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In the background is the white pillar on the Mount of Mercy (Jabal al-Rahmah) marking the spot where on 23 February 632 C.E., the Prophet Muhammad delivered his historic Farewell Pilgrimage Address before a vast concourse of 120,000-140,000 pilgrims. (See the Text of the Address on page 34 inside.)

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(The Qur'ân, 33 : 40)

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

The First Ever Historic Islamic Summit Conference held at Rabat, Morocco
(22—24 September, 1969)

The Heads of Muslim States and Governments representing Afghanistan, Algeria, Chad, Guinea, the Muslims of India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Su'udif Arabia, Kuwait, the Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Pakistan, Somali Republic, Southern Yemen, the Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Republic, and the Yemen met at the First Islamic Summit Conference held at Rabat during the period 9-11 Rajab 1389 A.H. equivalent to 22-24 September 1969 C.E. The Conference was attended also by representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization as Observers.

* * *
Ten Heads of State who attended were: President Yahyá Khan of Pakistan, His Imperial Majesty Muhammad Reza, Sháhansháh of Iran, His Majesty King Faysal of Su’údí Arabia, His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan, His Highness The Amir Sabáh Salem of Kuwait, President Houari Boumedienne of Algeria, President Mokhtar Ould Daddah of Mauretania, President ‘Abdirashid ‘Ali Shermarke of Somalia and President ‘Abdur Rahmán al-Iryáni of the Yemen and His Majesty King Hasan of Morocco.

Afghanistan sent its Prime Minister, His Excellency Noor Ahmad Etemádi, and Malaysia its Prime Minister, His Highness Tengku ‘Abdur Rahmán.

The United Arab Republic was represented by its Vice-President Anwar Sádát. The Sudan had sent its Vice-Premier Khalifah ‘Alláh Babekr. Tunisia was represented by Dr. Sadok Mokaddem, President of its National Assembly, the Lebanon by His Excellency Sabry Hamdy, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies. Turkey was represented by its Foreign Minister, His Excellency Ihsan Sabrí Caglayangil. Other countries—Guinea, Indonesia, Libya, Mali, Niger, Senegal and South Yemen—were represented by Ministers or personal representatives of the Heads of State.

Along with Syria and Iraq, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Maldives Islands, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tanzania had declined to attend.

King Hasan of Morocco

Inaugurating the Conference, King Hasan said it was the Summit’s duty to restore Islam to its rightful place and “cleanse it of the insult of the enemy in burning our holy places”, adding that the Muslim peoples should now forget their differences and draw together to face their declared enemy. King Hasan also implied that the Summit should not only debate the Mosque blaze but the whole Middle East question. “It is also our duty not to lose sight during our deliberations of that problem which various United Nations resolutions have failed to solve. 600 million Muslims are expecting us not to forget our Palestinian brothers who are now living in misery and outside their homeland.” He hoped the resolutions the Summit would adopt would enable the Muslim world “to lift its head again.”

Shah of Iran

The Sháh of Irán then rose to propose King Hasan formally as the Summit’s chairman, a proposal accepted by unanimous cheers. The Sháh said the unprecedented Summit should not be the last. He appealed for Muslim unity and said that he believed that “in following the path of wisdom we will be able to make ourselves respected and make our contribution to the human kind.”

President Muhammad Yahya Khan of Pakistan

Addressing the Islamic Summit on the second day, President Muhammad Yahyá Khán said, “the Conference should dispel the impression of the Western countries who seem to believe that the situation in the Middle East and the sacrilege of al-Aqsa Mosque are matters of concern to the Arab countries only.” He pointed out that the world of Islam from Indonesia to Maghreb had been moved as seldom before by the challenge flung at it, indeed, at the civilised world, mankind’s noblest traditions, values and sentiments. He declared that in the lengthening perspective of time, the “burning of the al-Aqsa Mosque would appear as a turning point.” He reiterated Pakistan’s determination to concert action with Muslim countries to bring about withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territory and for the restoration of Jerusalem.

“The sacrilege of al-Aqsa Mosque has brought into bold relief the question of Jerusalem itself which is Islam’s first Qiblah and remains to be of profound spiritual significance to one-fifth of humanity.
“The situation facing us today is grim. Our holy places and Jerusalem are under Israeli occupation. The plight of the Arab refugees is a reproach to the conscience of the world and a constant reminder of the injustice perpetrated on them.”

Emphasising the need for Islamic unity, he recalled the decisive role played by Islam in our struggle for attainment of political independence, and that Pakistan, ever since the Balfour Declaration in 1917, had constantly supported the Arab cause, “which we have looked upon as the collective Islamic cause of Palestine.

“We want to protect our Holy Places and secure justice, dignity and equality. We shall ask for no more, but shall accept no less.

“Pakistan’s stand on Palestine is rooted in the sentiments of solidarity with the Arab brothers, in the universally recognised principles of justice and morality and Pakistan’s opposition to colonialism and racialism in all forms.”

Referring to the Summit, the Pakistan President continued, “the meeting of the Heads of Muslim States representing 600 million Muslims is an event of historic importance. It is a demonstration of the strength of the bonds that unite Muslims all over the world. What is more, the Conference reflects the universality and the intensity of the Muslim feelings of resentment, grief and anger at the outrage in al-Aqṣā Mosque.” He called for the renaissance of Islamic values and thought to meet the present challenges.

“We have to make up for lost time or else we will not be able to defend our rights and preserve our heritage.

“We have a long and difficult road ahead, but we need not abandon hope. The position is not irretrievable, but it cannot be restored by each of us acting separately. United, we will be a force to be reckoned with.”

President Nāṣir

The Vice-President of the United Arab Republic, Anwar Sādāt read the message of President Nāṣir, who was not able to attend due to illness. In this message President Nāṣir said, “Your Governments know the Arab struggle against Zionism backed by imperialism. The fire set to al-Aqṣā Mosque was a premeditated act and only one aspect of a picture which threatens, not only the Arab nation but free people throughout the world, who are now able to measure the full dimensions of this threat.”

Agenda

The Palestine Liberation Organisation was admitted to participate in the Summit as Observers.

The Summit discussed on 23 September a new agenda of seven points: (1) The al-Aqṣā Mosque disaster, (2) The situation in Jerusalem, (3) Withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories, (4) Restitution of the rights of Palestinians and full support to Islamic countries in their struggle for national liberation, (5) Implementation of Summit decisions and setting the date and place for the next meeting of foreign ministers, (6) Co-operation between Muslim states, (7) Adoption of a joint attitude on all these questions.

After a long secret session, Moroccan Foreign Minister Laraki, as spokesman of the Conference, said all those who spoke in the session protested against the al-Aqṣā Mosque fire and expressed their fears for the fate of all holy places in Jerusalem. They stressed the imperative need to consolidate Islamic solidarity and to press for evacuation of all occupied Arab territories.

The Text of the Communiqué

(Translated from the Arabic Daily, al-Anwār, Beirut, The Lebanon, Beirut for 26th September 1969.)

“Convinced that the unity of their religious beliefs is an important element in bringing about closer relations and understanding between their peoples;

“Determined to pursue a policy in line with Islamic spiritual, social and economic values which remain the most vital factors for promoting human progress;

“Expressing their firm belief in the teachings of Islam, which have established the principle of complete equality in rights for all mankind;

“Affirming their adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the principles and aims of which have laid a strong foundation for fruitful co-operation between all peoples;

“Anxious to strengthen the fraternal and spiritual relations which bind their peoples together, and to preserve their common freedom and civilization based especially on the principles of justice, tolerance and the rejection of racial discrimination, and desirous of promoting prosperity, achieving progress and promoting freedom throughout the world;

“And resolved to unify their efforts for the protection of world peace and security;

“For all these purposes, the members of the Conference proclaim the following:

* * *

“Their Governments will consult with one another for the purpose of bringing about close co-operation and mutual assistance in the economic,
scientific, cultural and spiritual spheres and for safeguarding the teachings of Islam, and will endeavour to achieve a settlement of international disputes in accordance with the principles and aims of the United Nations.

“The Heads of Muslim States and Governments and their representatives, after discussing the criminal act of setting fire to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā and the situation in the Middle East, make the following declaration:

“The distressing event which occurred on 21 August 1969 C.E., when fire caused serious damage in the Holy al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, has given rise to most profound anxiety in the hearts of the more than 600 million Muslims throughout the world. The act of the desecration of a shrine considered to be one of the most sacred religious shrines in the world, and the damage done to holy places and their violation, all of which have taken place during the Israeli armed military occupation of Jerusalem — the City which is held sacred by all those who profess the religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism — have increased tension in the Middle East and angered all peoples throughout the world.

“The Heads of State and Governments, and their representatives believe that the danger threatening Muslim religious shrines in the City of Jerusalem is the result of the Israeli forces’ occupation of this City, and that the preservation of the holy character of these places, and the guaranteeing of the freedom of access to and movement in them, require that Jerusalem should be restored to the status it had acquired throughout 1,037 years of history;

“In pursuance of this belief they declare that their Governments and peoples are firm in their resolve to reject any solution of the Palestine problem which would not ensure the freedom of Jerusalem and its status prior to June 1967; they also request all governments, and particularly the Governments of France, the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain, to take into consideration the Muslims’ strong attachment to the City of Jerusalem and the firm determination of their governments to endeavour to liberate it; they also declare that their peoples and governments have deep anxiety about the continuation of Israeli military occupation of Arab territory since June 1967 and Israel’s refusal to pay the slightest heed to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly which called for the revocation of all measures for the annexation of Jerusalem.

* * * *

“Faced with this serious situation the Heads of Islamic States and Governments and their representatives solemnly call upon all the members of the family of nations, and particularly the Big Powers who have special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace, to exert greater collective and individual efforts to bring about the speedy withdrawal of Israeli forces from all territory occupied in the June 1967 war. This would be in accordance with the principle which declares as illegitimate the acquisition of territory through military invasion.

“In pursuance of their profound feeling for the tragedy of Palestine, the members of the Conference offer their full solidarity to the Palestinian people for the restoration of their usurped rights and for continuing the struggle for the liberation of their homeland, and they affirm their belief in the pursuit of a peaceful solution provided it is based on justice.”

* * * *

The 1,200 word Declaration said further: “Their Governments shall consult together with a view to promoting between themselves close cooperation and mutual assistance in the economic, scientific, cultural and spiritual fields, inspired by the immortal teachings of Islam.

“Their Governments undertake to settle by peaceful means any dispute which may arise between them in such a manner as to contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security in accordance with the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

King Hasan II, of Morocco, has decided to rename 25 mosques in Morocco after the names of the countries which participated in the Islamic Summit Conference.
The Rabat Summit lays the basis for future Muslim Summits

The Summit in its first session had laid the basis for future Muslim Summits when it provided for the setting up of a permanent Secretariat to maintain liaison between the Muslim countries and co-ordinate their individual actions. It was decided that Foreign Ministers of Muslim countries should meet in Jeddah on 20 March 1970 to review the result of joint action achieved since the Summit and to form a permanent Secretariat for maintaining inter-Muslim relations.

* * *

Some excerpts from King Hasan's speech at the conclusion of the Summit Conference

Thanking the delegates for participation in the Conference, King Hasan said,

“We come from all corners of the globe, from the remotest point in the east and from the farthest point in the west. We are separated by differences, by seas, by regions and by continents. We came here and before today we did not co-ordinate any of our actions. We came here although we had not met before; we came here although some did not know the others. This meeting is, above all, a miracle of God, and it is a miracle of God that this Conference has agreed. This Conference produced yet another result: it decided that it shall not be the first and the last. Hence among its resolutions we find that our Foreign Ministers are to meet in March next year in Jeddah, in the land of the Holy Places, to deliberate and exchange views in order to set up a permanent secretariat for this Conference.

“The world awaits the results of our Conference. One most important result is that we shall be giving to the understanding of Islam — its philosophy, religion and character — a new meaning. We shall unite our creed and co-ordinate our understanding of religious and worldly matters. Another important result is that, despite distance and remoteness and the difference between the interests of each of our countries, despite the necessity for neighbourliness, harmony, trade exchange and economic dealing and despite the years of traditional foreign policy followed by each of our countries, despite all these obstacles, we have achieved the creation of a working instrument, which is our resolutions... I pray to Almighty God to grant us His guidance and mercy so that we may not deviate from the straight path. . . .”

The two Heads of Muslim States, His Majesty King Hasan, of Morocco (left), and His Majesty King Faysal, of Su‘udi Arabia (right), who have been consistent advocates of the concept of Islamic solidarity of Muslim Countries as the only answer to the formidable challenges to the Muslim World from all quarters.
Initiation into the Holy Qur'an

An Examination of the Western Orientalist's Theories about the Search for the Original Sources of the Qur'an during the Medina Period

Did the Prophet's change of residence to Medina, and his contact with the "People of the Book", have any influence on his line of conduct and his teaching?

By the late Dr. M. A. DRAZ

The theory that the Prophet Muhammad received from humans before the Hegira is now being gradually abandoned.

After the rapid review we made in the articles in this series and which has everywhere given a negative result, we should have been at once tempted to develop and formulate our own logical conclusion, if there had not been any subsequent change during the "prophetic" period.

It is true that we do not encounter this change at the beginning of this period. That is why we have dealt with the Meccan epoch in its entirety, both before and during the Qur'anic transmission, making no distinction between the two periods. In fact, since we are looking for some human origin of the Qur'an, we have been, and still are, obliged to disregard the supernatural phenomenon of the Revelation. And putting this fact on one side, we note that during the first half of the Mission of the Prophet, that is to say, during his stay at Mecca, not only did the conditions and the environment remain unchanged, but the possibility of his obtaining external information rather tended to diminish. As soon as he proclaimed his first message he entered the arena of history. In an ever-increasing degree his every move was watched, his contacts noted. And what is more, there was ever-increasing opposition and persecution, albeit his independence, his unshaken faith and the authoritative tone of his teaching, increased no less forcibly.

So that in view of the extreme paucity — if not the total absence — of possible sources in the pre-Hegiran period, the theory that Muhammad received instruction from humans before the Hegira tends more and more, at the present time, to be completely abandoned.

The Jews at Medina whom the Qur'an condemns so severely could not possibly be the source of instruction for the Sacred Book of Islam.

With the Hegira a considerable change took place. From a pagan, ignorant and hostile environment, the Prophet was transposed to a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, surrounded by his staunch and devoted disciples. He was now in contact with a community organised on religious lines and in possession of a holy book — the Jews of Medina. In this new set of circumstances and this new environment would there not have been a fertile terrain for historical research and doctrinal rapprochement?

Let us first consider the general tenor of the spirit of the Qur'an, even before the Hegira, to see if it deemed this new milieu as being truly representative of revealed virtue, and consequently of being a model to follow.
Now it is interesting to note this striking contrast between the persistent Qur’anic attitude vis-à-vis the Judaic world and its attitude towards Christendom. When it makes some special mention of Christians, although it does not sing their praises (The Qur’an 5:82; 62:27), at least its accusations of blame are made in a relatively mild and attenuated tone (The Qur’an 5:14). But this is not the case when it speaks of the contemporary Jews, or of the “People of the Book” in general. According to the Qur’an they are men who no longer follow Revelation, but Satanic promptings (The Qur’an 16:63). When it refers to the torture of the “Fiery Ditch” which the Jews of the Yemen at one time inflicted on Christians, it takes up the defence of the latter, declaring this crime to be a premeditated attack against the true faith (The Qur’an 85:1-10).

Later on, at Medina, not only does it maintain its position, but it increases its condemnations. It proclaims that “. . . those who have been given the Pentateuch, and who have observed it in the letter only, in no way observe it faithfully” (The Qur’an 62:5). They practise usury, and use all kinds of devices to make illicit gains (The Qur’an 4:161). As a consequence of the falsification of their sacred books, resulting in a false presentation of their religion, they allow themselves to perpetrate corruption and lies (The Qur’an 2:79, 80). They consider themselves free from all responsibility towards the other communities, and in no way bound to deal justly with them, notwithstanding any engagement they might have made with them. (The Qur’an 3:75.)

Is it not ridiculous to suppose that these same people, whom the Qur’an condemns so severely, could possibly serve as a model or source of instruction for the Sacred Book of Islam? However illogical this theory might be, this should not prevent us from examining its claim. An a priori verdict might well be contradicted by actual facts. We should heartily welcome any serious research which aims at revealing to us some hitherto unknown facet of the truth. The “methodical doubt” of Descartes is in our view a wholesale principle, as indispensible to faith as to science. What is the use of building a faith on a quicksand? Errors, as well as their favourite spawning-ground — prejudices are, for every sincere man of conscience, “Public Enemy No. 1” He must seek out and pursue this enemy to the ends of the earth from wherever he may find it, even when it hides behind truths which, to him, seem to have been fully and adequately demonstrated.

When we see the moon changing its phases according to its position with regard to the sun, we very aptly decide that it is from the sun that the moon gets its light. Ought we not to follow a similar line of reasoning when we consider the inspirations of the Prophet Muhammad, when we see them evolve, become modified or even retracted proportionately as they come into contact with intellectual circles at Medina? This is the argument put forward by a number of European writers.

The two aspects which the European writers on Islam find incompatible with the Divine origin of their message of Muhammad

Without going farther afield, the majority of these writers have been struck by two general aspects, which they have regarded as being incompatible with the Divine origin of a message. In their view the deciding factor here was the belligerent spirit which suddenly erupted at Medina, and which was a definite volte-face when compared with the attitude preceding this manifestation. And if to this we add the polygamy of the Prophet towards the end of his life, it constituted for them the total ruin of Islamic morale in its last phase. Those who readily extolled Islam in the most eulogistic terms — an Islam coming into being, suffering and persecuted — and its founder at Mecca, peace-loving and monogamous, raised their hands in horror at the thought of the latter, “. . . his hands stained with blood, surrounded by his bevy of women”.

Beneath this flowery and imaginative style affected by Christian writers, it is not difficult to detect a certain basic argument, a seemingly logical point of view. But this cannot be taken seriously without destroying a part of their own faith in the Biblical teaching anterior to Jesus Christ, and against which this two-fold argument could be advanced. Does not this arise from mere sentiment rather than from well-formed reasoning? In any case, we have amply demonstrated, without the need for repeating it, the real attitude of the Qur’anic law on the first point in previous articles in this series.

As for the second point, this has hardly any bearing on our subject, which is the Qur’an, and not the person of the Prophet. But since it is true that the Book does throw a certain light on the private life of its Transmitter, we will show how the Prophet himself is depicted in its pages.

Personal pen-picture of the Prophet in the Qur’an in relation to his marriages

According to the Qur’an, the personal pen-picture of the Prophet includes the following outstanding characteristics — sensitivity, a strong will and faith. By his nature he was, of course, a human being, as were his predecessors (The Qur’an 21:7-8). Like everyone else, not only did he support himself and earn his livelihood, but, like many others, he had wives and children (13:38). What is more, he could appreciate human beauty (33:52). But since we have agreed to define morality, not the extirpation but the mastery of his own desires, we must here take into account his second characteristic trait: will-power. Here we see a man with such a strong power of abstinence that he was able totally to deny himself things which he was permitted, purely with the object of avoiding a misunderstanding or a breach of the peace (The Qur’an 66:1). And “A’ishah relates that no one had a greater mastery of his senses than he.” Finally there was his absolute submission to the Divine commandments, which transcended his own personal views and tendencies. In this connection we will mention the Qur’anic regulation which limited the categories of women he could lawfully marry (The Qur’an 33:50), and the other regulation which, on a certain occasion, formally forbade him to contract any further marriage, however desirable this might seem to be, or to replace any of his wives with others (The Qur’an 33:52). This series of regulations reached its maximum rigour in the case of the divorced wife of Zayd (his son by adoption), this being the only actual marriage mentioned in the Qur’an (ibid 37). We read that he tried by all possible means to avoid this union. But the Qur’anic law insisted on it being carried out, in order to put an end (not only by virtue of the lesson, as the Prophet would have preferred, but by example) to the institution of adoption as practised by the pagans, in virtue of which a son by adoption became in every respect a legitimate son. This is an example of what one can literally call a “marriage out of duty, or by decree”, that over-rote, so to speak, all considerations of feeling and emotion.

