The Promised Messiah Speaks

THE GLORY OF THE QURAN

"(The Quran is) is a Book that We have revealed to Muhammad abounding in good, that they may ponder over its verses, and that the men of understanding may mind" — 38 : 29.

Before entering upon a discussion on the truth and authenticity of the Quran, it seems necessary that a mention be made of certain principles which are of fundamental importance, and which will be found useful in appreciating the arguments offered in the following pages.

External and internal evidence

External evidence is the testimony derived from sources which are independent of the thing discussed. In relation to a book, it signifies those phenomenal events which come to pass in such a way as to prove its supernatural source, or serve to establish the paramount necessity of its having been divinely inspired. Internal evidence stands for those intrinsic values, which lead us to the inevitable conclusion that it is the infallible Word of God which is far above the power and possibility of mortal man.

The arguments constituting external evidence on the truth of the Holy Book may be divided into four sections:
—Arguments based on facts which require to be rectified and reformed, as are found in the previous practices of unbelief and heresy, depraved deeds and dishonest dealings which man has adopted instead of the right beliefs and righteous actions and which, having spread all over the world, vitiating its atmosphere, deserve richly to be set right and amended by the grace of the Almighty.
—Arguments deduced from teachings found in the revealed Books in imperfect form, the deficiency of which becomes all the more glaring when examined in the light of Prophet Muhammad’s teachings. It is also for this reason that these Scriptures can be considered to be at the mercy of an original revealed Book which may lift them up to the level of perfect excellence.
—Arguments derived from the Book of Nature which may be further subdivided into two kinds: external evidence, consisting of such facts as are brought into existence by God directly, without the intervention of human strategem, and as bestow upon

continued on page 2
The Black Law

Following a wave of rioting, murders, arson and loot of Ahmadiyya properties in various parts of the country by mobs incited by mullas in Pakistan, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, the military ruler of Pakistan has promulgated an ordinance on April 27, 1984, the so-called Anti-Islamic activities of Qadiani Group, Lahori group and Ahmadiis (prohibition and punishment) ordinance 1984 (which is reproduced in this issue for our readers) This black law, which directly and substantially interferes with the religious beliefs and practices of the Ahmadi Muslims, is a slap in the face of human conscience. It runs afoul of both the fundamental teachings of Islam as found in the Qur’an and Sunnah and the basic human rights as guaranteed under the charter of the United Nations. Quaid-e-Azam Mauhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan had guaranteed religious freedom and equality to all the citizens of Pakistan in his very inaugural speech on the 14th of August 1947. Unfortunately Pakistan has fallen to the hands of forces which were against its very creation; and they do not beat shy in annihilating all those principles on which foundations of Pakistan were raised. Little do they care for such “niceties” as they call these fundamental human rights now. It is nulla (the fundamentalist Muslim professional Priest) who rules supreme in Pakistan, as he does in all those Muslim states where non-representative governments be these king-ships, sultanates, Sheikhdoms or dictatorships, are in power. Professional priesthood and non-representative governments are interdependent; one needs the support of the other for its existence. We learn from history that inspite of its apparently strong facade a non-representative government, because of lacking foothings in the masses, is inherently the weakest form of government. Insipite of boisterous claims of chivalry dictators in the ultimate analysis are the most-cowardly persons-and bowing down to the roundness of mullas by the government of Pakistan is yet another proof of this bare truism. Presently the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan is living in persistent conditions of persecution and intimidation. Their fundamental human rights are being trampled by the government of Pakistan. Never before in human history has any civilized government taken upon itself the duty of coining religious beliefs and tenets for its citizens and never before a government has tried to thrust down the throat of its citizens the state coined beliefs and religion in such an ugly manner as is being done by the government of Pakistan. This is Hitlerism in the making and has rightly been condemned by the Lahore (Pakistan) Bar Association which declared it a clear interference by the government of Pakistan in the religious beliefs of its citizen. We hope all sane people all over the world will not only join us in condemning this act of sheer madness but will also take positive steps to check the violation of fundamental human rights by the government of Pakistan.

We like to make it clear once for all that Ahmadiyya movement in Islam was founded by the Mujaddid of the 14th century Hijrah on receiving revelation from Allah and those who are dreaming of its annihilation should take lesson from the unnatural death of the person who was claiming credit for solving the seventy years old Qadiani problem. The tragic end of the career and life of that
The Promised Messiah Speaks

cont.

every particle. Internal evidence, implying those inner excellences of the Book, the grandeur of its phrase and the greatness of its teaching, which no amount of human power can compete which and which, in point of fact being nonpareil, become a sign of the Supreme Being.

—Arguments relating to the secrets of the Unseen (umur-i ghaliibiyah), that is, facts falling from the lips of a man of whom it cannot be accepted that he was capable of making those statements. It should be clear, from a consideration of the secrets disclosed and the conditions of the man, that it could not be possible for him to have a previous knowledge of those facts, neither through sensible experience nor by means of contemplative thought, nor will it stand to reason to suppose that he became aware of them through the agency of a confidant, although the very same facts may not be without the ambit of another man.

Arguing adversely, it may be objected that it is quite possible to re-state the simple facts incorporated in the Scriptures by taking to the method of hearsay. For this purpose, a man need not be well-read; he can easily reproduce a fact which he has heard from a learned man. The facts of the religion of these people, too, are not so hard and abstruse as not to be understood without the help of high learning and erudition. If the Scriptures were not to contain such problems as cannot be solved except by scholars of high degree, it would have to be admitted that they constitute no high and distinctive mark of learning. For, a book commands but scant respect in the eyes of the learned if it should fail to rise about the crude intelligence of the common folk and fall far below the level of sublime truths. If a person should cherish that the teaching of his Scriptures is devoid of all the exalted truths, he is guilty of a contempt of his own Books. Nor will his feeling of pride be able to hold its own for the simple reason that he will be counted among the mass and, his knowledge and wisdom being in no way superior to theirs, cannot fall within the domain of the secrets of the Unseen, provided their teaching should be so widespread and well known that there may be good reasons to believe that every illiterate person can be aware of it, if he should devote even his small attention at the matter. On the other hand, if their contents are not generally known, nor universally prevalent — in that case, however crude those facts may be, a disclosure of them will be regarded as the disclosure of the secrets of the Unseen in reference to the man who is absolutely ignorant of the language in which those facts have been written.

Therefore, the knowledge of the Unseen falls beyond the ken of mortal man; and whatever is beyond the power and possibility of man is evidently caused by God. So, the secrets of the Unseen are caused into existence directly by the Divine Being, without the least intervention of human element.

A thing which is brought into existence by the power of the Almighty, be it a living being or a sacred Scripture, should be beyond the possibility of man to produce a like of it. This principle, which is of a general nature, may be proved in two ways:

Firstly, by constructive imagination, according to which it is necessary that God should be One and without an associate in His person, attributes and deeds. For, if the association of created being were possible in any of His creations, words and deeds, it could also be possible in all His works and attributes, in which case the possibility of the creations of another God would also become conceivable. And if a thing were to possess some of the divine attributes, it should have to be regarded as an associate with the Supreme Being, which is quite inconsistent with the plain dictates of common sense and reason. Secondly by judgment of all those things which have been created exclusively by the power and command of God, from the smallest atom to the most gigantic orb of the heaven. It is an established fact that even from among the merest trifles, for instance, a fly, a gnat or a spider, not one thing is there which lies within the possibility of man to create. On the other hand, the composition of their tiny bodies is so wonderful that it constitutes a strong argument of the existence of the Creator of the world.

In the teachings of Islam there is no mention of any priests. Instead one finds mention of the Ulema. The knowledgeable and the learned ones. A hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, states two classes of ulema viz Ulema-e-Haq (the righteous Scholars) and the ulema-e-sooi (the evil scholars.) Most of the Ulema-e-Haq have agreed that vast majority of the professional priestlike ulema have in all ages belonged to the second catagory.

EDITORIAL

cont.

most prominent and brilliant politician of the Muslim world should serve as an eye opener for his successors in power. Secondly we will not sit as silent spectators on the persecution of our brethren in Pakistan. Those who are trying to gain cheap popularity by offering Ahmadis as a scape goat at the alter of their political ambitions in the garb of service to Islam have in fact done greatest, disservice to Islam. Nay they are Islam's enemy number one. We owe it to the Muslim world itself to expose Mullah's whip and lash (dandascota) model of Islam, a product of the petty minds of professional priests, which has nothing in common with the rational teachings of Islam as found in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Mullahs persistently insist upon the use of force for converting people to Islam, for keeping them in the fold of Islamic community and for making them believe and practice what Mulla thinks is the form of Islam. They openly preach hatred, and prejudice the minds of common Muslims not only against the followers of other religions but also against other Muslims who choose to disagree with Mullahs' line of thought. If this is allowed to pass unchecked the whole Muslim world will run amok. For us the issues are crystal clear. The rational teachings of Islam as found in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah versus the bigotry, which is labelled as Islam by the so called fundamentalist orthodox Mullahs. We shall never be a party to Mulla generated hypocrisy as the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam is in fact only a call for "Back to Qur'an Back to Islam."

The very idea of making laws for protecting a religion means death of that religion. Islam does not stand in need of any worldly protectors. What is being accomplished in Pakistan through present legislation, viewed in its true perspective is an effort to protect Mulla's model of Islam. Bigotry as it is, sooner or later die it must the sooner the better for the Muslim world at large. The present legislation will only serve as an accelerator to the destined end of Mulla's Model of Islam.

Masud Akhtar.

Do you know; teachings of Islam are close to the human nature; hence no myths, no superstitions, no inexplicable and imperceptible dogmas are found in Islam.
SOCIAL ORDER IN ISLAM
by M. N. MASUD

Like any other great religion Islam also succeeded in evolving, in its case relatively in a very short period of time, a social order of its own and Muslims have, since the birth of Islam more than thirteen centuries ago, more or less conducted their affairs, both state and private, in accordance with that order. Again, like any other religious or political ideology of the modern times, Islamic social order is built upon a central philosophy which is the core of the religion. We may, therefore, examine what this central philosophy or core is, its origin, its impact on Muslim thought and conduct and lastly, more important for the world at large, its relevance in modern times.

We may refer to the opening verse of the Quran which is regarded by the Muslims as the quintessence of their Holy Book. In fact, for our purpose we may concentrate only on the first two words of the verse which describe God as “the Rub of the Universe”. The word “Rub” in Arabic means Creator, Preserver, and Nourisher. Since God is the Creator of all things in the Universe and man being one of the creation, Muslims believe that there could not be any discrimination as between one man and another, whatever might be his place of birth, his status in society of his any other distinguishing mark. To bring home this equality and the humble origin of man he is told by the Quran that he is made by a clot of blood only, and the Prophet is described as ‘man’, like any other man, chosen to convey God’s message for the welfare of all mankind and to bring them into practice in order to show their practicability.

The first of these many messages is about the humble origin of man and he is enjoined to acquire knowledge to know that which he did not know before. The gateway to knowledge is by living the life of the righteous which consists of having complete faith in and practising the five obligations of the religion, meant for everyone, man or woman, rich or poor. These obligations are also called the five pillars of Islam on which have been raised, in course of time, Islamic theology, its philosophy, its culture and its civilization. The obligations are easy to understand, even by the most illiterate and can be observed by everyone without involving much physical hardship, spending of any money or making any offerings. The Quran lays great emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and the importance of the faculty of reasoning. The Holy Book itself always reasons for or against a precept or an injunction, even to the extent that it argues at length for or against the existence of God. Man is repeatedly reminded of the environment about him, the presence of which can be seen and felt by every human being. He is finally persuaded to believe in his Creator who takes care of him from birth, and assures him that the world can offer provided he does his duty to God and his fellowmen.

