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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
The Twisted Conscience of the West
Russia—Czechoslovakia; Israel—Palestine

A CONTRAST

"The moral of recent events for the Muslims and the Arabs is simple and straightforward. If they want justice for themselves they must go all out to get it. If they want the Israelis to resist from their aggression they must develop sufficient strength to strike against the Israelis. The Arabs and the Muslims must rely on themselves only, and must forever remain suspicious about the motives and intentions of the big powers, for these are only interested in themselves and will sacrifice everything for the realization of their own selfish designs. To sum up, the road to justice for the Muslims is none other than the road to strength and self-reliance. Those Muslim countries which are developing themselves on modern and enlightened lines, and thereby acquiring strength, are helping to bring about a recognition of justice not only for themselves but for all their fellow Muslims."

The attitude of the West to the plight of the Arabs of Palestine

When reports came in the middle of August about moves by the Soviet Union against Czechoslovakia there was a tremendous uproar in the Western world. Statesmen in most of the Western countries condemned the Russians for "brutal aggression". People in almost all walks of life said they were indignant. There were demonstrations and public rallies, and the Soviet Union was branded with all conceivable bad qualities. It was urged that the Soviet Union should be left in no doubt about the feelings of people throughout the world regarding its acts against Czechoslovakia. It was repeatedly said that the Russian "outrage" should not go unpunished, and that all governments must give effect to the dictates of their conscience on this matter and take whatever steps were deemed necessary to ensure that the Russians desist from their misdeeds. It was repeatedly proclaimed that unless the world rose to this challenge and taught the culprits a lesson the values of Western civilization would be undermined and the world would lapse into anarchy and become a victim of the law of the jungle.

Whether or not the entry of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia was an act of blatant aggression is a subject which we need not consider at any great length here. It may be that right is not entirely on one side here, and wrong not altogether on the other. The simple deduction that where a big power and a small power are involved in a dispute right is always on the side of the small power is not a very safe formula. There is more to the entry of Russian troops into Czechoslovakia than the West would like to admit.

But while it is not our intention on this occasion to pro-
nounce judgments on the rights and wrongs of the Soviet Union’s actions against Czechoslovakia, we find it strange that the effervescent eruption of sympathy for the under-dog, and the clamour for upholding the principles of justice and morality, should have been confined solely to the Czechoslovak crisis. If the conscience of the West is indeed alive and pure, we cannot understand how it has failed to be moved by much greater misdeeds committed elsewhere against innocent nations and people not long ago. There are many wrongs still unrectified against many peoples throughout the world which seem to have eluded the notice and the conscience of the West, although they stare the world and the West in the face.

The attitude of the West to the plight of the Arabs of Palestine, and its failure to condemn in categoric terms the wrongs committed by Zionism against the Palestinians and the entire Arab nation, shows that the West is rather selective and moody in its morals. In Palestine the Arabs, who comprised 92 per cent of the country’s population in 1918, have been turned against their will into a minority in their own homeland. The Palestinian Arabs are now either refugees outside Palestine or labouring under the yoke of military occupation by the Zionists. Large areas of neighbouring Arab countries are being occupied by the Zionists. In these areas the Arabs are ill-treated and humiliated — and impartial observers have testified to that. Jerusalem has been occupied by the Zionists and they have declared its annexation to the Jewish state. The United Nations by solemn resolution has condemned this act and called upon the Israelis to rescind their annexation measures. But the Israelis have not taken the slightest notice of this. And, what is more important, the United Nations have not reacted to this act of defiance and contempt by Israel.

The selective conscience of the West

An examination of the attitude of the United Nations and of the Western powers towards the behaviour of the Zionists against the Arabs over the past twenty years or so reveals quite clearly that the West either prefers not to take any notice of what the Zionists are doing, or, if it finds itself in the awkward position of having to take notice, of doing nothing to give effect to any expressions of indignation or condemnation. In the case of Palestine several resolutions in favour of the Arabs have been adopted by resounding majorities. But when the Israelis rejected these resolutions the United Nations, and primarily the Western powers, did not take the natural and logical step of trying to enforce their will either directly or indirectly by means of exerting some pressure upon Israel. Quite the opposite, the Western powers, chiefly the United States of America, have consistently given aid and comfort to Israel and have encouraged it by overt and covert means to continue its policy of arrogance and malevolence towards the Arabs. Israel has been actively supported by the West by means of the supply of weapons and economic assistance. The West could have easily made Israel comply with the resolutions of the United Nations if they had wanted to. But they have preferred soft and meaningless words to action, and these words have acted as a soporific or anaesthetic to the conscience of the West — if, in fact, that conscience had ever existed!

In the Middle East and in other parts of the world, peace can only reign if there is justice. It is idle to hope that mere force — unless it be completely overwhelming and incapable of challenge — is enough for the establishment of peace. Certainly, also, morals and conscience should be allowed to prevail against temporary exigencies or selfish interests. It is both exhilarating and hopeful to see ordinary people and governments in various parts of the world react to a moral issue. But it is likewise depressing and wrong to react only to some special moral issues, and to ignore altogether other moral issues. Conscience must be consistent, and if it is not it does not deserve to be called a conscience. So if the world sees something wrong with an invasion by Russian troops of Czechoslovakia the world should promptly see something equally wrong with an invasion by Zionist forces of Arab lands in Palestine, Jordan, the United Arab Republic and Syria. If it condemns the one act, it must condemn the other. To be alive to one wrong, and to ignore — or, as in the case of the West concerning Palestine, to encourage — another would achieve no good and would instead do great harm.

Justice via strength

The conscience of the world, and of the Western powers in particular, being what it is, the conclusion cannot be avoided that it is idle for the Arabs and the Muslims to look to the West, or to the United Nations as at present constituted, for the rectification of the harm done to them. In regard to the Palestine problem, it is quite clear that the Western powers, for selfish reasons concerned with the American presidential elections and other domestic matters, are not prepared to exert their abundant and powerful influence against Israel. The West will not do anything practical to bring about a withdrawal by Zionist forces from the Arab lands they now occupy. The Palestinian Arab refugees will not be helped to go back to the land of their fathers, and they will not be compensated for the property they have lost. The Palestinian Arabs now under Israeli military occupation, and who are suffering badly under the harsh tyranny of the Zionist boot, will not be relieved or succoured by any pious words by the West. The Muslim holy places in Jerusalem now under Israeli occupation will not be protected from constant and outrageous profanity and desecration (a fact which has recently been confirmed by a report made by a Western ecclesiastical body) by any words spoken to Israel by the West or any act done by the West.

It is not true that the West does not know the full extent of the misdeeds committed by the Zionists against the Arabs. The Zionists are certainly good propagandists, and the world knows more about their case than it knows about the Arab case. But there is enough known about the justice of the Arab case to induce the Christian West to react if in fact they were disposed to do so. The simple fact is that the West is not interested in justice for the Arabs and the Muslims, and it is high time that the Arab and Muslim leaders understood this and acted consistently in accordance with such knowledge.

The moral of recent events for the Muslims and the Arabs is simple and straightforward. If they want justice for themselves they must go all out to get it. If they want the Israelis to desist from their aggression they must develop sufficient strength to strike against the Israelis. The Arabs and the Muslims must rely on themselves only, and must forever remain suspicious about the motives and intentions of the big powers, for these are only interested in themselves and will sacrifice everything for the realization of their own selfish designs.

To sum up, the road to justice for the Muslims is none other than the road to strength and self-reliance. Those Muslim countries which are developing themselves on modern and enlightened lines, and thereby acquiring strength, are helping to bring about a recognition of justice not only for themselves but for all their fellow Muslims.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
The Pillars of Islamic Thought

By Nadim al-Jisr

(A Professor of Philosophy in a Middle East University recently wrote an article casting doubt upon and criticizing some of the provisions of the Qur’ân. The Mufti of Tripoli, Nadim al-Jisr, replied in defence of Islam. In the debate that ensued in the Arab press, the pillars of Islamic thought and doctrine were elucidated and established. This article is a résumé of the arguments put forward by the learned and eminent Mufti of Tripoli, Lebanon.)

The existence of God

The existence of God is a subject on which philosophy can readily provide an answer. The celebrated English philosopher, Francis Bacon (d. 1626 C.E.), once said that a meagre knowledge of philosophy could take one away from God, while ample knowledge of the subject would bring man nearer to belief in God.

If one believes that God has created the universe, one must believe in consequence that God has also created the laws that govern the universe, as well as all forms of life on the universe. On this the Qur’ân says:

"O people, a parable is set forth, so listen to it. Surely those whom you call upon besides God cannot create a fly, though they should gather for it. And if the fly carry off aught from them, they cannot take it back from it. Weak are both the invoker and the invoked. They estimate not God with His due estimation. Surely God is Strong, Mighty" (22: 73 and 74).

This was said many hundreds of years before philosophers such as Roger Bacon (d. 1294 C.E.) and Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274 C.E.) said that science had not attained sufficient knowledge about the origin of a fly.

Some modern philosophers have found it difficult to imagine God as the Qur’ân pictures Him — "The Originator of the heavens and the earth" (42: 11) — and do not give credence to the idea that God created man from earth. Such doubt often leads to a complete rejection of the whole idea of the creation, and of the very existence of God. It is not my purpose here to debate the question as to whether God exists. But on the assumption that there is a God Who has created the universe — a doctrine believed by the great majority of scientists and philosophers — I should like to answer the criticism levelled against the versions of the creation given in the Qur’ân. The critics of Islam say that these versions of the creation are in conflict with modern thought and modern scientific principles. They also say that the versions given in the Qur’ân are self-contradictory and do not present a harmonious or complete picture. On the basis of this argument it has been claimed that the Muslims are very much handicapped by their religious beliefs, which prevent them from marching forward with the times and accepting modern discoveries which help promote progress in material and other spheres.

Do the principles and beliefs of Islam in fact conflict with reason and with demonstrable science? In my opinion, quite the contrary. They support scientific principles, and are supported and reinforced by scientific principles. This proposition will be evident from an examination of the main pillars of Islamic thought. All these are capable of substantiation by the application of the usual methods of proof. Complete verification of these principles, however, will require much more space than is available on this occasion — indeed some of these principles would require whole volumes for a comprehensive discussion. Nevertheless, I shall offer demonstrable proof for all the doctrines that I put forward. It must also be pointed out at the outset that Islamic thought is based upon the Qur’ân, and is in no way separable from the Qur’ân. A corollary to this is the fact that while Islamic thought is based upon the Qur’ân it nevertheless is in harmony with modern philosophical and scientific principles. The ideas

1 Based on an article entitled Raka‘az al-Taftûr al-Islāmî, which appeared in the Da‘wah al-Haqq, Rabat, Morocco, for June 1968.
contained in the Qur'an can be shown to be right and wholesome for all times and places, and with the proper approach and intention the Qur'an yields lively principles applicable to the needs of all times, including the present. There is no such thing as "old" Islamic principles as contrasted with "modern" Islamic principles. They all are of the same kind and have the same vitality and validity; and are all rationally verifiable.

The Qur'an and reason

The relationship between the principles enunciated in the Qur'an and the dictates of reason is one of the most characteristic features of the religion of Islam. The Qur'an ordains that reason is the final arbiter on the meaning and difference between right and wrong, and also gives reason the task of determining the truth of things, including the question of the existence of God. There are in the Qur'an more than three hundred verses in which reference is made to reason and the power and functions of reason, and where ignorance and lack of reason are deprecated. Perhaps the most meaningful of these verses is this:

"Surely the vilest of beasts, in God's sight, are the deaf, the dumb, who understand not. And if God had known any good in them He would have made them hear. And if He makes them hear, they would turn away while they are averse" (8: 22 and 23).

All belief not based on reason is not considered in Islam to be meritorious or wholesome. Faith not based on rational conviction is acceptable only from those incapable of exercising the reasoning required for this purpose.

The Qur'an also rejects the antiquated or reactionary traditionalism if this conflicts with the dictates of reason. Fallacies, fables and unproven traditions are all condemned by Islam. In Islam, also, there are no profound or unfathomable secrets incapable of rational analysis or proof. All the provisions of the Qur'an are capable of being resolved in such a manner as to conform to the dictates of reason and to be capable of acceptance by the application of ordinary methods of analysis and reasoning.

It can be stated categorically and without reservation that Islam is a religion in which reason is recognized as the supreme arbiter on all things, and in which the various aspects of the faith are capable of rational demonstration and proof. This is one of the most fundamental characteristics of the religion of Islam, and any misunderstanding of this quality of Islam implies ignorance of the Qur'an and the other sources of Islamic teachings.

The Qur'an and freedom

Freedom of the individual is one of the most important aspects of the teachings of Islam. The Qur'an considers freedom and liberty in the various spheres of human activity to be a natural phenomenon. No restriction is recognized against such freedom except in those cases where wrong or evil is committed and harm inflicted upon other individuals or the community at large. Freedom in Islam comprises freedom of thought, of worship, of speech, of work, of ownership of property, and of methods of use of property. The main criterion in the practice of freedom is that it should not cause harm to others. Only in that case does the Qur'an restrict the freedom of the individual.

The Qur'an and scientific knowledge

The Qur'an recognizes the validity of all scientific and ascertainable facts, and does not in any way seek to minimize their effect or relationship to the articles of faith. Indeed, the Qur'an considers that scientific facts of all kinds are valuable proof of the existence of God and His qualities as mentioned in the Qur'an, and their acceptance reaffirms the importance of reason, which is the main source of belief.

The accusation has often been levelled against Islam that the only scientific knowledge which the Muslim is urged to seek is in essence religious knowledge and philosophy, and not scientific knowledge concerning mathematics, physics or chemistry, for example. It is true, however, that Islam urges the acquisition of knowledge about religious matters, for religion is the most important code of conduct and has an important role to play in the regulation of the affairs of society and the promotion of harmony and human happiness. But medicine and other ordinary sciences are recommended to the Muslims in no uncertain terms. In fact, Islam urges the Muslims to acquire all such knowledge as is beneficial to man in his everyday life. The following verse from the Qur'an illustrates this point:

"Seest thou not that God sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? And in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and others intensely black. And of men and beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God" (35: 27 and 28).

The "knowledge" here referred to is not merely knowledge of religious matters, but knowledge of physical and other phenomena, scientific knowledge in the ordinary sense of the word.

The Qur'an is not a scientific encyclopaedia

It must be pointed out, however, that the Qur'an is not a comprehensive encyclopaedia of scientific knowledge. There is in the Qur'an abundant reference to scientific knowledge, but the Qur'an is not intended to be taken as the limit of scientific knowledge on any matter. There has been misunderstanding of the verse in the Qur'an which states:

"And there is no animal in the earth, not a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like yourselves. We have not neglected anything in the Book. Then to their Lord they will be gathered" (6: 38).

This does not mean that any knowledge gleaned from any source other than the Qur'an is improper. The Qur'an is not to be taken as the beginning and end of scientific knowledge on all subjects on this basis. The essential principles of scientific knowledge, however, are contained in the Qur'an. The most important elements, the basis and the general idea of scientific truth is found in the Qur'an. The details are not there, however, and it would be wrong to consider that if a matter is not mentioned in the Qur'an it is not to be taken as scientific. This would be absurd, on any reasonable interpretation of the Qur'an, and unjust to Islam and to the Muslims who have never understood Islam in any different way.

The miraculous nature of the Qur'an

The miraculous nature of the Qur'an is not based solely on its linguistic or rhetoric excellence as ascertained by the
Arabs, a people noted for their appreciation of rhetoric. It is based also on its tremendous capacity to express ideas on various subjects in a convincing manner, using methods not previously known to the Arabs. The words of the Qur'ān imparted their meanings as much to the simple and uneducated bedouin in the desert as to the learned and sophisticated philosopher. It is this quality of being understandable and comprehensible to all classes of people that is a miraculous quality of the Qur'ān.

A few verses of the Qur'ān will demonstrate this theory.

"Seest thou not that God has made subservient to you all that is in the earth, and the ships gliding in the sea by His command? And He withholds the heaven from falling on the earth except with His permission. Surely God is Compassionate, Merciful to men" (22 : 65);

"And We made the night and the day two signs, then We have made the sign of the night to pass away and We have made the sign of the day manifest, so that you may seek grace from your Lord, and that you may know the numbering of years and the reckoning. And We have explained everything with distinctness" (17 : 12);

"He has created the heavens and the earth with truth; He makes the night cover the day and makes the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient; each one moves on to an assigned term. Now surely He is the Mighty, the Forgiver" (39 : 5);

"Or, Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the cloud? Then We cause to grow thereby beautiful gardens — it is not possible for you to make the trees thereof to grow. Is there a god with God? Nay, they are people who deviate!" (27 : 60);

"See you the fire which you kindle? Is it you that produce the trees for it, or are We the Producer?" (56 : 71 and 72);

and

"Have We not given him two eyes?" (90 : 8).

The foregoing verses are typical of the Qur'ānic concept of science, and also of the fact that man must verify scientific principles by rational means. They also show that the way in which the Qur'ān referred to scientific principles was a simplified one designed to be comprehensible to all manner of people at various levels of intelligence and learning. The elucidation of all scientific principles on a comprehensive basis was not the purpose of the Qur'ān, and this would have entailed discussion of matters not within the grasp or comprehension of many people. But the rudiments of scientific facts were mentioned, and the Muslims were urged to deduce the proper knowledge from these facts. The Qur'ān says on this:

"We will soon show them Our signs in farthest regions and among their own people, until it is quite clear to them that it is the Truth. Is it not enough that their Lord is a Witness over all things?" (41 : 53).

Cause and effect

The principle of cause and effect is one of the principles established in the Qur'ān and detectable in the various positions and arguments contained in it. The simple proposition of cause and effect, and of purpose behind acts, is firmly established in the Qur'ān. This is the foundation of belief in physical facts, and the basis upon which belief in the existence and qualities of God is established. The Qur'ān says:

"So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by God in which He has created men. There is no altering God's creation. That is the right religion — but most people know not" (30 : 30).

Observation of nature, and a proper deduction from natural happenings, thus leads to belief in God.

The balance of contradiction

There are three elementary principles which serve as the basis of a great deal of what logic and philosophy are about: existence, possibility and impossibility. There is often, however, a great deal of confusion between two kinds of possibility and impossibility — the rational and the traditional. Rational impossibility is that which can be proved by ordinary rational means, e.g. that one cannot possibly be a quarter of two, or that part of a thing cannot be greater than the whole, or that a mountain is not smaller than a tea cup. But there are certain impossibilities recognized by men which are not in fact definite impossibilities, and on which a decision had been arrived at solely by reference to traditional principles or facts not mathematically or scientifically ascertainable. These are what I would call merely "traditional" impossibilities, e.g., that man cannot go to the moon, or that sound cannot carry beyond a certain distance. These are "facts" only by reference to man's level of achievement and discovery at a particular time, and their assessment varies with development and progress in scientific knowledge. Their truth is therefore merely relative and not absolute. The truth of facts mentioned in the Qur'ān should not be determined by reference solely to relative scientific knowledge. There are many facts which today are accepted as truth while only yesterday they were deemed absurd and impossible. The Qur'ān is for all times and places, and it would be wrong to apply for its assessment principles valid only for a particular time or place.

Rational verification of all facts is not possible. Some facts may be demonstrable, and verifiable by ordinary means. Others may not be capable of such verification. The science of philosophy has always recognized this principle. By the application of normal methods of reasoning certain facts may be ascertained. But sometimes these facts will only be capable of ascertainment and deduction by reference to other facts logically or scientifically connected with them, or presumed to be related by the process of cause and effect. And in any case it may not always be possible to comprehend the real nature of a thing, or its essence. Some of the qualities and characteristics of a thing may be determinable, while its bare existence may not be quite tangible or capable of analysis. This is a method of reasoning and proof which has for a long time been accepted as valid for scientific purposes. It is also the means whereby the existence of God and His qualities can be demonstrated.

It is also one of the principles of Islamic thought that a distinction must be drawn between the actual existence of a thing and the capacity to imagine or delineate all its qualities and characteristics. Not all that exists can be imagined in all its particulars and details. Likewise, inability to imagine or delineate the exact nature of a thing does not justify belief
that it does not exist. If we see a thing we can imagine that it has been produced by somebody, and we can also imagine some of the characteristics of the producer, e.g. that he is intelligent and knowledgeable and capable of certain things. But we may not be able to tell from the product all the characteristics and qualities of the producer with exactitude, because we would need to see the producer and make further examination for that purpose. Despite the lack of evidence, or opportunity to examine the evidence, about the maker of a thing, we would not be justified in denying that it exists.

The purpose of things

One of the pillars of Islamic thought as expressed in the Qur/'an is that man is not possessed, nor can he ever be possessed, of full knowledge about the very beginning and end of things. This is something which human minds are not capable of comprehending. Even within the realms of relative time and space, as known to man in everyday life, not all things are capable of real understanding. This has been recognized by many scientists, Muslim and non-Muslim. The European scientists, Pascal (d. 1662 C.E.) for example, accepted this fact. To give examples: very loud noise cannot be heard by man, because it deafens him, very bright light also blinds man and cannot be seen by him; if we are too near a thing we cannot see it in its right perspective, and likewise if the thing is too far from us. This is true of ordinary physical things, and true also of things relating to the unknown, to the realms of religion and belief.

The Qur/'an says:

"And they have no knowledge of it. They follow but conjecture, and surely conjecture avails naught against truth." (53 : 28).

This is a well accepted method of reasoning and a generally recognized means of ascertaining the truth. It is also an accepted principle that there is a great deal of difference between categoric deduction of the existence of a thing, on the one hand, and its non-existence on the other. It is possible to be categoric about the existence of a thing which can be proved to exist by reference to recognized means of proof, whether that be physical or mental. But where such means do not lead to proof of existence it is not proper to say that non-existence has thereby been proved. It is only possible to be sure of non-existence where existence would definitely contradict proof of the existence of other things closely related or connected in one way or another with the thing the non-existence of which is the subject of study. Otherwise, it would be improper and unreasonable to reach the conclusion that a thing does not exist. We must in such a case adopt the attitude that while existence cannot be proved in normal methods, and while non-existence also cannot be proven beyond reasonable doubt, existence remains possible, although this may be the subject of doubt by reference to some of the normal methods of proof. These methods of proof are not necessarily absolute, and may only be relative to the knowledge available to man at a particular time, knowledge which can be improved upon or altogether changed by the accident of discovery.

The Qur/'an says:

"Surely God upholds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught. And if they come to naught, none can uphold them after Him. Surely He is ever Forbearing, Forgiving. And they swore by God, their stronger oaths, that, if a Warner came to them, they would be better guided than any of the nations. But when a Warner came to them, it increased them in naught but aversion. Behaving proudly in the land and planning evil. And the evil plan besets none save the authors of it. So they wait for naught but the way of the ancients. But you will find no alteration in the course of God; and you will find no change in the course of God." (35 : 43).

The gist of this is that the laws of God and of the universe are unchanging and unchangeable. But it has been proved that the operation of one law of nature may be changed by the application of another law within the same realm. This does not mean that man can interfere with or impede the operation of the laws of God. What it means is that within these laws, and in accordance with a predetermined law governing the interaction and operation of the various laws, certain results can be produced. In other words, one of the laws of God can in certain circumstances operate to change the course of another law of God. Thus the development of the human embryo can be impeded or distorted by physical or chemical means applied by man.

Sufism in Islam

The allegation has been made against Islam that Sufism is the basic and only solution for the problems and difficulties of modern man. Many non-Muslims understand the sufist movement as an escapist and negative movement by which people avoid a confrontation with the realities of everyday life. But this is not a fair assessment of the sufist movement. Islam does not encourage its followers to evade or avoid the realities of life, or to adopt an introvert attitude towards life. If the sufist movement has at any time meant escapism, this was a defect in the followers of the movement, and most certainly not a defect in the teachings of Islam, upon which the movement was in general based. It must not be forgotten here that the sufist movement started at a time when the main religions of the world were experiencing great pressure and were subjected to many corrupting influences. Whether the accusations levelled by some people against sufism are true or not is a subject which cannot be adequately dealt with on this occasion. All that I would say is that the religion of Islam does not encourage — indeed it categorically and in plain terms prohibits — any attitude that leads the Muslim to shun life or divorce himself of its realities. True sufism encouraged by Islam is dedication to the will of God, rejection of wealth and luxury for their own sake, and a constant struggle by man to improve the lot of his fellows. In short, it is the "sufism" which was practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions, as well as the leaders of the Muslims in early days: they worked hard, they sought knowledge and imparted knowledge, they acquired strength, they gave advice, they helped and collaborated with others to promote good and prohibit evil, and they considered as paramount the good and welfare of the society in which they lived. In none of their acts of omission could it be said that the driving aim was a rejection of life, or escapism. Indeed, the very opposite was true, because they were very deeply involved in life in all its meanings.

These are the main pillars of Islamic thought, based on the Qur/'an. They are laid down in various provisions of the Qur/'an which specifically enunciate the way of life which the Muslim must follow. They are also to be deduced from the sum total of all the provisions of the Qur/'an.

There is not a single criticism of Islam which cannot be dispelled and undermined by a specific quotation from the
Qur'an. The great pity is that Muslim youth, which is subjected to the influences of Western thought often hostile to Islam, is not always possessed of the necessary knowledge to undertake the task of answering the criticism levelled against its religion. If it were to refer to the main sources of Islam, and study these very carefully, Muslim youth would have no difficulty in holding its own in any controversy or debate with the detractors and enemies of Islam. The Qur'an says:

"And among men is he who disputes about God without knowledge and without guidance, and without an illuminating Book" (22 : 8).

Islam and its critics

Many of the detractors of Islam enquire of the Islamic attitude towards modern civilization, scientific progress, the industrial revolution, Darwin's theory on the origin of species, Karl Marx's Das Kapital and Einstein's theory of relativity. The brief answer to all these questions is that the Qur'an encourages the application of reason to the assessment of the merit of these matters. The good in these matters is welcome, and the evil is eschewed. Darwin's theory on the origin of species, if it can be proved beyond doubt, does not in any way conflict with the teachings of the Qur'an. The same is true of Einstein's theory of relativity, which need not be understood in a way hostile to the teachings of Islam and the provisions of the Qur'an.

There is no doubt that many educated Muslims find difficulty in accepting the fact that miracles have taken place. The answer to this is that the idea of miracles — which, incidentally, is accepted by almost all religions — signifies merely a departure from the normal laws of nature. If one accepts that God is the Creator of all things, including the laws of nature, one cannot find any difficulty in accepting that God at times demonstrates events which are not comprehensible by reference to the laws of nature. It certainly is not possible to disprove miracles or to show that they have never taken place. Admittedly, proof of miraculous happenings is not always easily forthcoming, but that is not enough to disprove them.

The mind v. the heart?

Finally, I should like briefly to answer the accusation levelled against Islam, namely, that the Muslim is required to take matters for granted, and to believe with his heart rather than with reason. This is a completely false and unworthy accusation, and the teachings of Islam and the verses of the Qur'an provide abundant proof to rebut it.

The Muslim is urged to use his brain and to arrive at conclusions about all things, including matters of religion, by the application of normal methods of reasoning. It is true that not all people are capable of deep and thorough thought, and that they do not all examine everything before they come to believe in it. But those capable of reasoning will find it possible to verify the teachings of Islam. And I hope that in this essay I have shown that the fundamental concepts of Islam are capable of definite proof by ordinary methods of reasoning. The arguments I put forward in this brief article are based not on any special science or technique. They are ordinary methods of logic and philosophy which scientists use in determining the truth or falsehood of all things. Islam is not afraid of the application of these methods in any examination of its principles.

An Anthology of the Holy Qur'an by an American Muslim Orientalist

Selections from "The Noble Reading" (Qur'an Maj'id)

Translated by Professor Dr. T. B. IRVING

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One of the principal reasons that the West has not understood Islam is that its basic book, the Qur'an Maj'id (The Noble Reading), has never been translated with reverence and sympathy into any European language. This critical approach with its desire to disprove or mock the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad is a legacy from the Crusades. Its carry-over has prevented the truth from being known about Islam to non-Muslims.

Professor Irving, who holds his Ph.D. in Arabic and Spanish from Princeton University, founded the School of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota. He has held a Fulbright research fellowship in Baghdad, Iraq, and travelled widely throughout the Arab world and Iran. Dr. Irving is a member of the American Oriental Society, the Medieval Academy, the Middle Eastern Studies Association, the Middle East Institute and other learned societies.

His specialty is the Arab and the Islamic period in Spanish history, and he has written Falcon of Spain, a biography of the 8th century Arab ruler of Spain, 'Abdurrahmán I, as well as contributed numerous articles to magazines here and abroad. He is now Professor of Spanish at the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, Canada.

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AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1968
The Sword as Wielded by Muslims and Christians for Propagation of their Faiths

by MUHAMMAD ‘ALI

III*

An examination of the Holy Qur’an 9:13 which is seized upon by the critics of Islam to show that the Qur’an preaches force in the spread of Islam

Nothing in Chapter 9 of the Holy Qur’an is there to show that the Prophet Muhammad undertook offensive wars

Thus there is nothing to show that the Prophet ever undertook any war to force Islam upon a tribe. Yet words occur in chapter 9 in which the Muslims are told that if their opponents repented and became steadfast in prayers and gave alms, then they were not to be interfered with, as by doing so they became the brethren of the Muslims. It is from this verse that the conclusion is drawn that the Muslims are commanded to kill every unbeliever who does not accept Islam. How unnatural such a conclusion is, one can easily see. But as these words are often misunderstood and misconstrued, I deem it necessary to explain them at some length. For this purpose, I will quote the first few verses of Chapter 9 to show that nothing in this chapter leads to the conclusion of a general warfare against all unbelievers until they became Muslims.

1. “This is a declaration of immunity from God and His Messenger to those with whom you had an agreement among the idolaters.

2. “Go ye, therefore, at large in the land four months: and know that you cannot frustrate the power of God: on the other hand God will disgrace the unbelievers.

3. “And a proclamation on the part of God and His Messenger to the people in the day of the greater pilgrimage that God is clear of the idolaters as is His Messenger. If then you repent (of your oppression), it is better for you and if you turn your backs, then know that you cannot frustrate the power of God: and to the unbelievers announce thou a grievous punishment.

4. “But this concerns not those idolaters with whom you made an agreement, and who have afterwards in no way failed you, and not yet aided any one against you. Fulfil for them then your covenant until the time agreed upon with them: verily God loves the righteous.

5. “And when the sacred months are passed, then kill the idolaters wherever you find them, and seize them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in every place of observation; but if they repent and are steadfast in prayers, and give alms, then let them go their way, verily, God is Forgiving, and Merciful.

6. “And if any one of the idolaters ask thee for protection, then give him protection so that he may hear the Word of God, then send him to his place of safety. This, because they are ignorant people.

7. “How can the idolaters have an agreement with God and His Messenger, save those with whom you made an agreement at the Sacred Mosque. So long as they are true to you, be true to them; verily God loves those who fear.

8. “How! if they prevail against you, they will not observe either ties of blood or covenants. With their mouths they contend you, but their hearts are averse and most of them are transgressors.

9. “They sell the signs of God for a mean price, and turn others aside from His path: of a truth, evil is it that they do.

*Continued from The Islamic Review for July 1968.
10. "They respect not with a believer either ties of blood or their covenants, and they are the aggressors.