1 Bukârî, Kitâb al-Saûm.
When we study the circumstances in which the other marriage contracts took place we find that most of them were motivated, certainly not by any similar legislative compulsion, but by other essentially human considerations — to honour and console the widow of a martyr, or of an "emigrant" who had died among his friends; to strengthen the inter-tribal union brought about by the bond of inviolable relationship concluded between a number of tribes; to create an atmosphere favourable to the liberation of the prisoners of an entire tribe (prisoners who were already in the hands of the Muslims and which the latter were obliged to liberate immediately by reason of their new relationship with the Prophet), etc. But one does not need to be an expert historian to appreciate the moral character of a man who had spent his youth in absolute chastity and who, after his marriage, had faithfully observed a monogamous life, and who had reached the age of fifty-five before even thinking of taking a second wife. Further, if we consider his occupations and preoccupations, his duties and responsibilities of the most varied kinds, both public and private — the leading of the five prayers from dawn till night, teaching the Qur'ân, distribution of the communal alms, the settlement of disputes, the reception of delegations, correspondence with kings and governors, the setting-up of a system of law, the founding of an empire, in a word, attending to everybody and everything — and then keeping a nightly vigil, prostrate or kneeling or standing, his gaze towards heaven, we are obliged to conclude that motives other than the mere satisfaction of his desires must have brought these marriage-laws into being.

An examination of the efforts of European Orientalists who try to find a radical difference between the two—Meccan and Medina—periods of Qur'ânic teaching.

Not content with these popular objections against war and polygamy, a number of Orientalists delved even further and made researches into the Sacred Text of the Qur'ân. They claimed to have found a radical difference between the two periods of Qur'ânic teaching. According to them, at Mecca the Judeo-Christian legends had remained "... in a vague, sketchy, half-formed state," and they said that at Medina his first encounter with the Jews enabled Muhammad "... to become familiar with the story of Abraham and the genealogical relationship of Ishmael with the Arab people," and that he "... had lived at first under the pleasant delusion that his preaching, his Qur'ân, was completely concordant with the holy books of the Jews and the Christians. The bitter hostility of the Jews of Medina convinced him of the contrary." At first prayers were recited twice a day, in the morning and the evening. At Medina a third prayer was added, the afternoon prayer, "... obviously in imitation of the customs of the Jewish community," for the same reason the 'Ashurâ celebration was instituted, and the turning towards Jerusalem for the recital of prayers — two concessions which were later annulled because of the hostility of the Israelites. Thus the ritual law became changed because of political change. Even the conception of God became modified under the influence of the bellicose atmosphere of the Medina period: "His severity against hardened sinners offset His attribute of mercy." Let us examine these observations and contentions to see if they are valid and trustworthy, and whether they contain anything of value.

The Judeo-Christian stories and the Qur'ân

As regards Judeo-Christian stories and legends, generally speaking, we regret we can find nothing which can justify this remark, even in the slightest degree. In fact, a simple study of the text of the Qur'ân shows exactly the contrary. It is in the Meccan chapters that we find the various episodes of Biblical history related in their every detail. All that was left to the Medina period, so to speak, was the duty of profiting from their lessons, and this was often done by very brief allusions.

Concerning the question of Abraham in particular, I do not know if there is any other nation which takes such a keen interest in the science of genealogy as the Arabs, who have throughout history made a point of preserving in their memory their ancestral succession, sometimes as far back as twenty generations. Is it likely that a people like this would have remained permanently in ignorance of its origins? Even if the existence of the 'Temple of the Ka'bah at the very heart of the Arab nation — a monument of which the principal features bear the names of Abraham and Ishmael — did not constitute for them a living and permanent testimony to their relationship with these time-honoured names, at least they must have known of it through the Jews, who had been their neighbours for several centuries before the Hegira. In any case the Qur'ân does not seem to us to have waited until its transfer to Medina, before establishing this relationship, since the Meccan chapters had already referred to it (The Qur'ân 14:37). What is more, they command the Prophet to follow the Hanifite confession of Abraham (6:16, 16:123).

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2 It is true that she was engaged to him some little time before the Hegira. But this proves that the principle which authorised bigamy was an ancient one, and not the result of a new moral conception brought about by the atmosphere of Medina.

3 In this connection one can read with advantage the accounts given by Aishah and other "Mothers of Believers" regarding the way in which the Prophet spent his nights. We are told that each night he would tear himself from sleep and spend long periods in prayer. Sometimes his feet would become swollen through long hours of standing (Bukhari, Kitâb al-Tahajjud). Sometimes he would remain prostrated for such a long time that he appeared to be as one dead. (Bayhaqi, quoted by Nabhahîn: the Anwar, p. 522). Sometimes he would make his way to the cemetery, where he would pray over the souls of the departed. (Muslim, Kitâb al-Ibadât, B. 35) Everything goes to show that at Medina the faith and piety of the Prophet, far from diminishing, became even more confirmed and stronger than ever. It was fitting that the person of the Prophet should be surrounded by these exalted souls, not isolated so that a considerable part of his Tradition could be handed down to us — especially the teaching regarding woman and the treatment of woman, intended for one half of the human race — but also so that their common testimony might provide corroborate as to the noble and upright character of his private life, where all the veils of social hypocrisy are torn asunder.

4 Masé, L'Islam, p. 21.

5 Lamens, L'Islam, Croisées et Institutions, p. 33.

6 Andrae, Mahomet, Sa Vie et Sa Doctrine, p. 139. See also Lamens, L'Islam, p. 28.

7 Gaudêroy-Demombynes, Institutions Musulmanes, p. 66. Andrae Mahomet, p. 81.

8 Andrae, p. 137.

9 Andrae, p. 138.

10 Gaudêroy-Demombynes, p. 68.

11 Goldfrâber, Le Doppie et le Loi de l'Islam, pp. 21-22.

With regard to the religions which preceded it, did the attitude of Islam undergo any kind of evolution in its new home? Here again we have consulted the Text, and it gives us the following information. In the Meccan chapters, where it continually makes appeal to the testimony of people who “... have knowledge of the Book” (e.g., The Qur'an 13: 16:43), we see the Book also condemning those “people of the Scriptures” (Jews and Christians), who followed the Evil One and allied themselves with him (16:63). In contrast, at Medina it maintains its attitude vis-à-vis the scholars, whom it continually calls to witness, although it declares that a certain number of them are unwilling to give this acknowledgment (2:121, 144, 146). Thus in both cases the Qur'an makes a clear distinction between the Holy Books themselves and the scholars who follow them faithfully, and those who profess to be Jews or Christians but who follow their own desires and passions.

The Five Daily Prayers

Regarding the actual number of Muslim prayers, we must admit that, in all the Islamic works we have been able to consult, we have nowhere found any indication as to an evolution of this kind. And it is regrettable that the Western critics have not told us from which documents they acquired this idea. For according to the data available there have been five prayers since the time when they were first instituted at Mecca. The Prophet himself instituted them, together with all the essential points of detail, and the Qur'an mentions them briefly in several passages (e.g., 30:17, 18; 20:130; 11:114; 17:78). It is possible that there arose some misunderstanding on the part of the authors in question, because of an erroneous interpretation of the word Dua' in the last-mentioned passage (17:78).

The 'Ashura Day, the change of the Qiblah

Concerning the question of the day of Ashura', which is not mentioned in the Qur'an, the “Traditionalists” 10 tell us that the Quraysh observed a fast on this day before the coming of Islam, and that the Prophet himself observed it before the Hegira. We also know that this observance is recommended in the Hadith. 11 To maintain that the Prophet originally made this decision in order to imitate the Jews, and that he changed his mind because of changes in the political situation, is thus to put forward assertions which are not in accordance with the facts.

As to the question of the Qiblah, it is true that for a certain period of time, at the beginning of the Hegira, the Believers had to turn towards Jerusalem at the time of prayer. But it would be an anachronism to declare that the change from this direction to that of the Ka'bah (a change for which full justification is found in the Qur'an 2:142-150), was on account of the hostility of the Jews. This hostility began in 625 C.E., whereas the definite fixing of the Qiblah had been made in 623 C.E.

The Orientalists on the Qur'anic conception of God

There now remains the last of these “observations” made by the above-mentioned Orientalists — the one concerning the Qur'anic conception of God. But a reference to the text is amply sufficient to show us whether or not the God of Islam “changed face” according to whether the Qur'an portrayed Him in the pre-Hegiran or the post-Hegiran period. Now the Qur'an always speaks of His attribute of Universal Requirer, both of good and of evil, and the Meccan chapters tell us of both the ways of retribution (e.g., 6: end; 13:6; 40:43). In contrast the chapters revealed at Medina, like those of Mecca, begin with the words: “In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate”. It would be superfluous to point out that the love of God for men was manifested quite impartially during the two periods in question, if being the reward set apart for the charitable, the just, the patient, the pure, in the same way that His hatred falls upon the unjust, the proud, the unfaithful. But what should be emphasised is the inverse of the observation put forward by our critics. In fact, it is in the chapters revealed at Mecca that the God of War is referred to most frequently. It is those chapters which abound in the history of “sinful antiquity” and the terrible punishment which overtook it — an implicit warning, but a constant one, to the cities which were following their example. What is more, if we study the Text more closely, we see that the armed rising against the aggressors, ordered at Medina, was only the execution of an explicit ultimatum which had been given, and already repeated, at Mecca (e.g., 10:102; 11:121-122; 17:58).

The meaning of Naskh or abrogation

At the root of this last objection — as at the root of so many others — is an error which we would like to discuss briefly, namely, the conception which is often held of what is known in Islam as naskh, 12 or “abrogation”. This conception, in the opinion of the “Islamisants”, is sometimes taken to signify the withdrawal of an order, and sometimes the discovery of a previously-unknown truth. Neither of these definitions is in exact accordance with the real meaning. Knowledgable authority maintains that there is not, and can never be, either an “abrogator” or anything “abrogated”, in

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13 Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Saum, and Muslim, Kitāb al-Saum.
14 Muslim, ibid., 15 A term which is basically equivocal, signifying either transcription or annulment. In law and in jurisprudence it is often used to indicate abrogation, i.e., the suspension of the application of a provisional law. But by extension some commentators use this word to indicate any kind of elucidation or precision which helps to explain some expression or another. In this acceptance of the term 'Abd al-Hamid (d. 1604 C.E.) both used and abused it. It is not rare to find that, in the same passage, he takes the preposition “except” or the conjunction “but” to be a naskh of the general term or the opposite term which precedes it. The following examples can be found: the Qur'an 2:229, 231; 4:19, 22, 23, 146; 5:34; 19:60; 24:5; 25:70; 26:227; 60:8. A striking example of this curious terminology occurs in his commentary on a well-known passage revealed during the initial stages of Revelation: “O Thou who hast wrapped up thyself, Rise and pray in the night, except a little. Half of it, or lessen it a little. Or add to it.” (7:1-3.) Ibn Hazm maintains that “except a little” is naskh for “the night”, that “half of it” is naskh for “except a little”, and that “or lessen it a little” is naskh for “half of it”. Thus he picks out three instances of naskh in the same sentence, and could easily have continued along these lines. Can we wonder when he goes on to detect, in the Qur'an, no less than 224 naskh passages?

Incidentally, we should point out that of these 224 passages, Ibn Hazm selected 114 which he considered as falling into the same category — that they could encourage (albeit in a rather indirect manner) a passive support for, or connivance in, the aggression of the Unbelievers. As we know, this was a temporary state of affairs, since it was superseded by the command to resist, and to oppose force with force. But what is most important to note here is the way in which certain “Orientalists” misrepresent the facts. Seizing on this formidable-looking number of naskh passages, without taking into account the rather curious terminology of the authors, they seek little more than a suggestion of their own, and then present them to us, claiming that these are the number of “Qur'anic contradictions” recognised by Muslims as having arisen because of political change. (Renan, Revue des Deux Mondes for 15 December 1851, already mentioned, p. 1079.) See also S. Tisdall, The Sources of the Koran, p. 278. What is very evident here is the considerable hiatus between words and facts.
the revealed teaching. The truth of yesterday cannot possibly be the error of today. Here the term “abrogation” means “knowledge which has been newly-acquired”, and this, applied to the Deity, would be a blasphemy, in fact, an absurdity. In the practical domain, on the contrary, there have been abrogations, both within one definite confession and between one confession and another. “You have been told such and such a thing. But I tell you something else.” But in what sense should we understand a change of this kind? For a law to be abrogated, must it be evident that, from the very beginning, it was wrongly or badly conceived? If this is permissible in our human institutions, it is obvious that it cannot be so when we are dealing with a law of God. God never retracts His decisions, He does not “change His mind”. The rule which He causes to be no longer applicable, and the one with which He replaces it, both bear the marks of the Divine prerogative. Each of them, operating at its appropriate epoch, is the unique and final wisdom necessary. Whether it be a question of progress or regression, clemency or severity, change is by no means inherent in the conception of the legislator, but in historical circumstances and the varied solutions which they demand. Sometimes the law which formulates the initial measure is given the special appellation of “provisional law” (The Qur'an 2:109; 4:15). More often than not this title is understood, and we hear about it only through the law which follows later. This might give the impression of an improvised solution, whereas in reality everything has been fixed in advance and judicially distributed over definite periods of time (The Qur'an 2:143). Readers will agree with us that a good legislator would not deal with men over a transitory period in the same way as he would deal with them over the whole period of their evolution. On the contrary, like an efficient doctor, he has to modify their spiritual diet according to the development of their aptitude and their capacity for assimilation. Far from being a defect, this gradual development of teaching and legislation is the way best adapted to the formation of wise and enlightened people, disciplined nations and wholesome morals.

These observations on the part of certain European writers which we are examining were made with one object of proving, by close and fanatical criticism of the Qur'anic teaching, that some material had been “borrowed from the religious documents of Medina. If this project had been successful, it would have been an indirect method of proving that the Prophet had obtained information from the People of the Book. Why did these writers not go straight to the point and reveal the names of the person or persons whom Muhammad is supposed to have approached for information? But so far no historian conscious of his scientific responsibility has dared to do this. But how was it that this man, living right amongst them, had no contact whatsoever with the Jewish doctors? And what was their attitude towards him?

The Qur'an tells us. It divides these Jews into two classes.

**In talking of the Jews the Qur’an divides them into two classes**

The large majority, who were already hostile to him before his arrival in their region, not only did they hide their knowledge from him, but on many occasions tried in vain to trick him, and to lay traps for him. Sometimes, through the intermediary of his fellow-citizens, they would ask him embarrassing questions: about the soul (The Qur'an 17:85); about historical mysteries (18:9-25). Sometimes they demanded that he cause a written book to descend on them from heaven (4:153). Sometimes they denied certain details which he assured them appeared in their books, and they would not acknowledge them until they had been challenged and their falsehood exposed (3:93-95; 5:43). We will not comment on such a “benevolent” attitude on the part of so-called religious people.

On the other hand, a certain number of these Israelite scholars, unenumbered by racial prejudice or personal ambition, came to listen to the teaching of the Prophet and to study his physiognomy. Recognising him at once from definite signs “... contained in their books”, they thereupon expressed their belief in the Divinity of his Mission (The Qur'an 2:121, 146; 7:157; 61:6). Among this group of scholars the most well-known personality was ‘Abd Allâh Ibn Salâm, and the circumstances in which his testimony was given are of great interest. This man, who immediately before the declaration of his conversion was regarded by the Jews as being the most learned and virtuous among them, was at once cold-shouldered and ostracized by them after the declaration.16

Between these two categories — the hostile and the converted — history has left no place for “friendly teachers”.

But to maintain that Muhammad obtained his knowledge from men like Ibn Salâm would be not only to fly in the face of historical facts, by inverting the roles of master and disciple, it would also be to perpetrate an obvious anachronism,17 since the entire body of Biblical truth had already been given, and defined, at Mecca, before these two people could possibly have had occasion to “... see the face of the Prophet.”18 And a remarkable thing is that the few complementary episodes mentioned at Medina refer mostly to Christian truth, which the Jews do not recognise.

In view of these facts it seems to be rather futile to rake up and accumulate similarities between the Qur'anic exposed and the Judeo-Christian data.19 We do not say that such research is entirely valueless, but it would be literally giving the fullest possible support to the Qur'anic theme, namely, that its teachings are “... contained in the books of the Ancients”, and that “the testimony of Jewish doctors and scholars” constitutes “adequate proof” of this truth (The Qur'an 26:196-197; 87:18-19). But, between the actual fact of concordance and the “borrowing” theory put forward by the European writers, there is indeed a very wide gulf, a hiatus which, up to the present time, has not been bridged.

17 Two similar cases of anachronism are worth mentioning, though here the “time-gap” is even longer. Salâmân the Persian and Mary the Copt are supposed to have initiated Muhammad into the Zoroastrian and Christian religions respectively. The truth is that Salâmân, although converted shortly after the Hegira, remained in the status of a slave for more than four years, working for a tyrannical Jewish master. Thus he would have been able to accompany the Prophet only at the Battle of Khandaq, in the year 5 A.H. (Ibn Hishâm, Vol. 1, pp. 141-142.) Further, need we mention that if the Qur'an can be linked up with the Bible, like members of the same family, then there would be disassociation between its teachings and those of the Avesta?
18 Tirmidhî, Kitâb Siyâs at-Qiyámah, B. 40.
19 And this is precisely what Dr. S. Tisdall tries to do in his Sources of the Koran. But, in his avowed aim of demonstrating that the Qur'an belongs to legend rather than to history (pp. 61-62), the author methodically omits all those analogies with the Old and the New Testaments with which the Qur'an abounds, from the Creation of the world to its end. He devotes his efforts exclusively to discovering the relationship of certain details of the Qur'an with the Talmud, and those Judeo-Christian traditions which do not appear in the Bible.
Some Features of the Mathematical Sciences in Islam

By H. J. J. WINTER, Ph.D.

The mathematical sciences in Islam form an essential link in the chain of scientific discovery and transmission. After the decline of the Roman Empire, the legacy of Greek science was augmented in the cultural centres of the Middle East, to be later returned as a vital influence in the revival of science in the West. Indian and Mongol influences also were involved, but in the field of astronomy Islam’s characteristic methods continued to be used right into the eighteenth century.

Recent research has shown that in respect of both time and space the influence of Islamic science was of greater significance than has hitherto been supposed, and the nature of this culture-based science will repay examination. Prior to the scientific Revolution in Europe, which may be regarded as having started about 1500, scientific discoveries originated in the daily practices of different races in ways peculiar to each cultural pattern. Consequently, the intellectual background to such discoveries is of very great interest. The roots may lie in cosmology, religion, symbolism, local geography or climate, or just in sheer practical necessity. Thus, early Hindu knowledge of rectangles arose from the design of sacrificial altars. That the Chinese, and later the Japanese, should interest themselves in determinant algebra was a natural consequence of their mode of arranging their characters, whereas to place algebraical coefficients in appropriate vertical columns was quite alien to those races who wrote in Sanskrit, or Arabic, or in European languages. Such features are central to our understanding of ancient and medieval science, where the type of symbolism either facilitated or obscured further advancement.