The first obligation “Kalima” is that there is not God but God and Mohammed is his Messenger. The “Kalima” is recited once only in one’s life and has to be believed in with all its connotations. The second are prayers to be offered five times a day, singly or in congregation. The third is fasting for the whole of the ninth month of the Muslim lunar year. The fourth is “Zakat” which is to set aside for charitable purpose 2.5% of one’s entire wealth. It may be offered to government for the welfare of the weaker sections of the community. The object of the “Zakat” is that a Muslim may not hoard wealth; in fact, he is made to realize that he as a man, has a duty to perform towards others who are not as comfortably placed as he is and who are poor and indigent. The last of the obligations is to proceed once in one’s life, on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medinan in Saudi Arabia provided one can afford the expense and is physically fit to undertake the journey which used to be quite arduous but modern amenities have somewhat lessened its hardships.

Perhaps, no one obligation of Islam has influenced more Islamic thought and philosophy, even attitudes to life of the common man, as have the prayers, not their contents along but in conjunction with their mode or manner of offering. Prayers have, of course, been offered by man in every age, as these are a reaction of man in every age, as these are a reaction of man, with his many limitations, to the natural or that man, out of sheer helplessness, has raised his hands or moved his lips to a Being superior and mightier than himself who can save him, or who is to be praised for saving or bringing relief and succour. But, it is the manner or mode of prayers in Islam which make them distinctive and which also demonstrates what Islam stands for, apart from peace and resignation to the will of God, equality between man and man before God and man’s direct link to his Creator without an intermediary to assist or intercede. Prayers in Islam can be offered anywhere, not necessarily in a mosque. It is however, regarded as better if they are offered in mosque, a practice followed by the Prophet all throughout his life. They are usually offered on weekdays in the local mosque so that the work or business may not suffer: Friday noon prayers are, however, offered in the largest mosque of the town or city, the idea being that besides praying. Muslims should be also provided with as many opportunities as possible to meet another. For the mosque in Islam is almost an institution by itself. It is a place for prayers, but, from the social point of view, a place for a gathering of Muslims to exchange news and views on work or business or on topical subjects of the day. It is also used as school for learning and as a temporary rest-home, for the way-farer.

There is no reservation of places in the mosque by the rich or the privileged in society, not even for the ruler. No one can ask for a reservation and it goes to the great credit of the institution that never, so far, has a reservation been asked for anyone. Any reservation will not only be against the practice scrupulously followed in the past thirteen centuries and more by Muslims all over the world, it would also go against the teachings and the spirit of Islam. This has been beautifully expressed by the poet when he says "to offer their prayers Mahmud, the King and Ayaz, his slave, stand in one row". Not only do the master and the slave stand together in a row along with the others in the mosque whose number may be just a few or hundreds of thousands, depending on the occasion and the site of the mosque, they also follow the Imam, the leader. He is appointed to this very high post of the institution, not in consideration of his riches or the authority he might be enjoying in society by solely in consideration of his piety and his ability to recite the Quran from memory. He leads the congregation. When he stands for prayers, everyone stands, when he genuflects, everyone does and when he touches his forehead to the ground, everyone follows him.

In Islam, God is worshipped in all the three postures that man can take to pay homage to his Creator, while standing straight in an attitude of respect and humility, while genuflecting to give more respect and show more humility of body and spirit, and while in prostration, which posture has always been taken by man in fear or awe, in love or in gratitude.

Not only does the congregation follow the Imam in the three postures of worship, it also recites in silence verses from the Quran or listens when the Imam is reciting. Everyone in the congregation conducts the rites of prayers are, they take only a few minutes at a time, those who have to leave may leave, but those who can stay, take part in discussions on subjects mundane or spiritual. After the Id prayers, Muslims usually embrace each other in brotherly love and affection and demolish, outside of prayer, the barriers of birth, status or position. One can imagine the feelings of the slave being embraced by his master or the poor by the rich or a subordinate by his supervisor. Old enmities are forgotten and wrongs or insults are forgiven. It becomes, for the moment, a gathering of people, without bias or prejudices, without contempt or hatred. Man is possessed of those qualities which God would like to see in man and which man would like to possess, not for special occasions only but, as his habits, may, not just as habits, but the very way of life. Call it religious, or if you prefer, call it sensible.

An ideology, be it religious or political, is a way of thinking, and attitude to life and its problems. It can succeed to the extend that its followers or adherents, not a small minority of them, but most of them, are provided with opportunities to participate, more or less on equal terms in its...
EID-UL-ADHA
Pilgrimage to Mecca—
a symbol of world brotherhood

"And proclaim the Pilgrimage to ALL MEN" is the Quranic command of Allah unto the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is a perpetual call unto all Believers in God who accept the Patriarch Abraham as the father of organized Religion.

Muhammad was that Prophet and descendant of Abraham, sent by God to invite all men into Abraham’s monotheistic Faith of Islam, that in truly organized form they may develop his religion; and in establishing a great world brotherhood would bring about the peace and happiness of Heaven on earth that was promised to those true followers of Abraham.

The Pilgrimage is thus a wonderful exercise of human unity. Pilgrims of every race and nation, and from every walk of life gather upon the plains of Arabia and at the Holy Centers of Abraham in a grand show of mass unity of thought and purpose.

Spiritual power

Dressed only in two pieces of unsewn cotton garment and chanting together, "Here we are in Thy presence, O God," the pilgrims must lose all feelings of personal importance to the urge for collective spiritual power and purpose; together they must prostrate themselves upon the earth that gave them birth and succor, that they may reflect upon their humble origins and their utter dependence upon Allah for life.

In this collective frame of mind the pilgrims think only of God as the Sovereign over all and of themselves as equal co-sharers of the innumerable bounties of God. Here is born the spiritual power of Islam, of Abraham’s Religion that demands purposeful submission only to Allah, and sacrificing of the self for the benefit and welfare of others.

Abraham was the first man to organize religion for the benefit of society, and the shrine he built at Mecca in Arabia is a living testimony to his desire for all men to rally around this symbol of monotheistic faith that would inspire them into a single world-religious brotherhood. "God is one and mankind is a single community" is the Quranic dictum first voiced by the Great Patriarch.

Abraham’s prayer

The Shrine at Mecca is the first one upon the face of the earth to have had the distinction of having men and women drawn from all races and nations gather in pilgrimage around its holy precincts, and thus stands in fulfillment of the famous prayer of Abraham which the Patriarch had addressed to his Lord when dedicating the building to Divine worship:

"O Lord, I have settled a part of my offspring in this valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House that they may keep up prayer (to Thee). So make the hearts of the people yearn towards them and provide them with ample fruit, and make this city secure and save me and my sons from worshiping idols, make them a nation submissive to Thee.

... and raise from among them a Messenger who shall recite to them of Thy Messages and who will teach them and purify them. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise." —Holy Qur’an.

Living symbol

It was in response to this prayer that through Ishmael the mighty Arab nation came into being and the Arabian wilderness began prospering with tremendous wealth—that through the Arabs, peoples of all races who "yearned towards them" began accepting Abraham’s Religion of Islam and above all the great world-Messenger Muhammad came with the true Messages of the Lord to teach and

continued on page 20

Jesus & Muhammad
cont.

(From last issue)

There were then, as there are at the present time, many conversions from Christianity to Islam, but as the Rev. John Owen says in his Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance (p.69):

The apostasy which preferred the vicegerent of Muhammad to that of Christ might well be regarded as no true apostasy at all but the transference of allegiance from a corrupt and perverted Christianity to a faith and conduct nearer to own primal spirit.

Edward Clodd, who gave long years of intense study to the subject of Comparative Religion writes of Islam:

"By their fruits ye shall know them. A religion which has fed the heart-hunger of millions of men for high 1300 years cannot have been cradled in fraud. It did not grow without a struggle, for if stones and sneers could have killed it, it would have died during Muhammad’s life-time.

Despite the physical persecution which the Prophet and his disciples encountered many notable converts were made. The Quraish decided to boycott Muhammad and many of his followers were cast into prison and made to suffer in other ways. In order to escape persecution, on the advice of Muhammad, many of his disciples found refuge in Abyssinia, where they were given a hearty welcome by the Negus. Domestic afflications crowded in upon the Prophet. He suffered the loss by death of his uncle and protector, Abu Talib, which was followed by that of his wife, a firm believer in his mission from the beginning. At Madina he laid the foundation of the mosque al-Taqwa, "the Fear of God." A charter was drawn up assuring religious freedom to all inhabitants. The Rev. John Owen says: (op. cit. p. 64)

"It is certain that Muhammad himself, with all his prophetic enthusiasm, was a tolerant man. Undoubtedly he was so as to Judaism and Christianity. There were, indeed, too many elements common to the three Semitic religions to permit a logical standpoint of antagonism for the youngest against the two elder. The most honoured names both in Judaism and Christianity were sacred to the Arabian Prophet. There were also similarities of religious thought, opinion and sympathies - the common substratum of Semiticism - which he not only recognized, but of which he shrewdly availed himself, in controversy with Jews and Christians. No doubt there are passages in the Qur'an which manifest an intense hatred of unbelievers but by these are intended idolaters and polytheists, not varying phases of monotheism."

4 The Islamic Review • June/July 1984
WHAT can I do for Islam and Muslims, is a question which every Muslim, young and old, should ask himself. Without minimizing the value of the work that others are doing, I would place my own answer to the question as briefly as possible before my Muslim brethren.

Before attempting an answer to this question, it is necessary to find out the greatest need of Islam in its present trials. It is true that the most conspicuous thing that strikes us at first sight about Islam today, is decline of its political dominance in the world. But searching beneath the surface, one would find that the vanishing away of the temporal power of the Islamic world is itself due to other causes, which have brought about a general deterioration in the condition of the Muslim peoples throughout the world. The remedy, therefore, must be applied to the root-disease. An immutable Divine law is thus stated in the Holy Qur’an:

“God does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.”

Muslims were once the masters of the world and their condition now is the reverse of this. The change in their condition is therefore a clear sign that they themselves have changed; in other words, they gave up their high principles which made them eminent in the world. The inner change came first and the outward change in their political condition is only the outcome of that inner change. In fact, so great was the power wielded by Muslims in the world that no power from outside could bring about its fall, if deterioration had not taken place from within. And just as the fall is due to internal cause, even so the rise can be brought about only by an internal change. This is the first point which must be borne in mind. No alliance with this people or non-co-operation with that people can do any good to Muslims unless they think more about themselves than about love or hatred for others unless they exert themselves to a much greater extent for bettering the condition of Muslims throwing all other questions into the background. Their efforts must in the main be directed towards the reform of the Muslim community.

The second point to which I wish to draw the attention of my Muslim brethren, is that the mission of the Muslims in this world is not simply their own betterment; it is the betterment of humanity at large, the bringing out of people from darkness into light, the dissemination of truth, the removing of all distinctions of colour and nationality, the establishing of a universal brotherhood all over the world and finally the bringing about of a real union between God and man. Thus says the Holy Qur’an:

“And thus we have made you an exalted nation, that you may be the bearers of witness to the people and that the Apostle may be a bearer of witness to you.”