11. "Yet, if they turn to God and observe prayer and give alms, then they are your brethren in religion; and We make clear the signs for men of knowledge.

12. "But it, after alliance made, they violate their covenant and revile your religion, then do battle with the ringleaders of infidelity, so that they may desist. Verily their covenants are as naught.

13. "Will you not do battle with a people who have broken their covenant and aimed to expel the Messenger and attacked you first? Are you afraid of them? God is more deserving that you should fear Him."

Circumstances under which the verses of the Qur'an (9:1-13) were revealed

To understand these verses, it is necessary to bear in mind the circumstances under which they were revealed. It was not the Meccans only who opposed the progress of Islam and persecuted the Muslims, but all the idolatrous tribes of Arabia were guilty of the same offence.

In the beginning the Prophet Muhammad used to preach to the pilgrims who assembled at Mecca from every part of Arabia, and thus Islam had become known to almost every tribe. But idolatry was so deep-rooted in their hearts that they all assumed an hostile attitude to Islam. In fact, no tribe could be friendly or even neutral to Islam without incurring the enmity of the Quraysh who, as the guardians of the Ka'bah, used to warn the assembled hosts in the pilgrimage season against the new doctrines. Hence no member of any tribe could openly profess Islam though he might be inwardly convinced of its truth, and if any one dared do it, he was sure to be persecuted in the same manner as his brethren in faith at Mecca. Thus all the idolatrous tribes of Arabia, which annually assembled at Mecca, had necessarily assumed a hostile attitude towards Islam. When the power of Islam began to grow and the Quraysh suffered crushing defeats in battle after battle, their allies from among the idolatrous Arabs made treaties with the Muslims which were often for fixed periods. But the unbelievers generally paid no heed to such agreements and inflicted injuries on the Muslims whenever they could. Especially was this the case when the Prophet Muhammad went on an expedition to Tabuk with all his companions. These treaties were often made and broken by the idolaters, as the Holy Qur'an tells us in plain words. Thus we have in the eighth chapter of the Holy Qur'an the following description of these idolatrous tribes:

"They with whom thou hast made agreements, but whoever afterwards break their agreement and have not the least fear in breaking it" (8:58).

And again:

"... Or if thou fear treachery from any people, throw back their treaty to them as thou fairly mayest; verily God loves not the treacherous" (8:60).

But the Prophet is clearly enjoined to make peace with them if they are inclined to refrain from making war on the Muslims:

"But if they lean to peace, lean thou also to it; and put thy trust in God: He verily is the Hearing, the Knowing. But if they seek to betray thee, then verily God will be all-sufficient for thee" (8:63-64).

And to the same purport we have in a previous verse the following warning:

"If you desired a decision, now hath the decision come to you (referring to the conquest of Mecca). It will be better for you if you give up the struggle, and if you return to war, we also will return to it; and your forces, though they be many, shall by no means avail you ought because God is with the faithful" (8:19).

A detailed discussion of the first thirteen verses of Chapter 9 of the Holy Qur'an

It was under the circumstances narrated in the previous paragraph that the ninth chapter of the Qur'an was revealed. The Immunity was declared as the last remedy for a people who every now and then broke their covenants and disturbed the peace of the Muslim society. When the opening verses of the ninth chapter were proclaimed to the idolatrous tribes who had assembled at the Pilgrimage, the unbelievers told the Prophet's messenger to inform him that they had already thrown back their treaties which they had made with him and that there was no covenant between them, but the trusting of lances and the striking of swords. I will now take the verses one by one to show that the Holy Qur'an did not preach in this chapter any principle of persecution for the sake of religion.

The first verse clearly speaks of an immunity to those idolaters with whom the Muslims had entered into treaties. The injunctions that follow, therefore, relate only to such idolaters, and not to the whole world, not even to all the idolaters.

In the second verse the idolaters are told that they "Cannot frustrate the power of God", showing that the object of the idolaters in fighting against the Muslims was not to resist any supposed persecution by the Muslims, but to frustrate the power of the Muslims and to bring them under subjection to them to stop the progress of Islam by force.

The third verse establishes two points. It shows that the proclamation was not addressed to all non-Muslims or to all the idolaters anywhere in the world, but only to the people that assembled on the "day of the greater pilgrimage", i.e., only to hostile Arabian idolatrous tribes. Another point which the third verse establishes is that in the war which was now declared against these idolatrous tribes, the charge of aggression could not be laid against the Prophet, for it declares God and His Messenger to be "clear of the idolaters".

The fourth verse shows that war was declared not even against all the idolatrous Arabian tribes which after carrying on hostilities with the Muslims for some time had then made a treaty with them, but only against such of these tribes as had failed their covenants which they had made with the Muslims or secretly aided other tribes to attack the Muslims.

The fifth verse tells us that aggression and oppression by such idolatrous tribes were to be forgiven if they accepted Islam. These tribes were guilty of grave oppression and excessive outrages against the Muslims, but the latter were commanded to show them a clemency if they embraced Islam. It was not a case of persecution for the sake of religion, but a case of forgiveness for the sake of religion. The principle of forgiving one's bitterest enemies was carried into practice by Islam and Islam only. The unity of the religion of Islam established a relation of brotherhood and hence all past wrongs were forgotten. "Verily, God is Forgiving and Merciful" says the verse, thus impressing upon the Muslims
the necessity of showing forgiveness and mercy to their enemies.

The sixth verse even more clearly refutes the idea that the Muslims were fighting with the idolaters to force them to accept Islam. Even if a member of any of the idolatrous tribes that were at war with the Muslims sought protection, such protection was to be granted to him. If, as its enemies assert, Islam had taught the principle of persecution for the sake of religion, the injunction on this occasion ought to have been that an idolater falling into the hands of the Muslims should be forthwith beheaded if he did not accept Islam. *The principle of "Sword or Islam" has no existence anywhere except in the minds of the hostile critics of Islam*. For, here in the last revelation of the Prophet, He is enjoined to give protection to an idolater belonging to one of the tribes at war with the Muslims, if he sought it. The Word of God was only to be preached to him and he was then to be sent back to his place safely, leaving it to his choice to accept or reject Islam after that. Thus do the Holy Qur’an and the practice of the Prophet show that the principle that "there is no compulsion in religion" was preached by Islam for all ages and that it was never abrogated, even the latest revelation bearing testimony to its truth and endorsing it.

The seventh verse states that the idolaters could not enter into a treaty with the Muslims, and the reason for this is explained in the eighth verse in which the question asked in the previous verse is repeated. The idolaters could not enter into a treaty with the Muslims, not for any fault of the latter, but because they would not, if they prevailed against the Muslims, “observe either ties of blood or covenants” and because their hearts were averse to any alliance with the Muslims and they desired to content themselves only with their words. Hence they broke their covenants again and again. When the Muslims wanted to avenge the wrongs done by them they made a treaty, and when they saw their attention turned in some other direction, they again oppressed the unbelievers without regard either to the ties of blood or to the covenants which they had made.

The ninth verse shows that the idolaters were not content with practising their own religion freely, but they compelled others to forsake Islam. They were fighting not because the Muslims compelled them to accept Islam, but because they desired to compel the Muslims to forsake Islam; not because they were prevented from practising idolatry, but because they did not like others to forsake idolatry. Their object was, as the verse says plainly, to “turn others aside from the path of God”, i.e., to prevent them from accepting Islam.

The tenth verse repeats that when a Muslim falls into the hands of the idolaters, they maltreat him and have no regard for ties of blood or their covenants. The eleventh verse again enjoins the Muslims to cease fighting with people who become their brethren, in faith and forgive them all past wrongs.

The twelfth verse says that if after making an alliance any tribe violates its covenant, its ringleaders must be fought against. And the thirteenth verse enumerates the three principal offences of the people against whom the Muslims were commanded to fight. These offences were their persecuting and expelling the Prophet and his followers, their attacking the Muslims first and at last their breaking the covenants which they had made and thus again reverting to the persecution of the Muslims.

The Prophet Muhammad never offered “Islam or sword”

It will be seen from the above that the Holy Qur’an never enjoined or permitted the persecution of the non-Muslims on the score of their religion. The idolatrous Arabs had taken up the sword to destroy the Muslims and they were punished with the sword. And as there is no injunction in the Holy Qur’an to compel the unbelievers to accept Islam or to propagate it by the sword, so there is not a single circumstance in the Prophet’s life which should lend any support to such an assertion. It cannot be pointed out that any expedition was undertaken by him to force Islam upon any tribe. We even find him writing letters to the different potentates in the sixth year of Hejirah, but in none of these letters did he threaten any monarch with making war upon him if he did not accept Islam. One of these letters has been discovered, and it proves conclusively that it was not “Islam or Sword” that the Prophet Muhammad offered, but Islam only. The following is the translation of this letter, which has been declared to be genuine:

“In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

From Mohammad, the servant of God and His Messenger, to Maquaquis, the Chief of the Copts. Peace be upon him who follows true guidance! After this, I invite thee to accept Islam: become a Muslim and thou shalt be saved; God will grant thee a double reward. But if thou turn back, then on thee will be the sin of the Copts.”

It appears from the most trustworthy traditions that similarly worded letters were written to many other monarchs. And the strongest of all facts is that no expedition was undertaken by the Prophet Muhammad after the revelation of the opening verses of the ninth chapter, which is alleged by Christian missionary critics to proclaim the principle of persecution for the sake of religion for all ages. Had the Prophet understood any verse of the ninth chapter to mean fighting with the unbelievers to convert them forcibly, he would have sent his armies in all directions. But he lived for more than a year after the revelation of the ninth chapter and its announcement at the time of the Pilgrimage, and not a single battle was fought by him. Does it not show what meaning the Prophet himself attached to the injunctions of the ninth chapter?

The early Caliphs of Islam and the later Muslims never compelled any people to accept Islam

As regards the wars of the earlier caliphs, none of these can be shown to have been undertaken to compel any people to accept Islam, nor can it be proved that any people were actually compelled to change their religion. These wars were necessitated by the aggressions of the Persian and the Roman empires. The Arabian tribes near the borders of these empires had accepted Islam, and it was the aggression of these empires on the frontier that led to wars between them and the Muslims. Had the Muslims undertaken the conquest of these empires with the object of forcing their religion upon them, there is no reason why they should have allowed perfect religious freedom to the non-Muslims in these countries after conquering them. It is a fact that in all the countries which the Muslims conquered, they allowed full religious liberty, and Islam was in fact the pioneer of the valuable religious freedom with which the world is now blessed. The spirit in which the Muslims conquered these empires is well illustrated in the following remarks make by a Freethinker (see the *Crimes of Christianity*, London 1925) in connection with the

Continued on page 13
conquest of Jerusalem by 'Umar in 637 C.E.: “The great caliph entered without bloodshed, and conversed amicably as he rode along with the patriarch of the city on its antiquities. He granted the Christians the use of their churches and the free practice of their religion. His laconic decree is worth preserving: ‘In the name of the most merciful God. From Omar Ibn Al Khattab, to the inhabitants of Aelia.** They shall be protected and secured both in their lives and fortunes, and their churches shall neither be pulled down, nor made use of by any but themselves.’” The impartial writer adds: “The dignity and humanity of Omar, and the graceful chivalry of Saladin, who captured Jerusalem from the Christians in a later age, form a vivid contrast to the rudeness and ferocity of the soldiers of Christ.”

Even the later Muslims were never guilty of the heinous deeds of bloodshed which are recorded in the history of Christianity. Muslim monarchs may have invaded and conquered countries sometimes from a desire to extend their empires, but when they once conquered a country, the inhabitants of which settled peacefully under them, they never persecuted them for the sake of religion. They never demolished their temples or interfered with any of their religious ceremonies. There was no country in which they did not govern people professing other religions, but far from oppressing or persecuting these people, they granted them full liberty in the performance of their religious ceremonies. If we desire to institute a comparison between the spirit of Islam and the spirit of Christianity on the basis of the conduct of the followers of these two religions in wars, the crusades afford us best material for doing so, and the following quotations from European authors may be safely considered as conclusive against Christianity on this point.

European writers like Gibbon, Michaud, Milman, Jortin and Mills on the behaviour of early Christians towards Muslims

Gibbon, in his *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, thus describes the scene of the fall of Jerusalem:

“A bloody sacrifice was offered by his mistaken votaries to the God of the Christians; resistance might provoke, but neither age nor sex could mollify, their implacable rage; they indulged themselves three days in a promiscuous massacre; and the infection of the dead bodies produced an epidemic disease. After seventy thousand Muslims had been put to the sword, and the harmless Jews had been burnt in their synagogue, they could still reserve a multitude of captives, whom interest or lassitude persuaded them to spare.” (Vol. 6, p. 459.)

The Fall of Jerusalem to the Crusaders and their behaviour towards the conquered Muslims

Michaud⁷ thus describes the scene after the conquest when the excitement of war was over:

“All the captives whom humanity or the lassitude of carnage had at first spared, all those who had been saved in the hope of a rich ransom, were slaughtered. The Saracens were forced to throw themselves from tons of towers and houses; they were burnt alive; they were dragged from their subterranean retreats; they were hauled to the public places and immolated on piles of the dead. Neither the tears of women, nor the cries of little children, nor the sight of the place where Jesus Christ forgave his executioners, could mollify the victor’s passion.”

Mills⁸ thus gives an account of the butchery:—

“The subjugated people were therefore dragged into the public places, and slain as victims. Women with children at the breast, girls and boys, all were slaughtered. The squares, the streets, and even the uninhabited places of Jerusalem, again were strewn with the dead bodies of men and women, and the mangled limbs of children. No heart melted into compassion or expanded into benevolence.”

The earlier scene, immediately following the capture of Jerusalem, is thus described by the same historian:—

“Such was the carnage in the mosque of Omar, that the mutilated carcasses were hurried by the torrents of blood into the court; dismembered arms and hands floated into the current that carried them into contact with bodies to which they had not belonged. Ten thousand people were murdered in this sanctuary. It was not only the lacerated and headless trunks which shocked the sight, but the figures of the victors themselves reeking with the blood of their slaughtered enemies. No place of refuge remained to the vanquished, so indiscriminately did the insatiable fanaticism of the conquerors disregard alike supplication and resistance. Some were slain, others were thrown from the tops of the churches and of the citadel.”

Saladin and the Fall of Jerusalem in 1187 C.E. — a contrast

After some time Jerusalem was taken back by the Muslims under Saladin, and the humanity of the Muslims presents a vivid contrast to the brutality of the Christian crusaders. The following remarks from the pen of a Free-thinker are sufficient to convince any unprejudiced reader that in practice Islam was far more mild than Christianity.

The author of the *Crimes of Christianity* says:—

“Saladin defeated the Christians at Tiberias in July, 1187 C.E., and advanced to Jerusalem. Unwilling to stain the venerated city with blood, he offered the people money and settlements in Syria if they would capitulate. They refused, but prayer was a poor defence and after several days’ fighting they threw themselves on his mercy.” The following passage from Gibbon is then quoted:—

“He consented to accept the city and to spare the inhabitants. The Greek and Oriental Christians were permitted to live under his dominion; but it was stipulated that in forty days all the Franks and Latins should evacuate Jerusalem and be safely conducted to the seaports of Syria and Egypt: that ten pieces of gold should be paid for each man, five for each woman, and one for every child; and that those who were unable to purchase their freedom, should be detained in perpetual slavery.”

The author then goes on to say:—

“Saladin paid the ransom of thousands of the poorest himself. Malik Adel followed his example, redeeming two thousand. Eventually only about an eighth of the inhabitants were unredeemed, and many of these embraced Mohammdanism. Unlike the brutal crusaders, who massacred without distinction of age or sex, Saladin melted with compassion at the tears of women, and when they begged of him their fathers, husbands and brothers, he granted their request and loaded them with presents.” Michaud⁹ pays a warm tribute to this noble infidel.

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**The ancient name for Jerusalem.
"He rendered to the mothers their children, and to the wives their husbands, among the captives. Several Christians had abandoned their furniture and most precious effects, and carried on their shoulders their old and enfeebled parents or their sick and infirm friends. Saladin was touched (attendri) by this spectacle, and recompensed with his charities the virtue and the piety of his enemies. Taking pity on all unfortunates, he allowed the Knights of the Hospital to remain in the city to tend the pilgrims, and those who were prevented by grave maladies from leaving Jerusalem."

Gibbon justly says that "in these acts of mercy the virtue of Saladin deserve our admiration and love". Saladin's humanity was in striking contrast with the villainy of the nearest Christian prince. "Many Christians who left Jerusalem," says Mills, "went to Antioch: but Bohemond not only denied them hospitality but even stripped them. They marched into the Saracenic country and were well received."

Conclusion

I need not cite any more authorities. The comparison between the Muslim and the Christian religious wars not only shows the baselessness of the charges against Islam and the Muslim monarchs, but it also proves that the charges of cruel persecution for the sake of religion and of shedding human blood quite unjustifiably lie against Christianity. No Christian was ever put to death by a Muslim ruler on the score of his religion, but thousands of innocent Muslims were butchered by the Christians in Spain and elsewhere simply because they refused to accept Christianity. And while hundreds of mosques were turned by the Christians into churches, only rare instances can be pointed out in which the Muslims converted Christian churches into mosques. In fact, a single instance is sufficient to show the difference between the spirit of Islam and that of Christianity. When 'Umar conquered Jerusalem, he not only did not convert the church into a mosque, but even when requested by the patriarch to perform his orisons there, refused, and afterwards gave his reason for it, saying: "Had I yielded to your request, the Muslims of a future age would have infringed the treaty under the cover of imitating my example." But when the same city fell into the hands of the Christians for a short time, they converted the mosque into a church, and the place was afterwards dedicated by Saladin when Jerusalem was again conquered by the Muslims. And in conclusion may I again quote the same impartial writer, I mean the author of the Crimes of Christianity:

"Nor did Muhammad himself ever oppress the Christians who would live at peace with him. As Gibbon observes, he 'readily granted the security of their persons, the freedom of their trade, the property of their goods, and the toleration of their worship.' Christian churches were allowed in Mohamadan States, though it is safe to affirm that no Christian State would have tolerated a Mohamadan mosque. Even in India the Mohamadan conquerors 'spared the pagodas of that devout and populous country.' The Arabian caliphs gave freedom to all the Oriental sects. The patriarchs, bishops and clergy were protected in their domestic jurisdictions by the civil magistrate. Learned Christians were employed as secretaries and physicians; they were made collectors of the revenue and sometimes raised to the command of cities and provinces. When Saladin recaptured Jerusalem from the crusaders, he made a distinction between the Latin and the Greek and Oriental Christians. The former were treated as captives of war, but the latter were permitted to remain as his subjects, and to worship their gods in their own fashion. Nor has this tolerant tradition been since violated, for to this day the Jews and Christians of the Turkish Empire enjoy the liberty of conscience which was granted by the caliphs, and many a fugitive from Christian bigotry has found shelter with the persecuting Mohammedans."

The result of the Christian crusades is thus summed up by the same author:—

"Fighting the infidel abroad heightened the spirit of bigotry and sharpened the sword against the heretic at home. Jortin remarks that the thirteenth century saw 'hanging and burning for God's sake become the universal practice'. Milman also observes that the Holy War strengthened the doctrine that 'The unbeliever was the natural enemy of Christ and of His church; if not to be converted, to be punished for the crime of unbelief, to be massacred, exterminated by the righteous sword.' Besides the incalculable evils they directly caused, the crusades led to the slaughter of the Northern pagans, the massacre of the Albigeens, and the other wholesale cruelties with which the Papacy afterwards desolated Europe."

I have stated only the facts and I leave it for the reader to draw his conclusion and see for himself whether it was Islam that acted upon the principle of persecution for the sake of religion and converted people by force or Christianity, and which of the two shed human blood mercilessly and unjustifiably. Christianity has learned the lesson of toleration from Islam, though it ungratefully blames its benefactor for crimes of which it was itself guilty.


MUHAMMAD, THE LAST PROPHET
by Imam Vehbi Ismail

Muhammad, the Last Prophet, is primarily written for American-born Muslim children, but, in fact, this could be profitably read by all the English-speaking boys and girls and, of course, newcomers to the faith of Islam. It is a must for every English-speaking Muslim family.

Mr. Vehbi Ismail is the religious leader of the Albanian Muslim community in the United States. He is the Editor of the Muslim Life quarterly and at present working on a commentary of the Qur'an in Albanian.

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
CHILDREN’S PAGE

Glimpses into the life of the Last Prophet of God, Muhammad

Simplicity — a Gift from Our Prophet

By OLIVE TOTO

Dear Little Ones,

This time I am writing for your bigger brother, so that he can perhaps give a talk at school about a very important man, our Prophet Muhammad. But he can read this to you, if he would be so kind.

I want to tell you about the simple life our Prophet led. Here is an example of his plain and simple living.

One day the Prophet lay sleeping on a mat. He had had a very tiring day and was in a deep sleep. The Prophet’s friend and follower called Ibn Mas’ud came into the room and saw the Prophet sleeping in a very uncomfortable position on a very rough mat. Just then the Prophet woke up and when he sat up, Ibn Mas’ud saw that there were deep marks on the Prophet’s back, which had been caused by the rough mat. Ibn Mas’ud said, “I beg of you to tell me or one of the others whenever you want to sleep, and a proper bed will be made up for you.” With kindness in his appealing eyes, the Prophet looked at Ibn Mas’ud and said softly, “These worldly comforts are not for me. I am like a traveller who takes a rest under a tree in the shade and then goes on his way.”

This was quite true. The worldly comforts did not worry him. Our Prophet was always clean and tidy, but he would never worry if his bed was hard. Once, a follower called ‘Umar (who, after the death of our Prophet, became the second Caliph) entered the house of the Prophet. He saw the Prophet lying on a mat woven out of dried palm leaves which felt very rough and uncomfortable. ‘Umar noticed that the Prophet had for his pillow a rough leather cushion. ‘Umar’s eyes filled with tears. “Why should this wonderful man have such hardships?” thought ‘Umar. Turning to him, ‘Umar said, “Please pray to God that He may grant His followers the worldly goods and comforts of life such as those enjoyed by the non-Muslims.” The Prophet looked hurt; his eyes were full of sad reproach. But he could see the man’s point of view. He consoled him by saying, “These worldly riches may be enjoyed by the non-Muslims; but the rewards and comforts of the world hereafter await the faithful.”

Many of our Prophet’s friends tried to get him to have more of the comforts of life, but they never seemed to succeed. He just would not bother about them. One night his wife made up her mind that he must be made more comfortable. So she folded a very large mattress that he used into four parts instead of two, which he usually had. This made a great deal of difference.

When the morning came the Prophet asked, “What did I sleep on last night?” The wife replied, “The same mattress as you always use but I folded it into four instead of the usual two.” “Please always make it as it used to be,” said the Prophet. “Because of its being so soft, it made me oversleep and I was late for my prayers.”

All through his life, the Prophet had known hardships. He had never known what it was to have a father to talk to and love, because his father had died before he was born. It is true that he came from a family of high rank, but it was not rich. The Prophet had always to do his share of work. He had looked after the animals when he was quite young. When he was older, he went on trade missions along with the trade caravans to Syria. He had never led an idle life. But never did he boast about his ancestors, or say that he was descended from a noble family. No, that would not have been our Prophet. God had given him brains. He used them properly.

He always gave good advice. He himself was a shining example in all things. As I said before, he never boasted. He could have done so, because the Prophet’s grandfather had been the Chief of Mecca and was held in great esteem by the Meccans. But never did the Prophet dwell on this. He never once said in a haughty manner, “My grandfather was so-and-so.” All through his life he was humble. This endeared him to people. It is true that he married a rich woman, but he still remained poor. He never had anything for himself. He always helped others. He adopted his nephew, ‘Ali, who became a hero of Islam.

All through his life Muhammad was generous and he taught others to be the same. His wife, ‘Ayesha, relates how a woman came to the door begging with her two daughters. ‘Ayesha had no food in the house except one date. She gave this one date to the woman. The woman split the date in half and gave a piece to each of her daughters, keeping nothing for herself. After a while the Prophet came home.
She told him about this mother. He was very much touched. He said, "Whosoever is put to trial and tribulation because of his or her daughters and yet treats them well and gets the best he can for them in life, these noble actions will serve as a screen from hell." All through his life his house was bare and food was not plentiful. Into his household he took Zayd, a slave, and adopted him as his son.

All people knew him as an upright man, with such a sense of honour that he had earned for himself the name of al-Amin, which in English means "the trustworthy". What a simple man! When he could have had all, he did not. He kept nothing for himself. The only luxury he kept for himself was a pair of yellow boots, and they had been presented to him by the ruler of Abyssinia. It was well known that he would not allow his servants to be scolded, even if they were awkward or made mistakes. He was so very kind to children. He would always pat their cheeks when he met them, whether they were rich or poor. Do you know, he never stuck anyone in his life? When asked to curse someone, he said, "I have not been sent to curse but to be a mercy to mankind." He never forgot to visit the sick. He went to every funeral he could. No job was too low for him. He milked his own goats, mended his clothes and boots. Whenever he spoke, it was to the point and with great expression. Those who listened to him were filled with love and reverence. And yet with all his seriousness he could laugh and play with the children and tell them fairy stories. All children loved him.

After his first wife died (although he never forgot her), he married again. As was the custom in those days, he married this time more than one wife. He built a row of houses for them, not as you would imagine, but something much more humble. Each house was separated by palm branches cemented together with mud. This formed walls to divide each house. He would clean his own house and for months on end he would not have a proper meal. You see, he would have had plenty to eat if he had not shared it with others. Outside his house was a porch where people would have a meal if they wanted to. His food was ordinary, of course. He loved dates and honey and milk but he could not get these often, so the meal he had with his people was water and dates. He shared whatever he had, sometimes barley bread.

As you know, the Prophet always practised what he preached and when he started to preach, the tribe of Quraysh felt that their reign over the Ka'bah would soon end. I have already told you before what the Ka'bah is. Well, in a few words I would tell you again. It was always known as the House of God, even when the idols were there. But Abraham and his son had worshipped one God there hundreds of years before. All the neighbouring tribes were all of one mind about these keepers of the Ka'bah. They respected them very much and kept them in luxury. How could these keepers of the Ka'bah give all this up because of one man (whom they had always called "the trustworthy")? All because he had the idea that one must worship only One God, the true God, not any of their idols. Oh! this was too much to ask of them. Harm this man? Yes, they would like to. But they knew they had better not touch him, because he came from their most important family and belonged to nobility. This made a lot of difference in those days as to whether he should be harmed.

There were many slaves who took a keen interest in Islam. But when their masters heard of this they tormented the slaves and gave them no peace if they showed the slightest interest in Islam. Their lives were not worth living. But suddenly two very important people joined our Prophet and announced that they believed in this religion called Islam. The idolators were furious. "Oh! this is too much," they said, "Islam is claiming men like these two men. We shall have to stop this." They started in different ways to hurt the Prophet. When he went to a place called Ta'if, he was stoned and was bleeding very much. Important family or not, Muhammad must be finished off. It looked now as if someone would try and kill him. At any rate, one bright spot in the Prophet's life was the Pledge of 'Aqabah, a pledge which was given by twelve men at a place called 'Aqabah. They took the following oath which ran:

"We will worship none save the one God.
We will not steal nor kill our children,
We will not slander and we will obey the Prophet Muhammad."

Then these twelve men set out determined to preach Islam, and this they did.

After ten years of struggle and slow results for our Prophet, with many hardships, such as the departure of all Muslims from Mecca to Medina, through all this our Prophet showed what a patient man he was. He never gave up. He was the hero of the day and one had to love him. One just could not help oneself. It was only a question of time, Islam would conquer in the end. When the Prophet became ruler, or chief, of Medina, he was the most beloved ruler in history. When Muhammad marched into Mecca, what was his attitude towards those enemies of his? Did he torture them? Did he destroy them? No, the only destroying he did was to destroy the 360 idols in the Ka'bah. With a staff in his hand he stood before each idol and pointed at it and said, "Truth has come and falsehood has fled away", and after these words, he would get his soldiers to cut each idol into pieces. Every idol was destroyed. Our Prophet freely forgave the Meccans. He forgave them for the humiliation and strife that they had caused him. His soldiers harmed no one, insulted no woman and no house was robbed. In every phase of life our Prophet was a shining example. He was a husband, father, master, politician, warrior and ruler. He was a ruler of a nation of many tribes and ruler of a country twice the size of France. He governed his country as a Prophet should. He always used God's name before starting anything, whether it was great or small. Bismillah would pass his lips, meaning in English "In the name of God". So let us finish these few words with the Bismillah.

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
In celebration of the centenary of
Ahmad Shauqi — Prince of Arab Poets

One of the Great Innovators of modern Arabic Poetry

By ‘ATIYYAH ABU AL-NAJAH

This year, the Arab world celebrates the centenary of the birth of Ahmad Shauqi, the greatest Arabic poet of modern times, who has justly been called the “Prince of Poets”.

For centuries, Arab poets had been hidebound in imitation of their predecessors: the same subjects were treated, the verses meticulously couched in the qasidah, a rigid monorhyme form with an inflexible metre. By introducing new ideas and feelings, and modifying the traditional metre, Ahmad Shauqi brought about a revolution in poetry similar to that of the European Romantics some fifty years before.

Today, thirty-six years after his death, Ahmad Shauqi is still looked upon as one of the great innovators of contemporary Arabic poetry.

The Man

Ahmad Shauqi was born in 1868 at Cairo of an aristocratic family of mixed Arab, Turk and Greek descent. The Khedive Ism‘al soon took him under his protection. The poet studied first in Egypt, and subsequently in France, from 1887 until 1891. There he turned Bohemian: photographs from this time show him looking intense and mysterious, wrapped in a large black cape. He knew Verlaine and mixed with other writers, painters and artists of fin de siècle Paris.

On his return to Cairo he became the official court poet and his early work commanded the admiration of the entire Arab world.

Islam was, at the time, enduring one of the darkest periods of its history. The incessant wars of the 19th century between the Ottoman Empire and the Europeans, particularly against the Russians, the growing weakness and subsequent fragmentation of the Empire itself (Greek independence in 1829, Serbia and Bulgaria in 1878, French and British occupation of certain Arab countries) were all events which deeply disturbed the Muslims and reinforced their feelings of sympathy toward Turkey.

Believing Islam itself threatened by Christendom, the Arabs tried to form a pan-Islamic alliance to present a common front against the enemy. Egypt, occupied by the British in 1822 and struggling for freedom, turned toward Turkey, her former suzerain state, for aid. But Turkey had her own defence problems: she lost Tripolitania in 1911 following the war with Italy, and, in 1913, the Balkan War compelled her to give up the major part of her European territories. The vicissitudes of the Ottoman Empire removed all hope of Turkish aid for the Arabs and pan-Islamism gave way to nationalism.
Naturally, Shauqí had followed these events closely and they found an echo in his verses. But his nationalism did not quell his passion for Turkey and he never forgot that he had Turkish blood in his veins. In the first part of his work there are some twenty poems devoted to Istanbul, and the fall of the Ottoman Empire caused him much anguish, though he saw clearly the reasons for European supremacy — scientific progress, development of new techniques, a booming economy and the development of democracy. Nevertheless, in spite of his liberal tendencies, Shauqí retained a kind of nostalgic fidelity to the lingering memories of former Turkish power.