Our interpretation of the form which the mathematical sciences assumed in Islam is made clearer by the application of these criteria. To nomadic tribes in the desert the pattern of the stars was very familiar. The purely practical tasks of navigation — whether of a caravan in the desert or of a dhow at sea — compelled study of the relative positions of the heavenly bodies. The Babylonian cosmology, with its concept of burning chandeliers hung from the vault of heaven, was overlaid by the astrology of the Sabaeans of Harrán. When Greek geometry came to Islam its idealism and its basis, expressed initially in terms of straight line and circle, were immediately accepted into an intellectual climate having a traditional simplicity and austerity. With the spread of Islam and the growth of cities there arose the need for an accurate knowledge of the direction of the Ka'bah at Mecca, to which all Muslims turn in prayer. The appearance of the crescent moon, which meant relief from the fast of Ramadán, fostered an interest in the study of twilight. Allied with a strong leaning towards practical astronomy and astrology, this religious impetus especially favoured the development of a convenient portable observational instrument, the planispheric astrolabe. This instrument survived into the eighteenth century, and specimens made by native craftsmen in Persia during the Safavid period are unsurpassed in design and execution. A strong geometrical sense also produced a characteristic form of religious architecture. Inspired by the tomb of Timúr (Tamerlane) in Samarkand, Muslims in seventeenth-century India attained perfection with the Taj Mahal at Agra (1638) and the tomb of Dílras Bánú Rábi‘ah Durrání, wife of Aurangzeb, at Aurangabad (1666). The geometrical symmetry of the plan of the latter building reveals a remarkable arrangement of squares and circles.

The tomb of Dílras Bánú Rábi‘ah Durrání, wife of the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb at Aurangabad, India, is a fine specimen of the development of a strong geometrical sense in Muslim designers and architects. This tomb was built in 1666 C.E.

“The geometrical symmetry of the plan of this tomb reveals a remarkable arrangement of squares and circles.”


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The science of Islam embodied both a practical tradition and a geometrical tradition, and in these lie not only its success but its limitations. The dissemination of the Greek geometrical legacy, which owed its transmission largely to the heretical Nestorian sect, was assisted by the fact that the Arabic language lends itself to the expression of mathematical and philosophical ideas. On the other hand, the Hindu approach to mathematical problems by way of algebraical analysis never seems to have appealed to Muslims in mediaeval times except in its simpler and more directly useful aspects. Nevertheless, they were quick to realise the significance of the sine function in Hindu trigonometry, which was more useful than Ptolemy’s method of reckoning by chords. Much of this commerce in ideas took place in ninth-century Baghdad, especially under the patronage of the enlightened Abbasid Caliph al-Ma’mūn (786-833 C.E.).

Sun-dials and observatories

One of the earliest scientific activities in Islam was the study of shadows cast by a gnomon upon plane surfaces. As the centuries passed, more elaborately designed instruments produced shadows upon cylindrical surfaces, and accuracy was increased by erecting massive masonry structures with marble scales. Initially, the lengths of shadows were expressed in terms of the length of the gnomon, so that in the two simple cases of a vertical and a horizontal gnomon — where the shadow fell upon level ground or upon a vertical wall respectively — the trigonometrical functions of a cotangent and tangent were immediately involved. The construction of the former type of sun-dial (al-rukhāmah) was described by al-Battānī (Albategnius), c. 929 C.E., the material being marble. Usually the illuminated horizontal surface upon which shadow were cast was called al-bustah, the shadow itself al-zill basit; when the Arabic sources became known in Christendom, the Latin term was umbra recta. A shadow cast upon a vertical surface was called al-zill ma’kūs or al-zill munkūs, which in Latin becomes umbra erecta. Significant Islamic writings about the sun-dial begin with that of Ibrāhīm Ibn Sīnān Ibn Thābit Ibn Qurra in the ninth century, and were elaborated by successive authors. The oldest division of the gnomon (al-miqyās) was into twelve parts or digits (asābīt), and it was designed as a cone, or as a cylinder with a conical apex. This division appears to have been Hindu in origin, for we find in the Sūrya Siddhānta (which is certainly early medieval) a gnomon in the form of a staff divided into twelve digits (angula); that is, about nine or ten inches high.

At the very end of the period with which we are here concerned, in the eighteenth century, we see the simple sundial elaborated into huge dials in the observatories of Mahārājā Sawālj Jay Singh II of Jaipur. This Rajput prince, who had in early youth shown an enthusiasm for astronomy, had erected, on the orders of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh, his first observatory at Delhi (c. 1724), to be followed by others at Jaipur, Ujjain, Benares and Mathurā. These instruments mark the close of the long geometrical tradition; optical methods were already established in Europe. There are, however, primitive survivals of the gnomon in the form of time sticks, for example in Nepal.

Islam is noted for the establishment of both the hospital and the observatory as social institutions. Astronomical practice soon demanded a specific building to house more elaborate instruments, and this practice culminated in the Istanbul Observatory of 1577 in the West, and in the East much later in the large sites already mentioned, laid out by Jay Singh II in India. Undoubtedly the most renowned of these observatories was that of Ulugh Beg (fl. 1430), grandson of Tamerlane, at Samarkand which produced the famous astronomical tables: the zij of Ulugh Beg remained standard for over two hundred years and was translated into Latin at Oxford by John Greaves (1602-1652), who had become Savilian Professor there in 1643. Encouraged by Archbishop Laud, Greaves travelled in the Eastern Mediterranean in 1637-1640 with Edward Pococke, the orientalist, and returned with five Persian manuscripts which he collated. Ulugh Beg held the secular sciences in high regard because, in contrast with theology and literature, they have universal application; he was director of the observatory, which was founded in 1420 and made systematic records on the fixed stars during the period 1430-1437. The site at Samarkand was dominated by the giant meridian arc, which had a radius of about one hundred and thirty feet; the lower part was carved out of the foundation rock, and by a marble scale angular readings could be taken in seconds. Ulugh Beg unfortunately met the fate of many Oriental princes, being slain by his son, and his so-called New Observatory had probably ceased to operate by 1450, though it was still standing when the Emperor Bābur occupied Samarkand in 1497.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Ottomans were well informed on both geographical and astronomical matters. To the information gained from the voyages of the Turkish admiral Piri Reis in the reign of Sulayman the Magnificent (1520-1566) was added the work of cartographers and cosmographers such as the Kātib Chelabi, who died in 1657. Taqī al-Din Muhammad al-Rashīd Ibn Ma’rūf, an Egyptian judge, who became director of the Istanbul Observatory, was good at map-reading, and the “small-scale” building on this site housed a terrestrial globe showing the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe — together with quadrants, clepsydras, an astrolabe, and geometrical instruments. The plan of the Observatory is interesting in that the main building, an elaborate structure on which “Venetian ducats were spent like sand”, contained no instruments but comprised offices and a library; large instruments were placed in the open. There was a staff of sixteen, including Taqī al-Din, and, when prolonged observations were being made, five men were assigned to each instrument; two or three as observers, one as a recorder, and one for miscellaneous duties. According to Taqī al-Din the object of the Observatory was to remove the “many doubtful points” in the zij of Ulugh Beg, but the Sultan had more immediate objectives. As Taqī had predicted that the comet of 1577 would bring good fortune to the Sultan Murād III, he was actively concerned with the success of the Turkish arms against Persia. The influence of astrology was, in fact, so paramount with the Sultan that he was soon persuaded by rival factions to have the Observatory demolished, and this was done in the early 1580s.

3 24 digits = 50 cm. approx.
4 The Greenwich of India: a place of zero longitude in the earliest Hindu astronomical records.
7 Greaves, J., Insigniorum aliquot stellarum longitudines et latitudines, ex astronomis observationibus Lug Beigi, Tamanlin magni nepos, Oxford, 1648.
Why did Islamic observatories have such a short life? The astronomers believed that a comprehensive series of observations required a period of thirty years, corresponding with the revolution of Saturn. However, the Oriental princes, faced with the world of events, inclined towards shorter-term policies, and in the event no particular series of observations continued for more than about seven years.

Geometry

As astronomy developed, geometrical models became essential. Al-Biruni (973-1048) is said to have used orthogonal (cylindrical) projections, whilst the planispheric astrolabe was based on a stereographic projection of the heavens upon a circular plate. Al-Biruni in Books III and IV of his Qanun al-Mas'udi also developed plane and spherical trigonometry as an independent discipline, and this work was continued by Nasir al-Din at-Tusi (fl. 1250) in his Book of the Quadrilateral (kitab shakl al-qif') over two hundred years later. In plane trigonometry al-Biruni proved the sine formula for triangles; that is, that in any triangle ABC

\[
\frac{a}{\sin A} = \frac{b}{\sin B} = \frac{c}{\sin C}
\]

but it is highly probable that he knew of this relationship from his sojourn in India, for the Khandakhadyaka written by Brahmagupta in 665 C.E. and commented upon successfully by Lalita, Prthudaka and Bhattotpala, had already stated it. For a spherical triangle ABC — that is, one drawn on the surface of a sphere — al-Biruni showed that

\[
\frac{\sin a}{\sin b} = \frac{\sin b}{\sin c} = \frac{\sin c}{\sin a}
\]

Throughout Saljuq and Mongol times the study of spherical trigonometry was consolidated, and in 1260 Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, then director of the Maragha Observatory and a great admirer of Euclidian geometry, completed his work on the six combinations of sides and angles of a spherical triangle and so made the first systematic solution of this triangle. Thus we owe to Persian scholars, working initially from the Hindu reckoning in sines, the establishment of spherical trigonometry as a separate academic subject. Both al-Biruni and Nasir al-Din were men of tremendous industry; and it was said of al-Biruni that he laid aside his pen on only two days of the year — at the festivals of Navroz and Mehrjan — and that his literary output exceeded “a camel’s load”.

Algebra

The other fruitful line of development in pure mathematics was in algebra, which reveals an unbroken sequence of ideas from Muhammad Ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (fl. 830 C.E.) to ‘Umar Khayyam (c. 1050-c. 1123 C.E.). It began with the adoption of the simpler Hindu concepts, especially the practical ones of decimal notation and the real and positive solutions of equations, and culminated in the application of the Conics of Apollonius (3rd cent. B.C.) to the solution of higher equations by the intersection of curves. There was considerable activity both in Spain and in Iraq; Sanchez Perez lists some one hundred and ninety mathematicians who lived in such intellectual centres as Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, Granada, Zaragoza, Almeria and Jaen. A few had contacts with North Africa as far as Fez and Marrakesh, while the schools of Iraqi and Persian mathematicians broke new ground in their attempts to solve equations of degree higher than the second by investigating the intersection of the conic sections with one another. Thus Abi Ja’far al-Khazin (fl. 950 C.E.) solved a cubic equation by the intersection of a parabola and a hyperbola, and al-Sijzi studied the trisection of an angle by considering the intersection of a circle and a hyperbola. It is appropriate to mention here also Ibn al-Haytham’s (Alhazen’s) success by these methods in finding the point of reflection on a concave spherical mirror when positions of object and eye are known, a problem involving an equation of the fourth degree. This line of development saw its crowning achievement in the algebra of ‘Umar Khayyam, written in the early twelfth century, a treatise in which some respects anticipates Descartes by over five hundred years. Adherence to the Greek geometrical tradition, however, prevented an earlier discovery of coordinate geometry.

Physics

Physics developed in Islam as an experimental science, and although in optics ray diagrams were drawn after the manner of Greek geometry, and specific gravity determinations were made following the principle of Archimedes, there was in general little application of mathematical techniques to physics, with but one notable exception, the researches of Ibn al-Haytham (c. 965-1039 C.E.). This is once again an illustration of the Greek tradition. With Aristotle, physics had been mainly descriptive, and we find such an approach in the work of al-Kindi (fl. 850 C.E.) entitled ‘On the blue colour of the sky’ and in Job of Edessa’s Book of Treasures, an encyclopaedia in Syria which preserves for us a record of what was taught in science and philosophy at Baghdad around the year 817 A.D. The treatment of the rainbow and of colour is a good example of this state of physics in early Islam. Thus al-Kindi says that the azure of the sky is not its true colour, but the phenomenon can be explained by assuming that we are looking through a transparent material which is itself coloured (just as glass may be coloured) ‘whence we see what lies beyond it has a colour compounded of the colour of the glass and the colour of the object we are looking at from behind the glass’; whilst Job of Edessa states that the colours of the rainbow are green, date-red and yellow, the principal colours (black and white) not being present in it.

As knowledge of physical science increased in Islam the theory of the rainbow underwent improvements. Some five hundred years after Job of Edessa, Persian scholars, Qutb al-Din al-Shirazi (1236-1311) and his pupil Kamal al-Din al-Farisi (d. 1320) made a significant step forward with a complete qualitative explanation. Qutb al-Din explained the primary rainbow in terms of two refractions and one internal reflection and the secondary bow in terms of two refractions and two reflections. Kamal al-Din substantiated this by a careful experimental investigation of the paths of rays of light from a small aperture when a sphere of water, simulating an enlarged raindrop, is interposed. By using an opaque

11 Carabedory, A. P., Traite du Quadrilaterre, atribuido a Nusirud-din el-Toussi, Constantinople, 1891.
13 Sanchez Perez, Jose d., ‘Historia de Matematicos Arabes que florecieron en Espana’, Madrid, 1921.
screen he was able to cut out the light so as to find out what happened to the rays when each half of the sphere was exposed in turn. To Kamal al-Din the rainbow colours were blue, green, yellow, red, black and white, and these were the result of differences in intensity of the rays, which in turn were due to differing optical paths.

Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen)

This brings us to the notable exception, the work of Ibn al-Haytham in Cairo. His earlier researches on spherical and chromatic aberration of light, using the glass sphere containing water, had suggested the investigation of the rainbow to the Persian scientists in the early fourteenth century. His great 'Book of Optics' (Kitab al-Manazir) — which appeared in Latin as Opticæ Thesaurus Alhazenii — inspired the commentary Tantul al-Manazir by Kamal al-Din,19 and revived the serious study of optics in the West. But not even the 'Book of Optics' is most important scientifically. In the writings of Ibn al-Haytham, some of which appear to have been unknown in Europe, we find the first systematic interpretation of physical phenomena from both the experimental and mathematical aspects at one and the same time, in other words, real quantitative physics. These short Arabic discourses on specific topics, such as the spherical mirror and the paraboloidal mirror,18 show Ibn al-Haytham at his best, and here he produces the equivalent of the modern research paper. He also describes how he makes such mirrors out of steel using a turntable, placing 'the apex of the mirror, if it is egg-shaped, on the centre of the circle at its base'.22 This seems to indicate that the axis of the machine was vertical, being an adaptation of the potter's wheel.20

Conclusions

It would be impossible to give a complete picture of the mathematical sciences in Islam in a short space, so we have concentrated here upon certain aspects. They leave us with some interesting speculations. Thus, there is no evidence that the advanced algebra of 'Umar Khayyam ever influenced mediaeval Europe; so far no Latin version has been found. Of the six MSS known, five came from India; one was purchased in Lahore some forty years ago, the others deriving from British, French and Dutch colonial expansion. The sixth, which is in the Codici Barberiniani Orientali of the Vatican, came into that collection in 1902 from some other Italian library, probably ecclesiastical. Though the work was almost certainly too advanced for most mediaeval Latin scholars to understand, it would be interesting to know its history prior to 1902, especially as this particular manuscript is said to have been written as early as 1171. Would Descartes have been anticipated in his discovery of co-ordinate geometry had a Latin version been made and assimilated? Further, it might have been expected that Ibn al-Haytham would have discovered the sine relationship for refraction of light which, in the event was to be first stated by Snell in 1621. He had performed the necessary experiments and obtained adequate results, and the Hindu sines were by then known in the Arab world. In fact, in working out an expression for the direction of the Ka'bah he had himself used the sine and cosine, and Ibn Yunus, also in Cairo, had used a sine formula relating to the gnomon shadow. A likely explanation is that his strong leaning towards Greek geometrical interpretation had blinded his appreciation of any possibility that Hindu reckoning might conceivably apply to an optical phenomenon. Nor did the correct relationship occur to Taqi al-Din, who wrote about 'these difficult investigations, which are enough to make the hair turn white,' in his treatise on Optics in 1574. He, like all Muslims, seems to have concentrated upon differences in optical path, and not upon ratios. To these remarks we might add the apparent inability of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi even to understand refraction, so great was the inhibiting effect of Euclid on other modes of scientific thought. He failed because he gave a geometrical requirement precedence over a new experimental fact. But Euclidean geometry was strongly entrenched at Maragha in the 1260's.

Finally, we must note the key role played by Islam in the transmission of science from West to East, and from East to West.23 and how precarious this process has often been. Unlike the Chinese, who at this time had block-printed books, Muslims enshrined their wisdom in the author's own hand, usually in the copies of scribes. It is common to find in mediaeval MSS the Arab or Persian scholar alternating between lavish praise of his patron and despair at the state of science in his time; as 'Umar Khayyam writes — "the majority of the people who imitate philosophers confuse the true with the false, and they do nothing but deceive and pretend knowledge, and they do not use what they know of the sciences except for base and material purposes." These were the days of infancy in the evolution of scientific institutions and we do well to remember them with gratitude in the contemporary world of mass-communication, scientific periodicals and vast technologies.

In Islam the pilgrimage (al-Hajj) may be defined as the visit, by angels and men, to the House of God on earth.

It will be convenient if we divide this study into three distinct sections:
(1) Pre-historic antiquity.
(2) Pre-Islamic antiquity.
(3) The Islamic epoch.

**PRE-HISTORIC ANTIQUITY**

From Adam to Noah

According to certain traditions quoted by Muslim writers, the Ka'bah, the House of God, is of "pre-cosmic" antiquity. According to one of these stories, the Ka'bah floated like foam on the water forty years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and it was after this time that the earth was "spread out". According to another tradition, the angels used to make ritual circumambulations (Tawaf) around a house built below the celestial Throne (Arsh). Later on, God sent angels to build another house on the earth, so that the earthly creatures might do the same thing as the heavenly creatures. According to yet another tradition, when Adam, who had been expelled from Paradise because of his sin, was able to obtain the gracious forgiveness of God, the latter ordered him to make pilgrimage to Mecca. On this occasion Adam had the additional happiness of finding his wife, Eve, who was lost and had led a wandering life since the Fall. (It was at 'Arafat, in the neighbourhood of Mecca, that the couple were reunited.) The angels welcomed Adam to Mecca, wished him a happy pilgrimage which should be pleasing to the Lord, adding that they also had come there on pilgrimage two thousand years before Adam was born. It was the angels who marked out the boundaries of the sacred territory surrounding the House of God. Among the objects which Adam brought down from Paradise was a brilliant diamond. He inserted it into one of the walls of the sanctuary, and because of its being touched so often by sinners, it gradually lost its brilliance until it became black.

Some say that God removed the Ka'bah when the Flood occurred in the time of Noah, and that it was preserved in heaven. Others declare that it was taken away when Adam died, that his sons built another house with the same pious intention, and that it was this second house that was inundated by the Flood. But everyone agrees that Noah's Ark circled around the site of the Ka'bah for forty days before coming to rest on the peak of al-Jo'di (Mount Ararat).

It should be emphasised that these versions are furnished by Jewish converts to Islam. None of these traditions appears either in the Qur'ân or in the Hadiths (Sayings of the Prophet).