“You are the best of nations raised up for (the benefit of) men: you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah.”

Islam brought a message of peace to the world as its very name shows, and we are not true to Islam if we do not carry that message to the farthest corners of the earth. The Apostle was a bearer of witness to us because he delivered to us the message of Truth, an exactly in the same way we are required to be the bearers of witness to others and to convey to them the message of Truth. That is our ideal. To be content with anything short of this, is to waste away the opportunity which has been given us, to be untrue to ourselves and to Islam. So says the Word of God:

“Most surely, man is in loss, except those who believe and do good and enjoin on each other truth and enjoy on each other patience.”

The mere acceptance of truth, even its carrying into practice, does not make us gainers if not accompanied by our inviting others to it. Truth is not a thing merely to be received; it is a thing to be received and imparted. A little consideration would show the truth of the statement made by the Holy Qur’an. Man remains a loser so long as he does not carry the message of truth to others. Why? Because there is nothing stationary in the world. If you do not move forward, you shall go back. Life is a struggle onwards. The moment that struggle stops, there is decline and decay. This is the lesson conveyed in the above verses. It is useless to speak of the betterment of the Muslim peoples unless the very first condition of betterness is fulfilled and the banner of Truth is raised aloft and carried forward. It is the lesson writ large in the pages of the history of Islam. So long as Muslims were inspired by the zeal to carry the banner of Islam forward, they were a great people. The moment they called a halt, they began to deteriorate and it is only the result of that deterioration that is facing us in the fallen condition of the Muslim community. Let that spirit to conquer the whole world by the message of peace inculcated in the Holy Qur’an, again move our hearts and we shall soon see how Muslims are again ahead of the nations of the world in the race of life. Our betterment, the reform of the Muslim community, can only be brought about by the propagation of the truth that has been given to us in the Holy Qur’an.

The truth of the statement, made above, is clear in more ways than one. The world today is devoid of clear and correct notions about Islam. Misrepresentation has been rampant for centuries in Europe and it requires a long and sustained struggle on the part of Muslims to remove it. As a people, Muslims cannot afford to be looked down upon by the nations of the earth, and greater the esteem in which they are held by others, the smaller the chances of being ill-treated by them. Thus the propagation of Islam is the greatest religious as well as the most important political need of Muslims, and unless this need is fulfilled, our advancement from within cannot bring about any appreciable results.

The misgivings that lurk in the minds of some Muslims on this point are due to a lack of appreciation of the spiritual power of Islam and its effect on the material advancement of the Muslims. The Holy Qur’an speaks of Islam as being the greatest spiritual power that has ever existed in the world and it, therefore, speaks of the principles of Islam as destined ultimately to be the only dominant principles in the world.

“He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions.”

And what does history show? Islam is the latest religion of the world; its preaching commenced when all other religions had been firmly established and claimed homage from different nations of the earth. Yet so great was the spiritual power wielded by Islam, that no religion has been able to withstand it. Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, have all contributed their millions to Islam, while none of these has ever been able to take away any appreciable number from amongst the Muslims. Christianity has, for centuries, worked with the most powerful resources to deal a blow to Islam, but has not been able to wind back even those contributed by it. So great is the spiritual power of Islam that even at the ebb of its physical power, its principles are gaining ground in the West, the day of whose conquest by Islam seems to have dawned after a long night of a thousand year. Islam came into the world to conquer; it has gone on conquering and it shall continue to conquer.

“The sun shall rise from the West in the latter days” thus it was foretold by the Holy Prophet. Obviously the reference was to the sun of Islam which rose first in the East and filled the Eastern countries with its resplendent light. The West was to receive the spiritual, like the physical, light later in the day, and that light has shone forth on it just when the temporal power of Islam was considered to have almost vanished away. It is only a sign that Islam shall be a conqueror spiritually, whether winning or losing in the physical world. And this sign of the wonderful conquests that are yet to be made by Islam, has been manifested through the greatest religious personality of this age, the late Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Mujaddid (reformer) of the 14th century of Hijrah. About sixty years ago, he drew attention of the world to the wonderful spiritual power of Islam — power that can make whole world bow to it even in the days of its trial, even at the time of its political subjection to its greatest foe. He spoke with the force which comes from on High, that the apparent loss of Muslim power was a sign of the great conquest which awaited Islam in the spiritual field. His voice was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, until the time came when continued on page 20

June/July 1984 • The Islamic Review
“Allah is He who made (it possible) for you (to acquire) mastery over the ocean; thus (your) craft can ply thereon, with Allah’s command” — “Allah is He, who gives you subjection over all that is in Heaven and Earth: Herein are Allah’s signs for a people given to reflection”.

(The Holy Quran 45:12/13)

Taffakur and Taskheer
(Science and Technology)

I have quoted these verses from the Holy Quran for they speak of the two concepts of ‘Taffakur’ and ‘Taskheer’ together in the same place.

Taffakur is the reflection on, and discovery of, the laws of Nature (science); Taskheer is the acquiring of mastery over Nature through technology. Both these, throughout the ages, have been the shared urges of mankind. It is the glory of Islam that the Holy Quran, by repeated injunctions, enjoins their pursuit as bounden obligations on the Muslim community. And as in the verses above, there is the emphasis that taffakur and taskheer (science and technology) are not distinct; they form part of the same spectrum.

Following these injunctions, barely a hundred years after the Prophet’s death, the Muslims had made it their task to master the then-known sciences. With feverish haste, but systematically, they translated the entire corpus of the then known knowledge in their religious language. Arabic. Founding institutes of advanced study (Bait-ul-Hikmas) and prestigious universities (like the Nizamiya), particularity in this part of the world, they acquired an ascendancy in sciences that lasted for the next 600 years.

The Level of Scientific Creation in Islam

A semi-quantitative measure of this is given by George Sarton in his monumental “History of Science”. Sarton divides his story of the highest achievement in science into Ages, each lasting 50 years. With each, he associates one central figure: thus, 500-450 BC is the Age of Plato, followed by the Ages of Aristotle, Euclid, Archimedes and so on. From 750 to 1100 CE, however, it is an unbroken succession of the Ages of Jabir, Khwarizmi, Razi, Masudi, Abul-Wafa, Biruni and Omar Khayyam. In those 350 years, Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Persians — chemists, algebraists, clinicians, geographers, mathematicians, physicists and astronomers of the commonwealth of Islam — held the world stage of sciences. Only after 1100 CE, in Sarton’s scheme, do the first Western names begin to appear; however, for another 250 years, they only share the honours with men of Islam like Ibn Rushd, Nasirpur-din Tusi and Ibn Nafis.

To mark the level of this achievement and to emphasise the originality and calibre of science in Islam, I shall take my own subject of physics as an example. Contrary to the views of the Greeks — and I quote from H. J. J. Winter’s “Eastern Science” — “Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037 CE) regarded light as an emission by the luminous sources of particles traveling at finite speed; he understood the nature of heat and force and motion.” His contemporary, one of the greatest physicists of all time, Ibn al-Hathlam (Alhazen, 965-1039 CE), who started work at nearby Basrah and then migrated to Egypt, made experimental contributions of the highest order in optics and “ennounced that a ray of light, in passing through a medium, takes the path which is the easier and quicker.” In this he was anticipating Fermat’s Principle of Least Time by many centuries. He enunciated the law of inertia, later to become Newton’s first law of motion, and described the process of refraction in mechanical terms, by considering the movement of “particles of light” as they passed through the surface of separation of two media, in accordance with the rectangle law of forces (an approach later rediscovered and elaborated by Newton).

Al Khazini of Merv (12th Century CE) in a remarkable treatise entitled “The Book of the Balance of Wisdom”, worked out a theory of universal gravity directed towards the centre of the earth; he was also responsible of the assumption that air has weight and for original work on capillarity. Qubd-ud-Din al Shirazi (1236-1311 CE) and his pupil Kamal-ud-Din gave the first explanation of the rainbow, stated that the speed of light is in inverse ratio to the optical, rather than the material, density of the medium; and that hyperboloidal lenses avoid spherical aberration.

In assessing this work, let us not forget that most of these men were only part-time physicists. They were universalists — physicians, astronomers, lexicographers, poets and even theologians at the same time.

In this recital I have not mentioned Al Biruni (973-1048 CE) who, working in Afghanistan, was a great experimenter like his contemporary Alhazen. He was as modern and as unmedieval in outlook as Galileo, six centuries later, with whom he shares the independent (prior) discovery of the so-called Galilean invariance of the laws of Nature — the liberating statement that the same Laws of Physics apply here on earth and on the starry orbs in the heavens.

I have mentioned some of the great new ideas in physics due to the Muslims. But like all science, the bulk of the scientific work in Islam is not a record of what these universal luminaries did; it is painstaking, slow accumulation of data, supplemented with critical examination, exposition and commentary on the work of their peers. As Brian Stock has remarked in his perceptive review “Science and Technology and Economic Progress in the Early Middle Ages”, “the most remarkable feature is . . . that science in one form or another was the part-time or full-time occupation of so large a number of intellectuals.” Consider in this respect the following extract from the entry under “Euclid” in Al-Nadim’s “Catalogue of Sciences”, the — “Fihrist”:

“[The Elements] was twice translated by Al-Hajaj ibn Yusuf ibn Matar: one translation, the first, is known under the name of Harunian, while the other carries the label Ma’munian and is the one to be relied and depended on. Furthermore, Ishaq ibn Hunayn also translated the work, a translation in turn revised by Thabit ibn Qurra al-Harrani. Moreover, Abu ’Uthman al-Dimashqi translated several books of this same work; I have seen the tenth in Mosul, in the library of ‘Ali ibn Ahmad al-Imrani (one of whose pupils was Abul-Saqr al-Qabisi, who in turn in our time lectures on the Almagest) Al-Nayrizi also commented upon it, as did al-Karabisi . . . Further, al-Jawhari . . . wrote a commentary on the whole work from beginning to end: another commentary on book V was done by al-Mahani . . . Furthermore, Abu Ja’far al-Khazin al-Khurasani . . . composed a commentary on Euclid’s book, as did Abu’l-Wafa, although the latter did not finish his. Then a man by the name of Ibn Rihwayh al-Arrajani commented on Book X, while Abu ‘I-Qasim al Antaqi commented on the whole work . . . Further, a commentary was made by Sanad ibn ‘Ali . . . and book X was commented upon by Abu Yusuf al-Razi . . .” With this meticulousness, no wonder one of the earliest scientists to worry about Euclid’s axiom of parallels was Nasir-ud-din Tusi.

As Stock remarks: “Al-Nadim’s catalogue is complete. . . . However there is one aspect of Mathematics he omitted, this was the practical. Nadim did not say that the diffusion of Hindu-Arabic numerals and the decimal positional system was brought about by trade. Nor did he mention that Muslim mathematicians, to a much greater degree than the Greeks, interested
The Gulf University and Science in the Arab Islamic Commonwealth cont.

themselves in everyday problems. Masha' allah, the noted astrologer (d. ca. 815-20 CE), was the author of a treatise on commodity prices. Abu'l-Wafa combined original work on Euclid and Diophantus with books bearing such titles as “What is Necessary from Geometrical Construction for the Artisan.” In these works the theory was old but the examples were new. One may doubt that the most refined theory penetrated commercial circles, but commerce stimulated the theorists and oriented them towards the concrete. Such was the temper of the Islamic Society — Basic Sciences as related to their Applications to Life; Taffakur and Taskheer. In this context one may quote Sarton again: “The main, as well as the least obvious, achievement of the middle Ages was the creation of the experimental spirit and this was primarily due to the Muslims down to the 12th century.”