This kind of dichotomy — not unusual in the poetic type of sensibility which readily embraces oppositions — is to be found elsewhere in the life and thought of Ahmad Shauqí. He was at least two men: an epicurean, a lover of life and pleasure, handsome, rich and idolized — and a tormented soul expressing in poignant verse the tragic shortness of life, anguish in the face of death, the repentance of the sinner and hope in divine mercy. But whether he is celebrating earthly pleasures or pondering on the destiny of man, Shauqí never fails to amaze by the strength of his passion and the beauty of his verbal expression.

The Poet

Shauqí excelled equally in two fields: as a poet of the bedouin life, and as a poet of Western life and culture influenced by scientific progress and new discoveries. In the manner of the classic authors, he liked to use archaic words, giving them a new lustre. He shaped and polished them until they sparkled like jewels. Certain critics have reproached him for having, sometimes, sacrificed the intrinsic unity of a poem to stylistic experiment. But one must be grateful to Shauqí for having understood the lessons of the classic masters, and at the same time, given their traditional forms new life. Like the traditional poets, he wrote panegyrics, but not so much to gain the favour of a prince as to defend a political or social ideal. Influenced by foreign cultures, he wrote fables resembling the apologues of the Indian writer, Bidpaw (translated into Arabic under the name of Kalilah wa Dimnah by Ibn al-Muqaffa') and the Fables of La Fontaine. Much as the classic Arab poets, he "wept on the ruins", but under the influence of the romantics, he brought a new approach to the old themes and gave them a new significance.

While the classic poets, writing of abandoned tribal camps where their tribe had passed earlier, regretted that “the raven of separation” had ended their love, Shauqí preferred to draw his inspiration from Pharaonic ruins and meditate on the vanity of life and the fragility of empires. Sitting beneath the mighty Sphinx at Gizeh, he wrote of the succession of the dynasties and the constant cycle of change and rebirth.

The Dramatic Author

As a playwright, Shauqí once again showed himself as both Oriental and Western.

Like the French classic poets, he wrote tragedies in verse about kings, princes or legendary heroes: Cleopatra, Cambyses, the poet Antara, Majnun Laylá (Laylá’s Lover). But while Racine and Corneille obtained their subject matter from Roman and Greek history, Shauqí took his from events in the history of the entire Arab world, and in particular from Egyptian history.

Like Shakespeare and the French classics, he described psychological crises precipitated by the conflict of two opposing emotions: love and country (The Death of Cleopatra), love and tribe (Majnun Laylá) . . . and, like Shakespeare and the Romantics, he attached little importance to theunities of time and place, and mixed comedy and tragedy. However, following the fashion of the Arab authors of his day, he introduced numerous scenes of singing and dancing, and enjoyed piling on “effects”: duels, suicides, discovery of lost lovers, etc. Then, after the violent death of most of the cast, his plays conclude with a wedding or two, in the grand tradition of the happy ending.

Classic, romantic and “baroque” at the same time, Shauqí’s plays still command the public’s eye, perhaps less for their dramatic qualities than for the beauty of their form: they are listed in the repertory of the National Theatre of the United Arab Republic and appreciated throughout the entire Arab world.

It is indeed difficult, in translation, to give an accurate idea of the originality and musical quality in the lyric and dramatic poetry of Ahmad Shauqí, but here are, nevertheless, a few lines from the celebrated monologue in which Laylá’s Lover expresses his unrequited passion:

“Quiet is the night. Love and poetry
Fall on me. And the desert is
Night, poetry and love, nothing more.
O God! You filled the sky with love
And with love the sands of the desert.
But I am the one who bears the weight
Of all this love! When Laylé is far away
My heart groans. When she is near
My heart languishes! Ah! What pain and languor!”

The great Egyptian writer, Husayn Haykal, once wrote: “What Homer did for Greek and Virgil for Latin, Ahmad Shauqí has done for the Arabic language.” In Europe, too, his genius has been recognized: tourists to Rome can see his bust in the Valle Giulia (in the Gardens of the Villa Borghese), between those of Schiller and Leopardi.

(UNESCO FEATURES)

1 Shauqí, however, died stoically, saying simply to those around him: “May peace be with you”.
2 Many of his poems are sung today by the famous Egyptian singer, Umm Kalthüm, and as such are known from Morocco to the Indian Ocean.

The Editors of The Islamic Review invite writers in all Muslim countries to send them articles on religious, political, social and other subjects in relation to their countries.
An Introduction to understanding Spanish-Arab History

By PROFESSOR T. B. IRVING

Periods and Dynasties

The division into three clear segments of Spanish-Arab history

The chief difficulty in understanding the Arab or Islamic era in Spanish history results from a confusion in terminology plus a careless use of Arabic. Yet though it lasted for nine centuries, this period divides into three clear segments: the Umayyad, or pure Arab, period (711-1030 C.E.); the disruption of Arab rule that followed (1030-1231 C.E.); and finally the decline and expulsion of both the Muslims and Jews (1213-1610 C.E.). The Arabs arrived in Spain in 711, only eighty years after the death of Muhammad, and so they could draw upon the experience of the initial commonwealth which he had established at Medina, but which was soon overlaid with military considerations as well as Persian, Byzantine and Roman bureaucracy which the Arabs encountered in Iraq, Syria, Egypt and within Spain herself.

The Umayyad Period

The Umayyad, or Arab, period likewise divides into three sub-periods: first, the colony, to speak in contemporary terms, when Spain was administered directly under the Umayyad caliphate with its seat in Damascus, and its administrative centre for the western Mediterranean in Qayrawán, the first Arab capital of the Maghrib or Western province in what we now know as Tunisia. This colony lasted from 711 until 756, or only 45 years, for the Umayyad caliphate fell in 750 to the ‘Abbásids, and the shock waves of that revolution reached Spain six years later. This period was characterized by rivalry among the governors, and displays the Arabs’ tendency to tribal anarchy; in this it reminds us, too, of the civil wars in Peru following the Spanish conquest of that country in the 16th century.

The independent Emirate of the Umayyads

Then came the independent Emirate, which was established by the great ruler ‘Abdurrrahmán I (al-Dákhil, or “The Newcomer” (756-788 C.E.)). When the ‘Abbásids killed off the Umayyad princes, he was able to flee to Morocco, to the Berber tribe to which his mother belonged; from there he passed to Spain, where he put down civil war over the governorship and set up his own regime. He had been trained as a possible caliph by his grandfather in Syria, and his thirty years reign was one of the real periods of prosperity which a united Spain has enjoyed. Umayyad rule was based on Byzantine precedents which had been observed and adopted in Syria and Egypt by the conquering Arabs.

This Emirate lasted until 929 C.E. Under ‘Abdurrrahmán II (822-852 C.E.) some Persian influence appeared with Ziryáb the singer; but this was cultural more than political, and affected customs like music and manners. Nevertheless, it shows how Spain enjoyed broad contacts with the world during the otherwise dark Middle Ages of western Europe. Spanish Islam was cosmopolitan and embraced the native Spaniard as well as the immigrant; even Christians spoke Arabic and were called Muštarabûn, or “would-be” Arabs (Mozárabes in Spanish).

In the year 929 C.E., ‘Abdurrrahmán III al-Násir bi-Lláh (or “Victorious through God”) (912-961 C.E.) proclaimed
Fātimid one in Tunisia founded in 909 C.E. Under the third under his grandson and the ambitious minister Mansūr (Almanzor in Spanish texts), who brought down the Umayyad dynasty, just as Mussolini ruined the house of Savoy. A century after this caliphate had been proclaimed, in 1030 C.E., the city council of Córdoba, wasted by renewed civil wars, gave up its pretension to be the capital of Arab Spain. The diverse racial elements had fused, but not discovered political stability. However, industry and education were both flourishing. Arab Spain had passed the colonial period and was conscious of her own identity.

The period of disruption
Then we have a period of disruption and the collapse of Arab rule. This is also divided into three sub-periods.
First, we have the Taifa kingdoms, or Mulik al-Tawārīf (“kings of groups or parties”) as these are called in Arabic. These lasted for over half a century, from 1030 to 1092 C.E., when each of the score or more metropolitan centres of Spain tried to rule its region under its own king or leader, Christian or Muslim. The Cid in Valencia was one of these swashbuckling rulers who became the hero of a Castilian epic. This was a period of political anarchy but of cultural glory, and it resembles greatly what happened with the disruption of Spanish rule in South and Central America during the 19th century, when the “Taifa republics” could be said to have been established; or the Arab world today, under their kings and army presidents. Yet it was glorious, and we can remember names like that of the great romantic poet Ibn Zaydun, or, better still, the poet-king of Seville, Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbad, whose luxurious habits brought about the next phase, when the Moroccans intervened in Spain.

The Period of the Moors from Morocco
Almoravids
The real Moors from Morocco formed two separate dynasties. The first which arrived were the Murābītūn, or “Almorāvids” as the Spanish and Western historians usually call them; the name means “the men who live in a fortress” or ribāt (like the present capital of Morocco). They arrived in 1092 C.E. under their great leader, Yūsuf Ibn Tashfin, although they had been there in 1086 C.E. at the battle of Zallāja, in order to help King Mu'tamid against the Castilians. They stayed for half a century, until the year 1145 C.E. They were veiled warriors on horse- or camel-back, whom we recognize now from their kinfolk the Touaregs, or Tawārīq, the “Nighriders” like the first one, Tāriq of Gibraltar or Jabal Tāriq (“Tāriq’s Mountain”). Constitutionally, the Murābītūn were important, for their Emir, or prince, Yūsuf, consulted the great philosopher Ghazzālī, who was living then, to see whether he might depose the Spanish kinglets who were not living as good Muslims; Ghazzālī said that he could, and so came this intervention. However, these veiled cavalymen became a military autocracy whose arrogance while policing the towns eventually brought them into disfavour. Also, although they had been missionaries from ribāts along the Senegalese frontier, their religion was more emotional than theoretical.

Al-Muwahhids
They were replaced by the Muwahhids, or “Almohades”, who ruled for about 80 years, from 1145 till 1223 C.E., although the battle of the Navas de Tolosa in 1212 C.E. marked their real strategic end in Spain as it left the plain of Andalusia open before it. Under their founder, Ibn Tūmart, their religion had a philosophic basis in the strict Tawhid, or
"Oneness" of God. Intellectually they were very great; this is when Ibn Tufayl wrote the philosophic romance Hayy Ibn Yaqzán ("Alive son of Awake"), a clearing of the tables which resembles Descartes' Discourse on Method and influenced Robinson Crusoe. Ibn Tufayl, who was tied up with administrative duties at the Muwahhid court, encouraged his brilliant pupil Ibn Rushd, or "Averroes" to establish the text of Aristotle in Arabic by getting him a research grant from the emperor Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf. Ibn Rushd's painstaking work prepared the European scholastics almost in his same century. In architecture one of the most "Spanish" monuments, the Giralda of Seville, was built by the Muwahhids; people forget that it is twinned with the great topped Hasan tower in Rabat and the Kutubiyya, or "Book", tower of Marrakush, their Moroccan capital.

The decline and expulsion of the Moors

Then came the final phase, of decline and expulsion. This belongs at first to Granada, which lasted as a kingdom from 1231 till 1492 C.E., the same year as America was discovered. Granada covered only three of Spain's modern provinces, Málaga, Granada and Almeria, in the south-eastern mountains along the Mediterranean coast opposite Morocco. She existed as another Taifa-like state, a petty kingdom lying between the two powers of Castile and Morocco. Technically she was a vassal of Castile, but she was saved for over two hundred years by the civil wars which raged not only in the Iberian peninsula, but also over North Africa and between England and France.

Granada

Granada seemed European, or "Frankish", to Eastern visitors, and "Moors" to northerners. She found her strength in encouraging industry and agriculture, and her products were exported all over the Mediterranean, especially figs, textiles and leather work. The Genovese helped in this trade. The 14th century was noted for the great prime minister Lisán al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, one of those excellent civil servants turned out by the universities in Islamic Spain; he befriended and then broke with the renowned philosopher of society and history, Ibn Khaldûn, who visited Granada at that time. Ibn Khaldûn, though born in Tunis, was from an ancient Sevillian and Hadramawt family; he told King Peter the "Cruel" of Castile that while he would like to accept that monarch's offer to return his family's possession in Seville, he did not want his grandchildren to become Christians. This shows his keen political insight.

All through this period, Muslims had existed in the Christian kingdoms, under various statutes which made them Mudéjares in Spanish or Mudajyamin (tamed ones) in Arabic. The political status of these people deserves to be studied, for they had no Islamic government to protect them, and thus anticipate the colonial status which Muslims have known in Asia and Africa during this past century, or the Yugoslav Muslims, who were sold as galley slaves to the French navy by the conquering Austrians. Their artistic achievements gave Spain a cultural grandeur which has never left her, for they built churches, homes and palaces, and filled them with their handicraft. The Alcázar of Seville is their masterpiece; it was used in the film Lawrence of Arabia, for it surpasses anything further East, although it was built by Peter the "Cruel" in the 14th century.

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How the Federation came into existence

In declaring that "The Arab world warmly welcomes the Nine-State Federation of the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf," and that "this union will bring progress and stability to the peoples of the Gulf, thus reinforcing Arab unity and introducing a new source of power to the historic battle now being waged to eliminate the outrageous consequences of the aggression of last June," M. Nofal, Assistant General-Secretary of the Arab League, emphasized the importance of a remarkable evolutionary step forward which is giving a new character to the present, and thus the future, of this strategic nerve-centre.

These new States are: Abū Dhaby, Duba'i, Qatar, Bah-rain, Sharjah (Sharīqah), Rā's al-Khaymah, Umm al-Qaywīn, 'Ajman and Fujayra. Which will perhaps be joined by Muscat and Oman. The first Pact federating the first two States was concluded on 12 February 1968. Later on the other Emirates joined the Pact and created a Supreme Council responsible for establishing the Constitution of the Federation. The control of its foreign policy, its defence, economy, education, etc., will be the principal tasks of this new Federated State.

The birth of the Federation came about in a situation which was particularly explosive and complex. It was, above all, due to the revolutionary urge of the Arab peoples and masses to free themselves from the domination and the retrograde feudal régimes of the Yemen, South Yemen, Oman and other states.

In view of the impossibility of remaining in these countries, under any form whatsoever, especially after the victorious consolidation of the republican régime of San'ā, the proclamation of a People's Republic at Aden, the definite check to the Baghdād Pact in 1957, and the popular "tidal wave" which alarmed and shook the foreign powers after the aggression of 5 June 1967, British imperialism abandoned its age-old plans and projects (though not all of them).

The British have decided to withdraw their troops from the region by 1971.

Faced with Iranian threats and ambitions, the attitude taken up by the Arab States was clear and categorical. The Heads of the Emirates came together to study the future of their threatened territories. The Head of Bahrain State announced in February that he supported the idea of a federation of the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf, appealed for the fullest co-operation between them and the Arab peoples, affirmed the "Arabsim" of Bahrain and his determination to defend it against any threat in the future and denied the existence of any Islamic alliance between the heads of the Emirates. This declaration came at the end of discussions between Shaykh 'Isa Ibn Sulaymān, Governor of Bahrain, and the Emir of Kuwait, Salāh Bel'am, concerning the threats coming from Iran and its territorial ambitions on Bahrain. This same topic was the subject of other discussions between Bahrain and Su'ūdi Arabia. Kuwait supported the Bahrain point of view and its determination to safeguard the integrity, the stability and the security of the Arabian Gulf. This gave rise to dissatisfaction on the part of Iran. The visit of the Shāh to Su'ūdi Arabia, which had been fixed for the month of February, was cancelled without any explanation or excuse being given. Both the Press and responsible Iranian authorities launched attacks and calumnies, not only against the Arab States for taking up an attitude in favour of the independence of the proposed Federation, but also, and especially, against Kuwait and its Foreign Minister because of a declaration he made to the Press. In this declaration he denounced the falsehoods of the American Foreign Minister - who was attempting to provoke discord between the Arab States by spreading reports about a supposed new alliance - and emphasised that his country would never join any non-Arab pact, but would adhere to the present-day Arab defence obligations.

The vacuum created by the withdrawal of British troops

The announcement of the withdrawal of British troops from the Far East and the Arabian Gulf region (made necessary for pressing economic and financial reasons), came as no surprise to the United States. It was the implementation of the bilateral agreement made in 1967 dealing with co-ordination between Great Britain and her ally, by which the U.S.A. undertook to fulfil its obligation to uphold Western policy in this part of the Arab world. They are also keeping a watch on British interests, in particular those connected with oil monopolies, of which the majority are American (they represent 57.6% of the capital invested in oil production in the Gulf and Su'ūdi Arabia).

In an attempt to fill the now famous "vacuum", the Americans have already despatched their agents to the region, and these individuals are "boosting" and extolling the formation of regional blocs and defensive alliances. They also sent to Bahrain a naval force consisting of one warship and two destroyers. It is a known fact that at Bahrain there are at least three military bases, including Jīfr, which is an America-British establishment accommodating 5,000 British soldiers and 2,000 Americans. This base was one of the key points in the strategic set-up of the old Baghdād Pact. It played an important rôle at the time of the tripartite aggres-
sion of 1956 against Egypt, again, in 1957, during the revolt of the people of Oman and the struggle of South Yemen for its independence, and the action against the Bahrain nationalist movement (1956).

To fill effectively and adequately the "vacuum" in the Gulf region is thus one of the favourite projects of the imperialist-plus-neo-colonialist powers. Those should be added their ally Zionism, since Zionism is an integral part of the universal powers of evil, of under-development and oppression, aiming at retarding, if not paralysing, the revolutionary movement of the Arab people and the unification of the States on a solid foundation. On such a foundation cooperation and understanding would be put to the service of the Arab people in their struggle against economic plunder and aggression.

The serious self-examination of responsible Arab personalities and the unflinching determination of the exploited masses to reject the lordship of the monopolies and the ambitions of their ultra-retrograde allies, are sure signs that the Arabian Gulf — the happy hunting-ground of trouble-makers — belongs to the noble, heroic people of this region, the people who, throughout their long history, have time and again suffered, and thrown off, the yoke of different imperialist powers (Greek, Roman, Mongol, Portuguese, Iranian, Dutch, French and British).

An historical purview of the area

The shores of the Arabian Gulf formed an integral part of the culture and civilization of Ancient Mesopotamia (Sumer, Lagash, Ur, Eridou, Babylon and Assur). They were the cradle of the Phoenicians, the Sumerians and the Persians, the seat of a very ancient civilization, and contained sanctuaries similar to those of the Phoenicians, which indicates, according to the Greek historian Herodotus, that the Phoenicians originally came from Bahrain. The Sumerians called this region Nitukki, the country of religion. The Greeks called it Tylos. This region was the seat of an Assyrian divinity, but because of its distance and its situation it did not come under Assyrian rule. Sargon II received tribute from the King Upir. Among the Greeks this region was already famous for its cotton production. From far-off antiquity up to the present epoch the region has been the scene of the most renowned maritime, military, cultural and spiritual events and the largest and most important commercial exchanges. The stories of the Thousand and One Nights, like the legends of Gilgamesh, have made immortal one of the greatest moments in the history of thought ever known in the region.

KARMATISM

The appearance of an ethical and political movement of the name of Karmatism in the 9th Century C.E.

The Arabian Gulf has witnessed the birth and development of civilizations, the organization of States, and the flowering of philosophy and religion, better than anywhere else in the world — a splendid destiny for a wonderful people and a country surrounded by deserts and with flowing rivers. The coming of Islam to this region restored its economic prosperity, its cultural expansion and political continuity, in complete independence. Maritime navigation in the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean was, by the 16th century, entirely in the hands of its people. In fact, maritime relations between the Arabo-Muslim East and India were dependent on it. During the rule of the Abbasside dynasty of Baghdad — an important period for culture and civilization — there came into being an ethical and social political movement — Karmatism — which actively supported the masses in their attempt to build up a better Arabo-Islamic society. This revolutionary movement, based on the Muslim principles of justice, equality and liberty, was the mainspring behind the great Arab Renaissance in North Africa and the East.

This movement for reform and social justice was founded by Hamdán Karmat, a Muslim thinker, and, about the 9th century, made serious efforts to put its aims into effect — to remedy the evils in Muslim society. It supported the "legitimist" Muslim authority which had been usurped by the Umayyad dynasty and did not recognize the Abbasides. Its ideology was put at the service of the Alides (the partisans of the Caliph 'Ali (d. 661 C.E.)) and extolled the return to the humanist principles of the real Islam, which encouraged classical culture. It was noted for its insistence on a methodical education comprising all the different confessions and all the ethnic and social groups. It was founded on reason, tolerance and equality, and was imbued with the spirit of the "trade-union" (a club or association of members of the same trade or profession, a kind of mutual friendly society), which fostered the creation and development of trade-guilds and the founding of universities.

The influence of this progressive movement reached Europe, where it gave rise to the formation of European craft-apprenticeships and freemasonry. It was the founder of the Arabo-Islamic Encyclopaedia and contributed to the birth of the European Renaissance and the beginnings of the commune (parish) in Spain, Italy and the Balkans, that is to say, in those Christian countries in contact with Islam. This is particularly noteworthy. (L. Massignon, Opéra Minora, Vol. 1.)

The movement, at first an ally of the Fatimide state of Algeria, later opposed it and founded a prosperous and durable State in the Arabian Gulf in 889 C.E. This lasted until the 12th century, when it was replaced by a local dynasty. This continued to exist until 1882 C.E. and enjoyed a relative independence vis-à-vis Turkey and the neighbouring countries. The state which it set up in this region had all the characteristics of a Muslim socialist society, but it founded under the combined assaults of feudal states and invasions by Mongols and the Portuguese.

WESTERN COLONIALISM

The infiltration of the present-day imperialism into the Arabian Gulf by the Portuguese, the British and the French

Portuguese imperialism brought chaos, servitude and misery. Vasco da Gama achieved notoriety when he massacred the inhabitants of the Arabian Gulf and set fire to the Muslim navy. The destruction of this fleet in the Gulf of Oman and along the African coast had the most serious consequences for the European economy. In 1515, in alliance with the Shah of Persia, and led by the Portuguese admiral Albuquerque, they captured the port of Muscat and the island of Socotra, thus severing the important traditional commercial relations with the East, Asia and Europe. This accelerated the collapse and disintegration of the Arab world, already ravaged by the wars of the Crusades and the domination of the Mongols. This domination was followed by that of the Turks. Then came European imperialism, which will eventually be overthrown by the Arab people, who have been continually struggling against this kind of tyranny, and are still doing so, even at the present day.

The infiltration of present-day imperialism into the Arabian Gulf countries began at the end of the 18th century.
In 1797 C.E. the British concluded a first “Treaty of Friendship” with the State of Muscat, directed principally against the ambitions of Napoleon and the enterprises of the Dutch. Under the “camouflage” of “anti-pirate warfare” (another colonialist pretext widely used to justify naval action against the notorious “corsairs of the Mediterranean”) they set up one of the bases of the “East India Company”, a medium of exploitation used by British imperialism in the Far East and its extension in the Middle East. In 1833 C.E. the U.S.A. concluded another “Treaty of Friendship”.

Similar treaties were concluded, by France in 1841 C.E., and the Dutch in 1877 C.E. In 1862 C.E. France agreed jointly with Great Britain to “guarantee” the independence and integrity of the territory of Muscat. The same procedures were adopted to carry out the overlordship and occupation of the other Emirates of the Arabian Gulf. With the invention of steam power and the discovery of petrol, the “black coal”, indispensable for the functioning of modern industry, the Arabian Gulf and the Arab countries were eventually to come under the domination of the colossal international oil cartels and the governments at the service of imperialism and international finance, those Machiavellian creators of the Zionist State which were the advance outposts of the enemies and the exploiters of the Arab peoples.

But the revolutionary movements of the Arab people, thanks to their struggle for national liberation and the creation of a modern Arab society, have succeeded in winning their independence and are continuing with their legitimate struggle against domination and foreign aggression. One of their great victories is, without doubt, the decision of Great Britain to withdraw her occupation troops from the Arabian Gulf in 1971 C.E. With this in mind and to conclude this résumé, let us quote the declaration of M. Nofal, Assistant-Secretary of the Arab League:

“This decision can only be a good one, both for the Arabs and Great Britain. It will enlarge the scope of the proposed co-operation and will ameliorate future Arabo-British relations.”

How true it is that these important historical changes are the result of the firm determination of the Arab people, who are still menaced and are still fighting in spite of all the reverses of fortune and all the dark plots of imperialism and its allies!

**ECONOMICS OF THE ARABIAN GULF**

*Kuwait.* Population: 467,000. Oil production: 114 million tons (= metric tons) per annum. Oil investment figures: American 50 %, British 50 %.


*Qatar.* Population: 16,000. Oil production: 14 million tons per annum. Investments: 23.75 %, British, 23.75 %, Dutch, 23.75 %, French, 23.75 % American and 5 %, Gulbenkian. Foreign-manned base: Dawha. Qatar was formerly under Turkish rule, later coming under British rule, following an agreement made in 1916 C.E. giving the latter the exclusive right to exploit the pearl and oil production of the region.

*Dubaï.* Population: 80,000. Chief port of the Sahel region and commercial centre. Oil production in progress. At one time Dubaï was the port used by the Arab fleet which resisted the Portuguese and British invasions.

*Abū Dhahb.* Population: 18,000. Oil production: 17 million tons per annum. Invested capital: 62.2 % British, 33.5 % French, Dutch and American.

*Sharjah (Shârijah).* Population: 20,000. Capital invested in oil prospecting organized by the Americans. Foreign bases: British. An important port for export/import.


In 1966 the total oil production in the Arabian Gulf region reached 130 million metric tons.

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**What Our Readers Say...**

Schuyler Heights,
Lake George, N.Y., U.S.A.
13 September 1968

**THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD’S MARRIAGE TO SAYYIDAH ZAYNAB**

Dear Abdul Majid,

I have been greatly interested in the article “A Critical Examination, etc.” by Dr. Yusuf ‘Abbâs Hàshimi, beginning on page 18 of the January issue of The Islamic Review. But I feel compelled to call attention to one of his statements.

With all due consideration for the erudition of the writer, the story of David’s adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her lawful husband, Uriah the Hittite, is not apocryphal. God compelled the Jews to include this true story in their permanent record, no matter how much they wished to cover the truth.

The Jews were also compelled to include in their record the story of the deceitfulness of their founder, Jacob or Israel. As someone has wisely said, God is the Hero of the Bible. All other characters are reduced to their proper status.

I hope this brief note will be published and that the integrity of the Bible will not again be so bluntly questioned. God insists on the true record. Ginzberg’s Legends of the Jews contains the apocryphal material. “The Scripture which He revealed aforetime” would never contain so gross an error.

Sincerely,

[NORMAN LEWIS

**THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS**
LIBYA

FROM A MIRAGE TO A MIRACLE

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT
King Idris I of Libya

A personification of self-denial.

To get an insight into his lofty ideals, one has only to read his message to his people on the tenth anniversary of the Independence Day of Libya (see opposite page).

The message, as will be readily seen, abounds in words of the Prophet Muhammad and verses of the Holy Qur'an.
The Text of King Idris I's message to his people on the 10th Anniversary of the Independence of Libya

"In the name of God, the Beneficient, the Merciful.

"My beloved Libyan people,

"Peace be upon you and the mercy and blessings of God upon you all!

"I praise God (Whose name be blessed and glorified), Him Who vouchsafed me the good fortune to address you on this occasion of the 10th anniversary of the proclamation of the independence of our beloved country, I congratulate you from the core of my heart, and I also congratulate myself on His having bestowed on me life to be able to congratulate you, on the 10th anniversary of the independence. It is possible I may not have the same good fortune in the future to talk to you another time on such an occasion as this. I wish to address some advice to you, for 'the religion of Islam is good counsel'. I counsel you to fear God in your hearts and in your outward actions and to give Him thanks for what He has bestowed upon you, the gift of independence, freedom in your country and showering on you His favours, both visible and invisible. And remember, to thank Him is not only by the tongue; rather it is by following His Commandments: forbidding that which He has forbidden and co-operation in righteousness and the fear of God. And do not co-operate (with others) in sin and transgression', for the rejection of His blessings can take away His favours. God says, 'He who changes the favour of God after it has come to him (will suffer), for God is severe in chastisement.' The Prophet of God (may the blessings of God be upon him!) says in his Farewell Pilgrimage Address: 'For verily your lives, your properties, your honour are sacred amongst you as the sanctity of This Day in This Month in This Town of yours. Yes, let him who is present convey it to him who is absent from here. For verily he who is conveyed the message to sometimes understands it better than he who conveys it.' Thus in our following the words of the Prophet (may the blessings of God be upon him!) there is salvation from the bad luck of being absent. I counsel you to guard this independence for which you have striven hard over a long period and for which you underwent bitter hardships. I also counsel those of you who are placed in authority over you to be just and equitable: for 'every one of you is like unto a shepherd responsible for his flock'. I also counsel each one of you to obey those of them who are placed in authority over you. But (remember) 'there is no obedience to any one of you who asks you to commit a sin against the Creator'. And 'do not quarrel, you will become weak, your prestige will disappear. And be patient'; for God is with those who are patient'.

"My brothers,

"If the last 10 years have meant a struggle for survival, the next few coming years will cover you with prosperity and ease by the grace of God as a result of what God has bestowed upon us in the way of bounties of our land, but the struggle from now on will not be any the less arduous than the struggle of the last 10 years. For prosperity brings its own problems and imposes on all of us the duty to face them and to find a solution to them in the best interests and welfare of all sections of the Libyan people. To reach this goal it is imperative for us to be armed with noble moral qualities and to follow with determination the laws of the Shar'ah. It is also true that pernicious results which prosperity brings in its train are the love of wealth and engrossment in the pleasures of life and the show of pride and extravagance and an inclination towards comfort and slothfulness. All these are the causes of weakness and decline. I warn you to avoid them and let devotion to our religion, country and nation be our guide. I pray to God that He may bring happy returns of this day with His bounties, blessings, ease and peace.

"Peace be upon you and the mercy and blessings of God be upon you all!

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT
THE ISLAMIC REVIEW AND ARAB AFFAIRS has great pleasure in devoting the next few pages to a study of the Kingdom of Libya. The historical, social, economic, religious and other aspects of life in Libya are dealt with in articles written by experts on these subjects.

From time to time we have printed special articles on the nascent and progressing Islamic countries. The purpose throughout has been to acquaint the Muslims with the life, thought and problems of their fellow Muslims in other countries, and to familiarize the Muslims generally with their greater homeland, the Islamic world.

In the world of today, ripped as it is by the feuding between the two great political groups, the Islamic world stands as an entity capable of playing an important role in the future of mankind. The Muslim countries occupy vast, but what is more, strategic, areas of the globe, and they possess tremendous strength, both actual and potential, by virtue of the great numbers of the Muslims and the economic and strategic resources of their lands.

In the future of the world of Islam and the world as a whole, the Kingdom of Libya deserves special study and attention. This is a country which has suddenly come upon great wealth through the discovery of vast oil resources, and which has thereby assumed special importance for the oil-consuming countries of the Western hemisphere. But the significant fact about Libya is that, despite many temptations, it has managed to retain a meticulously independent attitude towards the Great Powers, and to avoid getting involved in any of their squabbles. It has thereby earned great respect and authority on the international diplomatic level.