**PRE-ISLAMIC ANTIQUITY**

The period of Abraham

The great Prophet Abraham declared that he loved God above all else. To test him on this point, God asked him (when he was in Palestine), to separate himself from his only

For footnotes see pages 30-33
son, who had been born when his parents were already age-
ing. Abraham led his wife and son far from his home into the desert, where, several times, he was on the point of mak-
ing camp and settling down, but God repeatedly commanded him to continue on his way. This he did until he arrived at a barren valley, which, incidentally was the site of the future Mecca. Abraham was horrified when he received the command to abandon, there and then, his wife and son, but he did so without complaining or murmur. He then returned to Palestine, where he rejoined his second wife. But the test of faith was not yet finished.

It was not long before the two lonely wanderers in the hot, arid desert had consumed all their food and drink, and the young child began to cry for water. His mother, Hagar, climbed up a small hill (Mount Safá) to see if there was any sign of water in the vicinity. Not seeing any, she decided to climb another small hill lying in the opposite direction (Mount Marwah). After descending Mount Safá she ran to see her baby before going on to Marwah. Still without success, she came down again and ran to her son before climbing Mount Safá a second time. This frantic and agonizing journey was repeated seven times — maternal love never gave way to despair. But when Hagar went to see her son after the seventh “failure”, a spring of water was flowing from underneath the child’s feet, who had kept knocking his heels against the ground and crying from thirst. Fearing that she might lose the precious trickle of water in the desert sand, Hagar surrounded the spring with a low stone wall. This spring later came to be known as the Well of Zemzem. To add to the benefits which He bestowed upon the family of Abraham, God caused a nomad tribe to wander to the locality. Seeing that there was water, they asked permission of Hagar to settle there, and, in return, they promised to look after her and her son.

Some years later Abraham returned to see his wife and son. God then said to him: “If you are speaking the truth when you say you love Us, sacrifice your son.” According to the Qur’án, this command was revealed to Abraham in a dream. Abraham asked his son for his opinion. “Certainly,” he replied, “do as God commands.” Abraham then took his son to the locality where the spring came to the decision to immolate him. The Devil then tried to dissuade him from this course, but Abraham hurled stones at him and chased him away. Satan then suggested to Hagar to intervene, but she also stoned him and put him to flight. Finally, Satan addressed the young boy and advised him to refuse to be sacrificed, but again the only reply was a shower of stones. Abraham then covered his eyes with a bandage, threw his son to the ground, and calmly drew a knife across his throat. But when he opened his eyes he saw that his son was safe and sound, and that he had only sacrificed — a sheep! For God had seen that Abraham was sincere when he said that he loved Him, and had commanded the Archangel Gabriel to substitute a celestial sheep for Abraham’s son. God then prescribed that this sacrifice be repeated perpetually by Abraham and his descendants as a commemoration.

According to the Biblical account, it was Isaac who was the son referred to in this incident, but the Qur’ánic version gives the name as Ishmael, and the Qur’án declares that the birth of Isaac was a Divine blessing granted to Abraham as a reward for this stringent test of his sincerity. Incidentally, we recall that, according to the Bible, it was always the eldest son who was sacrificed. And in this case the eldest son was Ishmael.

After this incident Abraham and Ishmael returned to Mecca, where they rebuilt the Ka’bah on the site of the ancient House of God. The word Ka’bah signifies both square and round, and the Ka’bah happens to be both square and round, in the form of a heart [], which led the mystics to ascribe to it an inner, spiritual meaning, which they interpreted in their own particular kind of way. At that time the Black Stone of Adam, located in a grotto nearby, was placed by Abraham in the principal corner of the building, as a starting-point for the ritual circumambulations, and as a symbolic token of the pact made with God, which is accomplished by placing one’s hand on this stone and kissing it reverentially. When the walls began to grow higher, Abraham had to stand on a block of stone to continue building, and his footprint was left on it. This stone, called the “Station of Abraham” (Maqām Ibrahim), is still in existence. It was preserved, sometimes where Abraham had left it, near the wall, on the right of the door of the Ka’bah, sometimes inside the temple itself, for fear of flooding. But today it is in a special pavilion-like building, underground yet covered with transparent crystal, facing the Ka’bah. On this stone there is an ancient inscription. This was deciphered by al-Fākhrī, but with the passage of time it has become almost illegible. Some of the signs resemble Himyarite or Hebrew characters. Another relic that has been preserved is the furrow in the ground made by Abraham when he dug out soil at the foot of the Ka’bah. With this soil he made mortar for use in the construction of the masonry. It was Abraham who instituted the annual visit to the Ka’bah, and he put his son Ishmael in charge of the administration of this observance. Both of them dug a pit in the interior of the building, and in this pit the pilgrims dropped their offerings. Abraham later returned to Palestine, but came back several times to perform the pilgrimage and to visit his family.

Under the Khūzā’ah

After the epoch of Abraham all the prophets made pilgrimage to the Ka’bah, including Moses, Aaron, etc. According to numerous Arab sources, the famous king Dhu al-Qarnayn also paid homage to this House of God. If this king was really Alexander the Great, we shall not receive any help from Greek sources, but their silence on this point is not by itself a valid reason for rejecting the story. Dhu al-Qarnayn means; “The two-horned one”; What better description could have been given to the Macedonians, whose helmets, decorated with two horns, must have made an impression on the imaginative Arabs? The “double-horn” was the symbol of the ram of Ammon, which was worshipped by Alexander. After the occupation of Egypt, and during the drive towards India, Alexander might well have passed by way of Mecca, whose famous temple was already known to the ancient Greek chroniclers. A curious fact is that, immediately previous to the advent of Islam, a ram’s head (Kaḥšah) was still preserved among the numerous offerings left at the Ka’bah. This object had two horns, was decorated with precious stones, and was popularly referred to as being one of the principal objects preserved in the Ka’bah “treasury”. (According to Suhaylī, among the gifts left at the Ka’bah were a number which had been presented by either Sābour, a Sassanide king who died about the year 270 or 272 C.E., or even by his ancestor, Sāsān.)

After the epoch of Abraham, many generations came — and went. Then the Yemeni nomads of the Khūzā’ah tribe invaded Mecca and drove out the original inhabitants (the Jurhum, the Qatūr and the Iyād, branches of the Amalikees). When they left, the Jurhum took care to remove all
traces of the Zemzem well, and even hid the Black Stone. But a female member of the Khuzā'ī tribe happened to see it being hidden and decided to turn the incident to the advantage of her tribe. Since the Ishmaelites tribe had remained neutral during this campaign, the victors did not worry them, but, in exchange for the Sacred Black Stone, they obtained a promise from the Ishmaelites that henceforward the Khuzā'ī tribes would act as guardians of the temple. According to the Arab chroniclers, the Khuzā'ī tribes dominated for a period of five centuries.

Qusayy, a fifth-generation ancestor of the Prophet Muhammad — very probably a contemporary of Theodosius I (the founder of the Byzantine Empire, who died in 395 C.E.)— married Hubbād, daughter of Hulayl, the supreme head of the Khuzā'ī tribe. When his father-in-law died, he bought the keys of the Ka'bah from his brother-in-law, and thus the guardianship of the temple reverted to the Ishmaelites. Later on Qusayy transferred this duty to his son 'Abd al-Dār (literally: "Worshipper of the House of God"). Since then, and up to the present day, these functions have remained in the same family, being passed on from father to son.

Idolatry had started with the Khuzā'ī tribe, when 'Amr Ibn Luḥayy, head of this tribe (about five generations before Qusayy), brought the idol "Hūbat" from the land of Moab, and set it up inside the Ka'bah, over the pit into which offerings were dropped. According to legend, a "jinn" revealed to 'Amr the whereabouts of the idols which were worshipped by the people of Noah before the Flood, and 'Amr distributed them among the Arab tribes. At Minā, one of the "stations" of the pilgrimage, he set up seven idols, which symbolized the seven planets or the seven days of the week. At the time of the Jurhum, two statues—those of Isāf and Nā'ilah—had been set up on the hills of Safa and Marwah as a warning to the impious. (In fact they represented a couple whom God had turned to stone as a punishment for sacrilege.) The Khuzā'ī tribe 'Amr Ibn Luḥayy adopted Isāf and Nā'ilah as divinities, and set them up in front of the Ka'bah, where they marked the altar on which sacrifices were to be made. (Curiously enough these two idols were located on the site of the Zemzem well.) This fact was discovered several centuries later, in the time of 'Abd al-Muttalib (the grandfather of the Prophet), who, in a dream, learned of its whereabouts. He recovered the valuable offerings which were hidden there, and became the owner and custodian of the Sacred Well.

The Christian invasion

The Christians of Abyssinia, after capturing the Yemen, were envious of the prestige of the Ka'bah, which was venerated by all the people of Arabia. They invaded Arabia, even bringing with them an elephant, which gave rise to the term: "War of the Elephant." But they were routed and annihilated by miraculous birds, which "threw stones at them." Shortly before the arrival of the birds, 'Abd al-Muttalib (grandfather of Muhammad) had gone to see the chief of the invaders, to demand the return of some camels which had been looted by Abyssinian soldiers. When the commander asked him the question: "Why do you not ask me to abandon the invasion of your temple?" he replied calmly, "The camels are my property and I am claiming them. The temple belongs to its Master, Who will deal with it Himself." Two months later Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was born.

Mecca on the eve of Islam

Mecca was never under the rule of a king, but only an oligarchic government, which functioned through a council of 10 members. In addition there were four "outside" chiefs who were concerned with the administration of the religious life (the pilgrimage in particular). Almost all of these duties had some connection with the Ka'bah, the municipal temple of the City-State of Mecca, which was already known as Umm al-Qur'ā (the mother of cities), the metropolis of the world. The following list gives the names of the clans (or tribes) connected with the administration of Mecca, and their public functions:

1. The Háshim, the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad: the Well of Zemzem and the upkeep of the Ka'bah.
2. The 'Abd al-Dār: held the key of the temple and the city council.
3. The Nawfal: the collection of the tax devoted to the subsistence of pilgrims.
4. The Makhzūm: the custodians of the canopy and reins of the horse which carried the idol during processions.
5. The Jumah: custodians of the "divining-arrows".
6. The Sahm: custodians of the offerings made at the Ka'bah. They also dispensed justice in cases involving the penal law.
7. The Taym: assessed the damages payable in civil lawsuits.
8. The Asad: administered the mashīra (Upper Chamber of the City Council).
9. The Umayyah: were guardians of the flag of the army, and assured the military high command.
10. The 'Adiyah: provided the permanent ambassador and minister in charge of relations with "foreign" tribes.

In addition, an architect-engineer was in charge of repairs to the temple building.

The following tribes were also associated with the government:

1. The Kinānah: who were concerned with the Calendar, and the intercalation necessary so that the time of the pilgrimage fell always during the same period (in spite of the lunar year).
2. The Ghawth: who supervised the pilgrims going to 'Arafāt.
3. The 'Adwān: who supervised the pilgrimage to Muzdalifah.
4. The Murrah Ibn 'Awf: whose functions are not known.

The pre-Islamic pilgrimage

On the eve of the advent of Islam, the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, the House of the One God, co-existed with pagan idolatry. There was already a distinction made between the Greater Pilgrimage and the Lesser Pilgrimage.

The Lesser Pilgrimage was probably limited to the month of Rajab (the seventh month of the calendar, and, it seems, the period when the dates were harvested). This pilgrimage entailed a visit to the Ka'bah and the accomplishing of seven journeys between Mounts Safa and Marwah. In the Greater Pilgrimage the devotees had also to make stops at 'Arafāt, at Muzdalifah and at Minā and sacrifice animals. This pilgrimage was carried out in the month of Dhul al-Hijjah (literally: the one of the Pilgrimage', the twelfth of the calendar). Profiting from the occasion, the devotee also made a "pious"
visit to the idols. (Incidentally, we will mention that the Ka'bah was certainly the most important place of pilgrimage, though not the only one, in pre-Islamic Arabia; similar practices were carried out at other sanctuaries and "sacred-stone" sites.)

The pilgrims first assembled at 'Arafat, about ten miles east of Mecca, where they stayed during the day of the 9th Dhul al-Hijjah. In the evening they left in the direction of Mecca, but, on the way there, they stayed for a night at Muzdalifah (also called Mughammis and Jam'). After the time of Qusayy, the Meccans and their allies considered themselves as being privileged people and so they did not visit 'Arafat, but waited for the pilgrims at Muzdalifah.35 (Before the advent of Islam, Muhammad had offended his fellow-citizens by disregarding this "privilege" and proceeding to 'Arafat, like the other pilgrims.) These "privileged" people were called "the austere ones" (al-Humra) because, once they had purified and consecrated themselves and definitely entered upon the sacred state of pilgrimage, they would eat neither melted butter, nor curdled milk, nor milk which had been gathered on the previous day. They would abstain from meat, and no longer lived under tents of wool, but only under tents made of red leather.35

From Muzdalifah the pilgrims went to Min'ad (about three miles from the centre of Mecca). Here was carried out the lapidation of the Devil36 (by throwing stones at the three specially-marked places), and then they went on to Mecca. Each contingent of pilgrims had its own particular customs and peculiarities. For example,37 when the 'Akk tribe of the Yemen used to arrive near Mecca, they brought forward two Negro boys, who had been chosen from among the slaves. They were completely naked and, mounted on a camel, they shouted from time to time: "We are the two crows of 'Akk!" Their cry was answered by their fellow-tribesmen, who followed behind them. They proclaimed: "The 'Akk surrender to Thee as captives, they who are Thy devotees from the Yemen. May we once more make the pilgrimage, in spite of all the hardships, hardships which bring healing to our souls."

The pilgrims then made seven ritual circumambulations of the Ka'bah, though it is not known exactly what went on there. The Qur'an38 speaks contemptuously of these practices, saying: "Their ritual prayer before the House was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands." Al-Fākhi39 relates that during the seven journeys between hills Safa and Marwah (quite near the Ka'bah) the pilgrims used to sing a refrain: "May our eyes be refreshed on seeing the Marwatayn (i.e., Safa and Marwah)." Then they shaved their heads and this completed the pilgrimage. They then left in the sacred state of "Hajj". During the whole of the time they were in the ritual state, they abstained from washing, did not cut their hair or their nails, and often pronounced the Labbayk ("Here am I").40 The actual wording of this ritual formula differed according to the site of the object which was being visited, and probably also according to the different tribes. The following are some examples of this:

1. For the idol Isā*: "Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! Here am I before Thee! Thou hast no partner, except the partner that Thou hast. Thou art Master of him, and also of that of which he is master."

2. For the idol Hubal: "Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! We have fertile camels. Thanks to Thee, we have become inaccessible to spearheads.
Thanks to Thee, all men envy us, because of our happiness.”

At Mecca the pilgrims lodged with private residents, to whom they gave a few presents in return for their help. Before the advent of Islam, Muhammad also extended this hospitality to visitors. The latter were not permitted to perform the circulations of the Ka'bah in their everyday clothes. They had either to borrow garments from the Meccans (against remuneration), or make the circuits in a completely new garment, which later they had to leave in front of the Ka'bah, where it gradually disintegrated. The poor (or the miserly) who could choose neither of these two solutions, had to perform the rite completely unclothed (women were excepted).“

At this period of history the sacred territory surrounding the Ka'bah had already been definitely marked out and fixed. It extended over some eighty square miles, the area of the City-State of Mecca. Here, everything was safe and secure—a man was not allowed to kill, or even pursue, another man (an enemy), or even hunt game. Even trees were protected and could not be hewed down.

THE ISLAMIC EPOCH

After the advent of Islam, the Prophet adopted the ancient institution of pilgrimage. He reformed it and purified it of its idolatrous and superstitious elements. The Qur'an definitely attributes the institution of pilgrimage to Abraham. The eliminations carried out by Islam were aimed only at the corruptions of post-Abrahamic times. Let us review briefly the history of the Hajj.

The biography of Muhammad

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, was born at Mecca in the year 569 C.E. When he was forty, he had a vision during a pious retreat which he was making in the "Cave of Research" (Hirâ) on the Mountain of Light (Nur—Paran), on the outskirts of the city. In the vision the Archangel Gabriel announced to him that God had chosen him to be His Prophet, and that his mission would be the reformation of humanity. After thirteen years of heroic and unselfish struggle, during which he underwent the cruellest of persecutions, he was obliged to flee from his native city because of a plot against his life. He arrived at Medina in 622 C.E., accompanied by other Muslim exiles, and here he organised the community as a City-State, where the spiritual and the temporal were blended harmoniously into a single whole.

From the very first day the religion he preached was addressed to the whole of humanity. It was a religion which invited men to practise the purest monotheism, without icons or other material representations or symbols of God, and to cease to rely on intermediaries, so that they might have direct communion with the Transcendent and Omniscient Lord. If we compare Islam to a building, we might say that the roof is the acknowledgement of the oneness of God (imán), the four pillars being the ritual prayer (Salāh), the tax collected for charity (Zakāh), the annual fast (Sawm), and the pilgrimage to the House of God (Hajj), effected at least once during one's lifetime. These obligations are incumbent on both men and women. The ritual prayer has a certain connection with the pilgrimage, for the daily times of "Salāh" constitute a non-mobile kind of pilgrimage and a Hajj in miniature.

According to tradition, Gabriel, during his first visit, taught Muhammad how to purify himself by making ablu-
tions, and how to perform the ritual prayer. At that time Muhammad used to turn towards the Ka'bah, selecting a point in the south side of the sanctuary, so that he could turn towards both the House of God built by Abraham at Mecca, and the house built by Solomon at Jerusalem. At Medina this two-fold orientation was no longer possible, because in relation to this city, Mecca and Jerusalem were situated in completely opposite directions. Immediately after the Hegira, when at Medina, Muhammad received the Divine command to turn towards Jerusalem when offering the ritual prayers. But after several months a new revelation ordained that Muslims would henceforth face the Ka'bah during prayers.

In the year 6 A.H. (628 C.E.) revelation prescribed the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah as a religious duty. (At that time the Ka'bah was still in the hands of the non-Muslims.) In order to carry out this duty, Muhammad led 1,500 Muslims to Mecca, but the polytheist masters of the holy city would not allow him to enter. Two years later the city of Mecca rallied to the cause of Islam and peacefully adopted the Faith. Thus, in the year 8 of the Hegira, Muslims were free to celebrate the pilgrimage but, among the pilgrims, there were infidels who came from different parts of Arabia. Muhammad himself remained at Medina. In the following year he issued a proclamation according to which no infidel would be allowed to approach the Ka'bah in order to practise his idolatry. Thus the Ka'bah was henceforth reserved for monotheistic worship. In the year 10 A.H. Muhammad went to Mecca, celebrated his first, and last, pilgrimage, and drew up the rites and regulations, which have remained the same to this day. At 'Arafat he had the happiness of meeting more than 140,000 Muslim men and women, who had come from all parts of the Islamic State. (This State started from nothing and after a period of ten years — when the Prophet made this particular pilgrimage — extended over some 1,154,000 square miles.) There, from the top of the Mount of Mercy (Rahmah), he preached to them a sermon which was a summary of the essential precepts of Islam. (This sermon is still solemnly recited during the pilgrimage at the same place where it was delivered by the Prophet.)

Changes brought about by Islam

In relation to the conditions which prevailed during the pre-Islamic epoch, the following were the principal objectives of the new Islamic dispensation:

1. The re-establishment of the spiritual character of the Pilgrimage, in its pristine purity.
2. The abolition of idolatry and polytheism.
3. The suppression of superstition.
4. The institution of an individual and personal duty, incumbent on every believer wherever he may live, a duty so imperative that if a man should die before it has been carried out, it must be performed by proxy.
5. The creation of a rite having universal scope and applicability.

Terminology

When referring to the Pilgrimage, Muslims use the word *hajj*. This Arabic word means literally: “to direct oneself towards”, and also: “to dominate”, “to get the better of”. In fact, the Muslim directs himself towards God, and endeavours to overcome his egoism, to the point where he forgets himself entirely and annihilates himself in God, by visiting His House.

