strong and bitter feelings have been engendered by the creation of Israel. The story is vividly and most ably told by James Morris, who was the Middle East correspondent of The Times, in his book The Hashemite Kings:

“When the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia, they discovered in the Tsarist archives some secret documents which violently shook and permanently breached the Anglo-Arab partnership. These embarrassing papers revealed that within a few months after the British had concluded their agreement with Hussein,
they secretly arranged with two of their allies to divide the post-war Middle East into spheres of influence. There was, it now appeared, no intention at all of allowing the Arabs their complete independence. The Bolsheviks, hoping to embarrass the Western powers as well as to discredit the diplomacy of the old régime, promptly published these papers, and thus let out of the bag an unusually persistent and ill-tempered cat” (p. 57).

“The Balfour Declaration . . . was to lead in the end to the establishment of the Republic of Israel and the estrangement of the Arab peoples from the Western world. . . . Dr. Weizmann, the most eminent of the Zionist leaders, said frankly enough that Zionism aimed to make Palestine ‘as Jewish as England is English’. Thus poor Hussein, freed at last from his Turkish entanglements, found himself caught in a stickier web” (p. 60).

James Morris then draws a most revealing chart showing various contradictory British agreements with different powers of that time, and then on pages 62 and 63 he writes:

“But if the letter of the various agreements could at a pinch be reconciled, their spirit remains in conflict. However you argue the case . . . this remains the truth, that the British gave the Hashemites and through them the Arab nationalists, the impression that after the war she would secure the general independence of the Arab Middle East; that almost simultaneously she agreed with France that this independence was not to be granted, and that in the event, the Arabs were refused what they had been invited, if not induced, to expect. This seems poor ethics and was certainly bad diplomacy. . . . To Churchill ‘it was a confusion of principles’. To the Arab historian, George Antonius, it was a ‘product of greed leading to suspicion and so leading to stupidity’. To Lawrence (of Arabia) . . . ‘it was a despicable fraud’.”

Here is yet another reference.

“The perennial mistake,” says Guy Wint, who has been the leader writer of the *Manchester Guardian* for more than 10 years, “in British policy in the Middle East was to underrate the force of Arab nationalism, and to fail to grasp its main sentiment, which is the passionate longing for the assertion of full sovereignty and equality. . . . There was another factor, the most dangerous of all, and that was Israel” *The Middle East Crisis*, pp. 21-22. (Italics are by the writer.)

These are references from the most impartial observers from the British press, which bring the problem of Israel in its true perspective.

**The reawakening strength of United Islam**

I will conclude with a quotation from *I Saw For Myself*, an absorbing book by Anthony Nutting, who was a Minister in the unfortunate Cabinet of Sir Anthony Eden. Sir Winston Churchill once suggested to Anthony Nutting that he should tour the Arab world and ascertain facts for himself. The book is a result of that advice. The book ends with the following words:

“Russia follows the familiar pattern of divide, exploit, and subvert, allying herself with Nasser and nationalism for her purpose. . . . But the Islamic world is beginning to come alive to the dangers of these divisive practices. If the West, and especially Britain, can redeem its pledges and help the Muslim world to regain its unity and cohesion, we shall not only have established an unbroken line of resistance to Communism from Casablanca to Karachi; we shall have gained the friendship and esteem of one of the greatest powers in world politics for generations to come — the reawakening strength of united Islam” (p. 103).

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**ABSTINENCE AND INSURANCE**

Police authorities know it better than anyone else that drinking is a major cause of deaths on the road. In recent years they have carried out intensive publicity to reduce the number of unnecessary loss of lives caused by accidents where drivers have been under the influence of alcohol. The police unfortunately have not received sufficient response from the public in this matter.

It is very heartening to know that an insurance company has come forward to give a helping hand in this cause by offering attractive inducements to drivers who are abstainers.

The Ansvar Insurance Company Ltd., since its inception in January 1959, has made considerable progress. The company is unique in this country since it is the only insurance company in which all the policy-holders are abstainers. With their efforts they are gradually widening the knowledge that abstainers are less prone to misfortune involving the human element. This company has proved to be of considerable benefit to the Temperance Movement and has also been a source of great strength to the cause of abstinence.

It is obvious that the world is gradually accepting the truth enunciated by Islam that drinking is a major social evil. We certainly think that the work of Ansvar Insurance Company Ltd. is a step in the right direction, although it would have been better still if Muslims would have taken a lead in this field.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS ON THE 
'ID AL-FITR GATHERING AT WOKING

‘Id al-Fitr, the festival of the breaking of the fast, was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Sunday 19th March 1961. An estimated number of 4,000 people attended the festival. There were traffic jams on roads leading to the Mosque and the crowd was one of the biggest at Woking for such an occasion. Soon after 11 a.m. Mr. Jaoilim Muhammad Abdul Wahab, a student from Mauritius, gave a recitation from the Qur’ān. After him there were more recitations by students from Indonesia, Malaya, Kuwait and South Africa. There was a final recitation by Mr. Siddqah, the Imam of the Turkish Muslim community in London. Then Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, led the prayers and delivered the sermon. He was followed by the Prime Minister of Malaya, His Excellency Tunku 'Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Hajj, who spoke about the need for the formation of a Commonwealth of Muslim countries. The text of his speech is published elsewhere in this issue.