Even more significant is the fact that Libya has been following from the very beginning an enlightened and honest policy regarding the utilization of its oil revenues. Successive governments have carried out very great reforms and changes, and the people of Libya have benefited at every level. Every penny of the oil money has been accounted for, and everything has been channelled into useful national projects, both short-term and long-term. And not only the people of Libya have benefited. Their Arab and Muslim brothers have been allowed a share in the riches of Libya, and the best example of this has been the generous assistance which Libya gave without hesitation, and continues to give, to the sister Arab countries affected by the Israeli aggression in June 1967. In this and other respects Libya has demonstrated compassion and solidarity with all the Arab and Muslim countries, and has shown that the future lay in solidarity, co-operation and co-ordination between the people of Libya and their Arab and Muslim brothers everywhere.

But perhaps the most important and meaningful aspect of life in modern Libya is the way in which this country has marched firmly and speedily on the path of modern progress and technology while loyally retaining its distinct identity as a Muslim country. Under the very wise and courageous leadership of His Majesty King Idris I, Libya has shown the world that Islam and progress go hand in hand, and that Islam is more capable of meeting the challenge of modern times.

It is for these weighty reasons that we believe that the brief study of modern Libya in the next few pages will make interesting and useful reading for both Muslims and non-Muslims.
Libya—A Paradise of Tourism

Cyrene — The Glory of Cyrenaica, Libya

Cyrene is the Rio de Janeiro of Libya

In Cyrene soil and stone speak of one of the world’s most noble pasts

Greek and Roman ruins dating back to the seventh century B.C.

By KURT VORDERMAIER

APPROACH TO BENGHAZI

Preface

May this be a greeting to a country — and at the same time from a country — which finds itself on the threshold between old, dignified tradition, and modern, fast-lived "progress". Of course, it all depends upon what one understands by "progress" — it probably means something different for each one of us.

May it be given to Cyrenaica, to mould and fuse these two factors into one, just as the Greek and Arab-Islamic elements were united to a beautiful harmony there. Then she will be able to look full of hope into the future. For then the future, her future, will be founded upon a solid basis of proven traditions.

It is not only the rich architectural remains — mainly mentioned in this article — that witness to the flower of Cyrenaica Art and Science during antiquity, but there are also the artistic coins and, above all, the famous scholars encircling her like an invisible garland: Aristippos, the founder of the famous school of Cyrenaica philosophers, Kallimachos, Eratosthenes and many more and also in the fifth century C.E. the Bishop Synesios.

The approach to Benghazi

Our steamer approaches Benghazi, capital of beautiful Cyrenaica. Over the glassy green of the waves, delicate as a mirage — a caressing of the expectant heart — a lovely coastline appears. Out of the veil of fine rain showers, flapping like tent cloths, again and again enshrouding the beach, the dark ribbon of feathery palms emerge. Over the straggling block of the white houses rise the powerful towers and minarets into the mother-of-pearl sky of a cool morning. And at the same time a veil also spreads over my eyes — a haze of tears, which well up in an emotion of happiness at seeing the land that I love like home.

Sure-footed as a sleep-walker, I passed through the great gate. Oh, Benghazi, how I have longed for you from the depths of my soul! How shall I describe the wonders I have seen?

Benghazi looks like Fairyland. Like a mirage, the white houses and the minarets float over the salt lakes, the Sebha. The town appears drawn upward, miraculously suspended, broad, weighty and yet freed of all gravity in the flickering sunlight. The main mosque is like a glorious edifice of heaven come down to earth. But this certain atmosphere, the delicate air, the magical cubes of the Arabian town seem to be spiritually lit from within; everything is permeated by the ambiguous, everything is alive with a mysterious transparency. Reality itself loses its objective nearness to life. The houses themselves seem scattered in the streets like so many blocks of stone, unfriendly, the fronts usually windowless. Outward appearance is neglected, because the Muslims’ faith is in other things. Behind the word "Allah" lies hidden an undefeatable power, which I sensed with a shudder in this town.

As of old, there is the atmosphere, that mixture of incense and mystery, poetry, tradition and dream, in which the soul of North African Islam lies cradled. And especially in Cyrenaica Arab poetry and Greek measure are happily interwoven. It is a country which has in the same sparkling garb assembled the deepest perfumes of Africa, the Orient and the Mediterranean.

Tripoli is in reality no longer the head and heart of Libya, but rather the ante-chamber of Benghazi. Tripoli is the seat of the government, the upper and lower houses, but the King and the leading ministers reside in Benghazi and Tobruk respectively, where all important decisions are made. Benghazi has become a capital and is turned towards the streaming lights of the Sahara towards Kufrah, where the Sanusi exercised their influence on the greatest Islamic movement of faith of the 19th century. A tremendous religious impulse was contained in that movement, and all that grew out of it descended like an avalanche over the North African
coast and repeated — on a small scale — what had previously shaken the whole earth: the birth of a total faith. Muḥammad turned mainly against polytheism and Judaism, but between Christians and Muslims he saw a connection. We read in the Holy Qurʾān (5:82):

"The polytheists and Hebrews are our worst enemies, whereas the Christians are most prone to love us."

One could say that the most radical Protestantism is to be found in Islam.

A peep into the past of Benghazi

But who would recognize Benghazi, when it appears in the glittering robes of Euhesperides of Berenice, as it was originally called. Its remains lie at the end of the Sebkha. This proves without doubt that in times of ancient Greece today's Lake of Selman was navigable and was identical with the Lake Triton of the old geographers.

This settlement of Euhesperides was founded about 500 C.E. by the king's party (Arkeisilaos IV), probably on an older native site. After the occupation of Cyrenaica by the Egyptian Ptolemy it was called Berenice in honour of the wife of Ptolemy III. By the way, the word "varnish" originates from the name of the town of Berenice, because it was there that this lacquer-like coating was discovered and first made. This is not to be wondered at, because the lentisk grows in wild profusion all over Cyrenaica, and it is the sap of this lentisk, the so-called mastix, which is obtained by making incisions in the trunk, which allow the sap to ooze out; it is used for the manufacture of fine lacquer. Mastix is also used in the preparation of putty, medicines and for incense. Already the ancient Egyptians and Carthaginians used mastix — probably from Cyrenaica — to embalm their dead. This kind of resin does not decay. There exists an Egyptian mummy, found in a 2,200-year-old mummy, in which — until today — no essential change has been found. Remarkable is also the meaning which the word "mummy" has in Arabic: the Arabian māmūṭa means resin.

An intoxication fills the whole land, even the very soil. It is everywhere. Benghazi is the gate to the underworld, but, where the portal to the Kingdom of Shadows lies, life must be especially near. And life here is obsessed by beauty, it is Pan and nymph. Yes, Cyrenaica is a wonderful land. You only have to keep still and the wonder will come.

Lethe lies a few miles outside the gates of Benghazi. There the earth opens its rocky jaws and issues forth a dull, earthy smell. Already the ancient knew that here lay the entrance of Hades, because there the earth caves in, where the underground waters of Lethe are troubled. A wave of indescribable scent meets one — a mixture or aroma, earth and the dull sound of water.

The mystery of the underworld is that one can enter everywhere. A slight change and the space wherein I breathe is not the same — the ground on which I walk has lost its reality, the windows through which I look have become blind.

When we came out it was nearly night, cool air came up from the ground but hardly stirred the candle flames. We stood for a moment, lights in hand, before we extinguished them. A faint glow was still resting on the slope opposite. One could see but little and the scent was the strongest now and the wild breath of the mint that was wafted over us.

* * *

CYRENE

In the meantime I have left Benghazi behind on my pilgrimage to Cyrene. Justinian already mentioned the walls of Tocra, the ancient Taucheira-Arsinoe of the old Pentapolis (the land of the five cities) of Cyrenaica. Now they gleam fiery red from the sea — like a child's toy, neat and beautifully kept — a little Rothenburg. The walls are set in a square about six hundred and fifty yards long each side, pretty towers strengthening the angles. A serene melancholy lies over the wall. The red dust must surely have been put down on this shore by a truly divine touch of its Creator, and I sensed the wonder of this coast — its ideal uniqueness. Yes, there are landscapes that speak to us like men, and sometimes we feel the breath of Paradise in some corner of the earth. And such a spot is this blessed coast between Benghazi and Derna. It is the coast where I could die, like the old Egyptians passed over in the face of the Libyan desert, the Western Shore.

* * *

Behind Tocra the mountain ridges of Cyrenaica rise, and it is the rhythm of these ridges with which Herodotus preludes his classic description of Cyrenaica. For this coast is like a Daktulos of the earth — rising in three powerful steps out of the Mediterranean, losing itself in the distant sands of faraway Sudan.

Cyrenaica is classical form fulfilled, its mountain metric measure. The Hellenes were drawn by its rhythmical beauty, a great vision led them into the loveliness of the ideal land of their dreams. It is the light of Hellas which is poured out over land and sea. Earth itself seems to play in with the poetic harmony of this classic landscape. The indescribable, the infinite resounds in form and colour, in quiet and silence, and this silence takes part in the music of the spheres. Eyes filled with joy of the world can still perceive what is holy, what is of the world is not yet separated from what is holy.

The Cyrenaican Jabal, land of grand beauties and verdant valleys, reminding one so strongly of classic Greece, experienced a unique enrichment of outlook and expression through the influx of the Muslim population; hardly anywhere else can one find such a harmony of proud austerity and innocent serenity.

Sheep in olive groves; dateless and idyllic, such scenes recall all literature's debt to the bards of ancient Greece who first glorified pastoral life.

Towards the south spreads the great mystery of the Cyrenaican pastures of Asphodel—Kufrah and Tibesti—a stretch of land imbued with the breath of the magical and mysterious. East to west across Cyrenaica where — in the haze of the shimmering heat — the steppe meets the rocky desert, stretches a chain of oases, a continuation of those across Tripolitania, each with wells and palms and its mud-walled villages. Ancient writers referred to these oases (of Augila) as "The Islands of the Blest" (Elysium).

That is Cyrenaica, the land of Asphodel, where the traces of Berenice are perceptible even in our modern materialistic days in the shape of varnish. Time becomes timeless and timelessness becomes time, the spheres resound, solemnity fills the quiet space. Along the shores of Lethe murmur the delightful gardens of the Hesperides. Forms and shapes are
astir around us, which in these days only find their place in the dusty volumes of history, in the abstract and dry knowledge of the sagas and legends of the ancients. Here in Cyrenaica they are put under a spell, here a world becomes apparent again that has long since disappeared.

Here in heroic Cyrenaica they come to life again as in a mirror, just as even after thousands of years the light of long extinct stars still reaches us out of infinite space. You only need ears to hear and eyes to see. Though the riders of the Apocalypse storm through our time, the disenchantment has not become final. Islam has saved the posey; but it needs scrubby bushes, pallid through lack of chlorophyl, border the way — a track in the outer court of the desert, recognisable by the imprints of the pads of camels.

* * *

A description of modern Libya in the literature of the ancients

The ancients made a difference between the countries of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. Tripolitania was first a province of the Phoenicians, then of the Carthaginians, and finally of Rome. Cyrenaica, on the other hand, is a creation of the Greeks. The ruins and landscape of Cyrenaica remind one

CYRENE

A general view of the archaeological site of the ancient Greek city of Cyrene.

a longing for solitude, a certain emotional attitude which invites one to linger — also in Cyrenaica. Gaze and wonder! There is so much to gaze and wonder at!

The scent of juniper and rosemary is wafted by the light north wind. Flames leap on the earth and the air is filled with the redolence of the cedar wood faggots. From the low black tents of the Bedouin, fires flicker and there is a gentle tinkle of a silver bracelet. In the distance women in their coloured gowns sway like tulips swept by a gentle evening breeze as they wend their way homeward. Through the grey-green wasteland the winding road leads into the valley, of Greece and although the Romans finally conquered the land, their passage is not so noticeable here as it is in the country of Tripolitania in Sabratha and Leptis Magna. Between the two countries lies the mighty desert of Syrtica, “populated” only by the skeletons of goats and camels.

Here the Fascists built the concrete and marble structure of the “Arch of Philæni”. This monument was erected on the spot on which the brothers Philæni, two athletes of old, had fixed for Rome the frontier of Tripolitania. It had been previously agreed that a stone should be put up to mark the frontier, where the Greek runners from Cyrene and the

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT
Roman runners from Sabratha should meet. One is tempted to sigh "Happy times" when arguments over a frontier could be decided by a race. But this didn't prevent the Greeks and the Romans from quarrelling either. They accused each other of fraud. The brothers Philaetii sacrificed their lives to prove their honesty. Since then the frontier has remained unchanged.

What are the Thermopylae are for the Greeks, are the laurel groves of Wadi al-Kuf for Cyrenaica. There the Arabs of Cyrenaica fought their epic battles of the 1920's with the Italian invaders. And then there is Tobruk, with its desert of sand and stone, the antique Antipyrus, the sublime symbol of the North African campaign of 1940/42. "Wanderer (when you come to Sparta) take from us (Lacedemon's citizens) the message, we lie in the grave faithful to our law."

* * *

Beauty and glory flooded Cyrene's holy and inviolate ground in antiquity

Now the red-letter day of my journey starts. Shortly after the crossing where the road branches to Cyrene, I decided to continue my pilgrimage humbly on foot. Here haunted fields are overgrown with glowing red poppies. There are ash grey walls amongst the grasses, blocks emerge from the earth — the colossal remains of a temple. The powerful scenery of Cyrene passes by — witness of lost relics. But I never found the Lotus, described by Cella, and the Silphium, too, was hidden like the blue flower of the romantics.

As I approached Cyrene I saw a fragment of a rainbow in the east, reminding me of the multi-coloured variation of Greek mythology. The discipline of their art set in the framework of the chaste serenity of the muses became alive. The sound of an Aeolian harp seemed to hang lost in the crystal blue air. Heavy was the scent of thyme drooping the senses — it was like a narcotic.

This lovely place, connected with so many sagas, legends and the splendour of the antique, is situated on a lovely prominence falling almost steeply towards the distant sapphire sea. Its beauty consists not only in the azure sky, its radiant sunshine and its spring-like climate, but also in the glory of its landscape and especially in the magic of its antique monuments; the maze of shattered arches, temples and basilicas includes parts of structures of many centuries.

Beauty and glory flooded Cyrene's holy and inviolate ground in antiquity, dedicated to the worship of the gods and to the high ideals of humanity. Here soil and stone speak of one of the world's most noble pasts. Loveliest of places it was for the ancient Greeks in Africa; enchanting peregrination it is for today's visitor.

The meeting with this place is both moving and stirring. In awe and trembling one senses the spiritual and emotional vacuum which threatens modern man in his life without devotion and humility before the highest and eternally incomprehensible.

* * *

Cyrene: its produce and trade with the outside world

About 2,600 years ago, under the leadership of noble Battus, Greek colonists founded on this now ruin-strewn patch of ground the city of Cyrene. Taking advantage of the good location, which combines a rich, tillable soil, magnificent scenery and a sound strategic and commercial position, the early settlers established their city beside the fountain of Apollo, the most important spring on the face of the Cyrenaican plateau.

Ships from every land now came into Apollonia, the port of Cyrene. They came from Greece, Asia Minor and Crete, from the isles of the Aegean and from the Black Sea, from Tyrre and Sidon and from the delta towns of the Nile, from Italy, Sicily and other towns of the Western Mediterranean, from which a splendid highway led up to Cyrene.

A local source of special wealth lay in the medicinal plants native to the plateau on which Cyrene stands. Chief among these was the silphium, found in no other land. It became so valuable that coins minted in Cyrene bore a design of the king watching men weigh this precious plant. Never in the history of mankind has there been a medicinal plant of such miraculous renown.

It was said to cure every ailment, from croup to the wounds made by the merciless whippings of that day. It was of special value as an antidote for the sting of poisonous snakes and the bite of mad dogs, and was highly prized as a condiment and a drug. Root, stem and fruit were utilized.

As the fame of silphium spread, its price soared. To free themselves of the enormous taxes placed on it by the Romans, the natives of Cyrene radically destroyed the plants. Ever since then it has been extinct.

Cyrene was not only one of the most flourishing towns of the Greek colonies, but also the seat of a great school of medicine and philosophy. (It is significant that situated near today's settlement of Beida was the site of the Sanctuary of Aesculapius.) Physicians, poets and writers of note were born here, among them Eratosthenes, father of geography, Aristippos, Kallimachos, Korneades and Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross of Jesus Christ.

Many of the victors in the Olympic Games came from Cyrene, and its inhabitants also acquired fame as charioteers. Many of the lions used in the arenas of Rome were brought from the Cyrenaican hinterland.

Unlike on many other famous sites, here one city has not been built upon another, but nature has covered, through the years, with vegetation and earth, "the glory that was Greece". In contrast to Leptis Magna and Sabratha, Cyrene is not an entirely "dead city". The thousands of gallons of water which flow daily from Apollo's Fountain will always make this hilltop village a place of settlement; the Arab town of Shahat is the marketing centre of this neighbourhood. The ancient city and its modern counterpart, Shahat, exist peacefully side by side and the marble columns of the ancient Roman market mark the beginning of the modern "suit". This juxtaposition of yesterday and today enhances rather than reduces the charm of Cyrene.

Here among cypress, juniper and ilex, in chasms where springs gush from the sides of terraced hills and oleanders and myrtles bloom, we come to understand why the ancient Greek colonists considered this their Promised Land. In springtime an orange carpet of marigolds covers the meadows, while sweet briar, honeysuckle and convolvulus run riot on the hill.

High above in the cobalt sky are banked row upon row of those great gleaming white cumulus clouds, which add to the glory of the country. Nowhere else do they appear so impressive and perfect as above Cyrenaica.

* * *

In 1913 a superb marble figure finer than the Venus de Milo was found in Cyrene

In December 1913 there were three nights of heavy
storms. Much soil was washed away from the surrounding hillsides. One morning, when the skies had cleared, there was found exposed an ancient bath, up to then hidden from sight, and there rose, not from the sea but from Mother Earth this time, a fair Aphrodite. Her flawless body was intact but the head, unfortunately, was missing. An unknown sculptor of the antique had created this most beautiful of all Venuses, which many authorities on classic art consider finer than the Venus de Milo. This superb marble figure is now in a Roman art gallery, where it rediscloses its beauty to the world, a perfect representation of the ideal youthful body. How well one can one, in the face of such overpowering beauty, understand the fable of the sculptor Pygmalion, who was gripped by a glowing passion for his statue of a maiden which Aphrodite, in answer to his imploring, brought to life and whom he finally made his wife.

It is well possible that one day in the course of excavations in and around Cyrene that a dream city of stone and marble may emerge. Only he who has wandered through the Decumano, past the old markets, basilicas, Fora, the Agora and Palaestra, can conceive what secrets may still be hidden in this historical soil.

This town was the Parthenon of Africa, here flowed the Castalia of Cyrenaica and the Delphic Oracle had called Hellas to settlement of the Gardens of the Hesperides. Here around Cyrene they had looked for them, for the long-lost happiness of man. Here they felt their Promised Land and under their very feet, and they were filled with an unheard of, a matchless, hope. They sensed that man in the depth of his being is hope, only hope.

* * *

The marble monuments of Cyrene proclaim “The Glory that was Greece”

The marble of the Thermes, the reflecting waters of the Apollonian Sanctuaries, the little temples of Persephone and Hades, the glowing, majestic Propylaea, the temples of Artemis, Hecate and the Dioscuri rise like a sea of white foam and — glorified into a symphony of glittering marble — they sweep in great waves of music into the valley, soaring again in full chords. At no spot in all this wide, wide world can we more fittingly and more feelingly exclaim : “The Glory that was Greece!”

A gentle zephyr lulls the senses and the smile of “Cyrene” trembles in space. In and around the ruins the wild fennel runs riot, the deep yellow of its blossoms blazing amongst the other flowers like the effulgent sun in the firmament.

The ancient town is situated at the summit of the two thousand feet mountain. The centre, the Agora, sweeps from the plateau towards the south. To the north-west looms the Acropolis, where the governors of the Ptolemies had their residence. At the foot of the Acropolis a huge terrace is cut into the hillside. It is the sanctuary of Apollo, the ancient fountain head where the god had taken abode as he had done in the mountains of Delphi.

Cyrene is the Rio de Janeiro of Libya. As the statue of Jesus Christ rises gigantically above Rio, so rose the Sanctuary of Apollo above Cyrene.

Down below one could discern the shimmer of long rows of olasters as though of silver long buried in the earth. The bed of a wadi was wending its way among a mass of boulders rolled down from the ridge — like a battlefield of Cyclops. One could sense the presence of long lost gods. Only the name had remained, which the town had given to the whole country and the longing of all those who saw the ruins.

* * *

A reverie while at Cyrene

I rest my notebook on my knees and write off the present. Procession after procession of white robed figures stream out of the Necropolis, filling the seats of the theatre. Processions pass through the valley, wave upon wave, as though gigantic layers of mist were creeping over the ground. I did not know what they were seeking in the theatre, these dead of Cyrene. Was it drama, mimes or wild beasts rending the Libyan prisoners, the Garamantes? There was no movement in this assembly of spirits, but the air was disturbed, as by the sound of many voices. I leaned back in my seat like one who is a stranger — not even suffered as a guest. Below me the land swept in waves to the sea. Heather, broom, privet and juniper, groves of oak, cherry and olive — the air was aglow with their glorious colour — the full chords of green and gold flaming in the light, chiming in jubilant finale over Cyrenaica. And, opposite, Shahat is resting like a white dove, yea and wise Cyrene is leaning on the temple of the Nile. In the distance, near Apollonia, gleaming spots of colour glow on the purple palette of the Mediterranean.

And now the sky seems all roses. Roses are falling everywhere: blue roses, pink ones, white ones, roses with no colour. One might say that the sky is dissolving in roses. Where does all this tender flora come from, for I myself do not know its source, which each day softens the landscape and leaves it sweetly rosy, white and blue — more roses, more roses — like a painting by Fra Angelico, he who used to paint glory on his knees? It might be thought that roses are being thrown down
from the seven heavens of Paradise. As in a warm and vaguely coloured snowfall, the roses fall on Cyrene and its surroundings. Heaven is playing out the climax of the great spectacle, in salvo after salvo of changing colour.

A floral fragrance begins to pervade the land. One obtains the impression of being in a temple in which liberal quantities of incense are being offered amid a profusion of flowers. Wherever one goes, one is fascinated by the changing pattern of perfume, from rose to jasmine and then to rosemary and mimosa, yet all against a background of heavy thyme.

The soul rises to the stars, already kindled by a roseate sky. Nymphs pour nectar in golden cups, the Graces are dancing, the Muses sing. Heaven and earth, mortals and immortals, all take part in the blissful joy. The earth-goddess holds the cornucopia, emblem of abundance.

Is there a land so full of plenty and so ravishingly beautiful, and who would not be eager to till such soil, so fertile, so charming, so gracious and grateful?

The waving barley of al-Merg, the busy bees of Derna singing Hyblaean honey into the combs, the luscious grapes of Cyrene district so sure to bring good cheer, and the seasoning dates of Benghaz.

Dream, you blessed shores, dream your age-old dreams, sing you shepherds your evening songs of longing. Pan, as of old, hides in the shrubs, listening; the wind carries sweetest fragrance, from the lemon-grove the notes of a nightingale linger over the slightly ruffled waters of the bay. Far from all noisy gaiety this beauty fills the soul with the sweet melancholy of a fading in the middle of the light.

The camera lay forgotten behind a rock, the watch had stopped. Coincidence? I do not know. Up here all hands point to eternity. The magic of Cyrene is unbroken. Battered, but still splendid in old age, centuries of sun have ripened the tawny glory of the columns, friezes and reliefs. One cannot capture it with rangefinder and exposure meter. There is still mystery in Cyrene, in the zephyr caressing the broken columns, in the whisper of the cypresses pointing towards the little clouds. That which remained proves the glory that was! And in the face of this sanctuary the question might well come to the pilgrim, what burdens, fears and needs are in store for us in the lap of time? In these days when man has never been so close to the stars — or to his own destruction. And still Cyrene gives the answer, not by the mouth of an oracle, but by its landscape. And it proclaims peace, peace, if we really want it, from the bottom of our hearts. Peace, if at long last the divine triumphs over the all too earthly.

The meeting with Cyrene offers more to man than just the sight of ruins. Even today Cyrene offers more to man than just the sight of ruins. Even today Cyrene means certainty! We have only to be men of goodwill.

Sheet lightning flashes green and yellow on the horizon. In the distance the long train of a camel-caravan dumbly passes by, like the march of time into eternity. The plaintive chant of the Muezzin sounds from the pointed minaret of the nearby Mosque of Shahhat like the evensong of a shepherd from Asia. On the furrowed street a man with a red fez bows towards the east, absorbed in prayer and devotion. All the poesy of wells, all the harmony of fountains is awakened at the sight of this praying Muslim. Most men of our European society are no longer capable of a concentration like this. One can understand that one single moment can change the praying man into a hero. He has his goal before his eyes, he has so much strength to uplift his soul, independent of all the obstacles of his surroundings!

For quite a while the sound of the caravan bells is in the air, becoming fainter and fainter, until at last it fades away.

The dying sun sends forth its last rays. Wild doves coo their love-song from the nearby cypress grove. Already sounds of a choir of nightingales meet the scent-laden evening from their abode in the flaming blossoms of the rose-bay near the little pomegranate and myrtle gardens. It is a symphony of colour, perfume and birdsong.

There is a flicker of light over the jade-green mountain-range. The whole land of Cyrene between Apollonia and the district of the temple was visible. It lay below us like a map. It was not Africa, it was part of Hellas, it was land that man had mastered and put under his discipline, stretching for miles towards the sea at the foot of the steeply descending mountain. Two mountain walls meeting in a right angle form a step and upon this Cyrene rests above the abyss, the district sacred to Apollo. In a last farewell the rays of the sun gild the ruins. Clouds break over the valley. The shadows of Olympus roll over the foaming crests of Apollonia. From the distance came the roar of the breakers, sad and low, like the monotonous sounds of an organ chanting again and again the low unchanging melody of a funeral march. The sea lay in wait with its fearsome depths, rocky abysses, which brought the chained Prometheus to the shuddering mind.

The sun bowed low and through the crimson veil once more the precious clarity of the sky was seen, as it changed to a soft green till the sun at last disappeared behind the sands of the desert, like a red hot ball of iron hammered out on an anvil. And again the call of the Muezzin rang out into the evening twilight and into the incomparable beauty of the approaching night, proclaiming the infinite greatness of Islam.

The moonlit night was shot with blue and mauve flames. The sky was radiant. Though it was dark, a backcloth for the white gleaming stars swirling upon it, it was yet radiant. It was like a velvet curtain covering the immense light, as though the glittering stars were but rents through which the indescribable brightness shone. Never had I seen the sky as in that night, so radiant, so sparkling, in spite of its steel blue hardness, so overpowering and streaming. The light seemed to pour forth, veiled from the moon, sparkling from the stars, this light which seemed to burn in secret empyreal depths. Stars sang; and then a falling star brushed "Berenice's Hair".

As the light of morning dawned — a veritable "twilight of gods" — and the hordes of night fled, I bid my final farewell to fadeless Cyrene and its valley, with its mulberry and fig trees and vineyards reaching down to the sea.

A strange greyness still lies over the landscape, a fading last star, but then the heralds of light ride in from the east. Like little boats, the clouds float in the silvery green ocean of light. Again and again new colours are spread in a wonderful array. Carpets of royal splendour! Of Cyrene — adorned with everlasting roses from Elysium! Thou art a symbol of the salute of the gods to the sublime spirit of man! Glowing scarlet flags are hoisted and suddenly he himself appears, the source of all life on earth: the sun!

I heard the surf beating the Libyan shore, smelled the juniper and rosemary of the hills where old Cyrene lies, and rode through the steppe, where the "pad, pad" of camels' feet breaks the silence of the ocean of sand.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
A PLAN OF THE SANCTUARY OF APOLLO AT CYRENE
(dating back to the Seventh Century B.C.)

KEY TO PLAN

(A) The Roman Baths, now containing a small gallery of ancient sculpture. The Baths were constructed under the Emperor Trajan, and repaired under Hadrian. They were completely rebuilt in the fifth century C.E. on a smaller scale.
(B) The Greek Theatre, later converted into a Roman Amphitheatre and used for gladiatorial displays.
(C) The Temple of Apollo, the most ancient and most famous of Cyrene's temples. First constructed in the seventh century B.C., and later rebuilt on several occasions. The columns standing today are Roman.
(D) The fountain of Apollo. The waters flow from a gallery, 200 metres long, in the heart of the mountain:
(E) The Strathegeion (building of the Greek generals). Rebuilt under Tiberius, whose statue it contains. Restored and roofed in modern times.
(F) The "New Fountain" and water-troughs. Beside it ran the main street of Cyrene connecting the Sanctuary with the centre of the city.
(G) The Ritual Baths. These subterranean chambers of the Greek period lie behind the high Roman wall.
(H) The Triumphal Arch of Marcus Aurelius, spanning the main street.
(I) The walls of the Acropolis, with a small sanctuary of Isis built up against them.
(J) The Acropolis, gateway, rebuilt in the early Roman period.
(K) The Gymnasium.
(L) The Greek Agora, containing the circular tomb of Battus, founder of the city, and the Naval Monument.
(M) Temple of Jupiter (138 C.E.). The great statue of Jupiter found here is in the main Sculpture Museum.
(N) Municipal buildings.
(O) The Christian House, occupied by Hesychius, a friend of Bishop Synesius. It contains interesting mosaic and marble pavements (c. 400 C.E.).
(P) The "House of Jason Magnus", the city residence of a wealthy Cyrenean family of the earlier Roman period. Fine marble and mosaic floors.
(Q) The Roman Theatre.
(R) The Roman Forum or "Caesareum", converted into a fortress in the later days of Cyrene. A Basilica or lawcourt adjoins it.
(S) A building of theatre type, probably the assembly-place of the city council.
(T) The Roman Market-place and Propylaeum of Septimius Severus. A small theatre was built on its ruins after the earthquake of 346 C.E.
(U) The centre of the Roman city, not yet excavated. The standing columns lined the main street.
(V) The Christian Cathedral, of the fifth century C.E., recently excavated.
(W) The Water-cisterns.
(X) The Temple of Zeus (6th century B.C.), the largest of the Greek temples. Here was found the famous Head of Zeus, now in the Sculpture Museum.
(Y) The Circus or Hippodrome, used for chariot races.
(Z) The Cyrene Hotel and stairway leading to the main Museums.

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT

XI
The Marks of History on the Arts and Culture of Libya

Greek, Roman and Arab-Islamic Influences

"History acquires meaning and objectivity only when it establishes a coherent relation between past and future."

The origin of the name of Libya

A drawing, deep in the Sahara (The Desert), cut thousands of years ago into the ledge of a cliff...cave-dwellings and monuments in continuous array...forts, cities, tombs and irrigation systems—these are a part of the historical heritage of Libya. Ten thousand years of Man's history is unfolded before us by these relics—years in which the seeds of civilization were planted, to grow with the passing of time in order to give the people of Libya their heritage of Art and Culture.

The name Libya itself dates back to many thousands of years when the area west of the Nile was settled by the tribes of Rebu (Libu), Tehenu and Mishawash. It is supposedly derived from the names of these ancient tribes who lived in Cyrenaica. The name also appears in ancient Egyptian inscriptions dating back to the 30th century B.C., and especially in the inscriptions belonging to the period of the 18th dynasty which indicate, quite definitely, that the land west of the Nile was occupied by the aforementioned tribes.