The site

The Ka'bah, the House of God, is situated on the level stretch of the territory of Bakka, in the valley of Makkah (at Mecca), at 40.2 degrees East longitude and 21.7 degrees North latitude, at about 47 miles east of Jedda. The city is 900 feet above sea-level and is surrounded by high mountain chains. At this point the valley is about a mile and a quarter wide, and the city spreads out for a distance of some three miles. At the time of the Prophet Mecca must have had a population of at least 10,000 souls. Today there are almost 200,000 permanent residents. When the pilgrimage is in progress, this figure increases to over a million.

The mosque surrounding the cube-shaped Ka'bah building forms the centre of the city and since the last extension, made under the Su'udite regime, more than 300,000 people can pray at the same time. The city is rapidly becoming modernised. Most of the houses are three- or four-storied, and are lit by electricity. Drinking water comes from the canal named after Zubayda, wife of the Caliph Hârûn al-Rashid, but there are also several wells giving fresh water which is used in horticulture. The water from Zamzem is slightly salty and so heavy that those who drink it lose their appetite for hours at a time. Afforestation is being carried out. There is very little rain — about two inches in a year — and, being surrounded by arid desert, the city has a hot climate.

Today the Muslim community is found everywhere and people make their way to Mecca by all methods of transport — by air, by sea and overland. Formerly all local transport was by camel but nowadays only automobiles are seen everywhere.

Two types of pilgrimage

There are two kinds of pilgrimage: *the Lesser Pilgrimage* (the 'umrah, or hajj asghar), and *the Greater Pilgrimage* (the hajj akbar). The former consists of a personal visit to Mecca, which can be made at any time of the year, but this visit does not carry a dispensation from the accomplishment of the ritual duty of the Greater Pilgrimage (the hajj akbar), which is performed collectively at a definite period during the lunar year. The Greater Pilgrimage involves a greater number of rites and ceremonies and for this a longer stay in Mecca is necessary.

In both cases the male pilgrim no longer wears his usual clothing, but puts on a special garment, called the “ihram”. This is composed of a loin-cloth for the lower part of the body, and another piece of cloth which covers the back and the shoulders — but the pilgrim remains bare headed. He also wears sandals or some other kind of shoe which does not cover the back of the foot.

The “ihram” may be put on as soon as one leaves one’s home but, at the latest, as soon as one arrives at the “outer circuit” of the sacred territory (see the accompanying sketch-map). Those who normally live at Mecca put on the “ihram” in the city itself, at the moment when they leave it to visit Mina-'Arafat. For those who reside at Mecca or in its suburbs, the “inner circuit” marks the limit where they must put on the “ihram” for the Lesser Pilgrimage and when they make the Greater Pilgrimage, they go outside of this circuit in order to consecrate themselves, and then they return to Mecca to perform the prescribed rites.

In the Lesser Pilgrimage the essentials of the routine are: the visit to the House of God, seven circumambulations of the Ka'bah, and seven symbolical journeys between Mount
Safá and Mount Marwah, after which the pilgrim shaves himself or cuts his hair. In the Greater Pilgrimage the supplementary routine consists of the following: the pilgrims assemble at ‘Arafat on the 9th day of Dhul-Hijjah, they spend the night at Muzdalifah, and on the 10th day they go to Miná, where animals are sacrificed and the “Pillars of Satan” (Jumār) are stoned. They then go on to Mecca for the sole purpose of making the seven-fold circumambulation of the Ka‘bah and the journeys between Safá and Marwah. They return immediately to Miná, where they should stay for two or three days. This completes the ritual of the Pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage and the calendar

We have already mentioned that the Greater Pilgrimage is accomplished during the second week of the 12th month of the Hegiran Calendar. As we are here concerned with lunar months, the date of the pilgrimage, according to the Gregorian calendar, which is solar, changes from year to year (since intercalation was abolished by the Prophet for a special reason). Each year the date falls about 11 days earlier. The 10th day of Dhul-Hijjah is the most important day of the Pilgrimage and is celebrated enthusiastically all over the world of Islam, even at the mosques at London and Paris. As a matter of interest, we give, for several future years, the dates of the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah according to the Gregorian calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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<td>18 February</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>26 December</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15 December</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>28 January</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>3 December</td>
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<td>1973</td>
<td>16 January</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>23 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>5 January</td>
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The pilgrim’s self-consecration

To prepare himself for the Pilgrimage, the Muslim takes a complete ritual bath and offers a prayer of two Rak’ahs. He then says: “Lord, it is my intention to purify myself for the Pilgrimage to Thy House. O Lord, assist me in this and accept my devotion.” During the whole of the time that he is in this state of consecration, he pronounces the Talbiyah from time to time, both during the day-time and at night. This is said in a fairly loud voice, the wording being as follows: “Here am I before Thee! O God! Here am I before Thee! Here am I before Thee. Thou hast no partner. Here am I before Thee! In truth, praise and graciousness belong to Thee alone, and majesty. Thou hast no partner.”

Entry into the city and the accomplishment of each rite are accompanied by appropriate prayers, which all ask for God’s forgiveness and mercy. The most important of these are given here:

The seven-fold circumambulation of the Ka‘bah

The pilgrim stands before the Black Stone, which is visible in an angle made by two walls and which is the starting-point of the Pilgrimage. He raises his hands (symbolical of complete renunciation and surrender of self to God), and says: “I have the intention of making the ritual walk around Thy House. Lord! Make this straightforward for me and accept this sign of my devotion.” Then, after kissing the Black Stone (when pilgrims are numerous the devotee places his hand on it, or he makes the gesture from a distance and then kisses his own hand), he leaves the sanctuary, keeping it on his left and begins making the circumambulations. During each of the seven circuits he recites the following prayer, which is in four parts (one part for each side of the Ka‘bah, which is quadrilateral):

“[Prayer]”

(1) “O Lord! Believing in Thee, acknowledging the authority of Thy command, acting in accordance with Thy Covenant and following the example of Thy Prophet Muhammad (May God keep him and be gracious unto him). I declare that there is no god but God Himself and that He has no partner. And I declare that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. O Lord! This house is indeed Thy House, this sanctuary is indeed Thy Sanctuary, and this security Thy Security. It is here that we seek Thy protection against the Fire. Shield me from it, O All-Powerful One! O Thou Who, above all else, art the One Who forgives!”

(2) “O Lord! I seek Thy protection against every doubt, against all forms of polytheism, against all division, against all hypocrisy, against all unworthy behaviour, against all misfortune when I return to my family, my possessions and my children.”

(3) “O Lord! Gather me into the shadow of Thy Shadow on the day when there will be no shadow except Thine, and on that day give me to drink from the cup of Muhammad (May God keep him and be gracious unto him)—a delightful drink—and then I shall thirst no more. O Majestic and Bountiful One! O Lord! May my Pilgrimage be a sincere one, may my sins be forgiven and my devotion accepted, and do Thou make it a gain and a benefit for me!”

(4) “O Lord! Bestow a blessing on us here on earth, and in the hereafter, and shield us from the fire of hell.”

After the seven circumambulations, each one involving a distance of about 36 yards if one remains near the Ka‘bah, a prayer of two Rak’ahs is offered. The pilgrim then goes to the hill of Safá, turns towards the Ka‘bah, declares his intention of making the seven circuits, and proceeds to the hill of Marwah, a distance of some 440 yards. At a certain part of this latter journey a section of the route, about 75 yards, is marked off by two green-coloured pillars, and male pilgrims must cover this distance by running (women are exempt). The remainder of the journey is done at a normal walking pace. The journey from Safá to Marwah is made four times, and the return journey to Marwah from Safá is made three times, terminating at Marwah; in all, a distance of about 13 miles. The sick and the feeble may make these journeys, as well as the circumambulations, carried on a stretcher or even in a vehicle. During each of the seven journeys Safá-Marwah-Safá, the pilgrim recites prayers affirming his faith, glorifying God and asking His forgiveness and blessing. On arriving at Marwah at the end of the seventh journey, he asks God in His own way for that which is nearest to his heart. He then shaves or has his hair cut (women merely cut off a small lock), which expresses symbolically that he throws off the burden and the defilement of sin and begins a new life.

After the ritual circuits the pilgrim, if he wishes, may drink water from the well of Zamzam, which faces the Ka‘bah. The Prophet once declared “Water from the Zamzam will make your wish come true.” When drinking it he had offered a prayer: “O Lord! Make this water a remedy against all illness and all indisposition, and feed me with the nourishment of sincerity, certitude and well-being, both now and in the hereafter!”

One of the duties of the pilgrim is to spend a day at ‘Arafat. Here, in the late afternoon, before leaving, the Prophet had pronounced the following invocations: “There is no God but God. He, the One Who has no partner, and to Whom alone belong majesty and praise. It is He Who
The Fundamental Texts

The Hajj is prescribed to all Muslims by the Qur'ān, in which there is an entire chapter, No. 22, entitled "al-Hajj". In other chapters, too, the Holy Book makes a number of references to the subject. The passages in question are so long that they would need at least a dozen or so pages to quote. Besides, there are the sayings and the doings of the Prophet on this subject, which are contained in works dealing exclusively with the Hadith (Traditions or sayings of the Prophet). The Qur'ān gives us the history of this institution and also deals with the regulations to be observed, the consequences of infringements, etc. It relates the story of Abraham, who was ready to offer his son in sacrifice. We will simply indicate the most important of these passages (the numbering being the one followed by Muslim authors, not that of Flügel): Chapter 2:124-129, 158, 196-202, Chapter 3:96-97, Chapter 9:3, 17-19, 28, 36-37, Chapter 14:35-41, Chapter 22:25-38, Chapter 37:83-113.

The Hajj Regulations according to Islamic Law

The rites and ceremonies connected with the Hajj, which have not changed since the time of the Prophet, fall into various legal categories. The following are the principal ones:

(a) Conditions which make obligatory the undertaking of the Hajj

1. The intending pilgrim must be a Muslim.
2. He must have reached puberty.
3. He must be of sound mind.
4. He must be free (not a slave).
5. He must have the material means necessary, and must be certain that the pilgrimage-route is safe.

(b) The basic rules (duties which are absolutely obligatory)

1. A formulation of intention.
2. A stay at 'Arafāt on the date fixed.
3. Circumambulation of the Ka'bah.
4. The seven-fold repeated short journeys between Safā and Marwāh.
5. The shaving or cutting of the hair after all the rites have been accomplished.
6. The accomplishment of the rites in the prescribed order.

(c) The obligations (or the things necessary)

1. Self-consecration by the wearing of a special (unsewn) garment as soon as the sacred territory is reached.
2. The stoning of the "Pillars of Satan".
3. The initial circumambulation.
4. A stay of one night at Muzdalifah.
5. A stay of two or three nights at Minā.
6. A final farewell circumambulation.
7. Abstinence from those things which are temporarily forbidden.

(d) The traditional rites (recommended by the Prophet)

1. The uttering of the words "Here am I" (Labbayka).
2. The ritual prayer of two Rak'ahs.
3. The drinking of water from the Well of Zemzem.
4. A visit to the Tomb of the Prophet at Medina.

(e) The prohibitions applicable during the state of ritual consecration.

1. The wearing of sewn garments (for men only).
2. The wearing of headgear (for men only).
3. The wearing of a veil (for women only).
4. Anointing the hair.
5. Shaving or trimming the hair.
6. Cutting the nails.
8. The killing of animals (except snakes, scorpions, and the like).
9. The felling of trees in the sacred territory (except during the course of normal agricultural and horticultural work).
10. Marriage.

The consequences of the non-observance of the rules

In order to avoid a superfluity of detail, we can say, in résumé, that if a basic rite (see paragraph (b) above) is omitted, the duty of pilgrimage has not been fulfilled, and this duty must be undertaken again during some year in the future. On the other hand, the omission of the "obligatory observances" mentioned in paragraph (c) (above) can be compensated for by the sacrifice of an animal, by the provision of a definite quantity of food for the poor, by fasting, etc. — the mode of reparation depending on individual circumstances. The non-observance of any of the traditional rites, mentioned in paragraph (d) (above) does not in any way invalidate the pilgrimage.

The meaning of the symbolic acts and gestures

The Ka'bah is the Qiblah, the target or focal point which commands the attention of all the servants of God, those obedient ones who are true Believers and who submit to their Lord. It is perhaps interesting to note that since the pre-Islamic period Mecca has been called the Umm al-Qurā (the mother of cities, the metropolis (of the world)). God being King, the house dedicated to Him must of necessity be situated in the metropolis. Further, the choice of a building, instead of a rock, indicates that it was the spiritual centre of a community of town-dwellers and not of nomads.

Al-Ghazālī on the meaning of the Hajj

Among those Muslim writers who have been at pains to explain the reasons for the acts and gestures prescribed to the pilgrims, we may here quote the celebrated al-Ghazālī. In his Ihyā (with the very learned commentary by al-Zabādī, vol. 4, pp. 266-460), he speaks of the Hajj, and devotes Chapter 3 to "The Meticulous Rules of the Internal Acts" (of
devotion) (pp. 431-441). We will summarise his study by quoting some brief extracts from the chapter in question:

“The ‘Meticulous Rules’ are ten in number . . .

(1) Money must have been honestly gained.
(2) No collaboration with the enemies of God by a servile decision to pay the taxes they demand.
(3) Lay in a good stock of provisions, share them (en route) with those who have need, and with a good grace.
(4) Abstain from sexual relationship, renounce all sin and the tendency to quarrel with others.
(5) If possible, go to the pilgrimage on foot.
(6) Ride only an unladen animal. Do not ride on one which is loaded with baggage.
(7) Be kind to the animal.
(8) Maintain a humble demeanour, the hair uncut, the body dusty (from the journey), grooming to be modest.
(9) Seek nearness to God by making sacrifices, even in addition to those which are obligatory.
(10) Be gracious in the giving of charity.

“With regard to the internal acts of devotion, we must first of all have a right understanding of the meaning of the Hajj, that is to say, its place in religion. Then there must be a keen desire to accomplish this religious duty. The would-be pilgrim must break off all worldly ties which divert him from this duty, etc., and he must observe the rules and procedures which deal with the preparation for the Hajj, the departure, and the pious observance of each rite in its established order.

“In order to appreciate fully the significance of the Hajj, the pilgrim must bear in mind that he cannot approach God unless he has abandoned all bodily desires, unless he abstains from all pleasure or luxury which is in excess of the necessary minimum, unless he gives himself entirely to God during both the active life of the day and his hours of rest and quietness. It is for this reason that the monks of the ancient religions used to abandon the normal life of towns and villages and would go to live on the hills and the mountains. They preferred to leave the company of their fellow-men and to find satisfaction in being nearer to God, seeking the higher Divine blessings and renouncing the pleasures of the temporal. In course of time this practice gave rise to corruptions and abuses, and God sent Muhammad, as His Messenger, to revivify the path to the higher life and, for the successful treading of this path, to restore the practices of the previous prophets. And this He did by enjoining the Hajj for our Muslim community, to replace the ‘monkery’ of the ancients. And He honoured the ancient Ka’bah by calling it ‘His own House’, and by fixing it as the goal and destination of His servants, thus rendering sacred the territory surrounding the House, and this with the aim of enhancing its importance. Further, He designated the locality called ‘Arafat to be the channel for the outpouring of His mercy. And to enhance still further the sacred character of this territory, He forbade the hunting of game there, and the felling of trees. In short, He established, so to speak, a royal audience-hall for those who came from far and near to seek His kingly presence — in humility, covered with the dust of travel, bowing low before the Lord of this House. It was there that they took refuge, humbling themselves before His majesty and power, knowing full well that God is too pure to be contained in a building, or limited to one place. And all this served to emphasise the character of men as slaves and servants of God, and to bring to completion their submission and obedience. That is why God prescribed the performance of acts to which they were not accustomed, and for which mere reason could furnish no meaning or explanation, such as the lapidation of certain landmarks, and the repeated to-and-fro journey between Safa and Marwah. Such acts as these show the perfection of the character of man as slave and servant of God, the quality of submission and obedience, and such acts are performed solely because of the Divine command, and to put this command into execution. That is why the Prophet declared, when referring to the Hajj: ‘Here am I before Thee as a true pilgrim, as Thy servant and slave’, and he did not speak in this way when referring to the ritual prayer, or to the other acts of devotion. The Divine Wisdom is such that man’s spiritual welfare and salvation should be achieved by acts going against the nature of man, and which are controlled and governed by Sacred Law . . .

“With regard to the condition that the devotee must have an ardent desire (to accomplish the Hajj) . . . such a desire becomes manifest when he really understands that the building is the House of God, and that, by its function, it closely resembles a royal hall-of-audience. Therefore whoever directs his steps towards it is really approaching God, whom he wishes to visit. And whoever approaches God’s house during his earthly life merits a reward — that his visit shall be productive of happy results, that he will attain the object of this prescribed visit, namely, to gaze on the majestic face of God in the everlasting hereafter.

“There is symbolism in the donning of the consecrated garment on reaching the boundary-line of the sacred territory, and in the oft-repeated phrase: ‘Here am I . . .’ They indicate that the pilgrim responded to the call of God. ‘Know ye,’ continues al-Ghazâlî, ‘that the circumambulation of the House of God constitutes a service of worship. Therefore manifest in your heart both respect and awe, as well as hope and love . . . Know also that, in accomplishing these circuits, you are doing what is done by the angels which are closest to God (those cherished by Him), who fill the space surrounding the Celestial Throne, and make ritual circuits around it. Think not that the aim here is the circuit of the House made by your body, but that made by your heart in remembering the Master of the House . . . And the House is a visible symbol in the world of the Kingdom (mu’ak) of the Divine presence, which is invisible to our earthly sight. For it is the world of super kingdom (nukalit), in the same way that the body is a symbol in the present world (shahidat) of the heart. And the heart is not visible to mortal sight because it dwells in the world of the unseen.

“The world of the divine kingdom and the temporal world serve as a ladder which leads to the invisible world and the world of the super kingdom — to him for whom God has opened the door. It is this comparison which is referred to by the saying that the ‘house which is eternally visited’ (al-bayt al-nâm’mâr), which is in the heaven, is situated exactly over the Ka’bah. The angels make circuits around the former, just as men circumambulate around the latter. Since the majority of men are incapable of doing this (as carried out by the angels), they are enjoined to emulate these angels as far as lies within their capabilities. And it has been promised: ‘Whoever strives to reach up to the level of one of these groups, then he becomes part of it’ (a saying of the Prophet). As for the man who is capable of making the circuit at this advanced degree, it is said that the Ka’bah
itself will visit such a pilgrim, and that it will make circuits around him. These facts have been vouched for by a number of people who are lifted with spiritual vision . . .

"With regard to the journeys between Safa and Marwah, in the exterior court of the House of God, they resemble the coming-and-going of a slave in the court of the king's palace — he comes and goes unceasingly to show his sincerity in the service of his king, hoping that he will be noticed by the eye of Mercy (and not by the eye of Justice).

"With regard to the time spent at `Arafat, may it cause you to think . . . of the assemblies on the Day of Resurrection, when men will meet together around their prophets and their guides . . .

"As for the lapidation . . . seek, through this practice, to emulate Abraham, when the Evil One appeared to him (to tempt him) . . .

"And as regards the sacrifice of animals, you should know that through this observance you will approach nearer to God, because you are carrying out His own command. Thus the sacrifice must be a perfect one. You must hope that God will liberate from the Fire one of your organs for each organ of that animal which you sacrifice . . ."