In planning for the super University of the Gulf States, we heard yesterday at this meeting an exposition of this new institution as a possible university of technology (taskheer). Today, I shall be emphasizing the other side of the coin: the aspects of taffakur (science), which lie at the heart of all modern technology. I wish to emphasize that in the contest of the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth of nations, we must also give the highest priority to the creation of sciences and I wish to outline the steps we need to take, both in regard to the evolution of the super-University at Bahrain as well as outside it, if we are to regain our rightful self-respecting place among the community of nations. The proposed University in Bahrain is rightly placed to help achieve this pre-eminence in sciences as a pre-condition for pre-eminence in technology. Just as Bahrain has successfully developed the highest traditions in sophisticated banking in a short span of time, I believe it also has a potential to develop sciences, through the establishment of centres of excellence at the proposed University. From ancient times, Bahrain has been at the crossroads of civilizations and cultures with a tradition of nurturing and toleration of new and venturesome ideas — a pre-requisite for the developing of sciences.

The Present Picture of Sciences in Islamic Countries

What is the picture of science and technology in the Islamic Commonwealth? For purposes of identification, the Arab-Islamic peoples fall into six geographical regions. First and foremost are the nine countries of the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. The second region consists of the Arab northern tier: Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza. The third region comprises Turkey, Muslim Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The fourth (most populous) region consists of Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, (plus the Muslim minorities in India and China). In the fifth region are the Arab countries of North Africa, where the sixth region would comprise the non-Arab African countries. If we consider the present enrollment in scientific and technological education in the 18-23 year age group at the Universities as an index of high scientific potential, the Islamic countries average 2% of the relevant age group compared to the norms of around 12% for the developed countries. A similar ratio of 1:6 prevails also in respect of GNP expenditures on scientific and technological research and development. No detailed statistics of numbers of those engaged in scientific research are available. However, in the Background Paper submitted to the first meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference, which was held in Islamabad during 10-13 May 1983, a figure of around 45,136 research and development scientists and engineers was given for the entire Islamic world, compared to one and a half million in the USSR and four hundred thousand in Japan.

According to Zahir, an analysis of these and similar figures reveals that so far as physics is concerned, the Arab-Islamic community is around one tenth in size and one hundredth in scientific creativity in research publication, compared to the international norms. Pakistan, which is one of the most advanced of Islamic countries in physics, has 19 universities, but only 13 Professors of Physics, and a total of 42 Physics Ph. D. teachers and researchers in all its universities — this for a population of 80 million. To compare, the corresponding numbers at one College at one University in the United Kingdom — the Imperial College of Science and Technology — are 12 Professors and 100 researchers.

These figures are dismal; what makes them more dismal is the unfortunate fact that our scientific effort is isolated from international science. As a measure of this, it is amazing, but true, that with the exception of Egypt, which is a member of sixteen Unions, no other Arab or Islamic country uniformly subscribes to more than five International centers of scientific research have been created or are located within our confines; few international scientific conferences are organized there; very few of us, if living and working in our own countries, are privileged to travel to scientific institutions and meetings outside; such travel, as a rule, is considered wasteful luxury. The situation is a little better in Arab OPEC countries; it is dismal in non-Arab Islamic lands. It was this isolation which prompted me to propose the creation of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics so that others do not make exiles of themselves if they wish to keep themselves abreast in newer developments in this subject. This Centre belongs to two United Nations Agencies — IAEA and UNESCO; some one hundred and seventy five Arab and Muslim physicists (out of around 100 from developing countries) are supported at the Centre every year. Of these, 25 are supported by the Kuwait Foundation for Science and Kuwait and Qatar Universities; the rest come with funds provided by IAEA, UNESCO or the benefactions I can secure from Italy or Sweden.

To give an outside observer’s assessment, writing in the prestigious scientific journal, “Nature”, of 24 March 1983, Francis Gales raises the question “What is wrong with Muslim science?” This is what he says: “At its peak about one thousand years ago, the Muslim world made a remarkable contribution to science, notably mathematics and medicine. Baghdad in its heyday and southern Spain built universities to which thousands flocked: rulers surrounded themselves with scientists and artists. A spirit of freedom allowed Jews, Christians and Muslims to work side by side. Today all this is but a memory. “Expenditure on science and technology may have increased in recent years though that increase has been, preface, limited to oil-rich countries. Some of these countries are busy fighting wars which cost billions of dollars — no doubt they have little time for science. Trade and structures are dominated by imported technology and most countries have economic and scientific systems geared to imitation rather than originality.”

“Even the recent wealth provided by oil exports makes relatively little difference... since policy and politics, much to the displeasure of many scientists, are closely linked in the Middle East. The region is dominated by dictatorships, benevolent or otherwise... further complicating any attempt to allow science to take root indigenously. Not surprisingly the brain drain to industrialized countries continues to debilitate intellectual life throughout the Middle East.”

The same issue of “Nature” contains another article on Research Manpower in Israel from which I quote: “The need for a substantial increase in the number of academically trained people to work in research and development is widely accepted. The National Council for Research and Development has urged that their country will need 86,700 such people in 1995, compared with 34,800 in 1974 — an increase of 150 per cent.” Compare the figure of 34,800 with 45,136 researchers in all Islamic countries (the population ratio is around 200).

The article continues: “In the 1960s Professor Derek de Solla Price of Yale University developed a method for measuring scientific manpower in various countries based on the total of researchers who had papers published in major professional journals an concluded that in this country there are five times as many scientists as would be expected for its population and gross national product. Price insists that ‘the situation is no different today; the country still possesses an enormous reservoir of trained people, something for which she has every...

continued on next page

June/July 1984 • The Islamic Review 7
reason to be grateful because her scientists and technicians more than compensate for the lack of oil and minerals.’

The New Gulf University

With this bleak picture of science in the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth, it is any wonder that the prospect of a Super-University in the Arab-Islamic lands excites me, first and foremost, to remedy the situation in the pursuit of the traditional basic sciences of physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology at the highest levels, as a prelude to sciences in application. My vision is that of prestigious universities of science arising — perhaps one in each of the six regions of Islam — the new Gulf University among them — consisting of centres of excellence, second to none in quality in the world, in one or more of the scientific disciplines, experimental and theoretical. These centres would be open internationally, their faculties would be among the finest in the world, the modalities of their operation non-bureaucratic. And there would be guaranteed financial access to these centres and their facilities for all researchers within the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth, so that the poorest faculties in the poorest of the Arab-Islamic countries can also keep in touch with living science through using these facilities.

The men to staff such facilities would come internationally, but in particular from the seventh region of Arab-Islamic science. This region consists, in Zahn’s count, of the twenty thousand researchers from the Arab-Islamic countries who are now working in Europe and America. I have the vision of these men coming to Bahrain and other super universities, at least as part-time associates, to bring about the renaissance of sciences in our Commonwealth through their active contact. This will happen provided we create here the conditions which prevailed in the days of early Islamic science, particularly in this region.

The reasons for Muslim Pre-Eminence in Sciences before 1000CE and for the Subsequent Decline

What were the conditions which helped the Muslims develop sciences at a feverish rate in the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th centuries? What were the reasons for its pre-eminence? One may think of three: first and foremost, the Muslims were following the repeated injunctions of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet. According to Dr. Muhammad Ajazi Khatib of Damascus University, nothing can emphasise the importance of science more than the remark that “in contract to 250 verses which are legislative, some 750 verses of the Holy Quran — almost one eight of it — exhort believers to study Nature — to reflect, to make the best use of reason and to make the scientific enterprise an integral part of the Community’s life.”

The second reason, which is connected with the first, was the status accorded in Islam to men of knowledge and science, — the ails. The Holy Quran emphasises the superiority of the aim, the man possessed of knowledge and science, by asking: how can those who do not possess these attributes ever be equals to those who do?

The Prophet of Islam said: “The quest for knowledge and science is obligatory upon every Muslim, man and woman.” He enjoined his followers to seek “ilm” even if they had to travel to far Cathay in its search. Clearly in the context of China, he was emphasising science and not religious knowledge, besides pointing out the internationalism of the scientific quest.

This brings us to the third reason for the success of the scientific enterprise in Islam: its international character. The Islamic Commonwealth itself cut across nations and colour; moreover early Muslim society was very tolerant of men from outside it, and of their ideas.

An aspect of this reverence for the sciences in Islam was the patronage they enjoyed in the Islamic-Arabic Commonwealth. To paraphrase what H.A.R. Gibb has written about Arabic literature to the parallel situation for the sciences: “To a greater extent than elsewhere, the flowering of the sciences in Islam was conditional . . . on the liberality and patronage of those in high positions. Where Muslim society was in decay, science lost vitality and force. But so long as, in one capital or another, princes and ministers found pleasure, profit or reputation in patronising the sciences, the torch was kept burning.” This situation did not last indefinitely, however, and after 1100 CE science in Islam started to decline. By 1350, the decline was almost complete. Why did we in Islamic lands lose out?

No one knows for certain. There were indeed external causes, like the devastation caused by the Mongols, but, grevious though it was, it was perhaps more in the nature of an interruption. Sixty years after Ghengiz, his grandson Hulagu was founding an observatory at Maragha, where Nasir-ud-din Tusi worked. In my view, the demise of living science within the Islamic Commonwealth was more due to the internal causes of discouragement to innovation (taqlid) and of isolation of our scientific enterprise.

To emphasise this, consider Imam Ghazzali’s (1058-1111 CE) injunctions in the first chapter of his great Ihaya’ al-umum-ud-din “The Revival of Religious Learning.” Imam Ghazzali laid stress upon the acquiring and creating of those sciences, which are necessary for the development of Islamic society, specifically mentioning mathematics and medical sciences. He designated these sciences as Farz-e-Kataya — an obligation for the whole community, but one which can be discharged on behalf, by a certain number of its members, otherwise the entire community would consist of transgressors.

In his Al-Munqith min ad-Dalal the Imam says, “A grievous crime indeed against religion has been committed by a man who imagines that Islam is defended by the denial of the mathematical sciences, seeing that there is nothing in the revealed truth opposed to these sciences by way of either negation or affirmation, and nothing in these sciences opposed to the truth of religion.” These injunctions notwithstanding, soon after Imam Ghazzali wrote, the temper of the age had turned away from science, either to Sufism with its other-worldliness or to a lack of tolerance and taqlid in Sciences as in other fields of learning.

To illustrate this, let me quote from Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 CE), one of the greatest social historians and one of the brightest intellectuals of all time in his field. Ibn Khaldun writes, in his Muqaddima:

“We have heard of late, that in the land of the Franks, and one the northern shores of the Mediterranean, there is a great cultivation of philosophical sciences. They are said to be studied there again, and to be taught in numerous classes. Existing systematic exposions of them are said to be comprehensive, the people who know them numerous, and the students of them very many . . . Allah knows better, what exists there . . . But it is clear that the problems of physics are of no importance for us in our religious affairs. Therefore, we must leave them alone.”

Ibn Khaldun displays little curiosity, no wishfulness. The apathy his words appear to convey led to isolation and, as everyone knows, isolation in the sciences and veneration for authority it engenders, spells intellectual death. In our great days in the 9th and 10th centuries, we had founded, in Baghdad and Cairo, international institutes of advanced studies (Bait-ul-Hikmas), and assembled international conferences of scholars there. But from 1300 CE, no more. Any science that was cultivated was concentrated in religious seminaries, where tradition was valued more than innovation. The very encyclopaedic nature of knowledge and science in Islam was now a hindrance in an age of specialisation. The wholema faculty of criticism, by which a young researcher questions what he is taught, re-examines it, and brings forth newer concepts, was no longer tolerated or encouraged.