The following friends rendered valuable help in the organization of this event:—
Major J. W. B. Farmer, Mrs. S. M. Abdullah, Mrs. S. M. Tufail, Mr. and Mrs. Retallack, Miss Margaret Davidson, Mr. Rafi Mian, Mr. and Mrs. F. Hussain, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad and his friends, Mr. I. Ahmad and Mr. H. M. Turney.

There were other friends also who came forward to lend us a helping hand at our appeal on the spot. We extend our thanks to all of them because without their co-operation it would have been impossible to carry out the different arrangements in connection with the festival.

Desire to form a Commonwealth of Muslim Countries

The Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku 'Abdul Rahman, told 4,000 Muslims at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Sunday: “It is my desire to form a Commonwealth of all Muslim countries somewhat after the pattern of the British Commonwealth.”

He was speaking at the ‘Id al-Fitr (the festival of the breaking of the fast). He said: “We believe that Muslims, wherever they are, are brothers, and therefore there is every reason for the Muslim countries to come together to discuss their problems.

“I have a vision for the future. It is of a time when we can meet together, not with the intention of forming one bloc to fight another bloc, but to discuss things for the common good.

“There is a lot we can do,” he said, and suggested that they should bring pressure on their respective leaders to persuade them to form such a Commonwealth of Muslim nations. “I am the leader of a small nation, and what I say may not have the same influence which you can bring to bear in your respective countries.”

The Prime Minister’s remarks were greeted by applause from the Moroccans, Pakistanis, Cingalese, Malays, Turks, Nigerians, Indians, Sudanese and the many other nationalities who mingled outside a marquee flying the flags of Muslim countries.

On South Africa, the Prime Minister said he did not think the Commonwealth was weakened by that country’s departure. It strengthened the Commonwealth as a body of men to make the world a place where every man had the right to live, and to be given social equality. “And as a result I think the Commonwealth is going to stay a living force in world politics.”

The Prime Minister said he was inspired by what had happened in Sharpeville. He felt that the soul and spirit of those people “who died in that eventful month in Sharpeville,” were a factor in bringing about “this conclusion to the talks”.

“Man has to live as man not divided because of his race, colour or creed,” he added.

Canker worms

The day of ‘Id was one of the greatest days of the Muslim institution. Throughout the world Muslims had denied themselves
Prime Minister of Malaya at Woking for Muslim Festival

Eighteen Nationalities represented at record assembly

More than 4,000 people of 18 different nationalities went to the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Sunday to celebrate the festival of ‘Id al-Fitr, the breaking of the fast. This record assembly, of whom many were students, was addressed by the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku ‘Abdul Rahman, after the sermon by the Imam of the Mosque, Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail.

The grounds of the Mosque were brightened by the national costumes of women from India, Pakistan, Africa, Malaya and Indonesia. In Oriental Road and all around hundreds of cars were tightly jammed.

Thousands of self-help lunches of curry and fried rice had been prepared and Pakistan sweetmeats were sold at stalls inside the huge marquee. Overhead flew flags of the many Muslim countries.

In the Imam’s sermon, which followed prayers, he declared: “The condition of our age is similar to that of the sixth and seventh centuries. The leaves and buds of our civilization and culture are infected with various canker-worms. Three of these pests are the materialistic outlook on life, race consciousness and alcohol.”

The Imam continued: “Human relations based on a materialistic outlook on life have always nourished the seeds of their own destruction. The Qur‘an does not condemn everything which is material but it certainly condemns the materialistic view of life.”

On the evil of race consciousness, he declared: “The scourge of race consciousness means man’s worship of the collective power of man. It is a great psychological danger, the extinction of which ‘between Muslims’ says Arnold Toynbee, ‘is one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world as it happens there is a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue’.”

Alcohol “pest”

The third pest which was gradually eating into the social and moral lives of individuals and communities was alcohol. India had taken a bold stand in entirely forbidding its use for human consumption. When the Queen visited the country she was toasted in fruit cocktails. “The lead in this respect should have come from those countries which take pride in calling themselves Islamic,” said the Imam.

He went on, “In the confrontation of Islamic and Western cultures, Muslims should only accept that which is in harmony with their moral and spiritual values. All else should be rejected.”

In his address, the Prime Minister of Malaya suggested that a Commonwealth of Muslim countries should be created on the pattern of the British Commonwealth. They believed that Muslims everywhere were brothers, so there was every reason for the Muslim countries to come together to discuss their problems. In this way they could contribute to world peace which was being threatened by apartheid policy. He hoped that the people would bring pressure on their own governments.

APRIL 1961
Throughout his address, applause punctuated the Prime Minister's remarks. He emphasized the fact that South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth would strengthen rather than weaken it. It would come to stay as a living force in world politics, he declared, adding: "Man has to live as man, not divided because of his colour, race or creed."

After his address the Prime Minister took a number of photographs of the Mosque and the festival. He said that in his youth while studying in England, he visited it regularly to join religious discussions and to play hockey.