Other interpretations of the symbolic acts of worship during the Pilgrimage

All this was how al-Ghazâlî views the Hajj and its attendant ceremonies. There are other interpretations possible. The greatest mark of respect that a man can give is to prostrate himself before the object of his worship. In Islam this act is reserved for God alone. To circle around someone means that one is ready to sacrifice oneself to defend this object of one's reverence. The House of God merits this more than anything else.

In speaking of God, the Qur'ân has used, among other metaphors, that of "King" and the "attributes of royalty". He is the most holy King, who sits on the Celestial Throne, who possesses treasures, armies and the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. This kingdom has its metropolis (Umm al-Qurâ — Mecca), where is situated the Palace (Bayt Allâh). To take the oath of fidelity the loyal subject stands in front of the house of His Lord, and swears loyalty on the hand of His Sovereign. (Referring to this the Prophet declared: "The Black Stone in the Ka'bah is the right hand of God (Yamin Allâh) on earth.") The circuits made around the house of the Sovereign are like those made by a sentry when on guard.

The journeys made between Safâ and Marwah signify through their very origin that one is showing one's admiration for maternal love, symbol of the love of God for His creatures. We recall that it was this maternal love which drove Hagar to search for water for her thirsty baby, and that it was in response to this love that the spring of Zemzem was created by God.

At `Arafat Adam found his wife, Eve, for whom he had been searching since his expulsion from Paradise on earth (at Ceylon, according to certain traditions). This meeting followed the pardon granted to Adam by God. For the descendants of the couple Adam-Eve this place naturally evokes sentiments of filial affection and memories of the Divine blessing bestowed on their ancestors, a blessing which the human race continues to share, as it also shares in the loss of Paradise through the first man. So that the day spent at `Arafat is passed in quiet meditation. We ask God to pardon our faults and our sins, and we pray Him to guide us on a surer path in the future, so that we can gain His favour.

Finally, at Mina, comes the recollection of the supreme Divine test undergone by Abraham, a test during which he had to resist the temptations of the Evil One, and offer in sacrifice that which, to him, was the dearest thing in the world, because he was commanded to do so by God.

In short, the Hajj, for the Muslim, is above all the commemoration of the blessings bestowed by God on Adam and Eve, on Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael, as well as a demonstration of his own close relationship with the one Lord, Transcendent and Omnipresent.

During the state of ritual consecration, the period when the pilgrim devotes himself entirely to God, he tries to forget himself completely — he is asked not even to scratch himself. For each hair which is removed by scratching, religious law demands a penalty in the form of alms given to the poor.

The Prophet declared: "The hand of God remains with the collectivity". Therefore the action performed in common by an entire community is more likely to attract the attention and the pleasure of the Lord than the action of an isolated individual.

Externally, the Pilgrimage is a kind of military exercise. Men assemble at a fixed place, in response to a mobilisation order. They come from all four corners of the earth; they spend their days and nights bivouacking in one of the most arid regions of the world. During this exercise, at the times of the five daily prayers, they assemble at the call of the muezzin; they fall in behind the imam, and in harmony with him they carry out, collectively, the ritual movements. In short, a life of perfect discipline.

Narratives about the Pilgrimage

From the earliest times all Believers have done their best, according to their individual circumstances and their spiritual development, to carry out this journey to the House of God. The story is told of Ibrâhîm Adham (d. c. 777 C.E.), who left Turkestan on foot to travel to Mecca, and who stopped after each step he took, to offer a prayer of two Rak'âhs. After a number of years, when he had duly arrived at Mecca, he saw "through the eye of his heart" that the Ka'bah was not there. It had gone to welcome another pilgrim, a woman who was God's guest of honour. It was Râbi'ah, the saint of Basra. According to the chronicles, Ibrâhîm had come to see the House of God, but Râbi'ah hoped to see God Himself. Naturally she also had come to seek Him in His House, but what a difference between the spiritual aims of the two pilgrims!

The outstanding feature of the Hajj is the annihilation of race and colour prejudices

The Muslim community has succeeded in eliminating from its midst all prejudices connected with race, language and country of origin. An outstanding feature of the Hajj is the unity and the equality which reign everywhere among the Muslims, the faithful of all colours minglingaternally altogether — white, black, yellow, etc. — members of all social categories, from kings to the poorest of men. We hear that the elderly Lord Headley, a convert to Islam, was unable to withstand the heat of `Arafat, whereupon the Sherif Husayn (then King), found him a turban to cover his head and neck.
European converts have become more and more numerous in the ranks of the pilgrims. But the most striking example of fervour to be found among the “Takrūnīs” (a collective term given at Mecca to pilgrims from Black Africa). The Takrūnī toils strenuously in his own country in order to save up a little money, just enough to enable him to travel a few miles in the direction of Mecca. Then he recommences his life of hard toil, and it takes him some years to arrive eventually at his goal. According to a tradition current in Arabia, the Prophet would appear in vision or dream to pious Muslims, assuring them that the Takrūnī pilgrims were among those dearest to his heart. It goes without saying that the fact of having made the Hajj brings a pilgrim the greatest respect and honour among his community, and the smaller the number of pilgrims in a district, the more honoured they are.

Several centuries before the coming of Islam, Qusayy had organised a public repast for the visitors to the House of God, and for this purpose his fellow-citizens agreed to pay a special levy (rafādah). His descendants continued to observe this hospitable custom, even after the advent of Islam. And, in our own times, the Su'udī kings invite the representative pilgrims of all the different countries to a sumptuous banquet at Mecca. They also receive them as guests at 'Arafāt, where a military parade provides entertainment for them.

‘Arafāt, Muzdalifah and Minā are inhabited only at the time of the annual Pilgrimage. All kinds of shops and stalls spring up like mushrooms. The Government opens up a number of Post Offices, sets up hospital and ambulance arrangements, etc. Thanks to the very efficient and well-trained police force, there are few accidents, in spite of the extremely heavy traffic.

Some Muslim and non-Muslim visitors to the Ka'bah

Since the earliest days of Islam, visitors to these Holy Places have handed down interesting descriptive narratives in all languages. One of these descriptions, written by the Imām Shāfi’ī (d. 820 C.E.), has been published. The North African “globe-trotters” Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battūtah have devoted the most important chapters of their works to their pilgrimages. In more recent times the best descriptive accounts are those which were prepared for the Khedives of Egypt, dating from before the first World War. Non-Muslim visitors are very few in number; generally speaking, they are Judeo-Christians.

In India there is a widespread tradition that Gurū Nānak (the founder of the Sikh religion) once visited Mecca. One day he was lying on the floor of the mosque, with his legs stretched out towards the Ka'bah. A steward who happened to be near invited him to adopt a more respectful attitude towards the House of God. The subtle-minded Nānak replied: “Take my legs, and turn them in the direction where God is not.” The steward did not insist further, and went away.

The people of Medinah still remember the story of the two Christians who arrived during the period of the Crusades. They were disguised as Muslims, and their aim was to desecrate the Prophet's tomb. Nūr al-Dīn Zengi (d. 1174 C.E.), the ruler of Syria, was there when they were discovered, at the moment when the tunnel which they had dug from their domicile had just reached the tomb. Since that time the sepulchre has been surrounded by deep, thick walls, reinforced with molten lead. Since the 19th century, other “inquisitive” visitors have arrived secretly from time to time — researchers, journalists, “spies” and so on — but their intentions have been less nefarious. (There have also been bogus visitors, who have pirated their stories, or parts of them, from bona-fide narratives, or who have even relied on their imaginations.) Among celebrated savants, Burchhardt (Swiss), Burton (English), and Snouck-Hurgronje (Dutch), have left learned descriptions for the benefit of posterity. Burchhardt seems to have been the first to arrive at the Holy Places, and he became naturalised in Egypt. Members of his family still live in Switzerland, and always declare themselves to be Muslim. The famous Arabic scholar Snouck-Hurgronje had arrived in the company of the pilgrims from Java, and spent several months at Mecca, but had to leave the region hurriedly when his identity was discovered. In 1933 he told the writer of these lines that a Su'udī prince had come to see him, and had officially presented him with an album of photographs of the Holy Places, at the same time extending an invitation from King Ibn Su'ud to come and visit Arabia in perfect freedom, without let or hindrance from anyone. The old professor died shortly afterwards, but seemed very moved at the gesture.

Can non-Muslims visit Mecca?

I am of opinion that the total exclusion of non-Muslim visitors dates from rather a recent period, possibly from Ottoman times. For the Qur'ān forbids only the use of the Ka'bah by pagans for their idolatrous worship. The Caliph 'Umar even used to receive non-Muslim plaintiffs — Abū Yūsuf mentions the case of a Christian merchant — in the mosque of the Ka'bah during the Friday sermon, so that justice could be dispensed without delay. Dealing with a period a bit later, Ibn Sa'd mentions the existence of a consulting-room of a Christian doctor at the foot of the minaret of the Ka'bah. He was an odd kind of Christian, for he had brought up his son, Dāwūd (David), as a good Muslim, without constraint from anyone, but had himself remained a Christian, giving rise to the Arab proverb: "An unbeliever worse than the father of Dāwūd". At various periods of history mention is made of a large number of Judeo-Christians wives or slaves of Meccan Muslims, and this is perhaps why Azraqī speaks of "the Christian women": In addition to these, there are also Christians, engineer-architects, etc., who have been brought in temporarily since as far back as the Abbāsīde epoch to deal with the work of maintenance.

Some details on the Ka'bah

Before the advent of Islam the exterior walls of the Ka'bah were covered with curtains, a common practice at other pagan temples also. According to Azraqī it was Tubbā', the Yeminite king, who was the first to cover completely the walls of the Ka'bah with cloth. Before that time leather curtains were used. These were not changed until they became torn, or until a king or some other wealthy visitor, wishing to show his devotion, donated a new covering. Sometimes the old curtain was retained, and the new one placed over it. Nowadays the Ka'bah is covered with a large sheet of black silk on which religious inscriptions have been embroidered, and which is changed every year. The discarded curtains are cut into small pieces and sold to the Faithful by the guardian of the sanctuary. For centuries it was the Egyptian Government which took upon itself to provide these coverings. Then, for a number of years, during political differences between Egypt and Su'ud Arabia, they were made firstly in Germany, then in India, by Muslim weavers, who later established a factory at Mecca itself and taught their craft to the Meccans. Thereafter Egypt resumed the
sending of the curtains. For a long time the departure of these curtains from Egypt was celebrated by picturesque ceremonies at the moment when chests (called Mahmal) containing the curtains, were loaded on camels. These ceremonies are no longer carried out. The replacement of the curtains of the Ka'bah takes place when the pilgrims are outside of the city, at 'Arafat and at Miná.

On the eve of the Pilgrimage a special sermon is delivered in the mosque of the Ka'bah, and this is diffused by microphone.

Visit to Medina

The Prophet is buried at Medina, which is situated several hundred miles north of Mecca. Prophets do not die; it is only their bodies which cease to live. And how very true this is of the Prophet, who declared that his teaching was valid for all time, that there would be no more prophets after him, and that henceforward the human race would no longer be without guidance in every domain! A famous tradition quotes a saying of the Prophet: “Whoever visits my tomb, I take it upon myself to intercede with God on his behalf.” Although this visit to Medina is in no way obligatory from the religious point of view, all Believers who have the opportunity make a point of going there, and when there, as a token of gratitude, they ask the Divine blessings for the head of their religion, the Last Prophet Muhammad (May God keep and protect him! — a phrase which is recited each time a Muslim pronounces the Prophet’s name).

Conclusion

Al-Ghażālī does not hesitate to describe the Pilgrimage as “the completion of religion”, for, he asks, was it not in this connection that the Qur'ānic verse was revealed (5:3): “This day have I perfected for you your religion . . .”? This is true from various points of view. It is true historically, for the Prophet began his Mission by teaching the oneness of God and instituting the daily prayers. Later there came, each in its turn, fasting and the tax (Zakah), whereas the Pilgrimage was the final commandment to be laid down as the religious duty of the Believer.

It is also true from the devotional and mystical points of view, for although the ritual prayer constitutes an ascension towards God, it is only an approach of the spirit, whereas the Hajj is a rite which is carried out on the very threshold of the House which God Himself has declared to be His House.

It will be readily appreciated that the Hajj, in Islam, is of much greater importance than the pilgrimages of other religions. It is obligatory on all Muslims, whether men or women, and to such a degree that if a Muslim dies before accomplishing it, then this duty becomes incumbent on his heirs, who take his place. Together with the prayers, fasting and Zakah, the Hajj is one of the four fundamental and essential elements of Islam. Finally, it involves so many individual, social and spiritual elements that nothing is comparable to it. It is a veritable Resurrection, but a resurrection on the earth-plane. Men of all classes, all countries, all races and all languages meet together in an act of adoration of the universal Lord. We cannot but reflect on the words of revelation describing the Day of Resurrection in the hereafter: “Whose is the Kingdom today? It is God’s, the One, the Ruler of all!”

The Mosque around the Ka'bah

The mosque surrounding the Ka'bah has been enlarged many times, to keep pace with the increasing number of pilgrims. The almost circular space around the Ka'bah (see the sketch-diagram) was sufficiently large in the time of the

![Diagram of the Ka'bah and its surroundings](image_url)

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A history of the Ka'bah itself

In the middle, both the quadrilateral and the semi-circular parts are the ones which form the actual Ka'bah. At one time the quadrilateral part was larger than it is at present, and it included both sections. On the eve of Islam, when Muhammad was a young man, rain, and then a flood, destroyed the edifice and necessitated the new construction of the building. Since the amount of material collected (wood from the wreck of a ship for making the roof) was insufficient for the purpose, it was decided to leave a part of the building open to the sky. After the city of Mecca became Muslim in 630 C.E., the Prophet declared that one day he would restore the Ka'bah to its original form, and that he

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would arrange for two doors to be made, one an entry and the other an exit, both to be fairly near the ground to avoid the need for stairs. But he died not long afterwards. This project of the Prophet was later carried out by Ibn al-Zubayr during his tenure of caliphate, but the rival caliph (who eventually got the upper hand), wishing to remove all traces of his adversary, reconstructed the building as it previously existed. The present Ka’bah building dates from the Ottoman period.

The Black Stone is situated near the door of the Ka’bah, in the wall of the left-hand angle. It can be seen by everyone, and is about a yard above the level of the ground, so that in order to kiss it the pilgrim has to bend forward. The door is about two yards above the ground-level and, to facilitate access during ceremonial occasions, a small movable staircase is used. The interior is a small, empty room, with a roof supported by three wooden pillars. On the walls are a number of inscriptions in Arabic which commemorate the occasions when the Ka’bah was rebuilt. In one corner a narrow staircase gives access to the roof (for the purpose of making repairs or for the annual changing of the exterior curtains). Those Believers outside of the Ka’bah must turn towards it during prayer, but, inside the small room it is simply . . . the Ka’bah itself! Therein, for their prayer service, Muslims will be found turning in all directions (as will also be done at the “antipodes” of the Ka’bah, somewhere to the east of Samoa Island, see map).

The space between the Black Stone and the door of the Ka’bah, about a yard in width, is called the “Murtazam” (or “place of embracing”). After a seven-fold circuit of farewell around the Ka’bah, the pilgrim who is leaving Mecca goes to the Wall of Murtazam and takes his leave by embracing it, at the same time asking God for the grace to return one day to make the Pilgrimage again.

Pilgrims can at any time enter the unroofed part of the Ka’bah, indicated in the sketch by a semi-circle (actually it is a little wall). This part is called “Hatīm” (or sometimes “Hijr”), and it is here that rainwater coming from the roofed part of the Ka’bah falls through a pipe made of gold called Mizāb al-Rahmāh (spout of the Divine Mercy). The four corners of the Ka’bah have been given names: the Corner of the Stone (on the left of the door), the ‘Iraqī Corner (to the right of the door), the Syrian Corner (opposite that of the ‘Iraqī), and the Yemeni Corner (opposite the Corner of the Black Stone).

At the foot of the Ka’bah, on the right side, there is a small ditch, and this is the remaining trace of the work done by Abraham, when he was digging out soil to prepare mortar for building. Almost opposite the Ka’bah door, outside the “matāf” (the route taken during the ritual circuits) can be seen the block of stone on which Abraham stood when completing the building of the sanctuary. It was formerly enclosed in an enormous pavilion, but it is now buried under a cover of transparent crystal. This was done in order to make room for the pilgrims when they were making the ritual circuits of the Ka’bah. Not far from this spot there was a large pavilion over the Well of Zemzem. For the same reason this building was demolished, and now the only access to the Well is by a spacious underground approach.

Here we will quote a passage from the work of Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Mahomet, p. 34: “Archaeologists, however, have discovered the prototype of the Ka’bah of Mecca. The excavations carried out by the British Mission at Huraydah, in Hadramaut, in 1937-1938, brought to light the ruins of a temple consecrated to the lunar god Sin. It was quadrilateral in shape, and measured 13½ yards by 10½ yards in width. It was orientated (like the Babylonian temples), on the axis of the cardinal points, the front facing the south-west. This form of orientation, and the dimensions, are the same as those of the Ka’bah, except that the front of the Ka’bah faces north-east. (Cf: Rykman, Religion, pp. 27-28; ibid. Trace de Saba, p. 9.)”

But it would be more accurate to say that the entrance-door to the Ka’bah faces east-north-east. Abraham came

The Pilgrims’ Route from Mecca to ‘Arafat

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from Babylonia, and it is quite understandable that he might have decided to site the front of the House of the One God in the opposite direction, as a protest against the paganism of his former compatriots. But before speaking of a "prototype", it would be necessary to have definite proof that the temple of Huraydah was older than the Ka'bah.

At the eastern end of the mosque is the route followed by pilgrims making the journey between the Mountains Safā and Marwāh (these are actually two large rocks). This route is called Mas'a ('the place of running between the two Mountains').

**Mecca and its surroundings**

The sketch-map of Mecca and its surroundings shows the City of Mecca itself and the three pilgrimage-sites or "Stations" of Mina, Muzdalifah and 'Arafat. The route taken when visiting these sites has no inherent sacred character, but owing to the configuration of the terrain no other itinerary is possible. In order to widen the route, engineers have recently blown up a number of small hills. At Mina can be seen the sites connected with Abraham and the offering of his son in sacrifice. (It may be recalled, by the way, that the ceremonial immolation of the first-born child is attested to by the Bible (Exodus XIII, 1, 12; Ezekiel, XX, 26, etc.) as a Divine ordinance — and Ishmael was not only the first-born, but even the immolation of Abraham had concerned his "only son", as Genesis XX, 12 affirms — and according to the precision of the Qur'an XXXVII, 112, when Abraham successfully passed the Divine test, God gave him as a gift another child, Isaac.) In this region, at almost every step can be seen historical monuments or sites having close connection with the life of the Prophet of Islam and his successors.

**Arabia**

The map of Arabia shows the two circuits. The Outer Circuit is the one which applies to pilgrims coming from abroad or from the exterior. When they reach the limit indicated by this circuit, they take off their everyday clothing, and consecrate themselves by wearing two pieces of cloth, which are unsewn. The Inner Circuit is undertaken by those who are already in Mecca (who live there), and who are making the Lesser Pilgrimage. To consecrate themselves, these pilgrims go outside of this circuit, and return when this observance has been carried out.

![Map of Mecca and pilgrimage routes](image)

*This map describes territorial limits where the intending pilgrims must discard their usual clothes and put on instead the pilgrim's regulation dress — Ḥāram*

**FOOTNOTES**

* The famous traditionist al-Darānī in his Sunan, paragraph Muqaddimah, I, No. 3 relates the following anecdote: "A slave speaks: Before Islam, my master used to send me with the offering of butter and milk for their gods, and he would threaten me with their (the idols) anger if I should ever consume the offering on the sky. But I have seen dogs come, lick the butter, drink the milk, and then urinate on these idols, viz. Isaf and Nā'illah."