When the Greeks conquered the eastern part of North Libya, they called the area surrounding their territory by the name of Libya. However, according to a Greek story, the name derived from a native lady who ruled the country in ancient times.
The ARTS and CULTURE

Libyan handicrafts.
Some thousands of years ago, prehistoric artists cut the walls of cliffs with flints and produced their curious records of a world that has disappeared—a world in which there existed herds of tropical beasts which ceased to exist in this terrain for generations. These drawings are a depiction of Nature as it was lived, in a period covering approximately 4,000 years of history—from about 5,000 B.C. up to the time when North Africa was first linked with the “civilized” world (Bronze Age) by Phoenician traders seeking shelter from the storms of the Mediterranean. This was the beginning of Art in Libya, which progressed with time and with the infiltration of different civilizations into the country.

Phoenicians in Tripolitania at about 700 B.C.

Phoenician Carthage colonised Tripolitania—the land of three cities—about 700 B.C. The three ancient cities founded by the Phoenicians were known as Sabratha, Oea (now known as Tripoli), and Leptis Magna. These trading posts later became “emporia” to guarantee the security of the fertile coast. During the ensuing years the language, culture and administration of the three cities was entirely Phoenician. The land around these cities was used extensively for agriculture and the growing of olives and vines. The three cities were ports from which the produce, brought by caravans from Equatorial Africa, was exported, ensuring the prosperity of the population. Considerable progress was made by Libyan society under the influence of the Phoenicians, especially along the coast.

Greeks in Cyrenaica at about 631 B.C.

At about the same time (approximately 631 B.C.) Cyrenaica was occupied by the Dorian Greeks, who are supposed to have founded Cyrene in the same year. In due course of time they built Euesperides (eventually to become the present-day Benghazi), or Barce along with its port of Teucheira, and Apollonia. These five cities flourished commercially and culturally and became a part of the empire of Alexander the Great. They passed into the hands of his successors, the Ptolemies, in 320 B.C. and in 246 B.C. they were even more securely bound to the Ptolemies by the marriage of Queen Berenice to Ptolemy III. The father of this Queen had made himself the independent ruler of Cyrenaica. At this time Cyrene itself was an architectural jewel wherein cultural life flourished. It is said that the mathematician Theodorus taught in this city and that the School of Philosophy, which was inspired by Aristippus, was the seat of learning for over a century. Lately excavations have revealed admirable examples of houses, temples, baths, theatres, forums, triumphal arches and amphitheatres.

The Roman occupation of Libya in about the first century B.C.

After a considerable length of time both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica came under the domination of Rome. Tripoli-
The ARTS and CULTURE

A woollen rug being woven on the traditional loom.

A Libyan artisan at work.

Young Libyan girls at needlework.
The Darghat Mosque — one of the ancient and famous mosques at Tripoli. It was built by the Turkish Admiral Darghat Pasha, who seized Tripoli from the Knights of St. John of Malta in 1551 C.E.
tania was absorbed gradually following the destruction of Carthage in the second Punic war and Cyrenaica, according to the will of Ptolemy Apion, the ruler of Cyrene in 96 B.C., was left to Rome. Both were, at the beginning, administered separately—Tripolitania becoming the province of Africa Nova and Cyrenaica being joined, administratively, to Crete.

The Romans remained in occupation of Libya for almost five centuries and in this period, brought to the country both material and cultural prosperity. Vast tracts of land were brought under cultivation with the help of irrigation systems and many buildings were constructed. The Romans, in 20 B.C., sent an expedition led by the Governor Cornelius Balbus to the land of the Garamantes (Fezzan) far to the south—in fact they went to places even farther south which were not seen again by Europeans until the nineteenth century. The Roman garrisons of that period erected many fortifications, some of which are still standing in mute testimony to the deep penetration by the Romans into the south. One of the loneliest man-made habitations in the Sahara—a fortress-like building supposedly built by Roman garrisons is known as Kasr Mata, and is marked on the World Aeronautical Chart by a small square and the legendary “ruins” beside it. In this area the World Aeronautical Chart depicts nothing but approximately 25,000 square miles of uninhabited and arid desert!

Of the present-day three regions in Libya—Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and the Fezzan—the first two were an integral part of the Roman state, while the Fezzan, lying in the south, was subjected only to the symbolic authority of Rome and an occasional show of force.

The Romans have left to posterity the cities, aqueducts, cisterns and milestones, the ruins of which still proclaim the vastness of their achievements. In the time of Septimus Severus much was done for Leptis Magna. Magnificent buildings, such as the New Forum, the Great Basilica, the Via Colonnata and the immense Nymphaeum (an edifice with waterfalls and fountains at various levels) were lavished upon it, making it comparable to Rome. The people, in turn, erected a four-portalled “Arch of Triumph” in his honour. At this time, Tripolitania was at the height of its glory—materially and culturally, whereas the prosperity of Cyrenaica was checked by a great Jewish rebellion in 115 B.C. During the time of the Romans, Libyan Art or “Provincial Art” as it was known, became very popular. Decorations in gold, silver, ivory, ceramic tiles and wood, in which Roman patterns were combined with linear, geometric figures reflecting the rigid Libyan art forms, were the objects of Libyan artists. Even in the present-day Libya some of these designs are in use though with the addition of Christian-Byzantine art consisting mainly of figures which represent birds, animals, leaves and fruit.

The decline of the Roman empire brought religious and political discord which, in Tripolitania, ended in disaster. At this time the Vandals from Spain stepped in and occupied the country. The Vandals destroyed the civilization which had been built up and put nothing in its place. They were finally driven out by Belisarius who occupied Libya for the Byzantine Emperor Justinian. However, the country did not regain its former peace and prosperity even though some cities were rebuilt and fortified. During this period an effort was made to restore the grandeur of Leptis Magna and Sabratha. The fine workmanship and the typical Christian ornamental designs of those days have been revealed by the modern archaeologists.

The Arab conquest of Libya in 642 C.E.

In 642 C.E. the Arab armies, on their way to Spain, marched through Cyrenaica and thence on to Tripolitania. Tripoli became an Arab stronghold, but the city was, in later years, to be occupied by other conquerors. With the advent of the Arabs and Islam, however, there came to Libya a completely different culture and way of life.

According to the annals of history, in the year 1145 C.E., King Roger of Sicily invaded Tripoli, thus extending his empire across the Mediterranean. Later, in 1510 came the Spaniards and after them the Knights of St. John of Malta. However, this brief period of European intervention (up to about 1551 C.E.) was brought to an end by the Turkish Admiral Darghut Pasha who seized Tripoli for Sulaymân the Magnificent, who was then at the height of his power. From then on Libya became a part of the vast Ottoman Empire, which stretched from Iraq to the eastern frontiers of Morocco. The only relic left by the Spaniards was the Tripoli castle, which the Knights of Malta rebuilt.

An ancient mosque at Tripoli.

With the coming of Arab rule in Libya, many facets of Moorish art made their appearance in buildings and various crafts. Islamic art is represented by mosques and countless inscriptions, in Kufic script, on tombs and buildings, though many remains of the culture under the various dynasties are yet to be excavated.

The Turkish period of rule in Libya

During the period of the Turkish rule much was done to further trade and diplomatic relations with other countries: the then young United States of America among them. At the same time, however, this was a period when, under some adventurers, privateering was greatly extended along the Barbary coast. Muhammad Sakesli, a Greek from Chios, who appointed one of his lieutenants as the Bey of Benghazí, was one such adventurer.
Early in the eighteenth century Ahmad Pasha Karamanli became the ruler of Tripoli. He was an able ruler and brought stability to his dominion. During his reign he made an endowment for the construction of a mosque (completed in 1736) which was the most exquisite specimen of local Libyan-Islamic architecture and decorative art. In this building the local people demonstrated the flowering of their artistic genius, which was expressed ardently in stone, plaster, wood, glazed windows and enamelled title work. Here, in this mosque, one sees the successful and harmonious fusion of the two streams of art which Muslim historians refer to as Islamic Mediterranean "east" and "west". In all probability, nowhere was this effect so successfully achieved prior to the eighteenth century, when this mosque was completed.

The successors of Ahmed Pasha continued to rule Libya with a firm hand, thus ensuring peace and prosperity in the country. The last effective ruler of the house of Karamanli was Yusuf Pasha, who came into conflict with the United States. Though a truce was declared after some time, Yusuf Pasha's maritime activities were gradually curtailed by other more powerful navies and he abdicated in 1834, precipitating civil war among his heirs. Turkey intervened at this time and appointed a new governor. The return of Turkish domination proved unpopular and was soon overshadowed by the rise of a great religious leader—the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al-Sanusi (grandfather of the present King Idris I)—who founded the Sanusi School of Thought in Islam. He guided the independent tribesmen back to the purity and spirituality of Islam. He, and later his son, the Sayyid Muhammad al-Mahdi al-Sanusi, united the country. But, fortunately, when the tyrannical regime of 'Abd al-Hamid (the Ottoman ruler of the period) was overthrown, Italy chose that very moment to attack.

The Italians slowly conquered Libya and entrenched themselves for the next several years. Under the Italian occupation, the people of Libya underwent a tremendous amount of hardship and facilities for cultural and artistic advancement were non-existent.

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a thing in which the Sanusi movement in fact assisted — the Ottoman Government was quite content to have its officials confined to the towns and to have the internal administration and government in the distant parts of the country entirely in the hands of the Sanusis. The Sanusi movement in such parts maintained peace, dispensed justice and controlled education; and the collection of the taxes in those parts was effected on behalf of the Ottoman Government by the Sanusi representatives. Contact between the Sanusis and the Ottoman Government was maintained through visits by Ottoman officials to Jaghbub and Kufrah or by Sanusi representatives visiting Istanbul. This made it unnecessary for the Ottomans to impose their will on the people to any great extent, and prevented friction between the Ottoman Government and the people of Cyrenaica. Peace and tranquillity resulting from this harmonious state of affairs enabled the Sanusi movement to devote its full attention to the religious field, and enabled Cyrenaica to enjoy a prosperous life, and remain a loyal member of the Ottoman Empire.

There was, however, at a later stage some friction between the Sanusis and the Ottoman Government. The latter became jealous of the strength and influence which the Sanusi movement assumed, and were anxious to have the allegiance and subordination of the Sanusis given on a fuller scale. In fact, in 1904 C.E. and 1908 C.E., attempts were made by the Ottoman Government to impose taxes on the properties of the zdwiya, but those attempts had to be abandoned when it became evident that the Sanusis would offer a strong and determined resistance to such measures.

Despite the magnitude and influence which it had assumed, the Sanusi movement, however, did not at that time enjoy any international status or recognition by foreign powers, and it was because of this that the Sanusis were unable to protest to the Western Powers against the encroachments made by France in central Africa or against the threatened danger of an attack on Libya itself by the Italians. Thus, notwithstanding the strained relationship that existed at that time between the Ottomans and the Sanusis, the Sanusis requested the Ottoman Government to appoint official representatives of its own in Kufrah and Jaghbub, so that, by the raising of the Ottoman flag there, Turkey could protest legally and legitimately to the world, if those parts became the subject of aggression by a foreign power. (The French finally conquered those parts, which were later combined together under the name of "The French Sudan").

In the period between 1912-1918 C.E. the Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif led the people of Libya in their bitter struggle against the Italians. In 1918 C.E. he retired from the leadership of the Sanusi movement, and left Cyrenaica for the Hijaz, where he stayed until his death in 1933. Upon his retirement the leadership of the movement passed to the Sayyid (now King) Muhammad Idris.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS
The Sanusi Movement, the first of its kind that set itself the task of reforming the Muslim World

By Dr. NICOLA ZIADEH

A Life-sketch of the Great Sanusi

Beginning of the Sanusi Movement in 1837 C.E.

A description of the Zawiya

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century C.E. sets Muslim thinkers to bring about internal reforms in the Muslim world

The Ottoman Empire was, until the seventeenth century C.E., a strong power whose armies had penetrated successfully into the European continent and vanquished many of the European states. It was regarded as the defender of Islam and held in high esteem by the Muslims everywhere.

Among the titles of the Ottoman Sultan was that of “Caliph of the Muslims” and “Servant of the Two Holy Mosques” and as such the Muslims looked upon him as a defender of their faith and of their countries.

By the end of the 17th century C.E., however, the Ottoman Empire began to weaken and disintegrate, and this process continued through the 18th century C.E. The European states began to nurse ambitions of acquiring territories held by the Ottomans, and the North African territories of the Ottoman Empire were of special attraction to these European states. This weakness in the Ottoman Empire also encouraged many of its subjects to set up autonomous governments that owed only nominal allegiance to the “mother country”. Such semi-independent governments were set up in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. Faced with this abject inability on the part of Turkey to defend her Empire and protect her subjects from the imminent danger of foreign aggression, the Muslim leaders in the various parts of the Ottoman Empire lost any confidence they may have had in Turkey as their champion and protector, and began to look in other directions for the preservation of the Islamic world.

These Muslim thinkers proceeded to apply their efforts to bring about internal reforms in the Islamic world. Many groups and schools of thought sprang up, and became very active in this field, though most of them never intended to sever the nominal link with the Ottoman régime (which was regarded by them as the “Caliphate”), perhaps in the hope that this reform in the world of Islam would ultimately bring about a revival of the Ottoman régime itself and pave the way for it to assume again its greatness in this sphere.

There is no doubt that the religious movement initiated by Muhammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab in the 18th century C.E. was the first symptom of this new feeling, which predominated in the minds of the reformers and leaders of religious thought in the Islamic world at that time.

The emergence of the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali al-Sanusi (the Great Sanusi) in the beginning of the 19th century as a great religious leader

Although in the Maghrib (the western part of North Africa) there were similar tendencies which could be perceived clearly in the strength of the Sufi and Ikhwān movements, whose object was to bring about reform and renaissance in those parts of the Islamic world, no great thinker or reformer emerged there until the beginning of the 19th century C.E. That great leader was the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali al-Sanusi, the founder of the Sanusi movement.

The Sanusi movement has so far had four leaders who nursed and advanced it and spread its teaching. First there was the founder, the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali (d. 1276 A.H.; 1859 C.E.), then his son, the Sayyid al-Mahdī (1276-1320 A.H.; 1859-1902 C.E.), followed by the Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharīf (1320-1336 A.H.; 1902-1918 C.E.) and, finally, the Sayyid Muhammad Idris al-Mahdī (who succeeded to the leadership in 1336 A.H., 1918 C.E.) and is now the King of Libya.

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT XIX

1 Adapted and translated from the book by the author Cyrenaica, the Eighth Arab State, published by Dar al-Tilm li al-Malāfīn, Beirut, Lebanon.
I shall now deal with the achievements of the first three leaders of the Sanusi movement, and in a later article I hope to deal with the significance of the services which the Sanusi movement rendered to the course of Islam and to the Muslims by affecting far-reaching reforms and initiating a new and important era in North Africa; and also by bringing Islam to other parts of Africa. I also hope to deal then with the eventful period during the leadership of the Sayyid Muhammad Idris al-Mahdi, who led the struggle against Italian aggression against his country.

**A life sketch of the Great Sanusi**

The Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali — the “Great Sunusi” as he has often been called — was born in Algeria on 12 Rabī’ al-awwal 1202 A.H. (22 December 1787 C.E.). He was descended from Hasan Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Abī Tālib and Fātimah, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. The designation of his family as al-Sanusi is derived from the name of his ancestor, the Sayyid al-Sanusi, who was one of the great Muslim ‘ulemas of his day.

The Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali grew up in a family of scholars held in great esteem in that part of the country. It was thus not difficult for him to acquire proper learning from his early youth. In his boyhood he applied himself industriously to learning as a pupil of one of the eminent local teachers. At an early age he realized that the Islamic world was badly in need of drastic reform, and so he devoted his efforts towards bringing about this desired change.

He took upon himself a very great task, and in order to equip himself to fulfil this arduous mission he sought further to enhance his learning, and proceeded, for this purpose, to Fās (Fez), which was one of the great centres of learning in those days. There he stayed for seven years (1822-1829 C.E.) first, as a student and later as a teacher in the Great Mosque. During his stay there he gained the confidence and admiration of his pupils and acquired a high reputation as a man of wide knowledge, mature ideas and forceful exposition, and also as a man who possessed true understanding of the spirit of the religion of Islam. During this period, the Sayyid Muhammad also devoted his attention to the study of Sufism. He did this because he was convinced that one of the essential prerequisites of achieving the desired reform in the Islamic world was to bring about true understanding and coordination between the activities of all those who at that time were working for the advancement of the religion of Islam, be they individuals or groups, and whatever distance separated them. The Sayyid Muhammad also studied other movements in Islam. He was greatly distressed to find that many of the Muslims lacked the moral courage and strong faith needed to bring home to the Muslims the true principles of the religion of Islam. He was likewise grieved to see that so many of the responsible elements amongst the Muslim people in the various parts of the Islamic world were pre-occupied with their own personal welfare and neglecting their primary duty of advancing the progress of their countries and the welfare of their people.

The Sayyid Muhammad then sought to widen the scope of his activities and learning by travelling to other parts of the Muslim world. He left Fez for Laggouat (in the south of Algeria) which was an important meeting place for the convoys coming from the western part of the Sudan. There he taught the true conceptions of Islam to those who sought such instruction. Later he proceeded to Abū Qabīs and then to Tripoli and to Benghāzi, and finally to Cairo, where he joined al-Azhar University.

He spent some time at al-Azhar, and in addition to studying at this university he devoted a great deal of time discussing with various people his ideas for the reform of the Islamic world, and urged a return to the true and original teaching of Islam. His first visit to Egypt may have finally convinced him of the view that Turkey, despite its efforts to stage a revival, had become so weak that it was idle to expect it to give a lead to reform or to play any great part in this respect.

The Sayyid Muhammad, however, entertained the hope that a renaissance in the other parts of the Islamic world would eventually revive the Ottoman régime and enable it to assume once again leadership of the Islamic world, and it was with this hope that he sought to maintain the Ottoman Caliphate in the Islamic world.

The Sayyid Muhammad then visited the Hijaz. For his purpose, the Hijaz was the ideal place, for there Muslims from all over the world met for pilgrimage and there, too, he had the opportunity of contacting people from different parts of the Muslim world and discussing with them his ideas. In the Hijaz he also saw an opportunity for meeting great learned men from whom he would be able to complete his learning and acquire wider experience. The Sayyid Muhammad remained in the Hijaz until 1840 C.E. During his stay there he met many of the great ‘ulemas of the time and the well-known authorities on Islam.

**The Great Sanusi sets up the first Zāwiyyah in the Hijaz in 1837 C.E.**

One of the great men he met there was the Imām Abū ‘Abbās Ahmad Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn Idris al-Fāsī, whom he later accompanied to Sabia, returning to Mecca only after the death of al-Fāsī. On his return to Mecca the Sayyid Muhammad set up in Abū Qabīs his first zāwiyyah (in English literally “corner”, but later meaning a “centre”) in 1837 C.E. This date is regarded as the beginning of the Sanusi movement. Later, other zāwiyyahs were set up in other parts of the Hijaz, namely Tā’if, Medina, Badr and Jeddah. But the Sayyid Muhammad did not stay in the Hijaz very long after that: he left in 1840 C.E. for Egypt, and thence to Tripolitania via the Siwa Oasis and the Jabal.

**The Great Sanusi sets up his second zāwiyyah in the Jabal, Cyrenaica**

The Sayyid Muhammad had intended to return ultimately to Algeria, but he was prevented from that by the fear of being persecuted at the hands of the French, who had occupied Algeria a few years earlier. In 1841 C.E. the Sayyid Muhammad reached Benghāzi, having temporarily abandoned his intention to return to Algeria, and in Cyrenaica two years after his arrival he set up, in 1843 C.E., a zāwiyyah at Beida in the Jabal (a district on the coast of Cyrenaica) and that zāwiyyah was to become the “mother” of the many other Sanusi zāwiyyahs set up. From that day, it can be said that the Sayyid Muhammad had begun to formulate final plans for improving the lot of the Muslims in Cyrenaica, so that from amongst them might one day come forth men who would give the lead for reform in other parts of the Islamic world.

The Sayyid Muhammad later paid a second visit to the Hijaz and upon his return from this visit in 1856 C.E. he transferred his “headquarters” from the zāwiyyah at Beida to
Jaghbūb. This he did because he found that Jaghbūb was more central, and thus more convenient for the purpose of making effective contacts with the wide parts of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and the then French West Africa. Another reason may have been the fact that Jaghbūb, as an important centre for convoys, afforded him the opportunity of contacting people to whom he wanted to convey his ideas on Islam, and this would have enabled him to reach the distant parts of Africa, where he wanted to preach the faith of Islam. The Sayyid Muhammad realised that in Algeria in the west, under the French — who were expected to oppose the Sanūsi movement and guard strongly against its dissemination or its acquisition of any influence — as well as in Egypt in the east, there would not be any fertile ground for initiating his movement, and that therefore only the central part of North Africa and central Africa were appropriate for launching this movement, and in fact stood in greater need of reform.

The Great Sanūsi sets up his headquarters at Jaghbūb from where he sent out trained missionaries

At Jaghbūb, the Sayyid Muhammad set up his headquarters, and there gathered around him his followers and supporters. The hitherto insignificant oasis of Jaghbūb was transformed by this decision of the Sayyid Muhammad into a beautiful and lively place. A large school for the teaching of the religion of Islam was set up by him in Jaghbūb, and this had a library containing about 8,000 volumes on subjects like Islamic law and jurisprudence, the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, history, interpretation of the Qur’ān, astronomy, philosophy and sūfism. This school was run by the devoted pupils of the Sayyid Muhammad, who had accompanied him on his tours of study and had proved themselves to be loyal to his ideas and able to preach them.

This school had about 300 pupils, who were being enthusiastically prepared under the guidance of the Sayyid Muhammad in order to proceed to those parts of the Islamic world which had been chosen by the Sayyid Muhammad and take with them the message of the guidance and wisdom of the true teachings of Islam. The Sayyid Muhammad personally supervised the instruction of these pupils, in order to ensure that every single messenger of his mission was thoroughly prepared for his task before he embarked on it. Thus in a very short space of time Jaghbūb became a very great centre of Islamic religious teaching in North Africa, second only to Cairo.

From Jaghbūb all these messengers of the Sanūsi movement spread to many parts of the Muslim world. They carried great and wise learning acquired from their master, the Sayyid Muhammad, and demonstrated great faith comparable only to that held by the great learned men of the early Islamic era. All these dedicated men were determined to make sacrifices for the noble cause they preached.

One of the early results of the initiation of this great movement in Cyrenaica was that the Arab tribes there, who had until then been engaged in constant hostilities with one another and preoccupied with raids, theft and other destructive activities, had suddenly resolved to bury the hatchet. With the acceptance of the true teachings of Islam, as propounded by the Sayyid Muhammad, peace was restored to those tribes of Cyrenaica, and a new method of settling disputes arising between them was now adopted, thanks to the intervention of the leading followers of the Sayyid Muhammad, who succeeded in settling disputes by peaceful means. Through the activities of the Sayyid Muhammad and his followers, Islam also began to spread to other parts of Cyrenaica and Africa.

Perhaps a good example of the esteem accorded by the people of Cyrenaica to the movement initiated by the Sayyid Muhammad and of its success is that a delegation representing the people of Kufrah, a group of oases deep in the desert of Cyrenaica, was sent to the Sayyid Muhammad asking him to set up a zāwiyah in that part, in order that its inhabitants might have the chance to partake of this new guidance which had already found enthusiastic acceptance in many other places. The Sayyid Muhammad agreed to this, and the first zāwiyah in that district was set up in the Jawf oasis.

An example of the methods employed by the Great Sanūsi to spread his ideas

The methods adopted by the Sayyid Muhammad in disseminating his new movement and in gaining acceptance first can best be illustrated by this authentic story.

A convoy of Negro slaves which was proceeding north through Southern Cyrenaica was met by the Sayyid Muhammad, who offered to buy the whole convoy. Upon buying this convoy he set the slaves in it free and proceeded to teach them the religion of Islam, and after he had completed their education he sent them back to their own people to preach their new faith. Such methods impressed the people in a remarkable manner.

On 9 Safr 1276 A.H. (7 September 1859 C.E.) the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Sanūsi died in Jaghbūb. He was buried there and his grave is preserved until this day.

When the Great Sanūsi died the movement had already taken deep roots in Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and other parts of Africa. His great personality had impressed itself upon his successors, so that the movement he initiated and nurtured through difficult times came to acquire under his successors yet greater strength and vitality and conquered wider parts of the world.

The Great Sanūsi's successor, the Sayyid al-Mahdi

The Sayyid Muhammad's successor was his eldest son, the Sayyid al-Mahdi, born in 1844 C.E. at the zāwiyah at Beida. When the great Sanūsi died, the Sayyid al-Mahdi was under age, and a council of guardians consisting of ten elders was set up to look after the Sanūsi movement until the Sayyid al-Mahdi attained his majority and could succeed to the position occupied by his father. When the Sayyid al-Mahdi came of age, he succeeded to the position of supervising the administration and direction of the Sanūsi movement. His brother, the Sayyid Muhammad al-Sharif (who was two years younger) concerned himself mainly with the teaching aspect of the movement.

Under the leadership of the Sayyid al-Mahdi (1859-1902 C.E.) the Sanūsi movement reached the climax of its power and influence. One of the decisions made by the Sayyid al-Mahdi, designed to enable him to supervise personally the various affairs of the new and wide Sanūsi movement, was to transfer the headquarters of the movement, in 1859 C.E., from Jaghbūb to Kufrah—Kufrah having become by then a major commercial centre, where convoys from the various parts of central and northern Africa met. These merchants and their convoys were a very effective channel for spreading the religion of Islam to distant and otherwise inaccessible corners of Africa. The administrative headquarters of the Sanūsi movement was at the town of al-Tāj, and from there the Sanūsi movement brought the faith of Islam to the many parts of Africa.

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT XXI
The influence and prestige of the Sayyid al-Mahdi in the outside world

The friendship and goodwill of the Sayyid al-Mahdi was solicited by many world leaders. The Mahdi of the Sudan sought an alliance with him, 'Urabi of Egypt asked for his support in 1882 C.E., Italy approached him in 1881 C.E. seeking his assistance to check the advance of the French in Tunisia, the Ottoman Sultan asked for his help in the war against Russia in 1876-1878 C.E., and there was an unsuccessful attempt by Germany to rally his support to her side in the fight against the French in Africa in 1872 C.E. But the Sayyid al-Mahdi refused all these requests and approaches, preferring to maintain strict neutrality and aloofness in these international disputes, in order to be better able to devote his strength to the all-important task of spreading Islam and improving the desperate lot of the Muslim peoples — a task to which he devoted his life, and in which he never slackened, following in this regard in the footsteps of his illustrious father. But the Sayyid al-Mahdi, as well as his successor, was eventually forced to take up arms against the French invasion of central Africa in an attempt to step into those parts and establish the Sanusi movement before the entry of the French would make this impossible. Likewise, his successor, the Sayyid Muhammad al-Sharif, had to fight against Italy when she launched her aggression against Libya in 1911 C.E.

On the death of the Sayyid al-Mahdi in 1902 C.E., the Sanusi movement had reached new heights of success, and had become accepted in many parts of the world. Researchers on this subject are agreed that at that time the Sanusi movement had 136 zawiyahs distributed as follows:

- Cyrenaica : 45,
- Egypt : 21,
- The Vilayet of Tripolitania : 18,
- The Arabian Peninsula (Hijaz) : 17,
- The Fezzan : 15,
- The Sudan : 14, and

The Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif (1902-1918 C.E.)

When the Sayyid al-Mahdi died, his son, the Sayyid (now King) Muhammad Idris (born 1889 C.E.), was under age. The leadership of the Sanusi movement passed to the son of the Sayyid Muhammad al-Sharif, the Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif, who was then 29 years of age. The first years of his leadership (1902-1912 C.E.) were taken up by hostilities against the French, who had launched attacks on central Africa

The feared aggression against Libya was soon to come at the hands of Italy. It is during those years of bitter struggle by the people of Libya, under the leadership of the Sanusi, that the annals of history have recorded the illustrious deeds of the Libyans, and the shameful acts of Italian mischief.

What were the principles of the Sanusi movement, and what was the message brought to the people of Islam by Muhammad Ibn 'Ali and his successors and by the Shaykhs (leaders) of the zawiyahs set up by him, and which the Muslims of the day welcomed and wholeheartedly accepted? This is what I shall attempt to discuss now.

The Great Sanusi’s call of “Back to the Qur’an and the Sunnah with ijithad”, the door of ijithad having not been closed, as believed by many.

The movement initiated by the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al-Sanusi, known as the Great Sanusi, was primarily a call to the Muslims for a return to the true teachings of Islam, and not the “Islam” into which many alien principles and practices had been introduced at the hands of various imposters and pretenders to religious learning. The Sanusi movement advocated a return to the Islam as practised during the days of the Prophet Muhammad and his Caliphs. In the Sanusi movement, as, indeed, it is in the real Islam, guidance is drawn in religious matters entirely from the Holy Qur’an and the Sunnah (the practice of the Prophet). According to the Sanusi views, only from these sources can there be a true understanding of the principles of Islam; and that the doctrines of ijtihad (the consensus of opinion among the learned) and the qiyas (analogical deduction), which came to be accepted at a later stage of the development of Islam, must not be relied upon. But the Great Sanusi, however, did not consider that the ijtihad (the power of independent interpretation of the law) has been exhausted, and he held therefore that it was permissible, provided it was strictly confined within the bounds of the Holy Qur’an and the Sunnah.

Inasmuch as the Sanusi movement advocated a return to the genuine practice of Islam, it must be pointed out that the movement did not confine itself to worship and devotion in the abstract, but that it required of the Muslims to be productive worshippers living industriously by their hard and active work. This attitude can be discerned clearly in the nature of the zawiyahs. A zawiyah comprises a mosque, a school, farms and shops, and the accommodation for the Ikhwani (literally, “Brothers” — the members or staff), who worked with zeal and industry. The character which the Great Sanusi wanted his movement to assume can be seen in the fact that he wanted the actual construction of the zawiyahs to be a matter entirely for the people in whose area the zawiyah was to be set up; this he achieved by the active participation of the inhabitants of that area as a whole, without outside help. The zawiyah was therefore, from the day its foundation stone was laid, a monument of the achievement of the inhabitants of a particular area where it lay.

Many scholars applied themselves to a study of the relation between the Sanusi movement and the other Sufi (devotional) movements, especially those that grew up in the north of Africa. The scholars were encouraged by the fact that the Great Sanusi himself had studied a great number of the Sufi movements like the Tijaniyyah, Shadhiliyyah, 'Idrissiyyah and Qadiriyyah, and spent some time learning about these movements from the great ulama who professed them. Some of the non-Muslim researchers on this topic were interested in this study from purely academic motives, but many of them, notably the Italians, had embarked on this research with the pre-conceived object of detracting from the value and importance of the Sanusi movement. They sought to establish that the Sanusi movement was an abstract devotional movement on the Sufi style and was not concerned with anything apart from mere worship, devotion and penitence. In taking that view they attempted to find some justification for their occupation of Libya, since, they would maintain, there was an administrative “vacuum” in the country — there ceasing to be any civil administration or government after the Ottomans had relinquished Libya to the Italians in 1912 C.E.