To complete the story, from Ibn Khaldun’s days, this intellectual isolation continued — even during the great empires of Islam, the empires of Osmari Turks, of the Iranian Safvis, and of the Indian Mughals. It is not that the sultans and the shah-in-shahs were not cognizant of the technological advances being made by the Europeans; they could hardly have been unaware of the intrusive superiority of the Venetians or the Genoese in the arts of gun-founding, or the the nautical and ship-building skills of the Portuguese who controlled the oceans of the world, including all oceans bordering on Islamic lands,
and even the Hajj sea routes. But they seem never to have realized that navigational skills of the Portuguese were not accidental; these had been scientifically developed and sedulously cultivated starting with the research establishment of Sagres set up in 1419 by Prince Henry the Navigator.

But even while they envied and sought the technologies involved, they failed to understand the basic interrelation between science and technology. In 1799, for example, Selim III introduced the modern studies of algebra, trigonometry, mechanics, ballistics and metallurgy into Turkey — and imported French and Swedish teachers — so as to rival the European skills of gun-making. But he failed to accent basic scientific research in these subjects, and Turkey never caught up with Europe.

Thirty years later, Muhammad Ali in Egypt had his men trained in the arts of surveying and prospecting for coal and gold. But it did not strike him, or his successors, to train Egyptians long-term in the basic sciences of geology. Even today, when we have come to recognize that technology is the sustenance and the power, we have not appreciated that there are no short cuts to it, that basic science and its creation must equally become part of our civilization as a precondition of a mastery of science in application and technology. If one was being Machiavellian, one might discern sinister motives among those who try to sell us the idea encapsulated in the catch-phrase “technology transfer” without “science transfer.”

Science Transfer and Technology Transfer

Let me elaborate on this theme, for this is central to what I want to say. I shall illustrate through some historical, as well as recent, examples of how scientific research impinges on modern technology.

My first example is Faraday’s unification of electricity and magnetism, accomplished in the last century. Before Faraday, one thought of the electric and the magnetic forces as two distinct forces with no interrelation between them. Electricity was typified by the phenomenon of thunderstorms; magnets were bar-magnets, deflected by the earth’s magnetism. Faraday, experimenting in his basic sciences’ laboratory at the Royal Institution in London’s Piccadilly, discovered an amazing interrelation between these two disparate forces. Move an electrically charged object in the vicinity of a magnet, and the magnet suffers deflection.

The conclusion of this and similar experiments was inescapable and sensational. The magnetic force is not an independent force; electrically charged objects produce electric forces when they are stationary; they give rise to magnetic forces when moved. Electricity and magnetism had been unified and unified — this was one of the greatest discoveries in physics of all times.

And when Faraday was making his experiments, no one could have imagined that this simple physics discovery in a laboratory in a fashionable and dilettante part of London, would lead to the entire corpus of the electrical power generation.

Just to emphasize how relatively useless Faraday’s work was thought to be by his contemporaries, consider the assessment of one of them, Charles Burney, of the uses of electricity versus music. Electricity is universally lamented that it has never yet, with much certainty, been applied to any very useful purpose . . . (while) it is easy to point out the human and important purposes to which music has been applied . . . Many an orphan is cherished by its influence, and the pains of child-death are softened and rendered less dangerous . . .”

The story of unification of electricity with magnetism, continues with Maxwell who immediately followed Faraday. Maxwell asked himself the question: Faraday has shown that moving electric charges produce magnetic forces what would happen if electric charges were accelerated rather than moved with uniform velocity? Maxwell pondered theoretically on this question; he found Faraday’s equations were inconsistent — they had to be modified if electric charges were accelerated. By one of the greatest acts of intuition in intellectual history, he supplied the correct modification and discovered, to his amazement, that an accelerating electrically charged object must emit electromagnetic radiation. He could compute the velocity of this radiation — again to his surprise, this velocity turned out to be identical to the velocity of light, then known with fair precision from experiment. Could light be electro-magnetic radiation, produced by accelerating electrical charges embedded inside incandescent matter?

Could we accelerate electrically charged particles in the laboratory and produce light? Could we verify Maxwell’s theory directly in the laboratory?

A few years after Maxwell’s death in 1879, Hertz in Germany, carried out such experiments with accelerating electric charges. Every one of Maxwell’s predictions was found correct; the spectrum of Maxwell’s predicted radiation consisted, not only of light waves, but also, of waves of longer wave length — radio waves — as well as waves of shorter wave length — X-rays. Thus, from a single theoretical calculation done by an obscure professor at the Cavendish Laboratory — a laboratory endowed not by the State, but by a private individual, Lord Cavendish and his family — flowed the marvels of radio, television and the modern communication systems on the one hand as well as the medical facility to see through a human body with X-rays. These discoveries, we in Arab-Islamic lands employ in our service along with the rest of mankind, hardly acknowledging the debt humanity owes to the modest physicist, Maxwell, and his solitary calculations. Maxwell’s hundredth anniversary fell due in 1979; some six men congregated from the University of Glasgow at his grave and that was all the homage the world paid him.

My next example is that of fission. This is the breaking apart of a heavy overweight nucleus, like uranium, into two or more fragments, when impacted by a slow-moving projectile like a thermal neutron. No one was looking for it — no one suspected it. The great Italian physicist Fermi, working in the dingy laboratories of the Department of Physics at the University of Rome, could have found these fission fragments in the debris deposited in his test tube, for they were there. But he was not looking for such fragments and missed them. The phenomenon was rediscovered in Germany at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for basic sciences in December 1938 — not by physicists but by two nuclear chemists, Hahn and Strasseman. In their paper, the authors said, “As nuclear chemists who are close to physicists, we are reluctant to take this step that contradicts all previous experiences of nuclear physics.” With this humble announcement began the age of nuclear energy for peace and for war. The equipment, the apparatus used, was so simple, even a humble laboratory in a poor Arab-Muslim country could have afforded it. To-day, in the contest of nuclear energy, European, American, Russian, Japanese and Chinese laboratories are experimenting with the phenomenon of fusion — the taming of the energy release in a hydrogen-explosion. These are at present laboratory experiments; as yet not commercial technology. The European nations have together created a joint laboratory — JET — at Culham in the UK. The UN Agency, IAEA, is projecting a joint device for the world; to my knowledge no Arab-Islamic nation has yet asked to join this project. With Russian help, Libya has had the foresight to set up a small Tokamak device in Tripoli for experimentation in this field, but has not yet created the modalities through which teams of experimenters from Arab-Islamic or African countries could come and use this device. The Centre at Trieste regularly provides theoretical workshops for this, led by men from the prestigious laboratories of the world; at present this provides one of the few entries for Arab-Islamic physicists to this field.

My next example is in the area of biotechnology. As is well-known, the modern advances in genetics started with the unravelling of the genetic code by Watson and Crick. In the synthesis it has provided in giving the basis for all known life, this has been one of the most synthesising discoveries of the 20th century, possibly of all times.

This great discovery in biology was made at Cambridge in April 1953 by two contemporaries of mine, one American, the other British — working at the Cavendish Laboratory for basic

continued on next page
THE GULF UNIVERSITY AND SCIENCE IN THE ARAB ISLAMIC COMMONWEALTH

continued

physics. One of my American pupils for Ph. D. in theoretical physics, Walter Gilbert, with whom I worked on dispersion phenomena, was a neighbour of the genetic code’s American co-discovery, J. D. Watson, in Cambridge. When Gilbert left me in 1956, after his Ph.D., both he and Watson went back to Harvard. The next time I saw my pupil, Gilbert, was in 1961 in the US. Assuming that he was still working on some problem on theoretical physics, I asked him what he was up to. He was somewhat sheepish; he said, “I am sorry, you will be ashamed of me; I am spending my time growing bacteria.” Watson had seduced him for genetics. Gilbert soon discovered a most elegant technique for deciphering the genetic code. For this work, he received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1980. In 1981 he left Harvard to found a company which exploits, among others, techniques of genetic manipulation to manufacture human insulin. This company is called Biogen and is registered in Switzerland. It went public recently. Apparently, Gilbert’s first investment in the company (of which he is President) was of US $4000; this is currently worth more than 14 million dollars.

Notice the mutuality of science and technology. Notice that the greatest discovery in molecular biology is made in a laboratory for physics, by men trained in the use of X-rays with fairly modest equipment. Notice Gilbert’s transition from research in theoretical physics to fundamental genetics and then to practical genetic engineering. The point I am trying to make is twofold: first, science and technology go hand in hand in modern times; second there is a premium placed on excellence and brain power in our rival civilisations. We must ask ourselves: do we provide like opportunities for our best young men, nurturing their talents for our civilisation, or do we leave them to wither away, or if they are strongly committed to science, to migrate and enrich the countries of Europe and American with their talents and their contributions?

Perhaps my examples appear too distant for comfort, though the biotechnological example is not all that far-fetched. Perhaps the intervening centuries of neglect of sciences have lured into a feeling that we can never catch up in the creation of sciences, and that we need not even try. I started in my first example with Faraday’s and Maxwell’s unification of two of the fundamental forces of nature — of electricity with magnetism — in the last century. I said, from this unification flowed the age of electric power and next, the age of wireless communications. When a hundred years after Maxwell, in the nineteen sixties, my colleagues at Harvard, Glasgow and Weinberg, and myself independently took the next step of postulating a unification of two further forces of nature — electromagnetism with the weak nuclear force of radioactivity — even the London "Economist" took note and counselled perceived businessmen not to ignore the likely economic consequences of this new unification.

Our theory had been indirectly confirmed through its consequences for diverse phenomena in nuclear and atomic physics by 1978. This year, in January, the great joint European experimental laboratory at Geneva provided the direct confirmation of our theory. We had predicted the existence of three mediators of the weak nuclear force W⁺, W⁻, and Z. We had specified their expected masses as a consequence of the unification. The January experiment showed that W⁺ and W⁻ indeed do exist, with precisely the predicted masses. This week the last particle, the Z°, has also been identified among the products of the collisions of protons and anti-protons in the 6 km accelerator at CERN. To obtain a beam of anti-protons the laboratory had to invent a new principle of "stochastic cooling" of anti-protons and to execute this idea with a technical brilliance of the highest order at a cost of around 50 million dollars. This same laboratory is now engaged in building a new accelerator of 27 km circumference under the Jura mountains of Geneva for further experimentation with our theory. This will cost them half a billion dollars and will be completed by 1987. So far the only comment on these discoveries made by an Arab-Islamic journal was last month; this journal, published from London, accused me of following in my research on the unification of these fundamental forces, "the heretical Sufi doctrine of Wahdat-ul-Wujud!"

This journal has sagely counselled that we in Islam should not concern ourselves with advances in science. We should concentrate on imitative technology, assuming someone will sell it to us. This is what the Japanese are supposed to have done. We forget that the Japanese have already won four Nobel Prizes in science — three in physics and one in chemistry. Their base in fundamental sciences is as strong, or in some cases, stronger than in the West. We forget that it was this unspoken and unsung base on which they have built their innovative successes in technology. We forget that an accelerator like the one at CERN, develops sophisticated modern technology at its furthest limit. I am not advocating that we should build a CERN for Islamic countries. However, I cannot feel but obvious that a relatively poor country like Greece has joined CERN, paying a subscription according to the standard GNP formula. I cannot rejoice that Turkey, or the Gulf countries, or Iran, or Pakistan seem to show no ambition to join this fount of science and get their men catapulted into the forefront of the latest technological expertise. Working with CERN accelerators brings at least this reward to a nation, as Greece has had the perception to realize.