† The word "salāh", among Muslims, is used to designate the *ensemble* of the inner and outer actions carried out by them during the act of adoration. It therefore includes the ablations, the intention of reciting the prayer, the request for grace and pardon, and the recitation of the canonical phrases, together with the appropriate bodily movements (bowing, prostrating, etc.). Some people give the translation of this term as "service", but here our version is "ritual prayer". A ritual prayer may be composed of 2, 3 or 4 Rak'ahs or cycles of acts, according to circumstances. In a rak'ah there are three successive bodily postures — standing, bowing, with the hands placed on the knees, and a prostration, which is repeated twice. This ensemble of gestures, accompanied by the recitation of various texts is called a rak'ah. The number of rak'ahs varies according to the ritual prayers of different hours. They are repeated in exactly the same manner, but the Qur'ānic texts recited therein differ from rak'ah to rak'ah.

‡ The tax known as Zakāh is clearly distinct from what is known as "almsgiving". It is definitely a tax payable to the government under penalty of sanctions, the amount payable and the times of payment being fixed by law. The Zakāh tax is levied not only on savings, but also on agricultural crops, commercial capital, profits from industrial concerns, cattle and sheep and livestock, mineral production, in short, on everything which in Islamic law is subject to taxes and levies. In the time of the Prophet and the Caliphs the Zakāh was the only tax which the various Islamic governments received from Muslims.

§ The Black Stone of the Ka'bah is named by the Prophet himself as "the right hand of God" (Yāmin Allāh). The Believer, when making his oath of loyalty, places his hand on this stone, and even he will kiss it. This act is known as istilām ("the obtaining of the pact"). On the Day of Resurrection this stone will testify in favour of those Faithful who have made the Pilgrimage. (This reminds us of the gesture of Jacob, mentioned in the Bible, Genesis 31:44-46.)

¶ Here the "heart" (as also very generally in Islamic tradition) indicates the symbolical seat of the soul. There is also an oft-quoted hadith according to which God says: "The universe could not contain Me, but the heart of the Believer was large enough for Me."

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I we give here a few relevant quotations:

(a) Ka'b al-Abhār (Ka'b of the Hebrews) relates: "The Ka'bah was like a vessel in the water, at an epoch forty years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and it was from that there the world was spread out." (Asqar, Akhbār Makkah, p. 3.)

(b) Mujāhid relates: "In truth God the All-Highest placed this House upon the earth before creating anything else on the earth; and the foundations of this House were placed on the seventh, the lowest, of the earths." (Ibid., p. 4.)

(c) Ibn 'Abīdīn, son of 'Abīdīn 'Alī, son of Husayn, relates: "One day I was at Mecca with my father, and while he was making the ritual circuits around the House (Ka'bah), a tall man went up to him and touched him on the back. Then the angel round about him asked him to him: 'Peace on you, O son of the daughter of the Prophet! I would like to ask you some questions.' My father merely replied to his greeting, and continued making his circuit without saying anything further. When he had finished his seventh circuit, he went into the Hijr enclosure, and stopped just underneath the spout of the Ka'bah roof. The stranger and I remained behind him. When my father had finished reciting the ritual prayer which marks the end of the circumambulation, he got up and turned towards me, upon which I went and sat beside him. He then said to me: 'O Muhammad (al-Baqir), where is the man who questioned me?' I beckoned, and the stranger looked up from his line of pace in front of the Ka'bah, then asked his father asked: 'Can I be of any help?' The stranger replied: 'Will you please tell me about the origin of the ritual circuits around this House? Why, and when, and how?' My father: 'Where are you, stranger? I am a Syrian brother, so what are you doing here?' Stranger: 'At Jerusalem.' My father: 'Have you read the two books, the Pentateuch and the Gospels?' Stranger: "Yes; "My father: 'Then tell me, and I will relate to others anything as coming from me unless it is true.""

"I will tell you about the origin of the circumambulation of this House. One day God, the Blessed One, the Most High, said to the angels: "I am going to place a lieutenant representative (in the earth)." (The Holy Qur'an 2:30.) The angels replied: "O Lord, wilt Thou choose a lieutenant from among others (than us), one who will spread disorder and shed blood? What is more, they (the members of this race) will set up rivalries, and hatreds, and there would be internal rebellion. Rather choose this lieutenant from among our own ranks, for we would not commit disorders on the earth, nor set up rival factions, nor hatred, nor internal rebellion. On the contrary, we would glorify Thee and praise Thee, and would extol Thy holiness. And we should obey Thee, and not disobey Thee." (The Holy Qur'an, ibid.) Then God the Most High said: "Verily, I know what you do not know." (Cf. The Holy Qur'an, ibid.) So the angels thought that what they had said had offended their Lord, the Powerful and Majestic One, and that their words had angered Him. And they returned to the Divine Throne, raised their heads, and stretched out their fingers (symbolising the recognition of the oneness of God), humiliating themselves and weeping, fearing His anger. For three hours they made circumambulations around the Divine Throne, and looked on God, and had mercy on them. He then placed beneath the Divine Throne a house having four pillars of emerald. This He covered with red ruby, and called the house al-Dhurah (the far-off, the distant). He then said to the angels: 'Make your circuits around this house, and abandon the Divine Throne.'"

"The narrator continued: The angels then made the circuits around this House, and abandoned the Divine Throne, and this was easier for them. And this was the Perpetually-visited House (al-bayt al-mādā'ir) spoken of by God (Cf. The Holy Qur'an 52:4). During every period of 24 hours it is visited by 70,000 angels, who never go back to it again (which gives an idea of the size of the House). One of the angels fell down in front of the Ka'bah in this same way, and a number of angels, with the command: 'Build for Me on earth a house similar to this house (al-bayt al-mādā'ir).' Then God ordered those creatures who inhabited the earth to make ritual circuits around this House, and this House became in the same way the dwellers in heaven make ritual circuits around al-bayt al-mādā'ir."

"When my father had finished giving this explanation, the Syrian replied: 'You have given a true account, O son of the daughter of the Prophet! It happened exactly as you have said.' (Asqar, Akhbār Makkah, p. 3.)"

(d) Ibn 'Abbas relates: 'When God expelled Adam from Paradise, He sent him down to earth. (Adam was so big that) his head was in the clouds while his body was on the ground. In that moment, the Ka'bah trembled like a boat. Then God decreased his height until it was sixty cubits. But Adam complained: 'Lord, how is it that I no longer hear the voices of the angels, or feel their proximity? God replied: 'Because you became a prosperous settlement. But go, and build Me a house, and make circuits around it, at the same time remembering Me, just as you have seen the angels doing around My Throne.' The narrator continued: 'Adam set out of the earth and the earth folded around him so that he was able to cross a whole desert in one stride, and similarly with all the stretches of water and the seas — to cross all of these he needed to take no more than one step. Each place where he stepped, he set a foot on it. When thirty men would be unable to move one of them. And Adam built it (the House) with stones which came from five mountains: Mount Lebanon, the Mount of Olives, Mount Sin'lat, Mount Al-hud (Arran), and Mount Hirāt (at Mecca, where Muhammad received the first revelation), until it finally took its finished form on the surface of the earth."

The narrator Ibn 'Abbas continues: 'The first one to set up the House and make circuits around it was Adam. This continued till the Flood, which God, in His Anger, sent as a punishment. This Flood extended as far as the wind (breath) of Adam. The narrator points out that the Flood did not spread over the House (Ka'bah, or Mount鸿) (The House continues: 'The site of the Ka'bah was swept away by the Flood, until God called upon Abraham and Ishmael, who laid the foundations of the House and marked out its boundaries. Later on it was constructed by the Prophet (The House belonged) of the House eternally-visited (al-bayt al-mādā'ir) in the heavens, that if the latter were to fall, it would fall nowhere except on the Ka'bah' (ibid., p. 7.)"

(e) Wabn Ibn Munabbih relates: 'When God accepted Adam's repentance, He ordered him to go to Mecca. The earth folded back as he advanced, and the deserts also, so that he could cross a whole desert in a single stride. Wherever he stepped, the foot of that place became a flourishing community. And so he arrived at Mecca. Up till this time Adam had wept and grieved so bitterly, because of the gravity of his sin, that even the angels took pity on him. They grieved because of his sadness and went because of his lamentation. To console him, God sent him a tent (tabernacle), one from among the tents of Paradise, and had it pitched at Mecca on the site where the Ka'bah is today (for this was before the Ka'bah existed). This tent was made from a red ruby (these are striking analogies with the New Jerusalem described in the Apocalypse of St. John, 3:16-27; 22:1-5). Is the Ka'bah meant by the new Jerusalem? Isaiah 66:6-9 speaks of the children of Israel, of the song of camels and sheep and vision of the House of My Glory' (for which cf. the Holy Qur'an 15:37), one from among the rubies of Paradise. Inside it there were 30 lamps, made from the gold of Paradise, and they shed a light which was the light of Paradise. They are also the so-called the 'Angular Stone' (rukh — the Black Stone). At that time it was a white diamond from among the gems of Paradise, and it served as a name for Adam, that last sat on it. When Adam arrived at the meccan, the angels mounted it immediately, they kept it intact by chasing away the inhabitants of earth, who at that time were nothing but djinni and demons. These latter were prohibited from setting eyes on any object which had come from Paradise, for whoever sets eyes on something which has come from Paradise deserves to go to that place. At this time the world was pure and spotless, undeformed, for no blood had yet been shed, and no sin had been committed. That is why God chose it as a dwelling-place for the angels, who existed as if they were in heaven, glorifying God unceasingly day and night. These angels took up their positions all around the sacred territory, at the doors to the Paradise, and so that the demons did not go so far, nor be found. In front of these angels was the sacred territory, and behind them the profane territory, and no djinn, nor any demon, could penetrate their ever-vigilant barrier. It is because of the presence of the parliamentarians, that the place is called Al-Madā'ir, so that the demon had no way to enter. And, at those places where the angels took up their allotted stations, boundary marks have been erected. Eve was forbidden to enter the sacred territory, or to see the tent which had been sent for Adam. And she is the only person which has come which had committed Paradise. And, in fact, she never sets eyes on it during her entire life. (This is a detail which is obviously of Jewish origin, and contrary to Islamic conceptions. We recall here how, on the celebrated day of the Prophet, Paradise lies at the feet of the mothers.) But whenever Adam wished to see her for
the purpose of cohabitation and raising children, he used to leave the sacred territory in order to meet her. Adam's tent remained in the same position until his death, when God withdrew it (to heaven). After his death Adam's sons built a house on the very spot where the tent used to be. This was made of earth and stone, and they and their descendants 'populated' it continuously until the night of the Prophet's Night when it was destroyed and its very site forgotten. When God raised up Abraham to be a prophet, the latter looked for the foundations of the House, and when he arrived (at Mecca) God cursed the site of the House to be overshadowed by elephants (a tradition which proves that the Word of God makes allusion to this (The Holy Qur'ān 22:26): 'And when We assigned to Abraham the site of the House...'). That is to say, when there occurred the sending of the cloud, which remained stationary over the exact dimensions of the House, to indicate to Abraham where the foundations were to be dug. And since that time, because of God's blessing, this House has always remained 'inhabited' (Azaqā, Akhbar Makkah, pp. 7-9), which spread exactly over the dimensions of the first House. And this cloud remained stationary, giving shade to Abraham and showing him the position of the foundations, until he had built the walls to the height of a man. It was not till then that the cloud went away.

(1) Ibn 'Abbas relates: "When God expelled Adam from Paradise and sent him down to earth, He caused him to fall on the site of the Sacred House, which trembled like a boat. God then sent down the Black Stone (the 'Angilal Sīkar") which at that time was glittered because of its intense whiteness. Adam took the stone and retained it. And he was commanded: 'Walk, O Adam!' So he set out and went as far as the region of Hind (India) and Sind, and he found it better for him as long as it is called Nārid. The Hashimīs felt the nostalgia with a longing to see the Angular Stone, so he was commanded: 'Make the pilgrimage.' This he did, and he was welcomed by the angels, who expressed the wish: 'May this pilgrimage be accepted as a grace.' The place was named after him, and after two thousand years ago we also made pilgrimage to this House." (Ibid., p. 7.)

2 Tabāri, Tarikh, I, 120.
3 Ibid., p. 133.
5 The Holy Qur'ān 2:124-129.
10 The Holy Qur'ān 37:112.
12 Al-Kā'bah, the temple of Mecca, is one of the purest surviving parts of the Ramayin, of which the Prophet called the Hedjaz the "holy country." (Batnāni, Rihlah, p. 113.)
13 Al-Ma'sūdī (Munāj al-Dhahab, ed. Paris, 4:43-44, 47) relates that the Sabeans claimed that the sacred House (the Kā'bah) was originally a building erected by Adam and that if it had survived through so many centuries, surrounded with such constant tokens of respect, it owed this prestige to the protection of Saturn, because everything which is placed under its influence cannot but reach a limit of duration. On the contrary, it gathers to itself increasing respect and reverence. According to the idolaters (the Sabeans), the Kā'bah was one of the seven temples placed under the protection of the planets, that is to say, the sun, the moon, and the five stars.
14 The Hindu Brahmins declare that the god Siva and his consort, under the forms and names of Kapot-Ishvara (pigeon

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The Text of the Prophet Muhammad’s historic Farewell Pilgrimage Address (delivered on 23 February 632 C.E.)

An Analysis of the Address

The Address lays emphasis more than anything else on social service and obligations of one individual to another, i.e., on cultivating social conscience

The Prophet Muhammad’s Farewell Pilgrimage address

The Prophet Muhammad during his Farewell Pilgrimage gave a sermon which could be styled the “Manifesto of World Peace”. The Prophet attached so much importance to this Manifesto that he repeated it five times during that Hajj season! Once he gave this sermon on 7th Dhū al-Hijjah in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca and twice at ‘Arafat on 9th Dhū al-Hijjah and again twice at Minā on 10th and 11th Dhū al-Hijjah (or 11th and 12th) each day once.

Ya’qūb, the historian, records that the sermon of the 7th Dhū al-Hijjah was delivered by the Prophet while on a camel after the afternoon prayer and the sermon on 9th Dhū al-Hijjah in the valley of ‘Arafat in the afternoon first before the afternoon prayer and again after finishing the afternoon prayer; on both these latter occasions he spoke on camel-back. The sermon at Minā was delivered after the morning prayer, also on camel-back. His companion, Bilāl was in attendance, holding the camel reins. On all these occasions the Prophet had a crier to repeat his words, sentence by sentence, after him. During the Minā sermon it was his son-in-law, ‘Ali, who acted as the crier, while on other occasions it was a young man of vigorous voice named Rabī’ah Ibn Khalaf. The Prophet Muhammad had him standing very close to him and asked him to repeat after him each sentence.

When the Prophet Muhammad reached ‘Arafat (near Mecca), he asked Rabī’ah Ibn Khalaf, who had a very powerful voice, to act as crier.

During the Farewell Pilgrimage of 632 C.E. there were present at ‘Arafat between 120 to 140 thousand men and women. The Prophet Muhammad repeated his sermon again and again because everybody could not make it convenient to attend only one assembly. As the pilgrims’ presence in the plain of ‘Arafat forms an integral part of the Pilgrimage rites and his stay at ‘Arafat is obligatory, the Prophet soon after the whole congregation was ready to perform the afternoon prayer mounted his camel. After praising and glorifying God, the Prophet said to Rabī’ah, “Say to them: O people! the Messenger of God says:

“I am a man like unto you. It is possible that you may not see me again in this place (the Prophet passed away about three months later — 8th June 632 C.E.). Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

“May God bless the person who, after having heard me, guards my words and takes them to others! It is possible that you do not understand the import of my words here, but there are people in the world who would understand the meaning of my words better than you. Therefore understand that you should take my words to others who are not present here today, for it happens often that the messenger does not know the importance of the message he is carrying.”

When the Prophet Muhammad had finished his sentence and his crier Rabī’ah had repeated it, the Prophet Muhammad stopped and asked the audience if it had heard his words well. When everyone shouted to say that they had heard them, the Prophet turned his face upwards and said: “O God! Thou art my witness. I have conveyed Thy message.”

The Prophet said to Rabī’ah, “Say to them: O people! Do you know what month this is? They said: It is the sacred month of Dhū al-Hijjah.

Then the Prophet said to Rabī’ah, “Say to them: God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this month until you meet your Lord.”

Then the Prophet said to Rabī’ah, “Say to them: Do you know what territory this is?” and they said: The Holy land (of Mecca).
And then the Prophet said to Rabî’ah to say to them: “God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this land until you meet your Lord.”

Then the Prophet said to Rabî’ah, “Say to the people: Do you know what day this is?” And they said: The day of the great Hajj.

And then the Prophet Muhammad said to Rabî’ah to say to them: “God has made sacred and inviolable the life and the property of each of you unto the other like this day of the Hajj until you meet your Lord.

“The Lord has ordained to every man the share of his inheritance. A testament is not lawful to the detriment of heirs.

“The child belongs to the parent, and for the violator of wedlock a stone.

“You are about to meet your Lord Who will ask you to account for your actions. He who has a pledge should return it to him who entrusted it to him.

“This day all sums of interest are remitted, including that of my uncle, ‘Abbâs Ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib. This day retaliation for all murders committed in the days of paganism (the Jahiliyyah) is prohibited, and foremost of all, the murder of Rabî’ah Ibn Hârith is forgiven.

“O people! you have certain rights over your wives, and so have your wives over you. They are the trust of God in your hands. So you must treat them with all kindness. You have taken them only as a trust from God, and you have the enjoyment of their persons by the words of God.

“And as regards your slaves, see that you give them to eat of what you yourselves eat, and clothe them with what you clothe yourselves. If they commit a fault which you are not inclined to forgive, then part with them; for they are the servants of the Lord, and they are not to be harshly treated.

“And keep always faithful to the trust reposed in you and avoid sins.

“All men from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab, except by good actions.

“O people! listen to what I have to say and take it to heart. You must know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim (and as he pronounced these words he raised his arms aloft and placed the fore-finger of one hand on the fore-finger of the other). You are all equal. (You enjoy your equal rights and have similar obligations.) You are all members of one brotherhood. It is forbidden for any one of you to take from his brother save what the latter should willingly give.

“Guard yourselves from committing injustices.”

The Prophet then proceeded to recite the 36th and 37th verses of the 9th chapter of the Holy Qur’ân which abolish the triennial intercalation of the year, and fix the month of Pilgrimage to the changing seasons of the year.

He said: ‘Verily, the number of the months with God is twelve months (in a year, so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth. Of them four are sacred, three consecutive and the Rajab of Mudar, which is between Jumâdâ and Sha’bân). That is the true religion. So wrong not yourselves.

‘Verily the transposing (of a prohibited month) is an addition to unbelief. The unbelievers are led to wrong thereby; for they make it lawful one year, and forbidden another year, that they may equalize the number of months which God has forbidden and make such forbidden ones lawful.’

“And now on this very day has time performed its cycle, and as it was on the day that God created the heavens and the earth.

“O people! truly Satan has despaired of being worshipped in your land for ever. But should you obey him in some matter which may seem to be trifling, it will be a matter of pleasure for him. So you must beware of him in the matter of your faith.

“Let him that is present tell it to him that is absent. Haply he who shall be told may remember that who has heard it.

“O people! so understand my words. I have left with you something which, if you will hold fast to it, you will never fall into error—a plain indication. The Book of God and the practice of His Prophet. So give good heed to what I say.”