The fact, however, as discovered by the honest and unbiased scholars of this subject and as recorded in the annals of history, is that the Sanusi movement was a combined religious and “civil” movement (“civil” in the sense of administrative and governmental). Though the Sanusi movement began with the main object of exhorting the Muslims to revert
to the genuine and original teachings of Islam as practised in the days of the Prophet Muhammad and the Caliphs, yet that fact alone meant that the Sanusi movement had also a "civil" and worldly character. Islam, it must be remembered, had made no demarcation or distinction, in principle, between the conduct of the affairs of the soul (religion) and the affairs of this world (government), and Islam did not confine itself to either of these two aspects of the welfare of man in preference to or in subjugation of the other; for it sought to secure for man's happiness in the world hereafter as well as in this world. It is therefore only natural that an exhortation to the practice of the true principles of Islam should mean a call for true belief and worship, as well as for productive and good work and for orderly political administration within the general framework conceived by the religion of Islam and accepted by the good Muslims at all the stages of the progress of this faith. It is thus only logical that the Great Sanusi, and his successors in the leadership of the Sanusi movement, in exhorting the people to take the life of the Prophet Muhammad as an ideal for them to follow and as an aim which they should strive to attain, should have exorted the people as well to devote their attention to those matters to which the Prophet Muhammad devoted his care. The life of the Prophet Muhammad was the best example that can be put before the people, with a view to enabling them to appreciate the relation between the mortal and immortal lives. For this reason, the Sanusi movement was based on the principle of working towards the life hereafter, in the words of the Prophet Muhammad, "as if man was destined to die the next day" and working for the worldly life "as if man was destined to live in this world forever".

Difference between Sufism and the Sanusi conception of life

There is also no doubt that the Great Sanusi and his successors, who called for the purification of Islam from all the ill-conceived and misleading practices that have been injected into it, should never have been content that whoever accepted the conceptions and teachings of that movement should allow any of these bad practices to be in any way whatsoever of any influence on his life or to affect his practice of Islam. It should be noted in this regard that the Sanusi movement is free from many of the practices adopted by other Sufi movements, like singing and dancing.

These biased scholars are committing a grave error in portraying the Sanusi movement as a movement akin to some of the Sufi rites whose followers live a life of strict seclusion, laziness and inactivity, spending their time in worship only and relying for their food on the charity of others. The Sanusi movement is a sincere and determined movement directed at leading the Muslims to the rightful path in the light of the true principles of the religion of Islam. It offered to the people the faith of Islam from Islam's true and rich sources, and expounded to the people the real spirit of the Islamic faith, urging them to follow the rules of conduct laid down by God in the Qur'an and practised by His Prophet. The Great Sanusi found that many of the Muslims of the day had abandoned all these high ethical conceptions and shut their eyes to the true light of Islam, and he thus took upon himself the task of rekindling in their hearts, by his fervent preaching, the faith that had almost dwindled. He expounded to them the creed of Islam, strengthened their waning faith in Islam, and removed the curtain that had prevented them from seeing the true light of Islam. His preaching was like "the fire that consumed the dry and broken plants but purified the gold". Those that came into contact with the Great Sanusi effected a change in their lives and acquired a new will, zeal and strength; they had become a people preaching goodwill, after they had been perpetrators of evil.

A description of the organization of the zawiya

The centre of life in the Sanusi movement is the zawiya. The zawiya (literally, corner — plural zawiyyahs) in this connection meaning a centre for the spiritual, agricultural, commercial and political life of the community where it is located. It is here that we come across the special and unique attributes of the Sanusi movement. It is not merely a religious, Sufi or spiritual movement, but a movement concerned with all the different aspects of the everyday life of man. When the leader of the Sanusi movement detailed one of his followers to set up a new zawiya, he would expect that that Shaykh (leader) would make that zawiya, with the land attached to it and the people inhabiting it, into a productive and active community. The first step in the process of setting up a zawiya in any part of the country was that the tribe interested in having the zawiya set up in its district would assign a definite area of land from its possessions for the benefit of the zawiya; then the buildings necessary for the zawiya were constructed by the members of that tribe. It was customary to have two groups of buildings in the zawiya — the first group would house the Shaykh of the zawiya and his family, and the second group would comprise the mosque, the school and the guest-house. The extent and size of such buildings naturally depended on the size of the community which the zawiya was intended to serve and on the magnitude of the services required in any particular part of the country. The mosque of the zawiya at Jaghbub, for example, was large enough to accommodate about 600 devotees, and the school building there had lecture halls and rooms for the accommodation of pupils who came from distant parts to seek education at the zawiya. The zawiya at Jaghbub, which was regarded as the first core of the academic aspect of the Sanusi movement, had at one time some 300 students in its school. The guest-house had spacious halls in which the merchants, visitors and travellers could sleep, and could stay for three days, in the first instance, according to the recognised customs of Arab hospitality. The merchants, however, were allowed to stay in the guest-house for a longer period; and the zawiyyahs that were expected, from the nature of their location, to cater for merchants had especially spacious halls where these merchants could safely deposit their wares and trades; and there were as well pens where the camels and other animals in the convoy could be kept. Those who were in charge of setting up these zawiyyahs devoted their careful attention to ensuring an adequate supply of water for the inhabitants of the zawiya, by digging a large well in the zawiya itself or by digging larger wells in the vicinity of the zawiya.

The lands adjoining the zawiya were farmed and tended by the staff of the zawiya (who were called 'Ikmuwan — Brothers), whether these were members of the tribe where the zawiya was situated or not; though the zawiya was regarded as in the ownership of the tribe in whose land it was standing. In this way the zawiya came to be the symbol of the unity of the tribe, and here, it must be pointed out, lies the zawiya's political and administrative significance. The
The Shaykh (leader) of the zwiyyah was appointed to this position by the Head of the Sanusi movement, who, in selecting him, usually followed the wishes of the tribe mainly interested in the particular zwiyyah, though, however, he never allowed his desire to conform to the wishes of the tribe when it was feared that it could subvert the predominant object of the movement. Since the Shaykh of the zwiyyah was a figure of paramount importance in the progress and well-being of the zwiyyah and its community. It was also essential that the Shaykh of the zwiyyah, who taught the pupils in the zwiyyah or supervised their education, adjudicated in disputes between the members of the tribe, maintained law and order and generally looked after the safety of the convoys, and, in the case of an emergency, organised the defence of the zwiyyah. He must of needs be a man capable of commanding and enjoying the respect of the members of the community in the zwiyyah, so that he may be able to discharge these many functions of his position satisfactorily and to the benefit of the zwiyyah, its community, and the Sanusi movement as a whole. The utmost care was therefore exercised in selecting the Shaykhs of the zwiyyah.

It is interesting to observe the system which governed the territorial distribution of the Sanusi zwiyyahs, particularly in Cyrenaica. The Sayyid Muhammad Ibn Alí and his successor, the Sayyid al-Mahdī, took particular care to set up the Sanusi zwiyyahs in those parts of the country which had some special significance, either commercially, administratively or strategically. Thus we find these zwiyyahs at the junction of main routes, and located in places which, because of their geographical and strategic position, could be easily defended against aggression, as well as command the adjoining area. These zwiyyahs were so placed that they were usually at a distance of not more than six hours from each other, especially in the north of Cyrenaica.

By virtue of this layout, and because of the fine system devised for the direct and individual supervision of these zwiyyahs, they became strongly integrated into each other and maintained a strong bond with the General Headquarters of the Sanusi movement. The Sanusi movement therefore came to be regarded more as a government or state rather than as a religious school of thought. Those who have described it as "an Empire within the Ottoman Empire" have not been far wrong.

It must be pointed out at this stage that the Great Sanusi and his immediate successors did not, at any time, have any military or warlike ambitions, though the strict organisation which governed the movement enabled its followers, when they were at a later stage forced to assume a military character to protect their country from unjustified aggression, to put up a very good fight against the invaders.

The division of the followers of the Sanusi movement into two groups

The followers of the Sanusi movement may be generally divided into two groups. There were the Mut'a'assibīn (supporters), who formed the greater majority of the Sanusi, and there were also the Ḥādīth or Mureddūn (the brothers or volunteers), who lived within the walls of the zwiyyahs—before the greatest majority of the zwiyyahs were destroyed by the Italians. There were also the Shāykhān of the zwiyyahs, who were Islamic scholars entrusted by the Head of the movement, after they had completed their education in the school of Jahlūb, to take charge of the zwiyyahs and supervise the conduct and welfare of their communities. There was also a small group known as Khawwās (the "Selected"), who formed the members of the "Inner Sanusi Council", if one may use the term. During the life of the Great Sanusi and his successor these Khawwās numbered four, all of whom were not members of the Sanusi family, and chosen from amongst men who had attained very high positions in Islamic learning. The Council does not exist now— the turbulent events encountered by the Sanusi movement had made it impossible to maintain such a Council.

The Sanusi movement during the Ottoman régime

Before concluding this article, it may be appropriate to say a few words about the movement during the Ottoman régime.

When the Sanusi movement spread amongst the inhabitants of the desert of Cyrenaica, the leaders of the movement became the link between the people and the Ottoman Government. The people accepted the Sanusi leaders as their representatives and accredited them as their spokesmen, and the Ottoman Government had no choice but to accept that state of affairs, and seek to gain the goodwill and favour of the Sanusi leaders. The first official recognition by the Ottoman Government of this position was embodied in a decree issued by the Ottoman Sultan in 1856 C.E., which exempted the possessions and properties of the Sanusi zwiyyahs from the payment of tax, and permitted the Sanusi leaders to levy a religious tax on their followers. During the reign of the Sultan ‘Abd al-Azeez, the brother of the Sultan ‘Abd al-Majid, a second decree was issued to the governor of Tripoli (within whose administrative domain Cyrenaica was) confirming the special privileges accorded earlier to the Sanūsīs, and directing that the Sanūsī zwiyyahs should be regarded as privileged and inviolable territory, where asylum could be taken.

The whole attitude of the Ottoman régime towards the Sanusi movement at that time may be summed up in saying that the Ottoman Government paid little heed to the constitutional or legal status of the Sanusi movement in the country. This attitude is understandable if one remembers that in those days there existed in the various parts of the Ottoman Empire many Islamic religious sections and movements, and also that Cyrenaica, being a poor part of the Ottoman Empire, was of no great importance to Turkey. So long as the Sanūsīs mentioned the Ottoman Caliph in their Friday prayers in the mosques, and so long as the Sanūsīs paid proper allegiance to the Ottoman Government and allowed her representatives in the country to levy her taxes—

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The Sanusiyyah
Contribution to Libya's Independence

By Ahmad al-Saliheen al-Houni

About the middle of the nineteenth century, the tribes of the Green Mountain plateau of Libya appeared on the historic scene as the torch-bearers of a revitalised reformist movement in Islam, which proved to be, more than anything else, responsible for the resurgence of Libya in our times.

The 19th century witnessed the disintegration of the Islamic world which had been protected by the Ottoman Empire. When the Ottomans failed to protect their empire, the colonialist powers began to draw plans to control the Muslim world and parcel out between them the property of the “sick man” even before he had breathed his last.

To cope with the disintegration threatening the Islamic world, a number of Islamic movements came into being with a view to reviving the righteous Islamic principles and unifying the Islamic world to face the fanatic Western imperialism and missionary activities.

The Sanusi Movement, considered to be the most important of all these revivalist movements of its period, was conceived and set afoot to stem the tide of Christianity attempting to convert the Muslim world. It was in such troubled times that Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali, the Great Sanusi, founded the Sanusi Movement and preached that the Muslims revive the righteous and the original Islamic ideals and go back to the spirit of Islam as preached by the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him).

Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali was born in 1787 C.E. in the Algerian town of Mostaghanem in the famous Idris family of North Africa, the descendants of Caliph ‘Ali through his eldest son Hasan. His father died when he was still young and he was brought up by his mother. After his primary education in his native place, he was sent to the famous Qarawiyyin Islamic Seminary of Fez in Morocco for seven years. His academic achievements there won for him a teaching post at this renowned college. Later he went to al-Azhar University in Cairo. From Cairo he went to the Hijaz where he spent two decades teaching, studying and meditating.

The Great Sanusi, feeling the decrepit condition of the Islamic world, especially when France invaded Algeria in 1830 C.E., proceeded to organise the Muslims with a view to fortifying their spiritual defences. At this stage of his life he, like other religious reformers in Islam, decided to visit the sacred city of Mecca where his grandfather, Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdullah, was buried.

On his way to Mecca, the Great Sanusi passed through Libya and saw for himself the disintegrated conditions, both political and social, that prevailed there at that time. He also witnessed the extraneous elements that had crept into the religious life of the Muslims. This state of affairs convinced him more than ever that Libya was the place which needed most of the religious and social reforms. When he returned from Mecca, he decided to launch his reformist mission in Libya, where he later established many a Sanusi Centre called the Zawiya. In no time his reformist movement found its way to the tribes that lived in the region and succeeded in eradicating un-Islamic practices.

Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali was a rare combination of a scholar, mystic and man of action. The dichotomy of the two worlds of the jurists and the mystics, which is normally a source of friction among the Muslims, did not exist in his system. He preached a life of action illuminated by the mystical experience and urged his followers to go back to the Qur'an and the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, keeping away from the reactionary innovations of the later ages. According to him, the doors of ijtihad were not closed in the fifth century of Islam, as was mistakenly held by some of the jurists, and the spirit of enquiry was free to play its role in a Muslim's life. This was the message which the Great Sanusi gave in the Jabal al-Akhdar area of Libya through his various writings.

In 1855, he moved his first Zawiya from Beida to the remote oasis of Jaghbub. There he built an Islamic seminary on the pattern of al-Azhar and collected the biggest library in the Sahara which contained 8,000 volumes and 1,000 manuscripts. It is recorded that from this seminary he sent out 300 scholars to spread the message of Islam in Central Africa and the adjoining Sahara—the areas which were being brought under European rule and economic subjugation.
The Sanusi Zawiyyahs, or lodges, which are termed by Professor Evans Pritchard in his *The Sanusiyyah* (London 1952) “the Centres of Culture,” spread security and safety in the Sahara by means of their reformist principles. The Sanusi Mission, however, did not restrict its activities to the academic preaching of Islamic theology. It was equally concerned with the development of industry and agriculture. Within a short space of time the whole country was dotted with nuclei of Zawiyyahs, each within about six hours’ walking distance from the other. Here every Friday regular congregational prayer was held, attended by the local people. From the pulpit of the Zawiyyah mosque they were exhorted to adhere to the fundamentals of Islam and to consider themselves as members of the wider Islamic society. These lodges served as community centres under an elder who also mediated in the local disputes. Each of these had a Qur’anic school attached to it where basic secular education was also given. The adjoining land was voluntarily cultivated to meet the expenses of the lodge. Horticulture and trade were encouraged and some of these places became important trading centres. This was the structure which arose from the sublime foundation of Islam. The Mosque was originally meant to be the forum of the community, its centre of education as well as a place of worship.

The Great Sanusi died in Jaghbub in 1859, to be succeeded by his son, Sayyid Muhammad al-Mahdi, who was only 15. The elders of the community took charge as regents and, between 1859 and 1902, brought the movement to its peak.

The imperialist powers were startled by the great success of the Sanusi Movement in Africa, especially because of their vested interests there. They therefore launched an extensive propaganda offensive against the Sanusi Movement.

In spite of the fact that the Sanusi was a peaceful movement pledged against bloodshed, the Imam Mahdi, who succeeded the Great Sanusi found himself obliged to fight back to defend the Sanusi Movement against French imperialism. The vast desert witnessed many battles between the Sanusi and the imperialists who had the overwhelming superiority of armaments and technology. The Imam himself was wounded in one of these battles. After living a life of great achievements, he died and was buried in Kufrah, which had by that time become the second important centre of the Sanusiyyah.

When Italy invaded Libya in 1911, the Sanusi Movement found its existence threatened on two fronts—one against the French imperialists and the other against the Italians. The Libyans, in spite of the heavy odds against them, put up a resistance that cost the enemy thousands of men. But the overwhelming superiority of the aggressors forced Prince Idris to leave the country and conduct the resistance from abroad, which he did successfully until 1931. Even after 1931 the Libyans continued their resistance and Prince Idris brought into play all his diplomacy and wisdom to win for Libya an international backing which helped them liberate ultimately their land from the Fascist regime.

On 9 August 1940 the Sanusi Army came into existence under the leadership of Idris. Side by side with the Allies, The Sanusi Army played a vital role in achieving victory against the Italian and German Armies. At long last, Idris and Libya had achieved their objectives.

The military war was then followed by a diplomatic war by the imperialists who were anxious to regain their hold on the country. But their designs never materialised.

On 21 November 1951 the United Nations declared Libya independent. His Majesty King Idris declared to the world on 24 December the creation of the independent United Kingdom of Libya.

From this brief account of the Sanusi Movement and its vital role in the wars of liberation, we can form an idea of its great contribution to the realisation of independence. After achieving independence, Libya today is forging rapidly ahead to build a modern Islamic society with a flourishing economy and a stable regime, thanks to the pious, dedicated and able leadership of H.M. King Idris.

Libya, the Islamic country—the Libya of the Sanusiyyah and King Idris—will never forget the mission of the Great Imam Muhammad Ibn ‘Alf Sanusi. His illustrious grandson Idris, now carries the torch of Islam and progress in the form of the principles of the Sanusiyyah. May the soul of the Great Sanusi rest in peace and may God give his grandson, King Idris, long life to lead his country from progress to progress.

**THE ISLAMIC REVIEW & ARAB AFFAIRS**
LIBYA—Some Facts and Figures

Situation and Size
Libya is a part of North Africa extending over 680,000 square miles, making it the fourth largest State in Africa, ranking after the Sudan, the Congo and Algeria. Its 1,800 kms. long coastline, overlooking the Mediterranean, stretches across the north. From north to south its length is about 1,500 kms.

Its boundary line is contiguous to the Muslim lands. Egypt lies in the east, the Sudan in the south-east, the Niger Republic and the Chad in the south, and Algeria and Tunisia in the west. The total length of the frontiers is not less than 480 kms. Besides being a link between the Arab countries lying in the east, south-east and west, it is regarded as the gateway to Central Africa.

Contours
The main highlands of Libya are the Western Jabal and the Jabal al-Akhdar (the Green Mountains) in the north; the Tasili, the Torno and the Tibesti Mountains in the south; the Sud and the Harruj Mountains in the middle.

The main plains of Libya are: the Jefara Plain, which lies between the Mediterranean and the Western Jabal, the Misurata Plain to the east of the Jabal, the Benghazi Plain to the west of Jabal al-Akhdar, the Barqa Plain in the midst of Jabal al-Akhdar, the Batman Plain and the Dafna Plain to the east of Jabal al-Akhdar.

The National Flag
The Libyan National Flag is a tricolour of red, black and green horizontal stripes bearing a white crescent and a five-pointed white star in the centre.

Population
The population of Libya was only 1,089,000 in 1954 and the census of 1964 shows an increase of a little less than half a million, making it 1,559,900. It is a Muslim country, most of its inhabitants are Arabs with a small European community. Its fast-growing prosperity, due to the new oil economy and the peaceful and wholesome Islamic environment created by the constitutional monarchy, portends further steady increases in the population.

At present the average density of population is about two persons per square mile. This is due to the fact that over nine-tenths of the country forms part of the waterless wastes of the Sahara (desert), which supports only some 80,000 people. In the northern and north-eastern and north-western extremities of the country, where better Mediterranean climatic conditions exist, is the population more concentrated. Tripolitania has 102,800 people, and northern Cyrenaica about 450,000. These two areas receive more than eight inches of rainfall a year.

Climate
The climate of the northern regions of Libya is moderate. It is warm in winter and quite refreshing in summer. The sky remains clear and blue almost throughout the year. The rainfall is about 650 mm. on the highlands and 100 mm. on the semi-desert parts. It usually rains during the period between the months of October and March. The fruit crops of the world are generally connected with the winter rainfall.

Main Cities and Towns
Tripoli
It is the largest city of the country and is its western capital, a beautiful port with wide streets, modern buildings and busy market-places. Its rural suburbs are noted for their palm trees, olive trees and evergreen farm lands. Its population is 250,000.

Benghazi
It is second to Tripoli in size and is the eastern capital of the country, enjoying an oriental pattern of design with modern buildings and wide streets.

Beida
It is the most recently-built town and is the Headquarters of the Government. It lies in the centre of a highly developed agricultural area. Farms with fruit trees such as olives, almonds, peaches and vines extend all round the city. Cornfields and forests make a picturesque countryside.

Tobruk
It is a famous port town to the west of Benghazi.

Derna
It is often referred to as the Pearl of the Mediterranean.

Misurata
It is a beautiful town surrounded by palm forests and rich farm lands.
Other important Libyan towns are: Garian, Agedabia, Zavia, Barce (al-Meri).

Administration
Administratively the country is divided into ten governorates, each governed by a governor. They are: Tripoli, Benghazi, Zavia, Derna, Sebha, Misurata, Beida, Garian, Homs and Obari.

Main Roads
Libya enjoys an extensive network of wide asphalt roads, the main road of which is the coastal road stretching from the eastern to the western border with a length of 1,822 kms. Other main roads are: the road between Ghaddabia and Sebha (length 850 kms), the Garian-Yefrin Road (length 73 kms), the Tarhuna-Homs Road (length 73 kms), the tourist road joining Susa (Apollonia) with Derna via Ras al-Hilal (length 84 kms) and the Tobruk-Jaghbub Road (length 285 kms).

Archaeological Sites
The most noted archaeological sites in Libya are:
In the western region:
Libda (Leptis Magna)
Sabratha
Sultan

In the eastern region:
Cyrene (present day Shahhat)
Apollonia (present day Susa)
Ptolemais (present day Tolmeiya)
Tokera (Tauchira) (present day Tocra)

In the southern region:
Germa, the capital of the ancient Libyan tribes: the Garamants.

In addition to the sites mentioned above, there are many other archaeological remains which may draw the attention of the tourist either on the coastal road or on the road leading to the remote southern border.
Some Important Features

1) AREA and POPULATION
Libya is a large country covering an area of 680,000 square miles with a small population of approximately 1,600,000.

2) LIBYA'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE
It will be the third largest oil producing country after the U.S.A. and Venezuela when it reaches the 100 million ton mark per annum.

3) LIBYA'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE
The ancient ruins in Cyrenaica, Ptolemais (Tolmeitya) and Apollonia are outstanding, as are those at Leptis Magna, near Homs, 70 miles from Tripoli, and at Sabratha, 40 miles west of Tripoli.
Recently an Italian expedition has found in south east of the Fezzan a series of rock-paintings more than 3,000 years old which are technically in advance of any yet seen.
King Idris I
His self-denial and his great contribution to the ultimate Independence of Libya on 24 December 1951

By AHMAD M. ASHURAKIS

He forbade the use of the title of “His Majesty” with the terse comment: “All Majesty belongs only to God. I am but a servant amongst God’s servants” (King Idris)

“I ask you to fear God in secret and in public, and to thank Him for the blessings He conferred upon you in making you independent and free in your own country. If the past years were confined exclusively to struggling for life, the coming years will bring vast and tremendous prosperity emerging from the riches of our country which God has bestowed upon us. But the strife from now on will be more difficult than the past years because prosperity carries with it problems which ought to be faced and solved in the best interests and welfare of all sections of the Libyan people.”

On the 10th Anniversary of independence, King Idris, believing in the supreme objectives of his country to occupy a deserving place amongst free nations of the world, counselled his people in the words quoted above.

To write about King Idris, the constitutional monarch of the Kingdom of Libya, is to tell the history of a country which has struggled for more than a quarter of a century for freedom and independence under his untiring efforts and good leadership.

King Muhammad Idris al-Mahdi al-Sanusi was born on
12 March 1890 at Jaghbub — an oasis south-east of Tobruk. He is the eldest son of the famous first successor of the Great Sanusi, the Sayyid Muhammad the Mahdi, who in turn was the son of the Sayyid Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Sanusi, the founder of the Sanusi Order, between the years 1837 and 1859 C.E. It was through the founder’s constant strenuous efforts that the principles of the Sanusi orthodox doctrine were adopted in the eastern province of Libya, namely Cyrenaica. This led to the Sanusiyyah becoming the ruling force in the Libyan hinterland afterwards.

It is worth mentioning here that the genealogical tree of the Sanusi family begins with the Idris dynasty, the lineage of which in fact goes back to the Prophet Muhammad himself (may peace be unto him!).

King Idris was educated exclusively by his father, who taught him to follow from his boyhood the teachings of Islam. He studied the Holy Book — the Qur’an — and hence most of his time was devoted to learning the many different aspects of the Islamic religion, namely law, history, sociology, politics and Arab culture in general. His pious father took much interest in educating his son in order that he might be qualified to lead one day the now powerful Sanusi movement.

His father, the Sayyid al-Mahdi, died on 30 May 1902 and was buried at Kufrah.

At the age of 27, King Idris assumed the responsibilities of directing the Sanusi movement, which had previously been held by his cousin, the Sayyid Ahmed Sharif Sanusi — the second successor of the Order. At that time, Libya and her people were beleaguered by various scourges, such as drought, plagues of locusts, disease and starvation. There were also hostile armies laying siege to the nationalist Sanusi forces.

King Idris, who in 1920 held the title of Amir, not only showed that he could master the deplorable condition of the country in which it found itself, he also organised the resistance activities which continued till 1931, the year in which the Fascist forces succeeded in ruthlessly executing the bulk of the nationalist fighters. King Idris, who was in Egypt at that time, had entrusted his adjutant, ‘Umar Mukhtár, to lead the fight for freedom and independence.

Although being in exile in Egypt since 1923, King Idris never gave up the struggle for the liberation of his country. During the period when World War II was passing through a critical period for the Allies, he succeeded in regrouping the Libyan people under his leadership, in particular the exiled patriots, who became the nucleus of a liberation army to fight alongside the Allies in 1940. And by joining the war he performed a great service to the common causes for which the Second World War was being fought, i.e. freedom and independence.

In fact the Allies, and in particular the British when they stood alone, acknowledged the important role the Libyan army played in the war and the heroism of the underground freedom fighters, who, under the direction of King Idris, marked the end of a gloomy past and the beginning of a new future of honour and freedom. The cost of the long struggle was very high in human life.

King Idris was elected monarch by the National Constituent Assembly on 2 December 1950 in recognition of his glorious achievements which in the end led his country to regain her freedom, independence, sovereignty and a reign of peace and prosperity.

King Idris’s self-denial

Even in his childhood Idris was known for his self-denial and the spirit of sacrifice for others. As a King, he shunned pomp and pageantry normally connected with monarchies. In 1953 he forbade the use of the title “His Majesty” with the terse comment: “All Majesty belongs to God alone, I am but a servant amongst God’s servants.” He also declared that all titles that make a distinction between the people of Libya and the people of the Arab homeland be abolished. Now there is no differentiation between the two, as all have the same title of “Sayyid”, which is the equivalent of “Mr.” in the English language. He directed that all goods imported by the royal household be subjected to normal custom-duities. He also asked that his name be removed from all streets, squares and institutions which are State or municipal controlled, a rule that also applies to the names of all members of his household.

He expressed the wish that the names of historical events, or names connected with Arabism or Islam be given to these places instead. He gave generously from his own funds to old veterans upon whom he has fixed monthly pensions. More than once he gave instructions for the cancellation of funds for the celebrations of his birthday, allocated by the State, municipalities or other groups, allocating the money to be spent for the poor and on charities. Last, but not the least, he gave instructions for the cancellation of the special privileges and exemptions of the members of the royal household and the titles of the nobles. Finally he banned all celebrations of his birthdays.

He forbade the acceptance of any gifts, individual or collective, that the people might desire to present to him on special occasions such as birthdays, royal weddings and other such occasions, requesting that the money’s worth of such gifts go to the charities.

He has spent of his private money to build the memorial monument in Egypt in commemoration of the founding of the Sanusi Army.

He ordered that his personal Emirate Guards, formed after Barqa’s independence in 1949, be disbanded and be made the nucleus of the Libyan Army.

King Idris gave the royal headquarters at Benghazi, the Manar Palace, to the University of Libya. He also made a donation of his private residence at Benghazi, the Ghadeer Palace, to the Libyan Military Academy for its use.
Rebirth of a Nation

The immortal hero of the Libyan nation, 'Umar Mukhtar, executed publicly by the Italians in 1931.

Libya had been an Ottoman Caliphate territory since the early 16th century C.E. With the decline of the Ottoman power, Italy occupied its important cities in 1911. The Treaty of 18th October, 1912, between Turkey and Italy confirmed this change of masters.

The ensuing 30 years of Italian occupation have gone down as the most unfortunate period in Libyan history. At the same time this period produced freedom-fighters whose names have been immortalized.

The heroic struggle for freedom by the Sanusiyyah against the Italian aggression

The struggle for freedom, led by the Sanusiyyah, started on 23 October 1911. The Italian advance in the Tripoli and the eastern sectors was halted. Thousands of volunteers from the tribes and the towns joined the struggle. During World War I, with the help of Turkey, the Italians were driven back to the coast. But the subsequent defeat of the Turks left the Libyans on their own.

In 1916 the Sanusi forces attacked the British troops stationed in Egypt, but were caught up between the British, the Italian and the French forces. It was the sagacity of Idris I and the heroism of 'Umar al-Mukhtar which saved the situation. In 1922 Prince Idris placed the command of his forces in the hands of 'Umar al-Mukhtar and himself went to Egypt to organise the line of supplies and arms.

During the years between 1922 and 1931, the Libyan people, in spite of extreme tortures and tyrannies by the Italians, kept the invaders engaged all over the country. Al-Mukhtar's army fought 260 skirmishes in the short period of 18 months. This brave soldier of 71 was at last wounded, captured and hanged by the Italians on 16 September 1931. The martyrdom of this legendary hero of the two Sanusi wars of 1911-17 and 1923-31 proved to be a great inspiration to the freedom-fighters who had now been forced to retreat into Egypt.

Prince (now King) Idris makes common cause with the Allies in 1940 against the Fascist regime of Italy

Italy entered World War II in 1940 on the side of Germany. This gave a good opportunity to Prince Idris to make common cause with the Allies against the Fascists. During 1940-43 the Libyan Sanusi army fought side by side with the British 8th Army and participated in all the battles of the Western Desert of Libya, including Mukheli, Tobruk and al-Alamayn.

Libya at the United Nations

In 1943 the victorious Allies, instead of recognising the independence of Libya as promised, placed it under the administration of Britain and France. Since France was too busy in her own troubles, Britain became Libya's virtual administrator.

Even in 1947, when the peace treaty with Italy was notified, the Big Four Powers failed to reach an agreement as to the future status of Libya and the matter was referred to the United Nations.

In 1949 the General Assembly of the UNO recommended that Libya, comprising Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and the Fezzan shall be constituted an independent Sovereign State not later than 1 January 1952.

The United Nations Council for Libya comprised representatives of Egypt, France, Italy, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and the United States, plus one representative of each of the three regions of Libya and one representative of the Libyan minorities.

In July 1950 a Preparatory Committee of the Libyan National Assembly was established, comprising seven members from each region, known as the Committee of Twenty One.

The National Assembly decided in December 1950 that:

(a) The new State should have a federal structure, with three provincial and one federal governments.

(b) Libya shall be a constitutional monarchy, and that the Amir Muhammad Idris Sanusi should be the king.
The Constitution of Libya was adopted by the General Assembly in October 1951.