Meanwhile a crowd of young people in the marquee had taken over the microphone and were singing their national songs. And mingling with the crowd were the son of the late King of Malaya, and the Indonesian Ambassador, His Excellency Doctor Sunario.

(The Woking Herald, 24th March 1961.)

Allah is praised—in a Surrey suburb

In a suburban Surrey road 3,000 colourfully dressed Muslims gathered from all over Britain yesterday to welcome in their New Year.

As they swayed forward to touch their foreheads to the ground, a microphoned voice wafted the ritual cry "Allahu Akbar" — "God is the greatest". Piles of shoes lay on the grass. Outside the grounds of the onion-domed Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking, it was Sunday morning in suburbia — an atmosphere of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and family favourites.

Inside, the worshippers with fezzes, tarbooshes, turbans and even pocket handkerchiefs to cover their heads, chanted traditional responses in Arabic.

Facing Mecca

It was the festival of 'Id al-Fitr — the breaking of the fast — which marks the end of the Islamic month of Ramadhan during which devout Muslims do not touch food or drink from daybreak to dusk.

The ceremony took place in a huge marquee pitched so that the worshippers and their Imam or priest would be facing Mecca. Every race under the sun seemed to be there — ebony men from Africa, dusky girls from the East, here-bearded men from the wild Afghan country.

They sat cross-legged on the ground as the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku 'Abdul Rahman, told them: "Muslim charity means helping and understanding our brother men irrespective of race or colour. One country alone refuses to believe that all men are born equal — South Africa."

After the service, the sari-clad women and the men in shirwans (black frock-coats) tucked into the traditional dishes — seasoned meat, potato curry spiced with herbs and bright-coloured sweetmeats.

(The Daily Herald, London, 20th March 1961.)

Call for a Muslim Commonwealth

"Vision for the Future"

The Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku 'Abdul Rahman, told more than 2,000 Muslims at Woking yesterday:

"It is my desire to form a Commonwealth of all Muslim countries somewhat after the pattern of the British Commonwealth."

"Speaking at the 'Id al-Fitr, the feast that marks the breaking of the fast, at the Shah Jehan Mosque, he said: "We believe that Muslims, wherever they are, are brothers, so there is every reason for the Muslim countries to come together to discuss their problems."

"I have a vision for the future. It is of the time when we can meet together not with the intention of forming one bloc to fight another bloc but to discuss things for the common good."

Applause greeted his remarks which followed prayers in a marquee which flew the flags of the Muslim countries. The Prime Minister suggested that they should bring pressure on their own governments to persuade them to form such a Commonwealth of Muslim nations.

On South Africa he said that with her departure the Commonwealth had come to stay as a living force in world politics. "Man has to live as man, not divided because of his colour, race or creed."

(The Times, London, Monday 20th March 1961.)

Materialism, race consciousness and alcohol

The festival of 'Id al-Fitr at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Sunday, was chosen by the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku 'Abdul Rahman, to make the suggestion of a Commonwealth of all the Muslim countries.

There were over 4,000 people at the festival, which marks the breaking of the fast, and the changed weather conditions brought with them considerable variety in the dress which is a feature of these festivals in Woking. In some cases saris were worn beneath fur coats while in others the national costume was worn despite the chilly wind and an occasional snowflake.

Flags of the Muslim countries flew over the marquee in which prayers were said by the Imam (S. Muhammad Tufail). In his sermon the Imam declared the condition of our age is similar to that of the sixth and seventh centuries. The leaves and buds of our civilization and culture are infected with various canker-worms. Three of these pests are the materialistic outlook on life, race consciousness and alcohol.

Corrupting influences

These three corrupting influences were the main ones left in the wake of Western domination of Asia and Africa, the Imam continued. Human relations based on a materialistic outlook on life had always nourished the seed of their own destruction. The Qur'an did not condemn everything which was material. But it certainly condemned the materialistic view of life.

The extinction of race consciousness between Muslims was one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam, it had been said. In the contemporary world there was a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue. Alcohol was gradually but surely eating up the social and moral lives of individuals and communities. India had taken a bold stand in entirely forbidding alcohol for human consumption. When the Queen visited India she was toasted in fruit cocktails.

Living force

The Malayan Prime Minister suggested that his proposed Commonwealth should be on the pattern of the British Commonwealth. They believed that Muslims, wherever they were, were brothers so there was every reason for the Muslim countries to come together to discuss their problems.

He reaffirmed his statement that South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth would strengthen rather than weaken it. "With the departure of South Africa the Commonwealth has come to stay as a living force in world politics," he declared. "Man has to live as man, not divided because of his colour, race or creed."

(The Surrey Advertiser and County Times, Saturday 25th March 1961.)

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Alcohol goes with Western influence

Over 4,000 people of 18 nationalities, including His Excellency Tunku ‘Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Hajj, Prime Minister of Malaya, attended the celebration of ‘Id al-Fitr (festival of the breaking of the fast) at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Sunday 19th March 1961.

Prayers were led by Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Mosque, who delivered the sermon, explaining the significance of the festival, which commemorates the commencement of the Qur’anic revelation which had its beginning in the month of Ramadan, and also explaining the role of Islam in the present-day world.