Let me close this part of my discussion about the mutual interrelation of science and technology with an example, nearer home, from the field of solar energy. This is a field where research is being carried out by the Universities in the Gulf as well as in the North African and Middle Asian universities of the Islamic countries. The basic problems, for example, with the development of cheaper photovoltaic devices, are material sciences problems. Solar energy is collected, and converted by materials that are optically or photoelectrically suitable. An optical converter must use as little material as possible; how little is determined by the penetration depth of the solar light, and the drift-length of the "excited state" on which the conversion is based. One can easily determine that the parameters entering these basic processes lead to thicknesses of material of the order of 1 micrometer. This then is the domain of thin films. Such films are cheap to make, but there is no way to make them with the perfection of a single crystal. This films are polycrystalline or amorphous. And they carry a large density of defects. Up to now it is these defects which have limited the thin film devices to low conversion efficiencies. Thus, before any technological amelioration can come, one must solve the problems of basic solid state physics of classifying the major defect phenomena, their effect on electron dynamics and problems of catalysis of the growth mechanism that makes these defects harmless.

What I am saying is that efficient photovoltaics do not depend on the engineers’ tinkering with solid state materials; the problem is one of solid state physics. And it is this problem of basic science which the Japanese state physicists have set themselves to solve systematically, before their counterparts in the USA or Europe. The Japanese will win this prize, not only because they are the more meticulous technologists, but also because they are the systematic physicists, with scientific facilities which, in many cases, are superior to what their rivals possess. The point I am making is that what the University of the Gulf will need, if it wishes in the long run to develop first rate research on photovoltaics, is a basic physics surface laboratory, in addition to technological support. The same sentiment was endorsed by the London "Economist" which, in its issue of 27 September 1980, has this to say on the cherished mastery of solar energy: "If solar energy is to provide the solution to the world’s fuel crisis, that solution will not emerge from low-technology roof-top radiators — (which) rely on nineteenth century (science). A breakthrough (will) come from applying quantum physics, biochemistry or other sciences of the twentieth century. To-day’s technology-based industries all depend on new science."

I hope I have convinced you that in the conditions of to-day there can be no high technology without first-rate science. I suspect some of us continued on next page
believe that technology is neutral, which science is value-loaded; modern science can lead to rationalism, or even apostasy — what scientifically trained men among us will ‘deny the metaphysical presuppositions of our culture.’ To such thinking, all I can say is — Do not fight the battles of yesterday when in the 9th and the 10th centuries the so-called ‘rational natural philosophers’, with their irrational and dogmatic faith in the cosmological concepts they had inherited from Aristotle, found difficulties in reconciling their concepts with their faith.

These battles were even more fiercely waged among the Christian schoolmen of the Middle Ages. This was inevitable as Maurice Bucaille has shown in his perceptive work ‘The Bible, the Koran and Science.” The problems which concerned the schoolmen were mainly problems of cosmology and metaphysics: “Is the world located in an immobile place; does anything lie beyond it; is there more than one world; are the planets and stars carried around in physical spheres? Does God move the primordial mobile directly and actively as an efficient cause, or only as a final or ultimate cause? Are all the heavens moved by one mover or several? Are the spheres moved by intelligences, or by some principle inherent in matter? Do celestial movers experience exhaustion or fatigue? Are all the spheres of the same nature? Are they concentric with the earth as common centre, or is it necessary to assume eccentric and epicyclic orbs? What was the nature of celestial matter? Was it like terrestrial matter in possessing an inherent substantial form and inherent qualities such as being hot, cold, moist and dry? The answers sought were either from an interpretation of the scriptures or from the authority of Aristotle.” No wonder when Galileo tried, first, to classify those among the problems which belonged to the domain of Physics, and then to find answers just to this class through physics experimentations, he was persecuted. Restitution for this is being made now three hundred and fifty years later.

I attended a special ceremony the day before yesterday in the Vatican when His Holiness the Pope, in the presence of 33 Nobel Laureates and 300 other scientists, declared: “The Church’s experience, during the Galileo affair and after it, has led to a more mature attitude... The Church itself learns by experience and reflection and she now understands better the meaning that must be given to freedom of research... one of the most noble attributes of man... It is through research that man attains to Truth... This is why the Church is convinced that there can be no real contradiction between science and faith... (However), it is only through humble and assiduous study that the Church learns to dissociate the essentials of the faith from the scientific systems of a given age, specially when a culturally influenced reading of the Bible seemed to be linked to an obligatory cosmogony.”

In his remarks, the Pope stressed the maturity which the Church had reached in dealing with science; he could also have emphasized the converse phenomenon, the recognition by the scientists from Galileo’s times onwards, of the limitations of their disciplines — the recognition that there are questions which are beyond the ken of science. We may speculate about them, but there may be no way to verify empirically our speculations. And this empirical verification is the essence of science. We are humber today than, for example Ibn Rushd was. Ibn Rushd was a physician of great originality with major contributions in the study of fever and of the retina; this is his claim to immortality in Sciences. However in a different discipline — cosmology — he accepted the speculations of Aristotle, without recognizing that these were speculations which future experiments may falsify. The scientist of today knows where and when he is speculating; he would claim no finality for the associated modes of thought. And even about accepted facts, we recognize that newer facts may be discovered which, without falsifying the earlier discoveries, may lead to generalizations; in turn, necessitating revolutionary changes in our concepts and our “world-view.” In Physics, this happened in the beginning of this century with the discovery of relativity and quantum theory. It could happen again; when our present constructs could appear as limiting cases of newer concepts, still more comprehensive, still more embracing.

But even to know the limitations of our sciences, one must be part of living science; otherwise one will continue fighting yesterday’s philosophical battles today. Our men, through their demonstrated ability, must belong to the artistry of creators of science, where one is respected and all doors are opened if one deserves to belong to it. Like all aspects of human activity, what the Arab — Islamic Commonwealth needs are men — an elite class of them — who have shared in the pride of having created some parts of science. Our youth are craving to meet this challenge; it is this challenge which makes them migrate to Western universities and institutions. Trust them; they do possess the highest potential. If the new University of the Gulf will provide them with opportunities to create science — and this, by definition, is the function of a University — they will never leave. And after providing them with these facilities, do not hustle them. It takes a decade or more of stability to build traditions of living science.

**Steps Needed to Excel in Sciences**

So then, how can we turn the pages of history back, and excel in science and technology once again? How can the new Gulf university ensure this excellence and attract these men back again?

In keeping with the obligations laid on us by the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Prophet, our society as a whole, and our youth in particular, must develop a passionate commitment toward bringing about a renaissance of the sciences. We must impart hard scientific training to more than half of our manpower; we must pursue basic and applied sciences, with 1-2 per cent of our GNP spent on research and development, with at least a quarter to one third of this on pure sciences.

This was done in the USSR. This was done, in Japan, after the 19th century Meiji revolution. And this is what is being undertaken today — in a planned manner, at a frantic speed — by the People’s Republic of China, with defined targets in space sciences, genetics, microelectronics, high energy physics, agriculture, and in the control of thermonuclear energy. There is a clear recognition in these societies that basic science is relevant science, that the frontier of today is tomorrow’s application and that one must remain at the frontier. They have realised that there is only one path to gaining ascendancy in science and technology — master science as a whole.

These societies are not seduced by slogans of “Japanese” or “Chinese” or “Indian” science. They do not feel that the acquiring of science and technology will destroy their cultural traditions: they do not insult their own traditions by believing that these are so fragile. In this context, one may recall that the GNP of the Islamic-Arabic nations exceeds that of China, while their human resources are not significantly smaller. And China has a lead of no more than a decade or so in the sciences of the lands of Islam.

Earlier, I spoke of patronage for the sciences. One vital aspect of this is the sense of security and continuity that a scientist — scholar must be accorded for his work. Like all humans, scientist of technologist can only give of his best if he knows he will have security, respect and equality of opportunity for his work, and is shielded from all forms of discrimination, sectarian and political.

I have referred throughout to a commonwealth of science for the Islamic and the Arab countries, even if there may be no political commonwealth of these countries yet in sight. Such a commonwealth of science was a reality in the great days of Islamic science, when central Asians like Ibn Sina and Al Bruni would naturally write in Arabic. In those days, their contemporary (and my brother in physics), Ibn al Hitham, could migrate from his native Basra in the dominions of the Abbasid caliph to the court of his rival, the Fatimi caliph, and be sure of receiving respect and homage — despite the political and sectarian differences that were no less acute then than they are today.

This commonwealth of science needs conscious articulation, and recognition once again, spiritually and physically, by both, us the scientists and by our governments.
THE GULF UNIVERSITY AND SCIENCE IN THE ARAB ISLAMIC COMMONWEALTH

continued

To-day we, the scientists from the Islamic countries, constitute a very small community — one hundredth to one tenth in size, in scientific resources, and in scientific creativity; compared to the international norms. We need to band together, to pool our resources, to feel and work as a community. We need the articulation of a compact conferring of immunity for, say, the next 25 years, during which those within this commonwealth of sciences, this Ummat-ul-lim, would not be discriminated against on sectarian or national grounds.

To summarise, the renaissance of the sciences within an Islamic and Arab commonwealth is contingent upon five cardinal preconditions: passionate commitment, generous patronage, provision of security, absence of discrimination, and self-governance and inter-nationalisation of our scientific enterprises.

Assuming that this will be a post-graduate University, it will strive, first and foremost, to create centres of research of international standards in basic sciences. These could emphasise mathematics, experimental solid state physics of micro-electronics and communications systems, and biotechnology, besides the regional disciplines of marine and desert sciences. The University will actively strive to link it to, through these centres, the best brains internationally, and in particular those from the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth. To facilitate these later linkages, there will be Federation Agreements with institutes and groups of researchers in the six regions of the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth. The funds for the stay and the travel of teams of such researchers will be provided by the Gulf University. This is the pattern we follow in Trieste (Table 1) where we have Federation links with 83 institutes in developing countries — 47 of these in the Arab-Islamic world — where we assign to researchers at each institute 40-120 days of visits at our expense. We have, in addition, for eminent individual researchers, a scheme of personal Associateships based on merit; at any one time we have 200 Associates, each appointed for a six year term. During these six years an Associate may come to the Centre thrice at times of his choosing, with a minimum stay of six and a maximum stay of twelve weeks. We pay the Associate’s fare and his expenses in Trieste, but no salary. There are no formalities. The Associate simply writes to say he is arriving. Such a scheme would be particularly valuable for men from the Arab-Islamic Commonwealth now working in the seventh region I mentioned — Europe and USA. These are the men whose presence at the campus of the Bahrain University will enrich it intellectually; they will bring it the newer ideas, newer techniques, newer trusts, with a minimum of delay. If the Gulf University can become a second home for these men, with a minimum of formality, it will have achieved a great deal.