Then the Prophet looking up to heaven cried at the top of his voice, “O Lord! I have delivered Thy message.” And the valley resounded with the reply from the myriads of human throats with one accord, “And that thou hast!”

Thereupon the Prophet said, “O Lord! I beseech Thee! bear Thou witness unto it.”

An analysis of the Prophet’s Farewell Address

In the Farewell Pilgrimage Address of the Prophet there are fifteen items which taken collectively could be styled “The Manifesto of World Peace”. In this sermon the one thing which catches one’s eye is that the Prophet not even once mentioned the importance of rituals — the prayers, the zakâh and fasting—and that whatever he said and emphasized had a bearing on human relationship tending to establish peace amongst men and security in the world. Ritualism is given no pride of place in this Address. There are fifteen items in the Manifesto. They are:

1. The blood, property and honour of Muslims is sacred to one another. In this regard the Prophet Muhammad said, “O men! listen to my words and take them to heart. Know that every Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim, and that you are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for any one of you, therefore, to appropriate to himself anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly given to him by his brother.”

2. Equality of rights. In this regard the Prophet said: “All men are from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab, except by good actions.”

3. The abolition of family distinctions. He said that people should not take pride in their genealogy. It is the good actions alone they should take pride in.

4. Interdiction of bloodshed resulting from old feuds. The Prophet said, “Blood feuds of the pre-Islamic days are under my feet, i.e., forbidden.”

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5. Interdiction of usury. The Prophet said: “All usury money chargeable from the pre-Islamic period is under my feet (i.e. cancelled), and the first usury which I cancel is the money that belonged to my uncle ‘Abbás Ibn Muttalib.”

6. The enforcement of the law of cease-fire. The Prophet emphasised the importance of observing peace and the cease-fire during the four sacred months of the Arab calendar. The meaning underlying this observance of the sanctity of the four sacred months was that the elders and leaders of the Arab community would thus be able to consolidate peace.

7. Safeguarding of the rights of women.

8. Safeguarding of the rights of the slaves, who, the Prophet emphasized, should be looked after in the same way as one did after oneself.

9. The brotherhood of Muslims. The Prophet pointed out that Muslims were brethren to each other and that they should each one of them respect the rights and privileges of the other; they should not backbite, and they should safeguard the property and life of one another.

10. He said, “from the sacred Ka’bah, as a result of the promulgation of the doctrine of the Oneness of God, Satan has departed; but do remember that it may try to come through other ways. Be prepared, therefore, to forestall its moves and machinations.”

11. The Prophet Muhammad anathematized transgression in any form or shape. He said that the worst enemy of God was he who struck someone who had not struck him.

12. The Prophet Muhammad said that those who took pride in affiliating themselves to others who were not theirs and those who did not pay the full price of the work done by a workman were far removed from the mercy of God.

13. The Prophet emphasised that Muslims should try to effect peace between two fighting Muslim factions.

14. The Prophet said, “I am leaving behind with you two things which will bring you salvation—one of the Qur’an, the second my ways.”

15. All men are jointly responsible about God’s commandment and for the propagation of the Manifesto. The Prophet said, “Those who hear this Manifesto should convey it to others who are ignorant of it.”
The Concept of *al-Ummah al-Islamiyyah* the Basis of the Early Muslim Political Philosophy

The Problems of Muslim Society in the 20th Century

By Professor ‘ADNAN MUHAMMAD ABU GHAZALEH

Muhammad created a new concept of a social system based on religious commitments

The problems of the modern world to the Arabic-speaking peoples — and to that effect to all Muslims — are problems set against the background of Islamic values, ideas and beliefs. A large number of present social institutions in the Arab world, the Islamic law, for example, have persisted from the early days of the religion to the present day to shape the outlook of Muslims. The greatness of the Prophet Muhammad, for the purpose of political philosophy, lies in setting up a system that left sufficient religious heritage to be institutionalized in various ways: legal, social, economic and political.

Islam is often looked upon as a religion with characteristics suitable for the life of the desert, since it was born in a nomadic environment. As a matter of fact, the Muslim religion was born in the city, Mecca, during the life of Muhammad, compared to other centres of population in the Middle East, enjoyed primacy. Located on the trade routes of the time, it had been used by the Quraysh tribe as a trade centre for over five generations before the birth of the Prophet. Byzantine, Roman and Persian influences were abundant in Mecca, which had, therefore, grown into a city of a commercial enterprise on a great scale. Some of the Meccans had become very rich working as middlemen for the traded products, while others had developed into *entrepreneurs* and capitalists.

This Meccan mercantile society, however, was based on a social organization of tribal groups with values corresponding to the conditions of the desert nomadic life. There was consequently a conflict between the theoretical basis of social organization and the basis of social control. Theoretically the basis of social organization was the clan, but practically money, in the form of rich, powerful merchants, enjoyed social prominence. Muhammad accepted the mercantile background but tried to set social development in a new context.

This new context which the Muslim religion supplied was based on fresh ethical directions. The most fundamental economic and social issues were attacked from a religious base, an attack that had far-reaching consequences on social, economic and political matters. Muhammad created a new concept of a social system based on religious commitments. He tried to dissolve the increasing irrelevance of the tribal society and adjust that society to the needs of a religious community. This community was a group of people joined by common submission to God and common acknowledgement to the Prophethood of Muhammad. The Muslim religion preached a new system which enabled early Muslim rulers to dominate the whole of Arabia and the neighbouring places.

What implication of the Mission of the Prophet Muhammad meant to his followers and contemporaries

There was little of significance in the religious practices of the nomadic tribes of Arabia. Throughout the peninsula there were evidences of animism and polytheism. Several shrines marked the centres of particular religious practices. Idol worship was a common characteristic of the pre-Islamic Arab religions. In place of this practice Muhammad preached the existence of an almighty, indivisible, one God.

A student of the life of Muhammad would notice a growing development in the Prophet's consciousness of the role he played as well as of the duties of his mission. During the first five years of his public ministry he used such names as "The Warner" to describe his role. It was only after these early years that he began to emphasize the name "Prophet" to define the nature of his work. With the adoption of this term and the gradual spreading of the new faith the Meccans began to feel the potential danger of the new movement to their established prestige. Their opposition to the new religion, therefore, grew stronger. The implications of the new movement began to be felt not merely as religious; it was felt that it had political connotations as well.

The acceptance of the preaching of Muhammad that he was delivering a message from God logically meant the ultimate submission of the individual to the authority of Muhammad. The more so since the revelations consisted of a body of truths and propositions which represented the will of God as being revealed to mankind through the agency of His Prophet. And Muhammad on his part always emphasized his role as a Messenger of God revealing His message. This function bestowed upon him a certain kind of authority. In the Qur'an there are specific references to the Muslims' duty of obedience to God and His Prophet, God is obeyed by obeying His Prophet, since there is no other way or access to knowing God's will.

Submission to Muhammad implies both religious and secular duties. The adoption of the Muslim faith meant committing oneself to the authority of a new leader and the obligations of a new community. The adoption of the Muslim faith meant joining a new group, a new entity — an *Ummah*. This concept of the *Ummah* became fundamental in the organization of society in the early and medieval period of Islamic history. It became the basis of the political philosophy of Islam.

The growth of the concept of Ummah with the expansion of Islam

The concept of the Islamic *Ummah*, however, underwent some change in the early years of the history of the Muslims. In its first conception it engulfed both Muslim and non-Muslims, both Christians and Jews. It implied a group of
people under the authority of a Muslim ruler irrespective of the individual belief of the subject. It rapidly evolved, however, into a body that excluded the non-Muslims. The word *Ummah* came to mean the group of people who established a community by virtue of the religious faith they adopted and who submitted to the authority of the head of that religious community. The implication was that the religious community was the community of Muslims and its head was the Prophet or his successor, the Caliph.

The *Ummah* in early Muslim practices was set above all other groups. The members of the *Ummah* constituted one entity tied together by allegiance to one authority and by professing a common faith. The Muslim community was held together not merely by common loyalties and shared traditions; it was linked too by a system carefully thought out of values and beliefs. This society was, therefore, the product of a superb ideal cemented by deep personal convictions; it was the expression of a religious ideal. As a theological system it was the expression of a personal faith in an intellectual form which made the social order of the *Ummah* and its activities a practical form of a Muslim's personal faith. Membership in the community of Islam, to the individual Muslim, was not simply something added to the duties of a Muslim individual. It was an aspect of personal Islam.

By its nature and because of the specific bonds that tied its members together the Islamic society constituted itself as a closed group excluding all the rest of the world. The components of the Muslim society firmly believed that their community had come into being by divine imperative, with the explicit duty of attempting to bring the rest of mankind to recognize that divine imperative as well. It was a community resolved to do the will of God in a way that had no place for compromise. The duty to extend the sovereignty of God to the rest of the world, in particular to those who worship, according to Muslim belief, non-heavenly God, is one of the idealistic pillars of the Muslim religion.

**The determination of the early Muslims to extend the sovereignty of God did not imply aggressiveness for its own sake**

Yet this determination to extend the sovereignty of God to the rest of mankind did not imply aggressiveness for its own sake. The allogation always levelled against the spread of the Muslim faith, that it spread by brute force, by the power of the sword, by force of example, is not literally true, but is also unjust. The Holy War — the *jihād* — which is often misunderstood and misinterpreted, implies war for the sake of God. It is a war that should be pursued as a moral duty so long as there are people who do not recognize the sovereignty of God. The Islamic *Ummah* looked upon the *jihād* as a righteous war, an instrument of policy, in its relationship with other peoples who did not recognize the primacy and sovereignty of the One Supreme God. It was an instrument to extend the dominion of the Almighty.

Contrary to the assertions of many students of the Islamic religion, Muslims did not exert compulsion on non-Muslim believers, whether Christians or Jews, to adopt their faith. More than half of the population of the territories conquered by the Muslims in the first century of Muslim expansion continued in their old faiths. Yet while a non-Muslim believer kept his religion, he was required to submit to the political authority of the *Ummah*.

**The Qur'ān and the Sunnah are the basis of the constitution of the Islamic community**

Since the basis upon which the Islamic community was founded was religion, the main function of the *Ummah* was to realize as best it could the guidance which had been given to it by the Prophet, embodied as it was in the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Prophet — the Sunnah. The *Ummah*, therefore, had religious law as its constitution.

To comprehend the working of the political system of the Muslim society, one has always to bear in mind the religious basis of its constitution. Muhammad is the Prophet and spokesman of God: he simply relays God's guidance. To obey the Prophet is to obey God. The authority vested in the Prophet passed, on his death, to his successor, his caliph. The caliph, in this way, is the one who would carry the function of leading the community along the path which had been defined for it by divine guidance. Like the Prophet before him, he became commander of the army, secular head of the state, and the religious leader. He was expected to perform his duties in a way that would lead to the well-being of society and secure right guidance to the community that was entrusted to him.

Theoretically, the office of the caliph is not hereditary. The caliph was to be elected by Muslims and the caliphate was open to all those who qualified. Even the Umayyads, who practically passed the office to the leaders of the family, preserved the appearance of election. An ageing caliph usually had his successor elected by Muslim notables.

On assuming a caliph was in the position of a person who was party to a contract, his chief obligation was to follow the divine law, and the community was to obey him and follow him so long as he adhered to that divine law. The caliph, therefore, was of supreme importance for the working of the Muslim political system. But that importance was not derived from the caliph's own person or for the caliph's own sake. The authority which the caliph had was to be binding to the extent that he upheld God's word. The duty is to God, not to the caliph.

**The ideological factor on which the Muslim community was established supplied it with unprecedented dynamism of expansion**

The ideological factor on which the Muslim community was established supplied the Islamic *Ummah* with an unprecedented dynamism of expansion. Although a number of motives had been ascribed to the expansionist movement of early Islam, the Muslims' determination to spread the faith, to make the world safe for the dominion of God, can be singled out as the most important ideological factor behind the *jihād* of the early Muslim period. Although many reasons were given for the unprecedented sudden victory of the Islamic armies, one of the most significant of these reasons was the zeal and enthusiasm of the soldier to carry the word of God, and the belief that death in such a case was a sure way to Heaven.

In conclusion, one should assert that, while a student of early Muslim society could divide the functions of the Prophet into religious and secular categories, in the circumstances in which the Prophet lived such a distinction was impossible. The political functioning of the community, the nature of the authority of the ruler, and the nature of the state were all tied together most intimately by a set of religious convictions. The central concern of these convictions is expressed best, perhaps, as a guidance. What a Muslim individual sought to find in his religion is guidance. Islam gave him the satisfaction of realizing the proper kind of social order on earth and the right kind of fulfillment of himself as an individual. The Qur'ān, to the Muslims, came as a guidance for those who are pious and those who submit.

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Children's Page

AKRAM REPLIES TO HANIF

By OLIVE TOTO

Akram had finished his homework and now he would go down to his mother and read to her the letter he had written down, whilst resting after his homework.

Down the stairs went Akram. "Mamma," he said, "I have here my proposed letter to Hanif. Bless his heart out there in South Africa! How I miss him."

"Come along, son. Show me what you have written."

"Sit down, Mamma, and I will bring you a glass of milk. And then you can relax and I will read my letter to you."

This being done, Mamma received her glass of milk, and Akram read his letter to her.

The letter read like this:

"Dear Hanif,
Assalamu 'alaykum!

We were all so glad to have heard from you. Mamma and our mutual friend, Malik, enjoyed your letter. Cheer up, my friend. Show everyone what a true Muslim you are in the time of woe.

"You mentioned the war in Nigeria (or should I call it a revolution? which it really is) and I hope this will all soon end.

"You also gave a most interesting true story. I enjoyed it very much. In fact, I have read a lot more about our Prophet since I received your letter. How that poor man seems to have suffered! For instance, he never wanted war, and yet he had to fight or be wiped out.

"I also read about the different battles he had to fight. One of these battles rather stuck in my mind, and also what a strange kind of battle it was.

"You know, I could really see all this in my mind's eye.

"I have cut these pages from a magazine. I am sending them to you.

"As for your house in South Africa, in a way your father was right when he said, 'The Muslims living in South Africa should have spread Islam amongst many more people in that country? I know they are very good Muslims there, and I know what your father wants is very difficult to fulfil. Your father was thinking that if Islam was everywhere, then there would be no colour bar. This is true, my friend. May this dream come true one day!

"We all send our love to you, and hope you will visit us one day.

With love,
Akram."

"Mamma, shall I read those pages about the battle?"

"Yes, please, dear Son."

"Here I go. It's not too many pages, Mamma. It is called 'The Battle of Hunayn'.

"'Mecca was just settling down under the rule of the Prophet Muhammad, when after only fifteen days of peace, a tribe called Hawázín, under the leadership of Malik Ibn 'Awwf, felt very disturbed because they lived very near Mecca and had a feeling that the influence of Islam would banish their idols.

"'So Malik Ibn 'Awwf went to another tribe called Thaqif and suggested that they should join together and go out and fight Muhammad and Islam.

"'Thaqif lived in Tá'īf, and, of course, you will remember how our Prophet was stoned and abused whilst in Tá'īf. We already know that these people had no love for Muhammad or Islam, and now that 360 idols had been destroyed in Mecca, they were furious.

"'So out went these tribes towards Mecca, and took up their positions on top of a mountain called Hunayn.

"'Now, the Prophet heard of the meeting of these armies and knew they were going to prove a great danger to him and his men. Without any delay, the Prophet gathered together his army which numbered 10,000 strong, and another 2,000 men who had recently adopted Islam joined the army. Some of these 2,000 were sincere and some were half-hearted. Thus the army of the Prophet was 12,000 strong.

"'This Muslim army was much larger than it had ever been before. Although the army of the enemy did not number more than 7,000, it had the advantage of a very good position which it occupied. Because Muhammad's army would be on the plain, the enemy would be on a higher and better position on the hill.

"'Everything seemed in their favour. Our Prophet got his men ready and set out towards the Valley of Hunayn, which is situated between Mecca and Tá'īf. He had first of all to find out what this was all about, because it looked like a plan to harm Mecca and Islam. I think the enemy must have guessed that our Prophet would come out to meet them. Perhaps that is why it kept to this good position on top of the hill.

"'Night was falling when Muhammad's army came to the district of Hunayn. So it camped for the night.

"'Early in the morning, before it was light, Muhammad's army formed itself ready for marching on to the Valley of Hunayn. The army formed itself into divisions. There were two divisions that day. The front division was under the
Commander Khalid Ibn Walid. This man had been an enemy of Muhammad in the battle of Uhud, which had been fought a few years before. In fact, it was he who led his men then to the back of Muhammad’s archers, and almost won the day.

“He had been a Muslim for two years now, and here he was leading a Muslim army. What trust our Prophet had!

“Our Prophet was with the rear division of the army. Now on went these two divisions. They arrived in the plain not far from the Hunayn hill whilst it was still twilight. Everything seemed ghostly in this light which was not the light of day nor the darkness of the night. Everything at that time appeared weird.

“The enemy army saw Muhammad and his men. With one yell it swooped down on this army marching along. Khalid Ibn Walid’s division got such a fright that they turned around and ran as if the devil were after them.

“Khalid Ibn Walid saw his men running past with a terrific shower of arrows following them. The worst kind of arrows were being shot at them from the enemy. Some of the enemy men were still on that high point which was a very good position for shooting arrows, and also they had made a point of scattering the horses and mules. With good bows and arrows and the swiftness with which they attacked, it was enough to frighten anyone.

“What with the weird light of neither day nor night, and these arrows flying everywhere, it was really no wonder that Muhammad’s army, at least the first front division, started to run off. When one man called Abu Sufyân, who had become a Muslim at the time of the conquest of Mecca, saw his fellow soldiers running away, for a minute he became his wicked old self again, and with a sarcastic smile, as the soldiers passed by him, he said to someone nearby, “These men will not stop running until they reach the sea.”

“Another man, the same kind as Abu Sufyân, said, “Now I see my father is being avenged,” for his father had been killed whilst fighting the Muslims at Uhud.

“A third man said, “The magic of Islam has finished. It has ended today.” But his brother, who was more sincere, although before he had been a great idol-worshipper, said, “Do you for one minute think that God will forsake his religion? May you be cursed!”

“Our Prophet must have thought it was a dream when his men from the first division came rushing past him. His division also joined these men and fled for their lives. As they rushed past the Prophet, he shouted, “Where, O my people, are you running?” But they could not hear him, and he got ready to mount his mule and charge into the enemy.

“But his relative got hold of the mule’s reins and would not let the Prophet go. This man had a great love for Muhammad. He was ‘Abbas, Muhammad’s uncle. He was such a large strong man that Muhammad could not move with his hand on the mule’s reins. Not only had he a big body but a terrific loud voice. He yelled at the top of his voice to the fleeing army, “O you Ansars! O you who made a treaty under a tree! Remember what you said at that time and what you promised! Well, here is the Prophet who is alive! Come back to him!”

“‘Abbas’s voice, loud and commanding, reached the army which was running away. It shook them. What were they doing, running away like this? At once they all turned around and came back to the Prophet, and then went on to charge at the enemy.

“The enemy was by now in the valley. It could not realise what had happened. Muhammad’s men charged at them and scattered them. They captured whomsoever and whatever they could. The enemy fled. And so ended the battle which seemed at first the Muslims were going to lose. But, thank God, it became a victory.”

“So you see, dear Mamma,” said Akram, “I want my friend to realise that many a battle which seems to be hopeless can sometimes become a great victory.”

“Son, you are quite right. Here you are. Here is a stamp. Stick it on the envelope and your father will post it for you. Tomorrow, dear Son, I will tell you a story. Now off to bed you go.”

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The Concept of al-Ummah
Continued from Page 38

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