The Imam said, “With regard to race consciousness, the extinction of any racial feelings among Muslims is something which the world could learn from Islam. Alcohol is a great menace to the lives of individuals and communities. Wherever Western influence has penetrated, the evil of alcohol has become a part of the lives of the people.”

Referring to the visit of the Queen to India, where she was toasted in fruit cocktails, he said that it was the lead which would have come from those countries which take pride in calling themselves Islamic.

The Prime Minister of Malaya addressed the congregation. He is no stranger to Woking, for he visited the Mosque several times when he was in England about 30 years ago and cherishes the memory of the hockey matches he played here.

After explaining the significance of the month of fasting and the need of charity which is intimately connected with Ramadhan, he said, “The most important thing in the world today is the charity of heart when man can feel the same about every man.

“IT is my desire that Muslims should also form a Commonwealth of their countries after the pattern of the British Commonwealth. They should not form themselves into another bloc but they should try to help mankind at this hour of great peril by inculcating that feeling of charity that makes man equal in all walks of life.”


The congregation in the posture of prostration

RESTRICTIONS ON POLYGAMY IN PAKISTAN

New ordinance on Marriage and Family Laws

Restrictions on polygamy as enjoined by Qur’anic Laws have been enacted in an Ordinance promulgated by the President of Pakistan on 2nd March 1961.

The main object underlying the Ordinance, which gives effect to certain recommendations of the Commission on Marriage and Family Laws, is to secure for Muslim female citizens of Pakistan enjoyment of their rights under Qur’anic Laws.

The Ordinance also lays down a system of regulating divorce and for registration of marriages with the Marriage Registrars appointed by Union Councils, established under Basic Democracies.

It requires husbands contemplating a second marriage to apply for permission from the Chairman of his Union Council. The request will be considered by an Arbitration Council named by the parties.

Permission, conditional or otherwise, will be granted only if the arbitrators are satisfied that the proposed marriage is necessary and just. Polygamous marriage without permission and failure to report talaq (divorce) pronouncements have been made an offence punishable with imprisonment extending to one year or fine up to £375 sterling, or both. Failure to register marriage is punishable with imprisonment of up to three months, or fine up to £75, or both.

Under the new law the wife has been given the right to seek dissolution of the marriage if the husband has taken an additional wife in contravention of its provisions.

Steps for reconciliation

The intending divorcee is required to inform the Chairman of his Union Council of his intention. The latter will then convene an Arbitration Council which will take “all steps” necessary to effect reconciliation between the estranged parties. On complaint from the wife/wives the Arbitration Council will decide maintenance amounts.
Inheritance

The grandchildren also will no longer be deprived of inheritance of grandparents’ property in the event of the death of their parents.

The Ordinance also raises the age of marriage of girls from 14 to 16 years.

Under the new Ordinance, registration would preserve evidence of marriage and contract terms between parties, and will eliminate to a great extent disputes about legitimacy of children and similar other disputes. Local prejudices and ignorance of Islamic injunctions and economic weakness of women have resulted in existing customs governing marriage and divorce, and there was a widespread and persistent popular demand by women’s organizations for enactment of the Commission’s recommendations.

The Commission, which was appointed in 1955, was headed by the late Doctor Khalifa Shujjauddin and later by a former Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mian ‘Abdur Rashid.

Children’s Section

THE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

by ROBERT ALLEN, Aged 9. Class 3A

On Monday 12th December the head of the Woking Mosque came to visit us. Our headmaster took the chair and introduced him. The first thing he said was “Assalamu ‘alaikum”, which means “Peace be with you”.

He then continued, “Islam has two meanings. The first meaning is ‘submission to God’s will’ and the second is ‘Peace’, peace with God and peace with all mankind.” Islam teaches that there is one God and all mankind is one, which means all men are equal before God. “A Muslim,” he said, “gives to charity willingly and treats everybody kindly.” They believe in all prophets of the Bible and that Jesus was a great prophet but a human being.

THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD

(571 C.E.—634 C.E.)

by JANETTE SHENDEREY, Aged 9. Class 3A

Muhammad was born at Mecca in Arabia in the year 571 C.E.

His father, Abdullah, died before Muhammad was born. When he was four Amina, his mother, died. He then went to live with his grandfather. But before two years had passed he died too. So Muhammad lived with his uncle, Abu Talib, who adored him.

He tended his uncle’s sheep and cattle. He then became a camel driver to a wealthy lady named Khadijah. She became very fond of him. They got married. She was 40 and he 25. He then became a prosperous Arab trader. They were very happy.

But he was also very worried because Arabs loved to fight, gamble and get drunk. Muhammad wanted to unite the quarrelsome Arabs.

At the age of 40 he had a very strange dream. He had a vision of an angel telling him that he (Muhammad) was the messenger of God, and that he must warn the people of their sins. He felt very much afraid. He told his wife what had happened and she encouraged him to preach.

So Muhammad went out and preached to the people.

But the Meccans did not believe in his message.
and only a few of them became his followers. His enemies threw stones at him. In 622 C.E. he fled from Mecca to Medina, where he had many followers. There he built the first mosque.

The Meccans attacked Muhammad. In this battle Muhammad was victorious.