'Umar Mukhtar's tomb at Benghazi.

Independence

Libya was proclaimed an independent State on 24 December 1951, when the Prime Minister of the Libyan provisional government, Mr. Mahmud al-Muntasar, took over the transfer powers from the United Kingdom and the French administrations.

In his Proclamation of independence, King Idris I said: 
"We at this blessed hour remember our heroes, pray to the Almighty to repose the innocent souls of our noble martyrs in eternal life, and salute the sacred banner which is the symbol of the struggle and solidarity hoping that the new era which opens today will be one of prosperity and peace to the country. We pray to God to give us aid in this undertaking and put us on the right path for He is the best helper."

From Federal to Unitary Form of Government

In 1963 the State of Libya was renamed the Kingdom of Libya as a Centralised State with Islam as its religion and the official language Arabic.

In spite of its provincial administration, a deep sense of national unity and solidarity had always characterised the Libyan national scene. Moreover, the Libyan economy, thanks to the oil, necessitated a central planning of the country. There is no doubt today that the change-over to Unitary form of government was a step in the right direction, resulting in significant benefits in the fields of both economic and social developments.

Again the following words of King Idris I represent the sentiments of the people of Libya at that historic occasion:

"God, all praise and glory for Him, has enjoined on us to hold-fast to 'His strong rope' of an eternal pledge.

"So says God, He Who is the truest among those who speak 'Hold together strongly to the rope of God and do not be divided among you.' This is the eternal way of life—the religion of our Muhammad, peace and blessing of God be upon him! He said, 'Don't be pugnacious lest you become faint-hearted.' The Messenger of God (upon him be the blessings of God!) said: 'The believers in their love and solidarity are like a single body which goes sleepless if any one of its organs is suffering. Praise be to God Who has joined our hearts in love and has united our country. He created us 'the best of all communities' to provide an example for the people.'"

"The best way to offer our gratitude for this blessing is to endeavour to preserve it. Each person must wish for his brother what he desires for himself. 'Co-operate in piety and good-deeds. Do not co-operate in sin and aggression.' May God guide us all to what pleases Him! May He grant us success and make our unity the opening of a happy and bountiful new era! May He open up a new phase of our progress with our determination soaring higher continuously! May we be fearful of His displeasure; for He is Closest to us of all those who hold responsibility. He listens to our supplications to grant our wish. He bestows opportunities, He is the End, the Best Protector, the Master and the Greatest Victor."

The Libyan Constitution

“All Libyan nationals are equal before the law”

Modern Libya emerged as an independent state on 24 December 1951, adopting constitutional monarchy as its form of government. On 2 December 1950 the representatives of the people had unanimously signed a declaration in Tripoli to this effect choosing H.M. King Idris I as their Monarch. The state adopted a unitary system on 26 April 1963 when a royal decree was published announcing this form of government and abolishing federalism.

The country has a written constitution promulgated by the Libyan National Assembly on 7 October 1951 embodying deep-rooted democratic traditions and a great love of freedom among its people. The reformation movement of the last century and a desperate struggle for survival and independence are the two most important factors which have made their positive contribution in the achievement of statehood by this ancient land and its people. The spirit of the Libyan constitution embodies these historic and ethnic realities. It is divided in 12 chapters comprising a total of 177 clauses.

The constitution declares Libya an independent sovereign state. Its territory is inviolate and no part thereof can be seceded. It is an hereditary monarchy with a representative form of government, part of the Arab homeland and continent of Africa. Islam is the religion of the state and Arabic its official language.

Rights of People

All Libyan nationals are equal before the law. They enjoy equal rights, the same opportunities and are subject to the same "PUBLIC DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RELIGION, BELIEF, RACE, LANGUAGE, WEALTH, KINSHIP OR POLITICAL OR SOCIAL OPINION." Personal liberties for everyone are guaranteed and protected equally by the law. A person charged with an offence is innocent unless proved...
The Libyan Parliament

The Libyan Parliament House at Beida, a new town about 200 kilometres east of Benghazi, on the Jabal al-Akhḍār (The Green Mountains). Beida is the location of the first zāwiyah of the Samāsi movement.

The Libyan Parliament in session at Beida.
guilty by legal trial which will be in public, except in cases prescribed by the law. The constitution forbids the deportation of a Libyan citizen.

Freedom of conscience is absolute. The state respects all religions and faiths and protects aliens living in its territory. The constitution guarantees freedom of thought and expression including the freedom of the press, the right of peaceful meetings, and the right of peaceful associations.

Elementary education is compulsory. Right of property is inviolate. The state is to endeavour to provide an appropriate standard of living to every citizen and his family.

**Organs of State**

Sovereignty belongs to God and is "ENTRUSTED TO THE NATION FROM WHICH ALL POWERS STEM." The legislative function is exercised by the King in conjunction with Parliament. The King promulgates the laws when approved by Parliament in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the constitution.

The Council of Ministers under a Prime Minister is responsible for the "direction of internal and external affairs of the state." The ministers are collectively responsible to the House of Representatives for the "general policy of the state and each of them is individually responsible for the activities of his Ministry."

Parliament consists of two chambers; the Senate and the House of Representatives. The twenty-four members of the Senate are appointed by the King. Its membership is for eight years. Half of the senators are replaced every four years.

The House of Representatives consists of elected members on the basis of one Deputy for every twenty thousand people or more than half of that number. All Libyan nationals including women of 21 years of age are entitled to vote. The term of the House of Representatives is four years and no member of the Royal Family can be a Deputy.

Both the Houses of Parliament meet in November each year. Decisions are taken in each chamber by a majority of members present. Each bill adopted by one of the Houses is transmitted by its President to his opposite number in the other chamber. Parliamentary privileges, including freedom of expression and freedom from arrest, are guaranteed by the Constitution.

The King sanctions laws passed by the Parliament and promulgates them within thirty days of the date of their communication to him. Once promulgated by the King, the laws become effective thirty days from the date of their publication.

When the two Houses are jointly in session, they meet as Congress. The meetings of the Congress are valid when an absolute majority of their members is present.

Independence of the Judiciary is guaranteed by the Constitution. The judges are independent "AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE ANSWERABLE ONLY TO THE LAW. THEY MAY NOT BE REMOVED FROM OFFICE, AS IN THE MANNER PRESCRIBED IN THE LAW."

**Budget**

The general budget is submitted to the House of Representatives for examination and approval at least two months before the start of the financial year. The currency system is regulated by the law.

The Kingdom of Libya is administratively divided into ten main administrative units, each of which is headed by an official appointed by Royal Decree.

The Libyan Constitution has guaranteed the rule of law in the country. It is functional in spirit and suits the local genius. Because of its smooth running the country has enjoyed a stable government since the independence and has evolved a welfare state guaranteeing free medical aid, free education on all levels, subsidised food items, housing and ample opportunities in life for the Libyan citizens.

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**The Strategic Importance of Libya**

Throughout the recorded history of Libya, its geographical position has given it a certain importance. The location of Libya on the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, with a coastline extending for about 1,131 miles, has had a great effect upon the ethnography, history and politics.

The chief factors which have made Libya strategically important are:

1. Libya, lying in the middle of the eastern and western Arab world, is a connecting link in this vast area bound together by a similar history, culture, religion and language.
2. The location of Libya, in the middle of North Africa and facing the southern European coast, makes the country useful as a military base from which any place in Europe could be invaded, especially by planes and rockets.
3. Transport by air, land and sea between Libya and the Middle East or western North Africa is very easy and safe.
4. Libya reaches about 1,240 miles into the interior of the continent and is connected with central, western and eastern Africa (north of the equator) by several caravan routes which have played a major role in the trading history of Libya. Despite the fact that these caravan routes have lost most of their significance after the development of better means of transportation, they still have their special importance, particularly during wartime. It is not inconceivable that these routes will regain their importance if the minerals of the area are well exploited, if great care is taken to improve the routes by paving them and protecting them from the moving sand dunes, and if railroads are built connecting the interior of Africa with the northern coast. It will then be easy for the Central African countries to communicate with other parts of the world, especially Europe.
Education and other cultural activities in Libya

Since Independence in 1951 Libya has made significant advances in education including education for women. Besides the University of Libya, the Government has set up a network of primary and secondary schools. More than 250,000 children now attend schools.

A school is the mirror of the society in which it exists. The aims and the progress of an educational system depend on both the historic and the economic backgrounds of the country and should be particularly related to the needs and requirements of the country.

History of Education
The history of education in Libya in recent times can briefly be divided into three periods. First, there was the time of the Italian occupation when the Libyans were not only discouraged but often positively prevented from partaking in the general education programmes. Then, there followed the period of British administration. During that time a lot was done to encourage the spread of education, especially elementary, but there was a failure to provide and train enough Libyan teachers and no particular effort was made to increase the number of university students.

The third phase started with the Ministry of Education taking over full control of all the educational activities. It did this on a federal basis and covered the whole country. Operating through the provincial Nazirates for Education, it encouraged and financed the opening of numerous teachers' training colleges, schools and also the creation of universities. As a result, 175 schools with 1,025 classrooms have been completed, in addition to 224 schools with 2,315 classrooms which are under construction.

The Education Law upholds the great Islamic heritage of Libya. The spiritual education of children is being achieved by Qur'anic and other religious instruction. In this respect the role of the family is also not being neglected. Besides the school libraries, public libraries are also being planned. To start with, two have been planned for Tripoli and Benghazi.

The Ministry of Education has established, in addition to traditional schools, evening schools and schools for adults. Similarly, to provide the technical skills needed for the increase in production, the Ministry has established several institutes.

The opening of the "Higher College for Teachers" is in line with the educational policy of having similar University Colleges in all Faculties. The project for building two University towns in Tripoli and Benghazi is being carried out in order to enable the University to admit a large number of students. Scholarships are provided for higher education abroad in subjects for which there are no facilities at home at present.

The New Programme
With the birth-registration now made compulsory, it is easier for the authorities to estimate future needs. Kindergartens take children from the ages of five to seven, and the following six years are spent at primary schools which are springing up rapidly all over the country. A further five years' schooling is available for those lucky enough to be able to get into secondary schools. In the remote Fezzan there are more than 5,000 children at school.

Among the facilities in all the schools is the free breakfast given daily to every pupil under the School Feeding Programme. Recreational programmes are also an essential part of school activities and are closely supervised. The programme of medical and dental inspection is being extended also to the schools. Fortunately, Libya does not have any real problem with physically-handicapped children. The few such children, as well as those slightly below average mentally, are taken care of in special classes in some schools.

Secondary Schools
Since there is a shortage of school buildings in some places, there is a two-shift system of classes for children in the forenoon and afternoon and most schools remain open for evening adult education classes.

Boarding Schools for Nomads
There are also in Libya State-run boarding schools. They are especially provided to meet the problems of orphans and nomad children. Boarding schools are more satisfactory than trying to undertake the impossible task of providing daily transport over vast distances.

Education may thus prove a very important factor in changing the habits of the nomads. While their children are at school, nomad parents have a tendency to stay near them. At the moment, most of the children return to their families and the old tribal life, but it is hoped that gradually they will avail themselves of the new opportunities offered to them of settling and working in the towns.

Teachers
Every encouragement is being given to young people wishing to take up teaching. There are special summer courses in addition to the training colleges and, on graduation, teachers earn high salaries. It is estimated that within four years there will be an adequate number of Libyan teachers for all elementary schools in the country, and perhaps for the intermediate schools as well. Although all the heads of schools are now Libyan, in the training colleges most of the teachers are still from the Middle East.

The Universities
Although housed in Benghazi in a former Palace of His Majesty the King, the University of Libya can accommodate a very small number of students. It was established in 1956 with only two Faculties, Arts and Education, and 31 students. Since then, the Faculties of Science and Commerce, and of Literature and Art, have been opened in Tripoli and Benghazi respectively. The British General Certificate of Education is taken and Libyan degrees are at the same level as those in British universities.
Woman’s place in early Muslim society was never inferior to man’s. During and after the Prophet Muhammad’s time, women as nurses moved with the armies to look after the wounded. Some were authorities on Hadith while many others had learnt the Qur’an by heart. They came freely to the Prophet’s Mosque for prayers, often with their babies.

According to Philip K. Hitti, “the early ‘Abbasid woman enjoyed the same measure of liberty as her Umayyad sister; ... Not only do we read of women in high circles of that early period achieving distinction and influence in state affairs—such as al-Khayzurîn, al-Mahdi’s wife and al-Rashîd’s mother; Ullayyah, daughter of al-Mahdi; Zubaydah, al-Rashîd’s wife and al-Amin’s mother; and Bûrân, al-Ma’mûn’s wife—but of Arab maids going to war and commanding troops, composing poetry and competing with men in literary pursuits or enlivening society with their wits, musical talent and vocal accomplishments.”

“... But towards the end of the 10th century C.E. under the Buwayhids, the system of strict seclusion and absolute segregation of sexes became general.” (A History of the Arabs, p. 333, London 1953).

And this is the way things stayed until the “Arab re-awakening.” In Libya this awareness awoke with the beginnings of the Sanûsî movement. After years of being almost a race apart, women started to take an active part in the community and social life, and today they have again reached a level virtually on a par with their men-folk—the status originally granted to them by the Qur’an.

The real beginning of this trend came after the end of the First World War. It was in the early 20th century that Arab girls first availed themselves of education. Unfortunately for them the process was partially retarded by the occupation of Libya by foreign powers.

It was not until the end of the Second World War that Libyan girls, along with the boys, could break the barriers in the way of elementary education and continue thence to the Teachers’ Training Institutes for Women, Nursing Schools, Health Officers’ Schools and all the other institutions. On the eve of independence, for instance, women were for the first time admitted to Universities and other institutes of higher education.

In the comparatively short span of 15 years—between 1951 and 1965—the enrolment of girls at elementary schools rose from 13.7 to 23.2 per cent. At the same time they began to study specialised subjects in the important seats of learning of the world.

After the Italian evacuation, Libyan children were enrolled in their thousands—but they were mostly males.

Until 1951/1952 the percentages of girls and boys in elementary schools were 13.7 and 86.3 respectively. Only 5,105 girls were enrolled in that year as against 32,814 boys.

After independence, there was a noticeable increase in school enrolments. In 1950/51, the year preceding independence, there were 29,077 schoolboys and only 3,664 schoolgirls registered. In 1954/55 the number rose to 48,003 boys and 11,374 girls. In 1959/60 the number of boys rose to 103,799 and of girls to 21,816. This was due to the expansion of schools in villages, oases and small community
concentrations. Men could be found to teach in these remote areas and hence it was easier to open new schools there. But women teachers were reluctant to be transferred to these far-flung districts. Consequently, fewer girls’ schools could be opened.

In 1964/65, however, the percentage of girls’ enrolment rose from 17.4 to 21.8. The increase during the period from 1959/60 to 1964/65 was 92 per cent, while the increase in the case of boys during the same period was only 47 per cent. The reason for this leap in the registration of girls is two-fold: Parents allowed their daughters to go to schools in villages and oases; and the employment in their own villages and oases of some of those who had graduated from teachers’ training institutes for women. Despite this positive development in the community as regards the number of schoolgirls enrolled, the disparity between the two sexes is still great—the ratio being five to one.

A recent Ministry of Education report says: “School programmes should also aim at developing an Arab-Muslim community. To realise this, they should underline the acquirement of eloquence in Arabic in speech and writing and the development of noble character. Girls, beginning with their initial school enrolment, should be given religious guidance as regards Islamic precepts and be made aware of their social as well as their human responsibilities, to enable them to participate more fully with men in the common struggle to solve the problems of the community and thus contribute towards the progress of the people.”

STATISTICAL DATA REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF SCHOOLGIRLS’ ENROLMENT AT ALL LEVELS FOR THE PERIOD 1950/51—1964/65

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<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of Girls to Total Pupils</th>
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<td>3,664</td>
<td>32,741</td>
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<td>1951/52</td>
<td>32,814</td>
<td>5,105</td>
<td>37,919</td>
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<td>48,212</td>
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<td>139,526</td>
<td>37,943</td>
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<td>153,276</td>
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Technical and Vocational Training in Libya

The first formal body entrusted with the task of systematically briefing the youngsters in different trades and in specialised subjects was established as far back as 1889. This body, the Islamic Association of Arts and Trades, is responsible for training students in Libya and for sending them abroad for specialised instruction.

The Technical and Commercial Training Centre at Tripoli was started in 1949. Another unit, opened a year earlier, was handed over to the Libyan-American Joint Services Organisation in 1950. Both schools were founded to provide technical training and instruction in commerce.

A girls’ school.

In 1951—the year when Libya’s independence was officially proclaimed—all-out efforts were made to increase the scope of vocational and technical training. The schools at Tripoli and Benghazi were especially geared to give greater coverage to both technical and commercial subjects.

In 1960 another new technical school, the School of Applied Technology, was established to supply technicians to the public and private construction firms in surveying, petroleum engineering and mining. The four-year course was designed to cater for students who have passed their general preparatory education certificate. They specialise in one of

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the two sections—public works (or petroleum engineering) and mining.

School for Carpet Making

Lying on the outskirts of Benghazi is the "Rug Training Centre." In this modest building some of the finest hand-woven Libyan carpets are made by girls, some very young.

The girls spend a period of approximately six months in learning the basic principles of spinning and weaving. Gradually they are promoted to higher classes. Eventually the time comes when they begin working with designs, some of which are extremely intricate and difficult.

The training of teachers

Teachers' training institutes have been opened for both men and women in Tripoli, Zawiya, Garan, Homs, Misurata, Benghazi, Beida, Derna and Sebha. In the order of importance the government decided that specialised training would take the form of:

1. Pre-service training of students for primary, preparatory, secondary and university levels.
2. In-service training at two principal levels: (a) for unqualified teachers, and (b) for qualified teachers.

For the pre-service training, the Institutes made available to the aspiring students two types of courses, namely, the Special and the General. The qualification required to enter the Special course, which lasts four years, is a Preparatory School Certificate. The students of this section make a general study for one year and then specialise.

The General Course, which also lasts four years, entitles those who have obtained a Primary School Certificate to enrol. Those who graduate from the General course are restricted to primary teaching, but those who graduate from the Special course teach in either primary or preparatory schools. However, after three years' service, graduates from the General course are permitted to sit for the examination held at the end of the Special Teachers' Training course.

In 1965 the Higher Teachers' Training College in Tripoli opened its doors to students who had obtained a Secondary School Certificate. As this course, too, is of four years' duration, its graduates will join the ranks of qualified teachers in 1969. In Benghazi, the graduates of the Faculty of Arts and Education are, as the term applies, pre-service teachers. They, along with the graduates from the aforementioned Higher Teachers' Training College, will form a nucleus of Secondary School teachers. To be enrolled in the Faculty of Arts and Education, the minimum qualification required is a Secondary Certificate of Education of the literary division. The students of this Faculty make a general study for one year and then specialise.

According to the law, graduates of the other Faculties of the University have to serve for two years in the teaching profession. These graduates come from the Faculty of Commerce and Economics and the Faculty of Science.

Besides the pre-service training mentioned above, there is an in-service training with its two divisions of "qualified" and "unqualified" teachers who make up the total strength of teachers of the country. An unqualified teacher gets an opportunity to obtain a Teacher's Diploma as soon as circumstances permit.

There are at the moment, in Libya, two sources of supply for the teachers in the preparatory and secondary schools—the Higher Teachers' Training College and the University of Libya. Steps are now being taken to establish an Institute of Education where graduates from the University can be trained to become teachers.

In the last few years, a number of teaching aids have been introduced which enhance a teacher's knowledge and skill. For many years it has been known that some children learn by seeing, some by hearing and some are kinesynthetics (learning by handling and touching). The majority of teaching aids are based on the principles underlying this knowledge, and education in Libya is being developed to cater for all the three types. It is very much hoped that in the near future television, radio, tape-recorders, teaching machines, reading, spelling and language laboratories and the numerous other teaching aids would be available to teachers in training and, later, to the pupils.

Finally, it must be emphasised that although much remains to be accomplished in the field of teacher-training, enormous strides have already been made in this direction and the responsible authorities are continuing to evolve ways and means of implementing further projects with a view to enhancing teachers' training in Libya.

Journalism

It is just over a century since the first newspaper was established in Libya in 1866. The Tripoli weekly, Tarabulus al-Gharb, appeared every Thursday morning for 45 years. It was closed down in July, 1911, a week before the Italian invasion took place. Each issue was both in Arabic and in Turkish—the official language of the Ottoman administration. It published news of Libya and the Caliphate Empire, along with official announcements, public notices and news of the Court.

Libya at the beginning of this century had an intellectually lively society with a comparatively high number of literate people. Students were frequently sent to al-Azhar at Cairo, Egypt, and Qayrawân in Tunisia to attend the two universities which pride themselves on being the oldest seats of learning in the world. There were many others who attended schools in Istanbul and came back with their impressions of the big city. These scholars formed the élite, supplying the country with a number of brilliant journalists after the promulgation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908. In the period 1908-11, Tripoli alone had eight weekly newspapers and four printing presses.

Independence in Libya has been characterised by a rapid expansion of journalism and the printing trade. The State alone operates three Arabic dailies from each of the three principal cities of the Kingdom. The old weekly Tarabulus al-Ghilibi has been succeeded by the daily Tarabulus al-Gharb in Tripoli. Benghazì has its daily Barghah al-Jadidah. Across the Sahara, Sebha has its own daily, the Fezzan. These three newspapers appear each morning with a good coverage of local and overseas news, together with articles and features of varied interests.

Nineteen daily and weekly newspapers are now published in Libya in English, French and Italian. This figure does not include the monthly and bi-monthly magazines.

A set of glossy, attractive Arabic magazines is produced by off-set process by the Ministry of Information and Culture. Libyá al-Hadithah, a bi-weekly, is a smart illustrated magazine, and the monthly, al-Mar'ah is an exclusive women's
magazine with a comprehensive range of interests. A literary
monthly magazine, al-Ruwād, is devoted to serious literary
and cultural subjects. A children’s magazine will appear
shortly bearing the title al-Tīfī.

The privately-owned newspapers are steadily progressing
in the country. Leading among them are the Arabic daily
al-Rādī, the Italian daily Giornale di Tripoli and the Arabic
weekly al-Hurrīyyah. There are also three privately-owned
English weeklies, two of which appear from Tripoli and
one from Benghazi.

The Libyan Constitution protects freedom of expression
and the press. It encourages the voicing of public opinion. The
press law of the Kingdom regulates journalistic activities
and administration on healthy lines.

The State subsidises many newspapers and offers the
facilities of its huge printing plants to many journals. The
Libyan News Agency supplies local and foreign news to
the newspapers on nominal charges.

Training courses for journalists are organised by the
News Agency in Tripoli and Benghazi. The Press Depart-
ment of the Ministry of Information and Culture maintains
a constant touch with the press and supplies it with all the
necessary facilities.

Newspaper reading is a serious occupation in the country.
People take a lively interest in world events and current
issues at home. The fact is amply demonstrated by the
readers’ columns which abound in letters to the press on
almost everything of interest.

The Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Sanusi University at Beida
Established by a Royal Decree on 29 October 1961

North Africa is the birthplace of the three oldest seats of
learning in the world. The colleges of al-Azhar in Egypt, al-
Zaytūnā in Tunisia and Qarawiyyīn of Morocco have pro-
duced the greatest scholars of the Muslim world, such as Ibn
Khalūd and Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Sanūsī. Even some of the
greatest names of Medieval Christendom were educated at
these seats of higher learning.

In the formation of the personality of modern Libya the
living traditions of these great schools have played a decisive
role. The Great Sanūsī was himself educated at Qarawiyyīn
and passed his formative years at al-Azhar. When he arrived
in Libya to start his missionary work he built a school along
with the zawiyyah at Beida. Later, when he moved to Jāhībūb,
in 1855, he created the famous Jāhībūb college of Islamic
studies which produced scholars and missionaries whose
devoted work in Central Africa was responsible for the spread
of Islam in those regions during a very critical period of
Islamic history.

After the independence of Libya, King Idrīs, following
in the footsteps of his grandfather, Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali
Sanūsī, inaugurated an institution of Islamic studies on
30 November 1952 to foster Islamic scholarship and fraternity.
On 29 October 1961 the King issued another decree raising
the status of the institute to that of a full-fledged university.
Now Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Sanūsī University ranks among
the greatest seats of Islamic learning in the Muslim world.
At present 5,264 boys and girls are studying at 109 Qur’ānic
schools run by the University scattered all over Libya. It also
runs separate Qur’ānic schools for 1,020 girls, who receive
primary education and training in domestic chores as well.

The main colleges of the University are situated in
Beida, near the site of the famous zawiyyah, constructed by
the Great Sanūsī. The three colleges of Islamic Advanced
Studies in the Shari‘ah and Advanced Studies in Arabic lan-
guage have 287 students and 36 professors. At present the
University, its 16 institutes and schools have a total of 7,971
students, including 319 foreign students from 31 countries
as far apart as the Philippines, Yugoslavia and the Cameroons.

The Great Sanūsī during his lifetime’s experience of the
Islamic world affairs was convinced that the prevailing deca-
dence in Muslim society was caused because of its gradually

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AGRICULTURE IN LIBYA

Ten Million Pounds spent on the reclamation and resettlement of derelict farms and expansion of farming under the 1963-1968 Development Plan

The cultivation of young trees on an agricultural experiment station in Benghazi is part of Libya's current emphasis on land rehabilitation and re-afforestation. More forests are badly needed, not only to produce more commercial timber, but also to protect agricultural areas from the strong sandstorms, known as Ghiblis, that are so characteristic of the country.

By the time the current Development Plan of 1963-68 is completed, Libya would have spent more than ten million pounds on the reclamation and resettlement of derelict farms and on the expansion of farming areas throughout the Kingdom. In 1967 alone the Development Budget called for an expenditure of more than three million pounds on such projects.

Along with other factors furthering agricultural development, the application of improved technology is responsible for more production per hectare. The Extension Service is thus bringing technological know-how right to the farmer's doorstep.

World War II and the Fascist occupation cost Libya nearly half its population and two-thirds of its livestock. Besides, these calamities resulted in the loss of skills and the sense of stability, as well as in the disruption of the agrarian economy. More than two-thirds of Libya's population of 1.6 million are agriculturists.

The discovery of oil in the late fifties was not an unmixed blessing in the sense that it stimulated the movement of rural population to the urban areas. This urbanization of manpower widened the gap between the home-produced food and the total demand.

Despite the rapidly rising income from petroleum in recent years, agriculture still contributes a substantial proportion of the national income. High priority was, therefore, assigned to agriculture in the first Five Year Development Plan ended March, 1968, which allocated 70 per cent of the total oil revenues to all development plans, out of which more than 17 per cent was appropriated to agriculture. Similarly, a high priority is being assigned to agriculture in the Second Five Year Plan.

In July 1963, under the guidance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a special organization known as National Agricultural Settlement Authority was created as an autonomous body entrusted with the task of preparing agricultural settlement projects, reclaiming large tracts of wasteland and encouraging individuals to develop their own lands and organize farmers' co-operatives. The NASA was also given the mandate to adopt any other means conducive to the rapid development of agriculture.

Agricultural settlement and land reclamation projects are the hallmark of the Development Plan. These include agricultural research, conservation of soil and water resources, forestry, erection of windbreaks, marketing, the extension of arable land, plant protection, agricultural credit and co-operatives.

Guided by these considerations, the Ministry of Agriculture has drawn up a comprehensive productivity and efficiency programme to be implemented by a well-organized Extension Service.

The Ministry is planning an exhaustive long and short-term training programme for its personnel, including the agricultural agents called Murshid. They are taught the basic principles of agriculture, including plant protection, horticulture, aspects of soil and water, crop production, animal husbandry, marketing and the use of farm machinery.

Other measures taken to improve the agriculture of the country are:

The Government is liberally subsidising the provision of major imports to the agricultural industry. For example, it is subsidising 50% of the cost of chemical and organic fertilizers, pesticides and concentrated animal feeds. In the case of machinery, individual farmers receive a subsidy of 25% and the co-operatives 50% of the cost. The drilling of new wells, the maintenance of the existing ones and purchase of acces-

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Libya's Foreign Policy

Solidarity and Unity amongst the Arabs

A view of the Dome of the Rock (al-Qubbah al-Sakhrah) at Jerusalem.

Libya's Foreign Policy is based on friendship, co-operation and moderation in its relations with all peace-loving countries. Libya respects all international agreements and backs all causes of freedom and independence.

Libya is an active member of the United Nations Organization and takes pride in its devotion to the principles embodied in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in its friendly relations with nations of the world.

After independence, Libya formulated its foreign policy drawing inspiration from its past, being fully aware of its present and with hopes in its future.

Libya, that had struggled long and had sacrificed much to gain its freedom, knows today what it wants from the future and appreciates its role in a world which is torn by enmity — the positive role of working for the emancipation of humanity from fear, hatred and war.

The Middle East

In its policy with the Arab States, the Government of Libya is fully aware of the critical period the Arab nation is currently passing through. It follows a clearly defined Arab policy and looks to its Arab neighbours for support and closer ties. As a member of the Arab League, it contributed its rightful share to the Arab causes, such as the Palestine problem, the Algerian case and other similar matters.

The former Prime Minister, Mr. ‘Abdul Hamid Bakkoush, recently stated:

"We are co-operating with all within our limits. We also support Islamic countries... We also wish to utilize the experience of the Mediterranean countries on the basis of mutual interest.

"We are Arabs, affected by the policy of the Arab world, and we are Africans on the Mediterranean who adopt an amiable policy towards all. We support Arab countries in their problem with Israel, and we are linked with brotherly and friendly States by relationship and experience."

Mr. Bakkoush continued to say:

"The Maghreb States are in great need of free and continuous efforts, work, development and construction. The Arab Maghreb States are strengthening their relations with each other according to mutual interests."

Israel and the Zionist Aggressors

The Libyan attitude to Israeli aggression and occupation of Arab lands is the same as that of any other Arab country. The Libyan Government is aware of Israel's aggressive intentions, which were unveiled showing the true expansionist intentions of Israel and its danger in the heart of the Arab world. It believes that Arab co-operation in all fields, whether political or diplomatic, is now required to eliminate the traces of aggression and expansionist aims and that the war with Israel will be taken as a lesson by the Arab countries to reconsider their inter-politics and inter-relations to ensure a closer co-operation, truer friendship and unity of declarations. The Libyan Government takes inspiration from the directions of King Idris, who has supported Arab and Islamic causes and has worked for their glory and prosperity.

The Government is much concerned with combining its efforts with the efforts of its sister Arab countries, and has decided to adhere to any unified Arab plan adopted by any Arab meeting at any level. It also pursues its endeavours at a diplomatic and individual level and within the framework

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of the general Arab efforts to elucidate and defend the Arab point of view.

An illustration of its concerted action against Western imperialism that was behind the Israeli aggression of June 1967 was supplied by Libya which, in collaboration with the Arab states, conscious of petroleum as being a sharp weapon in their hands, adhered most tenaciously to the resolutions of the Arab Petroleum Ministers’ Conference and other resolutions adopted by the Arab oil producing states. Libya’s position in this regard was evidently clear and plain, for it stopped pumping and exporting oil completely.

The Muslim world was laid under a deep debt of gratitude by the remarkable sacrifice which was made by the Libyan treasury and its effect on Libyan national economy and on its development projects.