I have mentioned an international laboratory in material sciences for Bahrain, with specialisation in microelectronics and modern electronic communications, including space satellite communication, to help also with the banking communications needed at Bahrain. Such a laboratory was in fact proposed for the University of Jeddah. The idea was to emphasise science transfer in addition to technology transfer and to create international laboratories, in the fields of material sciences, including surface physics and laboratories would have been open to teams of international researchers, who would congregate now at the great laboratories in Hamburg, Geneva or Paris.

The project apparently has not matured, mainly, I believe, because it had sponsorship of a single rather than a consortium of Universities. I would hope that the project can be revived for the new Super Gulf University, thereby making it accessible to researchers internationally, and particularly of all the Gulf, as well as all the other universities in the Arab and Islamic countries. I have also mentioned a super laboratory at Bahrain for biotechnology. In this context let me mention that the UNIDO organisation at Vienna is sponsoring an International Centre for this subject, like the Centre at Trieste. A competition is being organized for its location; six locations have offered facilities — these are Pakistan, India, Cuba, Thailand, Belgium and Italy. No Arab country has offered a location. If Lahore, in Pakistan, wins the competition, the UNIDO International Centre at Lahore would naturally have close links with the Gulf University at Bahrain.

Finally, I have emphasised an international centre for mathematics, with ramifications in computing sciences. As we all know the modern tradition in mathematics originated at the institutions in the Gulf Region, particularly in Baghdad in the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th centuries, with the creation of algebra, trigonometry and analytical geometry. I do not see why we cannot create the same conditions of excellence today in mathematics and make Bahrain a world crossroads for the subject. As you probably know, one of the leading mathematicians in the world — currently a Professor at Oxford — who was awarded the most prestigious honour any one can aspire to in mathematics (the Fields Medal) is of Arab descent. I do not see why such men should not hold joint appointments between their European places of work and Bahrain and build up a modern school of Mathematics here.

Conclusions
Let me conclude. Why am I so passionately advocating our engaging in this enterprise of creating knowledge? This is not just because Allah has endowed us with the urge to know, this is not just because in the conditions of to-day knowledge is power and science in application the major instrument of material progress; it is also because as part of the international world community, one feels that rash of contempt for us — unspoken, but still there — of those who create knowledge.

I can still recall a Nobel Prize Winner in Physics some years ago, from a European country, saying this to me: “Salam, do you really think we have an obligation to succour, aid and keep alive those nations, who have never created or added one iota to man’s stock of knowledge?”

And even if he had not said this, my self-respect suffers a terrible hurt whenever I enter a hospital and find that almost every potent life-saving medicament of to-day, from penicillin to interferon, has been created without our share of inputs from any of us in the Third World, or from the Arab-Islamic lands. The 20th century has been a century of great synthesis in science — the synthesis represented by quantum theory, relatively and unification theories in physics, by the Big Bang idea in cosmology, by the genetic code in biology, by ideas of plate tectonics in geology. Likewise in technology, with the conquest of space and the harnessing of atomic power. Just as in the 16th century when the European man discovered new continents and occupied them, the frontiers of science are being conquered one after another. Do you not feel as passionately as I do that our men in Arab-Islamic lands should also be in the vanguard of making these conquests?

I wish to conclude with two appeals — one to those responsible for creating the new University, and particularly, to the scientists among them; and the second to our rulers. First the science administrators, there are few scientists in our area, on whom you can build. This, however, would not be so if we could band together in an Umam-ul-lim and create a genuine community for all Arab-Islamic lands. Believe me our situation is not that desperate, particularly if conditions are created to associate those from our lands working in the Seventh Region of Europe and USA, with our enterprise. I can only say, for all our present weaknesses, let us not be the less ambitious. Let our plans for our institution building be audacious. With ambition and with involvement, will come competence, for this is Allah’s promise to all those who strive.

And finally, I wish to appeal to those responsible for our affairs and for funding this University and other projects I have spoken about. Science is important because of the underlying understanding it provides of the world around us and of Allah’s design; it is important because of the material benefits its discoveries can give us and finally because of its universality. It is a vehicle of co-operation of all mankind and in particular for the Arab and Islamic nations. We owe a debt to international science, which in all self-respect, we must discharge. However, the scientific enterprise cannot flourish without your

continued on page 20
THE MOVING ZOO
by late AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

HUMAN NATURE IS A conglomeration of the whole animal kingdom. It is an epitome of the vast diversity of temperament and disposition met with in the myriads of God's creatures. It combines within itself, in a potential form, the courage of the lion, the meekness of the lamb, the neatness of the cat and the dirtiness of the pig, the vindictiveness of the camel and the forbearance of the ass; and likewise it partakes of the nature of every species of lower animal. Man is thus a huge moving zoo, within which you can find any animal you would - bird or beast, insect or fish.

Man and animal both receive their peculiar shape and nature from a common stock. The same ingredients go to form the body and nature of a man as those of a dog, a cow or any other thing. Which particular form those ingredients may assume depends upon their quantity in each case. One measure of the same material may give shape to an ant; another, to an elephant. The same difference in magnitude is responsible for the diversity of tendency and disposition each one displays. The camel, for instance, is not only distinct from the cow in its physical frame, but also in its instincts and passions. If the one is a repository of revengefulness, the other is an embodiment of meekness and docility. In brief, the diversity in the measure of stuff common to all, has given rise to diversity in form and temperament.

Man, however, enjoys a distinction in this respect. Whereas every animal has its nature wrought of a specific measure of ingredients, resulting in a specific tendency, human nature is not so limited. It is cast in an all-comprehensive mould. The numerous measures that go to create, each one of them, this temperament or that, in one particular animal, are all collectively blended together in the nature of man. To this effect says the Holy Qur'an: "Verily We have created man of the goodliest fabric." Thus the passions that severally find manifestation in individual animals, are represented as a whole in the texture of human nature. Besides, in the case of lower animals, the dominating passion is incapable of any regulation or control. It has an unrestrained mastery of its object. The wolf, for instance, or the tiger is endowed with a tendency to tear up weaker animals into pieces. It cannot go against this innate prompting. It is incapable of exercising any check over this call of its nature.

The pig, likewise, cannot shake off its habits of dirtiness and sex-impudence. Similarly, the monkey, the dog, the rabbit, the cock, each has a particular tendency, as the product of the specific measure of ingredients employed in its make. Each must be swayed by the same under all circumstances. Thus these lower animals are possessed of tendencies unalterably chalked out and delineated. No regulation, no evolution, no improvement is possible in thier case. But man, the lord of creation, has an unlimited scope of progress. His faculties truly trained and cultivated, he is capable of penetrating into the mysteries of heaven and earth. He can unravel deep Divine secrets.

As already explained, this difference between man and animals is also due to the difference in the measures of formative ingredients which assume different forms of flesh and bones, ingrained with different kinds of passions. In the make of man there is a harmonious and well-balanced mixture of all these. It is thus obvious that the flesh of an animal which may form the food of man, becomes part and parcel of his body and lends additional weight to the like ingredients already existing in his nature. And, ultimately, it leads to the manifestation, on his part, of the characteristic tendencies of that animal. For this reason, Islam forbids the eating of the flesh of certain animals.

Scientific research of the day also lends support to this truth. It has been discovered that the human body comprises within its four walls the germs of all animal life. The blood of certain patients, when tested was found to contain the tiny microscopic forms of certain animals. Elephants, horses, dogs, pigs were seen creeping in their blood-drops. This affords a conclusive testimony to the fact that the life-germs of creatures exist in the human physique. Naturally enough, if we take the flesh of some animals, it will tend to rear that animal in us; and the latter's passions will consequently predominate in us.

IN REPLY TO YOUR QUESTION by N. A. Faruqui

The following questions were asked of me by a Pakistani girl on a short visit from U.S.A. I found her knowledge of the Holy Qur'an to be quite extensive. She is doing work for women's rights in U.S.A. while studying there.

Question

Before I ask specific questions, will you please throw general light on the position of woman in Islam?

Answer

A human being, man or woman, consists of body and soul. The body is of temporary consequence only. Sooner or later it is returned to the dust from which it came. The animals have similar physical bodies, sometimes much stronger than ours. Man's one superiority lies in the wisdom he can acquire from knowledge and experience. But even that is shared, however infinitesimally, by the animals who learn from experience. Man's real superiority lies in possessing the soul blown into him by the Great Creator, and given to no other creation, that soul survives death and passes into the Hereafter, which can acquire Divine Attributes, which is the biggest boon and blessing. Man's superiority, because of the soul, grows and diminishes as he acquires such measure as he can of the Divine attributes or alternatively sinks to the animal level, even lower, as animals don't go against nature while man can and does.

Now, so far as the soul is concerned, man and woman are identical in the eye of Islam. Witness the opening verse of the chapter named 'The Women' of the Holy Qur'an:

'O mankind! Guard yourself against Allah's reckoning. Who created you continued on next page

June/July 1984 • The Islamic Review
In Reply to Your Question  

from a single soul and created its mate of the same soul, and spread from these two many men and women.’ (4:1)

Thus in the thing which really matters, the soul, not only are all men alike but so are all men and women. And that is why the teachings of Islam are fundamentally the same for both the sexes. Both can acquire similar moral and spiritual excellences. There are so many places in the Holy Qur'an to support this view that I cannot possibly quote all of them. This one should suffice: ‘Surely the men who submit (to Allah) and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the charitable men and the charitable women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their chastity and the women who guard their chastity, and the men who remember Allah much and the women who do the same - Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward’ (33:35).

Question

It is true that in certain places in the Holy Qur'an men and women are spoken of alike. But in most places only the men are spoken of. For instance, all the commandments and injunctions begin with the words, ‘O you who believe’, and the Arabic gender used is masculine. Are the women excluded in those places?

Answer

Certainly not. Having made it clear in more than one place that the men and the women are equally liable, the Holy Qur'an adopts the masculine gender generally in conveying its commandments and injunctions in the same way as all laws and codes do, because the use of both the genders in every place makes the language clumsy and cumbersome. Therefore all laws, whether human or Divine, usually adopt the masculine gender, but define 'he' to include 'she' as

continued on page 20
BOOK REVIEW
by Dr. Zahid Aziz, Nottingham, England


Amongst all the founders of the great religions of the world, the Holy Prophet Muhammad holds the distinction of being a historical figure, about whose life a wealth of authentic information and detail is available. This unique information covers not only the general events of Muslim history during his lifetime, but also details relating to his personal life, habits and character. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that more is known of the life of the Holy Prophet than of any other figure in human history, ancient or modern.

The collection and compilation of the details of the Holy Prophet's life, which took place in the early days of Islam, was done not merely for historical or sentimental interest, but also because his deeds and sayings are regarded as an indispensable part of the teachings of the faith, being a practical illustration and a commentary of the precepts given in the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Prophet is recognised in Islam as the 'best model' (the Qur'an 33:21) for a Muslim to follow and emulate, and as a 'teacher of the scripture and wisdom' (62:2), and therefore details of his life both mould the moral outlook of Muslims and are used to derive laws and regulations of Islam (whether 'religious' or 'secular', using these terms in their modern sense). Hence it is vitally important for both Muslims, if they are to be true to their faith, and for non-Muslims, is they are to appreciate Islam, to have a correct and accurate account of the Holy Prophet's life before them.