There were three battles in all. In the second battle neither side won. In the third a great storm arose which made the Meccans flee in terror. Muhammad now returned to Mecca, with his army. But when he got there the Meccans surrendered without a fight.

Muhammad forgave them. He then went into the Ka'bah and destroyed the idols.

Soon he converted all the Arabs.

Although he became master of Arabia he lived a humble life so as to set an example to others.

He died when he was 63 and was deeply mourned by his countrymen.

DUTIES IN ISLAM
by BARBARA KALMAN, Aged 9. Class 3A

All Muslims make the Declaration of Faith:—
"There is but one God and Muhammad is His Messenger".

They must pray five times a day — before sunrise, early afternoon, late afternoon, after sunset and before going to bed.

They fast for a month from dawn to sunset. The fasting month is called Ramadhan. That is how they learn discipline.

Giving to the poor is compulsory.

They must visit Mecca once in their lives.

These rules are found in the Muslim Bible called the Qur'an.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, addressed some school children of a London Junior Mixed School on 12th December 1960. After his talk, the following questions were put to him:

Q. Do Muslims have any celebrations at Christmas?

A. There is no objection to celebrating the birth of Jesus at Christmas, but there is no official celebration of this event in the world of Islam. Muslim's are not even obliged to celebrate the Prophet Muhammad's birthday.

Q. Do Muslims offer animal sacrifices?

A. At the festival of 'Id al-Adha a sheep is slaughtered by each family, and the meat is distributed among friends, relatives and the poor. A part is kept for one's own consumption. But this does not please God. He is only pleased by observance of duty.

Q. Is there any special day of rest similar to our Sabbath?

A. There is no such day in Islam. Services are held in a Mosque on Fridays which Muslims are expected to attend, and after the service Muslims are supposed to engage themselves in their occupations again.

Q. Are Muslim priests allowed to marry?

A. Yes. But we have no priestly class in Islam. Every Muslim is his own priest — no intermediary is required between man and God. Muhammad himself was married. Every Muslim is expected to marry.

Q. Are any special clothes worn in prayer as we do on Sundays?

A. A Muslim can wear any decent clothes at times of prayer.

Q. How old was Muhammad at the time of his death?

A. He was sixty-three years old when he died.

Q. Do you have an altar in a Mosque?

A. No. We have no altar and no pews in a Mosque.
Q. Do you have special food laws?
A. Our food laws are almost similar to those of the Jews. For example, we do not eat the flesh of a swine in any form and all alcoholic drinks are forbidden.

Q. Are there any tombs in the larger mosques?
A. We have no graves in the mosque. There should be no graves where Muslims pray, although it is correct to say that there have grown up mosques around some places of worship.

Q. Is intermarriage allowed?
A. A Muslim is allowed to marry a Jewish or a Christian woman, and she is not compelled to change her religion. A Muslim girl, however, should not marry outside her faith.

Q. Do you have a special baptism service for a new-born baby?
A. No. Only a call to prayer is made for the new-born baby.

Q. Do you say any prayer before eating?
A. Yes. “In the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful.”

Q. Are special clothes worn at a marriage?
A. Only as worn in the country where the marriage takes place. There is no uniform practice in Muslim countries on this point.

Q. Is entertainment allowed in Islam?
A. Yes, but nothing which is evil or involves alcoholic drink — only what is lawful and decent.

Q. Are women allowed the same freedom as in this country, or must they stay at home?
A. If freedom means license they are not allowed such freedom, but they are allowed to go where they like. They are allowed to have their own property. Their consent must be asked in marriage. But we do not have courtship before marriage.

Q. Have you any holy rivers, such as the Ganges is to Hindus?
A. No. No river is holy to us.

Q. Are you allowed to use television?
A. Yes, but it all depends on what kind of programme is being shown.

Q. Do you have any special daily food?
A. (given smilingly) Yes, bread and butter.

Q. Are tombstones allowed in your religion?
A. Yes.

Q. Do marriages take place as in this country?
A. Not quite. Parents help to arrange the marriage.

Q. Do you have sports?
A. Oh yes — athletics, horse-riding and so on.

Q. What does the word “Islam” mean?
A. “Islam” means to enter into peace — this peace comes from man’s surrender to God.

Q. You mentioned that the Qur’an says “All the prophets are sinless”. But Moses sinned when he struck the rock instead of speaking to it?
A. The Qur’an does not mention this incident, but it does state that all were sinless.

Q. Have you any sacred animal such as the cow?
A. No.

Q. Have you any Fasts?
A. A Muslim has to observe the whole lunar month of Ramadhan as a month of fasting. This lasts 30 days. Between dawn and sunset he must abstain from eating, drinking and smoking. This fasting is intended as a spiritual discipline and is not a sign of mourning.

Q. Are there any special festivals in Islam?
A. There are two official festivals in Islam
(1) A feast is held on the first day of the month after the conclusion of the fasting of Ramadhan.
(2) The “Feast of the Sacrifice of Ishmael” — not of Isaac—about two months after the end of Ramadhan.