The Israeli annexation of Arab areas in contravention of all laws of international justice not only means political pressure on Arab states which Libya will never accept, but it poses a threat to the Islamic way of life which the Libyan people in the recent past have fought so bravely to defend. The very existence of independent Libya is due to the successful jihad of its Sanusi leaders against the colonialist oppressors. The Libyan people of today cannot, therefore, remain indifferent to the fate of their Arab brothers when places sacred to all Muslims have fallen into the desecrating hands of the Zionist materialists, and their fellow Muslims are being deprived of their birthright. Nor can they remain indifferent to the extravagant Zionist expansionist claims, set forth so vividly in the Memoirs of Theodore Herzl, the ideologist and father of Zionism, that the boundaries of “Israel” extend from the Euphrates to the Nile and that “The slogan we must shout should be: The Palestine of David and Solomon!” Nor can they ignore the conclusions of some historians that in the Prophet Solomon’s time the course of the Nile River lay far to the west of its present course, near the present boundaries of Libya.

Therefore, when the Israeli expansionists attacked the Arab states, the Government of Libya, backed by an outburst of popular support, immediately diverted a portion of its wealth to help its stricken Arab neighbours. The generosity of its economic assistance to the Arab cause can only be appreciated in the context of the multifarious present needs of its own emerging society, where every effort is being made to achieve the economic and cultural uplift of the country in the shortest possible time.

Libya’s former Prime Minister, Mr. ’Abd al-Hamid Bakkoush, during his state visits to various European countries early this year, explained his country’s identification with the Arab cause by utilizing the opportunity to explain the Arab position to the leaders of those states and to seek their support.

In addition to practical assistance, Libya also provides its Arab brethren with an inspiring lesson from its own history of how a people armed with complete faith in God can overcome the greatest adversities and even the most powerful armies. Libya’s struggle to regain its freedom began after most of the Arab and Muslim world had already fallen under foreign domination and was therefore powerless to render the Libyan people the smallest assistance during their most crucial trials.

In answer to the Israeli threat, Libya can point not only to its heroic heritage, but to its living present. The Sanusi spirit of mutual help and co-operation which freed the country of colonizers inspires the present generation of Libyans to make every effort to reconstruct their society so that its material and spiritual benefits may be enjoyed by an ever-increasing number of its citizens. Such a society, based upon Islamic principles, will offer the best resistance to the threat of Israeli expansionism. The Government and people of Libya also realize that only a prosperous nation, achieved through the successful completion of its Development Plans, can assure a flow of material aid to its Arab brothers and sisters resisting Israeli aggression. They have learned from experience, too, that prosperity, like freedom, is not a gift but must be diligently strived for.

Africa

The Constitution of Libya defines it as a part of Africa. As an African nation, Libya feels bound to the Addis Ababa Pact.

Libya, being part of the African continent, recognizes its role in the modern African world. The bonds between Libya and the African nations are the bonds of not only common interests and aspirations but also of common suffering. Whenever an African liberation movement started demanding independence, Libya offered it its generous support. Its active support for Angola, South Africa, Rhodesia and its active participation in the Organization of African Unity are just a few examples.
Design of the proposed Jewish Temple which the Israeli leaders intended to erect on the site of the Dome of the Rock.

TURKEY and LIBYA
The President of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Jawdat Sunay (third from left), with H.M. King Idris and the Crown Prince of Libya (first from right), during his five-day State Visit to Libya.
"We confidently believe that our action must be based on forgiveness. Principles based on hatred and malevolence have vanished into the past. Our hopes today are to promote good relations and to co-operate in both prosperity and adversity. Our emotions will not be based on past circumstances, but we shall concentrate on the present, which we are building with mutual co-operation.

"We learn from lessons and one of the examples is Algeria, which has strengthened her relations and ties with France on the foundations of co-operation in all fields, and has forgotten all the circumstances of the past. The Tunisian people have done the same, also India with England, and Somalia with Italy."

**Pakistan**

In the words of the first Libyan trade delegation to Pakistan in June 1968:

"There is tremendous goodwill for Libya in Pakistan. Pakistanis have great admiration for the rapid progress Libya is making under the dynamic leadership of His Majesty King Idris."

It is hoped that the forthcoming visit of Pakistan's President, Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan, would go a long way towards strengthening the existing brotherly ties between the two.

**Turkey**

Libya and Turkey have got very old ties — the people of two brotherly countries have stood by the side of each other on many occasions. They fought and died side by side in the Great Siege of Malta led by the great Turkish General Darghont, under the bastions of Tripoli to rescue it from the foreign domination. These old relations were perpetuated with the emergence of Libya as an independent nation.

Libya and Turkey recently reached a cultural agreement in order to strengthen the existing fraternal ties under the Cultural Agreement. A trade pact was also finalized during the recent visit of President Sunay, which has opened a new field of co-operation.

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**AGRICULTURE IN LIBYA — Continued from page 41**

Sorries, are subsidised by the Government. In areas of acute shortage of water, the Government undertakes to drill wells. Further, the import of agricultural appliances, material, machinery, seeds, fuel and all such items essential for agrarian development are exempt from customs duty.

The farmers are provided with interest-free long-term loans payable over a period of 15 years. Medium or short-term loans are also advanced for operational purposes.

Since 1961 the Government has undertaken the stabilization of prices of the major crops. A chain of warehouses helps the Government to purchase and store all marketable products.

In 1967 three in-service training courses were organised with the assistance of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations. Facilities for under-graduate as well as post-graduate training in the various fields of agriculture are also made available to officers in foreign universities.

A comprehensive study of natural resources, especially surface and underground water and soil, has been undertaken.

A comparison between the available production figures for 1956-60 and 1964-65 discloses that the production of wheat has increased by 67%, citrus 123%, potatoes 134%, tomatoes 642% and olives by 210%.

Although the above figures are very encouraging, Libya has to go a very long way to achieve its goal. Determined efforts are, therefore, being made to devote appropriate attention to the agricultural sector in the second Five-Year Development Plan.
The Growing Economy of Libya
The story of Oil in Libya

Pre-Petroleum Libya

In 1951—the year Libya declared independence—her main source of income was agriculture. The presence of oil had been detected, but the drilling operations had not yet been started.

Today the economic picture has improved beyond all expectations. Standards of living have risen and for the first time in centuries, Libya is financially in the black. A dramatic change has been brought about in the economy of the country, transforming her from the state of want to the state of plenty.

Post-Petroleum Libya

The effect of the oil industry in Libya is the rise in both incomes and prices. Automobiles, radios and television sets are present in a country whose annual per capita was £12 per annum at the time of independence in 1951. In 1966 this figure had reached £600 per annum.

Even as late as 1954 the economy of Libya was far from encouraging. The total Libyan exports came to £1,366,800 while imports amounted to £11,198,000—a deficit of over £11,750,000. This dangerous economic imbalance looked even worse two years later when the trade deficit rose to £12,447,000.

For seven long years the government struggled with the problem and, at last, success was achieved with the help of oil which began to flow in commercial quantities from the rich Libyan deposits. By 1963 the financial equilibrium showed unmistakable signs of recovery with the favourable trade balance of £35,168,000. In the following year this surplus was more than trebled. Today, 26 international petroleum companies are drilling for oil. Experts predict that, within a couple of years, oil will flow out of Libya’s wells at the rate of two million barrels daily. Libya is on the map of the world.

Prior to Libya’s independence 16 years ago, her economy had been ruined by the Italian administration. Italy had almost succeeded in turning Libya into its fourth base in order to buttress and finance her war efforts. At that time agriculture was the main source of income. Seventy per cent of the people lived on the land. The first task of the new government was obviously to take steps to improve and modernise this industry. There was at that time a great lack of motivating force in the private sector and it was left to the government to begin developing the country’s agricultural resources as well as to accelerate her general economic progress. This led to a number of important changes in the then skeleton economic system. Fortunately, at that period, some of the petroleum companies were operating in Libya than in any other country in the world. One adverse effect of this, however, was that the farm labourers went over to the oil fields. Realizing this problem, the government implemented its Five-Year Plan to utilize the petroleum revenues in support of agriculture and of industrial and economic development. A huge sum of £169,799,000 was earmarked for this purpose. This impressive budget was financed entirely from Libyan resources.

The major part of the Five-Year Plan was to develop agricultural resources, without which no country can achieve social security. In spite of the fact that Libya is a vast country, it has a population of only 1,559,339. No wonder that the burden of the economic development must be borne by the government. It is up to the government to finance the agricultural expansion, establish modern factories, encourage the tourist trade and to subsidise economic projects even in the private sector.

The Story of Oil

In the midst of the current healthy boom of the Libyan petroleum industry, it is sometimes forgotten that there were anxious times in the early days when oilmen needed every drop of faith they had in their instruments and experience to keep going.

In 1953 a Minerals Law permitted surface exploration in all parts of the country, and two years later a Petroleum Law, framed after discussions with oil companies, set the search for oil going in earnest.

The former Prime Minister of Libya, Mr. ‘Abd al-Hamid Bakkoush (left) opening the Seventh International Trade Fair at Tripoli on 28 February 1968.

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In the early 1950s it was by no means certain that there was oil in the Sahara. Across the border in Algeria favourable signs had been found. Optimism was not enough. Any full-scale search would involve investments of many millions of dollars. But the oil companies were encouraged by Libya's oil laws which set terms under which they could work comfortably.

Italian oilmen had made unsuccessful explorations in the 1930s. Exploration techniques had improved enormously in 20 years, but it was still something to be remembered.

British geologists, too, had made some exploratory examinations of the Libyan desert during the British Administration in the late 1940s but were not over-enthusiastic. They concluded that any oil search should be left to private enterprise. The risk was believed too great for a government to take. Failure would involve the loss of too much public money.

It was against this uncertain background, then, that in 1955, when Libya's Petroleum Law was promulgated, several of the world's largest oil companies applied for concessions. At this stage the areas requested were chosen by inspired guesswork rather than by any real scientific knowledge.

and supplies allowed. It was a hard, adventurous life and it attracted some of the best men in the industry.

After concessions were granted, the search became methodical, scientific and very expensive. Permits under the Minerals Law were taken out by 12 companies. Most of them were American, but there were also British, Dutch and French interests. Concessions in hand, they moved into the desert with geophysical exploration teams.

This was early in 1956 and the effect of the search on Libya's economy was immediate. An influx of foreign technicians meant a demand for housing which launched building booms in Tripoli and Benghazi that still continue. Hotels filled for the first time since World War II.

Bombed and war-wrecked plots in Tripoli and Benghazi which had been eyesores for years blossomed with modern apartment and business blocks. The suburbs pushed outwards into charming country as villas and transport yards and factories were built.

The arrival of oilmen was also felt immediately in every other sphere of the country's life. Camps in the Sahara needed food and services, machines needed mechanics and tenders, and men and supplies needed transportation. The desert had to be cleared of land-mines left by the armies which fought there for three years from 1940. Communications had to be established by land, air and radio, and maps had to be drawn from surveyors' data.

Life changed, too, in the Sahara's oases. The oil camps drew labour from the surrounding countryside as well as from the towns and the coast. Men whose lives had been spent in or around their own tribal country went away with the oilmen. They lived where they worked in tents or in caravans. They earned good wages and had regular working hours and conditions. Within weeks of the search's beginning it became clear that, whatever its results in terms of oil, it had introduced new ways of living to the Sahara which brought an end to the old.

Libya's first exploratory well was started by the Libyan-American Oil Company in April 1956 in northern Cyrenaica. Although it was a dry hole, the drilling of the first hole so soon after the granting of concessions meant that the search was off to a fast start.

Within a few months most companies holding concessions were drilling, and by the end of 1957 there were about 4,000 people directly employed in the industry. There were probably five times that number in trades connected with the needs of the oil camps. Libya had never had such large scale employment, nor had so much money ever before been earned in wages.

In January 1958, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (affiliate of Esso Libya) found the first oil. It was with a well in Concession One, far into the Sahara, south of the Great Libyan Sand Sea and near the border with Algeria, where the French had already found oil. This well, at Atshan, yielded only 500 barrels of oil a day, not enough to make it a commercial producer. Attempts to find more failed, and after drilling 11 more wells in the area, all of them dry, Esso moved its rigs to another concession.

Companies in other parts of the country met with even less success, and apart from another discovery in the Syrtica Desert, 100 miles from the coast and about 400 miles west of Tripoli, made by Oasis Oil in July of the same year, drilling yielded nothing. By the end of 1958 the oil world was beginning to wonder if Libya was, indeed, likely ever to be the
Tripoli's shopping centre.

The International Trade Fair Building at Tripoli.
bonanza that had been hoped. To the $70 million spent during that year by oil companies in Libya, there had to be added perhaps another $60 million spent during the previous four.

The Libyan oil search, so intense and concentrated into so short a period was becoming very expensive, and to date there was nothing to show for it. Cynics, possibly from companies which had not themselves applied for concessions, began to call it the biggest dry-hole boom the world had ever known. Even the operating companies began to re-examine their budgets. Was it worth while to spend good money after bad?

Six months later the big discovery was made.

It was made by Esso at Zelten in the Syrtica, a well that gushed 17,500 barrels a day in June 1959. Within a few weeks other big-yielding wells were drilled nearby. Libya was in the oil business with a good chance of success. The disappointments of the early years were soon forgotten, and the search by most companies concentrated on the Syrtica. In 1959 nearly $100 million was spent by prospecting companies. New discoveries and development wells became almost a commonplace, plans for pipelines to harbours on the coast were made, and by October 1961 the first tanker, the Esso Canterbury, was loaded with oil from the Zelten field, and Libya entered the oil-export business.

The years of activity in the desert were matched by activity in the towns where supply, transportation and manufacturing industries had become established. Such a big increase in demand for public works and services as the discovery of commercial oil made, brought unprecedented opportunities to Libyans to enter trades and professions that were never before necessary, or possible, with the country's limited agricultural economy.

There was work for everyone, skilled and unskilled. The skilled could go directly into the oil company technical services and to the engineering and mechanical industries that had been launched to make the goods the desert-based oilmen needed. For the unskilled, jobs were available in catering, building, provisions, entertaining and other service trades. Libya, indeed, became a country with a booming economy.

The production of crude oil in Libya topped the 1½ billion barrel mark in the first half of 1966. During the first six months of this year, exports totalled 254,510,161 barrels. By the end of June 1,262,586,019 barrels of crude oil had been produced and 1,249,384,873 barrels exported.

Natural Gas

A fresh and significant chapter is opening with the plans to make industrial and commercial use of natural gas. Gas produced with the crude oil, and presently burned off, amounts to more than 300 billion cubic feet per year, and in addition there are several gas-fields not yet in use. Studies are now in hand on the feasibility of wide-spread employment of gas as a source of cheap fuel, in line with the current trends in modern industrial countries.

One important, concrete step in gas utilization has been the beginning of a huge project to refrigerate and liquify associated gas and ship it to European ports in special tankers, whence it will be fed into distribution lines. Long term contracts were signed last autumn to ship 345 million cubic feet per day to outlets in Italy and Spain. This represents the largest international sale of natural gas ever made. Principal units for the plant, to be installed at Marsa Brega, have already been ordered, so the project can be completed in 1968. Libya will add a new commodity to its exports, achieving a new source of revenue to be devoted to national betterment.

Esso is spending E£70,000,000 on the world's biggest liquid gas factory which will be located at Port Brega. The first exports of Libyan natural gas are expected before the end of next year. Italy and Spain will take, respectively, 235 and 110 million cubic feet of gas a day for the next 20 years.

Libya's considerable achievements in the development of its petroleum resources, thus briefly summarized, make clear that a firm basis has been laid for further national progress. Libya is determined to build soundly on this foundation.

Trade and Commerce trends (other than oil)

The value of imports during the first quarter of 1966 amounted to £L34.8 million, which is about £L13 million higher than its level during the corresponding period of 1965. The total exports and re-exports (other than petroleum) amounted to £L503,000 and £L570,000, respectively, as against £L627,000 and £L855,000 during the same quarter of the last year.

Exports of crude oil, which represented 99.4 per cent of total domestic exports, exceeded their level during the first quarter of 1965 by about £L17.2 million and amounted to £L80.3 million (actual price).

Imports under all sections showed a sharp increase during the period under review, particularly those of machinery and transport equipment which rose by £L6.9 million or 99.1 per cent and composed 39.7 per cent of total imports. This was mainly due to a rise in imports of vehicles for all purposes, by £L2.9 million; electrical and parts by £L1.2 million and agricultural machinery and equipment by £L0.6 million.

The value of manufactured goods imported during the period under review amounted to £L8.4 million, recording an increase of £L2.6 million or 43.3 per cent over their level of the comparative period 1965. The main increase was in the imports of construction materials which rose by £L613,000; iron tubes and pipes which rose by £L434,000 and steel parts and tanks which rose by £L359,000.

Food and live animal imports rose by £L1.4 million (43.5 per cent) compared with the first quarter of 1965, and con-

LIBYA SUPPLEMENT

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stituted 13.4 per cent of total imports. This was mainly the result of an increase in the imports of cereals, wheat flour and live animals by £L.399,000, £L.219,000 and £L.202,000 respectively.

Miscellaneous manufactured articles also rose by £L.1.0 million (40.7 per cent) and amounted to £L.3.6 million. The bulk of this increase resulted from imports of furniture and parts thereof which rose by £L.327,000 (92.9 per cent) and clothing and footwear which rose by £L.400,000 (39.2 per cent).

Imports of raw material showed an increase of £L.205,000 due to a rise in the imports of wood and cork by £L.245,000. While imports of oils and fats and beverages and tobacco showed a very large percentage of increase, they accounted for only a very small fraction of total imports.

The total domestic exports (other than petroleum) amounted to £L.503,000 as against £L.627,000 during the first quarter of the last year.

The largest decrease was in the exports of esparto grass which dropped from £L.151,000 (24 per cent of total exports) during January-March 1965 to £L.15,000 (3 per cent) during the present quarter. There was another significant decline in the exports of castor oil seeds by 63 per cent, almond and citrus fruits by 45.1 per cent and groundnuts by 9.3 per cent, while the exports of livestock and products and scrap metal rose by 60.9 per cent and 50 per cent and their ratio to total exports increased to 27.8 and 12.5 per cent, respectively.
Oil is music

Few modern inventions have brought so much pleasure—and usefulness—as the transistor radio. Always there with music, news and education, it brings the world to everyone's side. The well-styled sturdy cases that protect transistors are made from oil-based plastics. BP brings oil to life; transforms it into the thousand-and-one products wanted by the peoples of every country. This not only generates the money for payments to the oil-producing countries; it also provides revenue enabling the oil-companies to create new demands for oil products. And so the cycle, which has benefited all, is complete—ready to turn again.
SOCIAL SERVICES IN LIBYA
King Idris Housing Project costing £L400 million
Medical Service Free to All

According to the Libyan Government figures the total number of doctors working in Libya in 1966 was 759, with 112 laboratory technicians, as compared to a total of 228 doctors and medical specialists in 1959.

The Arab family and tribal tradition of responsibility for the aged and the destitute is proving very helpful to the State in the organization of social welfare work.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare plays a vital role in safeguarding the rights of labour, in addition to sponsoring insurance and youth clubs, as well as scientific training and other organizations.

SOCIAL SERVICE TRAINING INSTITUTES

The two social service training institutes in Tripoli and Benghazi give a four-year course to 91 internal students. Expectant mothers receive pre-natal care and instruction, and children of three to six years are looked after by special care centres. Four family-care centres are operating in Tripoli, Misurata, Benghazi and Derna. Special mobile units, equipped with a wide range of audio-visual aids, tour the scattered villages and rural areas.

Women, through their Ministry-supported social associations, are now coming forward to meet the challenge of the technological age.

Homes are provided for those unfortunate people without family. On 2 February 1967 the Cabinet granted special allowances to the destitute and to large families. INAS (the National Insurance Organization) administers hospitals, clinics and other services. The co-operative movement has been extended to farming, fisheries and handicrafts, the target being a co-operative store for each village.

The Ministry is also responsible for the religious needs of the community and runs special units for the medical care of and help to pilgrims to Mecca.

THE KING IDRIS HOUSING PROJECT

The goal of the King Idris Housing Plan is 100,000 housing units within the Five-Year Development Plan and then 13,000 annually, 60% of such dwellings to be built in the countryside. In addition, 110,000 existing houses are scheduled for major repairs. A special property bank advances generous long-term and low-interest loans to about 3,500 every year in owner-occupied houses. Through the establishment of a separate Ministry of Housing and State Property, it is anticipated that the target of the Plan will be achieved. The Project, when completed, will have cost the national exchequer £L400 million.

The Project was inaugurated on 9 August 1965. Under the Project new model villages are being constructed and old villages are being developed.

MEDICARE FOR ALL

"Two decades ago there were hardly any medical services available to Libyan citizens outside the big towns. Even there, these were beyond the reach of ordinary people except under conditions of great emergency."

"It was no easy matter for our newly-independent nation, with its resources drained by foreign occupation and wars, to eradicate from its soil the legacy of disease..."
Not too long ago children, like these, would have had little to look forward to in life other than the knowledge that they would have poor living conditions, too little food, and no chance at all of receiving any schooling. Today, the picture has changed radically. These tots, all of them about three years of age, are taken to Tripoli’s Welfare Centre at about eight o’clock in the morning, where they stay until three in the afternoon. In addition to receiving two free meals a day — meals carefully planned for their nutrient value — they are supervised by fully qualified staff, taught how to look after themselves, and are able to spend their free time in pleasant surroundings. Here, Mr. Na’ir al-Madani, Assistant Director General of Social Affairs, looks at work produced by this class.

and pestilence. We simply did not have a health service . . . at the time of independence, especially in the smaller towns and countryside.” (Mr. Omar Jaodah, Minister of Health.)

The health services in Libya are being streamlined under a seven-member Health Council. The post-Independence period is marked by a sincere attempt on the part of the national government to create a nation-wide free health service and to raise it to modern standards.

To begin with, whatever derelict hospitals, clinics and health centres existed were reorganised and at the same time mobile clinics were despatched to remote villages and settlements. In addition, a number of young men and women were selected for training abroad to provide a nucleus for the proposed national health service. Attempts were made, right from the start, to make full use of the mass media to educate people in personal hygiene, sanitation and first-aid. Even before the country started receiving oil revenues, places like Tobruk, Cyrene and Ifrin on the edge of the Sahara had their first local hospitals.

Once the financial problem was solved by the newly derived oil revenues, a comprehensive project to create a free-for-all medical care service was launched under the First Five-Year Development Plan 1963-68, at a cost of £12,500,000.

Under the state budget increased sums were allocated for health. In 1965-66 these were £4,040,000 and in 1966-67 such allocations amounted to £4,900,000 for a population of less than two million.

Luckily, a few years ago a number of young Libyan doctors, nurses and other staff of both sexes joined the Ministry of Health. However, efforts to train Libyan doctors and nurses are still continuing. At present 185 students are studying abroad at medical colleges. The Ministry of Health has also adopted a programme for training technicians, laboratory and hospital staff. A few years back, a nursing school was opened in Tripoli offering a two-year course and a training school in mother and child care. In Benghazi, a health training centre coaches health inspectors, hospital technicians and male nurses. Plans are afoot to start a health school in Benghazi and a midwifery training school outside Tripoli.

The two proposed central hospitals in Tripoli and Benghazi, with 650 beds, expandable to 1,200 beds, will be sufficiently equipped to meet the needs of a medical college for training doctors and nurses. At present a number of Libyan post-graduate students are studying abroad who may in due course take up teaching at the college which, besides providing enough doctors for the country, may be in a position to offer seats to students from the neighbouring countries.

HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

The Ministry of Health has recruited more than 1,000 doctors and nurses from Britain and more are being recruited from Ireland, Malta, Pakistan and other countries. Because of the vast area of the country, health planners are trying to establish medical services all over the length and breadth of its territory. The extent of progress achieved in the development of health services may well be understood when compared with 1959, when there were no more than 180 doctors in the Kingdom. In 1960 there were 261 and by 1966 the number rose to 759, in which year there were also 112
laboratory technicians and 402 nurses employed by the Ministry. In 1966 there were 7,163 hospital beds compared to 5,713 in 1965. Twelve health centres have been opened, each of which operates three clinics in the surrounding area. These centres and clinics have brought free medical service to the very doorstep of every citizen in the vast country. Some of the health centres and clinics are situated in remote oases right in the heart of the Sahara. Another 15 such health centres and 45 clinics are now under construction. An entire fleet of mobile clinics operates all over the country, serving the needs of pastoral families scattered over the steppe and sparsely populated desert area.

The Five-Year Development Plan allocated £4,250,000 to construct new hospitals with 2,143 beds, to bring the hospitalisation facilities to the standard of 5 beds for each 1,000 persons. Besides, existing hospitals are being modernised with the introduction of more up-to-date equipment and the addition of new wards and sections. Work has already started on the Sidi Masri Hospital outside Tripoli and five more new hospitals of 120 beds each are also under construction.

The programme for the eradication of the common Mediterranean diseases started by the Ministry of Health is already in an advanced stage, malaria having been completely eradicated.

All the ten administrative units in the country have T.B. centres. The trachoma control section of the Ministry is operating with a fleet of 20 mobile units in the countryside, providing on-the-spot treatment.

Strict inspection of foodstuffs and provisions is maintained by the health authorities. The Health Publicity Section of the Ministry conducts regular radio broadcasts, organizes lectures and distributes booklets on topics of health and hygiene. It also runs a mobile film unit which exhibits films on health care.

Compulsory free inoculations are given to 270,000 school-children through the School Health Service.

Above:
A Libyan woman dentist with a motherly touch.

Right:
A typical hospital ward in Tripoli.
Modernization of social services is in full swing all over Libya.
The Government and the Youth of Libya

Sports Cities in Benghasi and Tripoli comparable to similar centres in the world

A bird's-eye view of the Sports Stadium at Tripoli.

The Establishment of the Ministry of Sports

The young generation is the hope and future of the nation. Leaders emerge from it and on its shoulders falls the responsibility of guiding the country towards a world of advancement and civilization. That is why the Kingdom of Libya mobilizes all its resources and capabilities for the purpose of raising a generation of leaders and loyal soldiers, a stronger, more mature, more ambitious generation.

Sports, being one of the best methods of bringing out the best in the youth of a country, have received the special attention of the Government, which offers all forms of assistance to youth organizations and helps set a sound plan (worked out in accordance with thorough educational, scientific and psychological studies) to guide them. To this end a committee exists in Libya to supervise, guide and make plans for the promoting of the sports movement in Libya.

The Libyan Government attaches so much importance to sports and physical culture that it has a special Ministry of Sports.

Athletic Institutions

For the last two years the government has been working on the implementation of the biggest athletic projects in the modern history of Libya — the construction of two sports cities in Tripoli and Benghasi. The project has cost about £1.6 million. Each city, covering 84 hectares, consists of:

1. A gymnasium;
2. Five football and gymnastics fields. Three of them are all-weather pitches and the other two are grass covered;
3. A tennis court;
4. A swimming pool for the training, swimming and diving, and a covered swimming pool;
5. Shooting, polo and golf grounds;
6. A theatre, a club and administrative offices;
7. Special quarters for visiting sports teams and living quarters for administrative supervisors; and,
8. The sports cities have facilities for television and radio coverage, public address systems, bus stations, roads and car parks. They are comparable to similar centres in the world.

Both the pools and stadiums are floodlit and will seat 30,000 people.

There are 78 cultural and athletic clubs with 5,000 members in Libya. All kinds of sports are played, especially football, basketball, swimming, gymnastics, bicycle racing and boxing.

A committee, which supervises all athletic activities with the help of general and branch federations, organizes local tournaments to create the true competitive spirit among the youth. It also organizes competitions on the international level. The Libyan youth has proved its worth in these events, capturing many victories for their country in Arab and international tournaments.

Youth Care Centres

These centres are being built in the various governorates under the supervision of experts in social affairs. Their aim is to provide planned entertainment for young people, consisting of athletic, cultural and social activities designed to cultivate their physical, moral, psychological and social development.
BENGHAZI

The White City, Capital of Cyrenaica and co-Capital of Libya

BENGHAZI BEACH

When of a night the moon, arrayed in festive robe,
Comes soaring from the void, a bright resplendent globe,
She scatters sparkling gems upon the palm-tree fronds
And sets the earth aglow with her bright gilding wands.
Oh, what a wondrous sight this eery, fairy scene,
So soul-uplifting and so full of charm serene!
The town, which shone so white, assumes an ivory hue,
And like an amber plain the desert glows anew;
The broad expanse of sea has molten silver sheen;
Each hedge seems to be cut from emerald pure and green;
The stars, choice gems agleam in velvety black sky,
Look down on Barqa’s hills that rear their peaks so high
And twine like garlands green protectingly around
This marvellous domain, so steeped in peace profound.

* * *

Enchanting town! enthroned in golden desert sand,
Your snowy walls reflected in the dark blue sea,
May Allah keep you in the hollow of his hand
And be your friend in need throughout eternity!
One glimpse of you makes parting, oh, so hard,
For potent spells you cast on me when I am off my guard;
Your cloudless sky, how can it from my memory fade?
It clings around my heart as does your winsome morn.
Arabian nights, bizarre bazaars and perfumes sweet
Forever shall I long for you and fondly greet,
Benghazi!

* * *

MOONLIGHT PRAYERS AT THE MOSQUE OF BENGHAZI

Deserted lanes are steeped in violet shades,
   No light streams from the windows near or far,
The moonlight with its eery glow pervades
   The now so silent suc and still bazaar,
Before the mosque a clump of stately palms
   Bends in the breeze performing grave salaams;
While moon-rays glint and flit from frond to frond,
   And cast reflections on the rippling pond.
Soft plashes come from rusty, reedy strand,
   But dormant lies the stretch of desert sand,
The minaret looms towards the sparkling sky,
   Its crescent longs to join the stars on high.
Familiar sounds are wafted on the breeze
   Of crickets chirping in a myriad keys,
Of frogs croak within their moist abode,
   Of camel bells along some distant road . . .
A sense of peace and soothing rest
   Comes stealing over every harassed breast
As grateful prayers for so much sound and sight
   Ascend to Allah on this blissful night.

LONGING

I have been to many lands
Most of them I don’t remember,
There is just one place which stands
Living in the desert amber.
Beautiful Benghazi has
Been a second home to me
Since I lived within its walls
It stayed in my memory.
Here Fatima’s gentle hand
Bade the caravans farewell,
Palm-trees rustling in the sand,
Jasmine blossoms’ heavy smell.
Here, according to the fable,
Grew the fruit of the Hesperides,
Luscious golden apples, able
To tempt even Hercules.
Gentle music of a song
Floats to me through stilly nights
To Benghazi I belong
There is where my soul delights.
Longing lingers in my heart
To return to this fair garden,
Could I but once more depart
To Benghazi — Allah’s Garden.

* * *

TO HER MY SONGS I’LL SING!

Why proffer gold and gems to me?
Why offer wealth, a beauteous maid?
For none of these my cravings be,
I hanker after no high grade,
But still I have one great desire
That fills my heart with flaming fire:
Return Benghazi unto me
That my best song ring out in glee,
For her alone my longings are,
She is my steadfast guiding star,
To her I’ll sing with all my heart
Until Benghazi I regain,
Or till all hope be void and vain,
And I from life must sadly part:
Give me Benghazi once again!

Kurt Vordermaier
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