The anniversary of the birth of Muhammad is also celebrated in some parts of the Muslim world, but this is of recent origin.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW
THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON WESTERN THOUGHT

by PROFESSOR FRIEDRICH HEILER

Even Islam has strongly influenced European intellectual life since medieval times. The great scholastic theologians, first of all Thomas Aquinas, were indebted to the great Arabic philosophers, Avicenna and Averroes. Through Arabic writings medieval scholasticism received the works of Aristotle.

In the period of the Enlightenment, the old Christian polemics against Muhammad were replaced by real admiration. A German churchman of the eighteenth century, Konsistorialrat Boysen of Quedlinburg, who edited a translation of the Qur'an, praised Islam as the most rational religion after the Christian religion.

The greatest poetical genius of Germany, Goethe, was attracted by Islamic Sufism which had found its most poetical form in Persia. His West-östlicher Divan, a collection of poems containing the ideas of Persian mysticism, with an important commentary, has become the Magna Carta of oriental enthusiasm in Germany. A German orientalist, Hans Heinrich Schaeder, has shown the enormous influence of Persian poetry on Goethe in his illuminative book Goethes Erlebnis des Ostens. Goethe admired especially the Persian poet Hafiz —

Hafiz! what arrogance to put oneself on a par with him!
Hafiz, with thee alone
I want to compete,
Delight and pain
We both twins may share.

Goethe was especially attracted by the mystical idea of annihilation (jana, corresponding to the Indian nirvana). He uses the Persian parable of the butterfly who, attracted by the light, casts itself into the flame. But he gives to this mystical idea an ethical accent:

And as long as thou hast not reached
This skill, "die and grow",
Thou art only a wretched guest
On this gloomy earth.

Although the influence of Islamic mysticism on Goethe is mainly ethical and aesthetical, one has to acknowledge that few Western spirits have conceived so deeply the essence of Islam as Goethe did when he said in a wonderful verse:

As Islam means surrender of oneself to God, we all live and die in Islam.

Another great German who has interpreted Islamic poetry to the West is Friedrich Ruckert, who was a learned linguist and at the same time a mystic poet. Yet another orientalist, Hammer-Purgstall, has made Persian poetry known in Germany. Many English, German and French scholars have promoted philological and historical research in Islam — two of the greatest of them are Noeldeke and Goldziher. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, edited by Western scholars, bears witness to a deep understanding of Islam by Western minds. One of the best authorities on this Eastern religion today is the French scholar, Louis Masségon, who, although a devoted Roman Catholic, is a great admirer of Islam and a leading member of a brotherhood of Muslims and Christians. Another great authority on Islam is a German woman who was first a professor at the University of Marburg and who now teaches the history of religions in the Muslim theology faculty of the University of Ankara — Annemarie Schimmel. She has published not only a series of scientific works on Islam but also a collection of wonderful mystical poems, The Song of the Red Pipe, in the style of the Persian ghazals and in the spirit of the greatest mystical genius of Islam, Jalal al-Din Rumi. But besides individual experts and admirers of Islam in Europe there are also Muslim congregations whose members are converts from Christianity to Islam. One of these converts, an important Hungarian scholar, Germain, has published his life-story in a widely read book entitled Allath-hu.

So we see a great influence of Eastern spirituality on Western thought during the last few centuries and continuing to the present time. That East and West belong to each other perhaps nobody has emphasized so strongly as the prince of our German poets, Goethe.

In West-östlicher Divan we read several wonderful verses on this intimate connection between the two:

Who himself and others knows
Must just here acknowledge:
Orient and Occident
Cannot be separated.

East and West — between both these worlds
May we rock ourselves in thought:
Between East and West to move,
Nothing, nothing may be better.

All the East belongs to God
All the West belongs to God,
Northern and all southern lands
Are reposing in His hands.

1 From a lecture delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. Published in the Indo-Asian Culture, New Delhi, India, for October 1960.

The Holy Sword is a popular history of Islam compiled by Mr. Robert Payne, who has written under his own name and various pseudonyms over 50 books. It is thus understandable that at places this book has become a hotch-potch of literary inaccuracies, historical half-truths, hasty conclusions and the author’s own vagaries.

The author on the whole follows in the footsteps of the hostile critics of Islam of the last century and is still haunted by the memories of the earlier conquests of Arabs. The Arabs have conquered the world before and may do it again,” writes he in his introduction. “The fire lit by Muhammad still burns strongly, and there is every reason to believe that the flame is unquenchable.” So it is to acquaint the world with such people that the author has written this book. In his opinion it is the first attempt to write a reasonable complete cultural history of the Arab conquests from the beginning to the present day.” As the author is chiefly concerned with something of the sweep and roar and fury of the Arab people therefore he is always at pains to depict their character in this light. Where the roar and fury of Arab temperament did not exist or was not displayed the author did not hesitate to use his own imagination to provide it, or if he found it convenient did quite happily omit all such incidents which were contrary to his theory of Arab characteristics.

He mentions the chroniclers who talk of the Prophet’s voice that when he shouted it was like a blare of trumpets, frightening everyone in sight, but as he does not care to give any particular reference it is difficult for a lay reader to find out the authenticity of the statement that when the Prophet grew older, he became round shouldered, and with that strange, quick walk of his he resembled more than ever a bull about to charge.” (page 30). This is just an instance to show the author’s insouciance towards the Prophet.

The Prophet’s conquest of Mecca is mentioned in detail in the third chapter (pages 62, 63). “By sabotage, by deceit, by the terror of Muhammad’s name, the city had been weakened,” writes Mr. Payne, “and it fell into his hands, as he had long suspected it would fall, like a ripe plum.” One would have naturally expected the author to mention the most important incident at the time of this almost bloodless conquest: that is the general amnesty which the Prophet gave to his enemies.

Surprisingly enough the author glides over the whole event as if nothing of this nature did ever happen at the time of the conquest. To assume the author’s ignorance would not be doing justice to him. He has intentionally omitted the whole incident because it would not fall in line with his hypothesis of the Arab roar and fury. In his bibliography he quotes several works which deal with this point at length. But he does not find it convenient to mention it because it would go against the whole spirit of The Holy Sword. Literary dishonesty could go no further.

At one place the author thinks that Muslims believe that Jesus Christ would die a second time after his second appearance. This is purely a Christian belief which has been accredited to Muslims. There are two views of Muslims on this point. One is that Jesus Christ died a natural death long ago (vide Fatwa by Mahmud Shultut of al-Azhar, Cairo), the other popular mistaken view is that someone else was killed at the Cross and Jesus was taken alive to heaven. This notion of second death thus in both cases is Christian and not Muslim.

The book consists of several puerile mistakes such as ‘Ali was “Abu Bakr’s handsome ten-year-old son” who lived in Muhammad’s house (page 32). In fact the name of ‘Ali’s father was Abu Talib. About Qutub Minar (illustration 14) the caption reads “The Tower of Victory in the Red Fort, Delhi”**: It seems the author neither knows anything about Qutub Minar nor about Red Fort, Delhi. Again, he calls Muslims worshippers of the Black Stone (p. 261), and at another place is says: “In all history there is no object of veneration which has been worshipped for so long a time”. Such sweeping statements and generalizations are often met with in the book. It would have been better if the publishers had consulted some other authority before sending this grossly ill-informed book to the press.

* * * *


This is a short account of the life and achievements of one of the great figures of history by the author of two more academic books on the same subject. Muhammad has too often been maligned by his biographers. The author of this book has tried to give an objective account of his career, avoiding theological bias on the one hand and biography on the other. He has also given particular attention to the social and political background against which Islam was born and grew with such astonishing vigour. The result is a book which should appeal to historian, sociologist, student of religion and general reader alike.

* * * *


The first two leaflets are reproductions of the lectures delivered by S. Muhammad Tufail at Oxford and Amster-
The last one is his 'Id al-Fitr 1960 sermon. Could be read with interest by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

* * *


The author is not a casual visitor to Africa. She was born there and is well known in East Africa; her husband is a surgeon in Nairobi and has a farm in Tanganiyka. She is thus in a position to give a fairly accurate picture of Kenya which is changing rapidly. It is difficult to understand what is happening in Kenya by people who live outside Africa, and for them Susan Wood has provided useful information.

Africa in the past has been neglected by the records of history. The author therefore has not attempted to tell us anything of the past of Kenya. As the sub-title suggests her main theme is about the present Kenya which is trying to bridge 1,500 years in twenty, and which at the moment is working its way through "The Tensions of Progress".

The book deals with the social, economic and political revolutions which are changing life in Kenya from one of tribal and subsistence economy to that of a country with a higher standard of living and where the power is passing from the wealthy few to the poor and inexperienced masses. The author sums up the present attitude of people in Kenya by saying "Africans are feeling the bitterness of awakening to a new world. Yet hardly one rejects it; all are eager to push on and to sample what it has to offer."

The book gives interesting facts about the racial groups in Kenya, viz., the Africans, the Asians and the Europeans. It explains the part they play in the growing Kenya, their mutual relations and fears of each other. It discusses the territories adjacent to Kenya and the effect of its geographical position. It gives a fair description of the problems of Kenya and the important changes in its constitutional development.

To those who are interested in the study of the new Africa, which does not want to remain confined to the actual benefits of civilization brought by the colonial powers, but has awoken to an unprecedented stimulus and frustration, this book will provide absorbing reading.

INTOLERANCE OF OTHER RELIGIONS?
88 Wheturangi Road,
Green Lane,
Auckland, S.E.4,
New Zealand.

Dear Sir,

My interest in comparative religions led me to enquire about the teachings of Islam through The Islamic Review. I do not quite appreciate the opinions of some of your contributors. There is an intolerance of other religions that I do not appreciate. "There are many lamps, but the One light." I see a correspondence between all the great religions of the world, they only differ in non-essentials. "People that live in glass-houses should not throw stones." If each religion, each individual, had the courage to follow a little more closely the teaching and example of their chosen Prophet there would be less time to criticize others and would realize the brotherhood of humanity. However many errors there may be in the Bible, and however imperfectly Christianity is taught in the churches, for the seeker there is sufficient direction to lead him to the "Truth" of the "One".

Yours faithfully,
ELLEN K. CABLE.

* * *

'ID AT COPENHAGEN

Strandlobervej 34,
Copenhagen.
Hvidovre.
29th March 1961.

Dear Brother in Islam,

'Id al-Fitr (the festival of the breaking of the fast) was celebrated in Copenhagen, Denmark, at my house on Sunday, 19th March. Twenty Muslims from seven countries

APRIL 1961
participated. The afternoon service was televised and shown next day in the television news programme "Aktuell".

Yours in Islam.

Mrs. AYESHA EHSANULLAH.

* * * * *

ASSOCIATED TELEVISION MISREPRESENTS ISLAM

42 Harringay Park.
16th February 1961.

Dear Sir,

It is difficult to see what purpose the Granada production of the "Mighty and the Mystical" served if not to hurt the feelings of about 50,000,000 Muslims of India and to irritate those of 400,000,000 Muslims of the world. I am referring to the last production in the series entitled "The Mighty and the Mystical", exhibited through the channel of ATV on 13th February 1961 at 10.30 p.m., which dealt exclusively with the religion and population of India and an interview with Mr. Nehru. Making ample allowance for the immature and illogical mind of the script-writer of the programme, Mr. Dom Moraes, which is amply demonstrated by his unnecessary assertions, sweeping remarks and generalizations, one cannot but wonder at the distortion of facts which he has compressed in his short reference to the Muslims and Islam.

His first point, that the Muslims came to India in the 10th century, is wrong. If he means the Muslim conquerors, we know precisely that in 643 C.E., Thana, a port near Bombay, was attacked by Osman ibn Abil Aas At Taqafi, a governor of the Caliph Omar I (vide Tabari). Later on in 712 C.E., the whole of Sind had to be permanently occupied to protect the Arab traders from the Indian pirates who were the subjects of King Dahir of Sind. Still later in 1175 C.E. started the famous conquest of India under the leadership of Muhammad Ghori. Besides these generals, Muslim traders and preachers started settling in the coastal regions of India from a very early period. Therefore whatever he means by the first arrivals of the Muslims in India, it must be either the 7th century or the 8th or even the 12th century, but never the 10th century.

His next demonstration of historical scholarship was the original statement that Nur Jehan was the wife of Shah Jehan. I am sure that no community in the world identifies the mother with the wife. Even a child in India knows that Shah Jehan's wife was Mumtazmahal Begum, whose name the Taj Mahal bears.

Again, no amount of ignorance can justify the unqualified remarks about the Muslims when he says that, intolerant as they were, the Muslims plundered, murdered, massacred, looted and burnt. It is never disputed by the Muslims that nothing of this kind did occur at all, but these have always been found in the wake of conquest, whether the conqueror was a Muslim or a non-Muslim. But the Muslim conquerors of India did not only try to check the vandalisms of their soldiers but specific instructions were issued to protect the women, the children, the old and the sick people and the monks of any religious order. Besides, there was hardly any need for violence, as in most cases the Muslims were welcomed by the local populace. It was quite natural for the Muslims, whose religious book, the Qur'an, says "Your religion is for you and mine for me" and "There is no compulsion in religion", to allow other communities to continue in their old faith. The proof — the centre of Muslim rule for centuries in Delhi and the United Provinces in India always contained and still contain a predominantly Hindu population. Although some Muslim conquerors in their quest for wealth to finance their Central Asian conquests did destroy some Hindu temples and monasteries (i.e., Mahmud Ghaznavi), yet the records of the majority of the Muslim rulers show that they made ample provisions for the protection and upkeep of Hindu temples and monuments: these rulers were not necessarily the Moghuls but galaxies of Pathan and Turkish rulers whose liberalism and sagacity have been sung by both the Hindus and the Muslims.

Although the Muslims of India claimed Pakistan and got it, yet about 50,000,000 Muslims still live in India. But this great mass of people, with a history of twelve and a half centuries behind them, find but a passing reference about them in the review of Indian religious communities. Except the Taj Mahal, not a single Muslim monument nor any of the numerous beautiful mosques built by the Muslim rulers were found fit to be exhibited. And the Muslims shown in the programme wholly misrepresent the Muslims of India. The few shabbily-dressed Muslims in prayer could easily be substituted by the great congregation at prayers during 'Id in any of the great cities of India.

But perhaps the most unkindest cut of all was the reference to the Muslim women. The Muslim women, to the commentator, can be compared to the untouchables among the Hindus, because, he says, like the untouchables, they are also under-privileged. While he had so many apologies for the deterioration of the old caste system into the untouchability of today, he had none for the veil of the Muslim women. It is a fact of history that the purdah system was an adoption by the Muslims of an old custom of the Aryans in India and Persia. This is an institution which is found among almost all the communities of India. While the Western contact liberated the non-Muslim women of India the Muslim women got their liberty from their religious and historical traditions when properly evaluated. But long before the European women got their right of property of inheritance, and right of consent in marriage, the Muslim women enjoyed it as their fundamental right prescribed in their religious books.

It is very difficult to understand what motive actuated Mr. Moraes to indulge in such an unusually vindictive manner, but it is undeniable that such minds are a potential danger for international harmony. Our planet is much too over-burdened with problems. It can hardly afford another problem — the problem of hatred between the Christians and the Muslims.

Yours sincerely,

SYED MUHAMMAD ALI.

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