SOURCES OF LIFE

The Holy Qur'an, which was recorded contemporaneously with the Holy Prophet and which is admitted by all to have survived intact since that time, refers to many events and features of the Holy Prophet's life. Any information that it provides on any such aspect must be regarded, from a purely objective, historical point of view, as the most authentic and reliable. Then there are the collections of the sayings and deeds of the Holy Prophet, such as Bukhari and Muslim, from which much detail can be obtained of various facets of his life. These collections of 'Tradition' or Hadith, made about two hundred years after his time, do not contain any continuous accounts of the Holy Prophet's life as such, but consists of reports of his sayings and actions, traced back to him through lines of known narrators by the compilers of these books, and arranged according to subject. Lastly, we have the earliest continuous biographies of the Holy Prophet and histories of early Islam which are, of course, interesting and engaging to read, as narrative accounts are, but whose authors made little attempt to discriminate between true, muddled, and blatantly false reports in the mass of raw information current at the time.

Martin Lings' book, subtitled His life based on the earliest sources, is a narrative account culled and compiled largely from the biographies just mentioned, with some additions from the books of Tradition and occasional references to the Holy Qur'an. It is an unusual biography, especially among such Western works, in that the author does not give any views, comments or conclusions of his own regarding the Holy Prophet and his life, not even a preface explaining the author's purpose or approach except for a list of authorities at the end, but has apparently prepared a biography based wholly on the texts of ancient Islamic sources. It is this aspect, we fear, which is very likely to mislead readers into believing that this book is an objective and impartial reflection of the Holy Prophet's life, as given in classical Muslim sources, untinged by the author's own views and conceptions. Had Martin Lings simply translated one of these source works as a whole, he could not have been blamed for any lack of authenticity in the contents, nor could a charge of bias be laid against him. However, in the book under review, he has obviously used his judgment and discretion to give far more weight and credence to one type of source (the biographies) than the others (Qur'an and Hadith), and is also responsible for making particular selections, as well as omissions, from his own preferred sources. We shall show that Lings can be heavily criticised on both these counts, and that the 'image' of the Holy Prophet's life in this biography is indeed very much influenced by the author's use and editing of the source-material.

LINGS' USE OF SOURCE MATERIAL

As is indicated on the page where the sources are listed, Lings' book is based mainly on the classical biographies of Waqidi, Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Ishaq, with some references to the Hadith works such as Bukhari. Although he does not list the Qur'an among his authorities, his references to it in the book show that he considers it to be a source as well. As noted in the brief discussion of the sources of the Holy Prophet's life above, in order of authenticity of information the Qur'an comes first, then the Hadith books, and finally the popular biographical works to which we have just referred. Lings, in his approach, simply follows the biographies, and makes use of the Hadith and the Qur'an only to support or supplement some point made in those works. In cases where the Qur'an or Hadith can be shown to contradict the biographies, the author makes no reference to what these two authentic sources have to say. The result is that his book is full of spurious, discredited stories of various so-called 'miraculous' occurrences, and relates those highly superficial accounts of wars, raids, and marriages of the Holy Prophet which have been the basis of so many distortions about the Founder of Islam and his teachings over the ages. The biographies from which Lings has acquired these details, as we now intend to expand, contain many reports which are devoid of authority and have been condemned as fictitious by Muslim scholars throughout history who spent their lives investigating the authenticity of these accounts. Just because a report occurs in these classical biographies continued next page
Book Review

cont.

does not mean that it is an acknowledged fact of Islamic history accepted by Muslims.

MUSLIM SCHOLARS AND CLASSICAL BIOGRAPHIES

The early Muslim scholars who compiled books of Hadith and scrutinised this particular field undertook thorough and painstaking investigations to determine the authenticity of the reports from the Holy Prophet's time by tracing them back to eye-witnesses of the time, through unbroken lines of reliable narrators. As a result, they never held a high opinion of the biographies whose authors had simply copied masses of reports without check or criticism. One such scholar of Hadith, Hafiz Zain al-Din of Iraq, says about the biographies: “The student should know that the biographies contain all kinds of reports, both true and false.”

Turning to the three particular biographies which are the main sources of Lings' book, he has most often referred to Waqidi, as is apparent from his footnotes. Now regarding Waqidi, all scholars are agreed that he used to fabricate reports. As Maulana Shibli Numani writes in his excellent, renowned Urdu life of the Holy Prophet, Sirat an-Nabi, published about 65 years ago: “Of the classical biographies, Waqidi is to be dismissed completely. The scholars of Hadith unanimously say that he fabricated reports. In fact, Waqidi's book itself provides proof of this because the manner in which he gives the most minute and interesting details of every minor event, even today the greatest writer could not record events seen by himself in this manner.” (p. 48)

As regards the biographies of Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Ishaq, and the historical work of Tabari, these individuals were themselves trustworthy and reliable, but, as Shibli adds: “Unfortunately, these persons being reliable does not have any effect upon the reliability of their writings. These people were not witnesses of the events, and so whatever they relate is through narrators. However, many of their narrators are weak in reporting and unreliable... More than a half of the reports of Ibn Sa'd have come through Waqidi, and therefore have the same position as Waqidi's own reports. Of the rest, some are reliable and others not.” (p. 49)

In his highly informative discussion on the standard of reports passed down from the Holy Prophet's time, Shibli underlines various weaknesses of the reports contained in the classical biographies, contrasting this with the stringent tests applied by the compilers of Hadith to the reports before approving them for their collections. Without going into the technicalities of this field of criticism, the conclusions drawn in his discussion can be summarised as follows. The biographers copied all sorts of reports about the events of the Holy Prophet's times, without caring to trace them back to any eye-witness of the time, and they ignored all the tests relating to the conditions to be met with in a reporter before his narration may be accepted. Besides these drawbacks, the biographies appear to be compiled as chronicles of events, centered around battles, which simply list various events, especially accounts of battles, without at all inquiring into or indicating their causes. It is this feature of the biographies which, due to the popularity of these works, has created the widespread impression that Muslim armies were sent on battles, campaigns and raids for aggressive purposes.

Shibli also quotes a rather interesting comment about Damyati, a biographer of a later period who died around 1300 C.E. A classical scholar, Ibn Hijr, made the following observation: “This saying of Damyati proves that in most matters regarding which he had followed the biographers and gone against reliable Hadith, he eventually recanted from his original views. However, since his book (biography) had spread widely, he could not correct it.” (Sirat an-Nabi, p. 55)

Thus many reports contained in biographies - reports relating to battles, concubines, and certain miraculous occurrences - are contradicted by the much more authentic information recorded in works of Hadith. Damyati lived to realise this, but did not get the opportunity to correct his earlier writing.

DETAILED LOOK AT TYPICAL CHAPTER

We now briefly examine a group of chapters in Lings' book, those relating to the battle of Badr (chs. XLI to XLV), which illustrate all the worst features he has copied from his sources, and are quite typical of the tenor of the whole book. The two main misconceptions conveyed in these chapters, which are both contradicted by the Qur'an and authentic Hadith, are that it was the Muslims who initiated aggression against the Makkans after the emigration to Medina, and that the 'angelic' help that came to the Muslims during the battle consisted literally of armies of angels descending from heaven!

After the Muslims were forced to leave Makkah, having borne great persecution there, and they settled in Medina, the Divine revelation permitted them to take up the sword to defend themselves, should they be attacked by a Makkah army. The first revelation on this point said: “Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made (Arabic: yugataluna, or 'those who are fought against' because they have been wronged...”) (22:39)

Lings, at the head of chapter XLI as well as within it, quotes the above verse as: “Permission to fight is given to those who fight because they have been wronged.” This is clearly incorrect, for the Quranic text uses the passive yuqataluna (those fought against), not yuqatiluna (those who fight). Furthermore, Lings' translation makes no sense, for what is the meaning of giving permission to fight to those who fight?

Lings adds: “The Prophet had received this Revelation not long after his arrival in Medina. He knew moreover that permission here was a command and the obligations of war had been stressed in the covenant with the Jews.” (p. 135)

Who is his authority for saying that the Holy Prophet considered this permission to be a command? As to the continued next page
covenant with the Jews, it expressly stated that, should either party be victims of aggressions, the other would be bound to come to its aid. Lings' mistranslation of the Quranic verse above, his misreading of the Holy Prophet's mind, and his misrepresentation of the pact with the Jews, are the basis of his implied suggestion that the Muslims initiated the fighting. If Lings had used the Qur'an as his primary source, a book earlier than his "earliest sources", rather than dragging in and misquoting occasional Quranic passages when they can be made to suit the biographies and his own prejudices, he would have quoted the following: "Fight in the way of God against those who fight you, but be not aggressive." (2:190) - and the significant observation: "Fighting is enjoined upon you, though it is disliked by you." (2:216)

We do not know how the last verse above escaped Lings' notice, since in the same chapter (XLI) he has occasion to reproduce the very next verse (2:217). What can be said with great certainty is that if this verse had only said, "Fighting is enjoined upon you", and had omitted to describe the Muslims' dislike of war, Lings would surely have quoted it to prove that "the permission to fight was a command".

After this, Lings mentions what he calls "raids" by Muslim detachments on Quraish trading caravans, in the period of tension leading up to the battle of Badr. The impression created by him, in pursuance of the biographers, is that the Muslims were on the offensive, harrassing the Quraish. Yet if we consult the Hadith we find that it was the Muslims who were harrassed and threatened by their opponents: "When the Holy Prophet and his Companions came to Madina, and the helpers gave them shelter, all the Arabs combined to fight them. The Companions had to sleep by their weapons, till the morning." (Hakim and Darimi, quoted in Shibli's Sirat an-Nabi, p. 308; interestingly enough, Darimi is listed by Lings among his authorities).

The so-called "raids" were, in fact, reconnaissance missions whose purpose was not only to detect any move by the Quraish, but also to approach tribes living in the vicinity of Madina to secure pacts of neutrality with them. Even Lings admits the fact that these "raids" failed to intercept any Quraish caravan, but to fit this fact to is theory he ascribes this to the inaccuracy of the Muslims' information about the caravan movements.

**BADR**

According to Lings, following the biographies, the cause of the battle of Badr was that a Muslim army, led by the Holy Prophet, left Madina on one of these "raids" to intercept and capture a Quraish trading caravan returning from Syria with merchandise. In response to this threat, runs this account, the Quraish sent an army from Makka, and the Muslims found themselves having to fight these troops rather than being able to capture the caravan. According to this account, when the Muslim army left Madina, they did so solely with the intention of capturating the caravan, being unaware that a Quraish army had set out. It was only sometime after they had marched out that they learnt of the approach of the armed enemy force, and decided to encounter it. The Holy Qur'an, however, acknowledged by friend and foe as the most authentic record, begins its account as follows: "Even as thy Lord caused thee (O Muhammad) to go forth from thy house on the side of truth, though a party of the believers were surely averse, disputing with thee about the truth after it had become clear - as if they were being driven to death and could see it in front of them." (8:5,6)

This, then, was the state of mind of some of the Muslims - "as if they were being driven to death" - as the army was leaving Madina. Could it possibly have been so if they were proceeding eagerly to "waylay" an unarmed caravan with its easy, rich pickings? It is perfectly plain from this that the ill-armed Muslim army numbering a mere 300 (including raw youths and aged men) was marching out to face the three-times larger and much better-equipped Quraish invasion force, and this was why some of the Muslims did not like it. Hence the Muslims set out from Madina only to repel the Quraish invasion, not to capture their caravan.

To clarify the true situation, namely that the Muslims fought only in self-defence after the enemy had first raised the sword, and did not initiate the aggression by raids on caravans or by any other means, is not some academic point of historical interest only, or quibbling over details. As stated earlier, actions of the Holy Prophet carried out in pursuance of the Quranic teachings are an important source of Islamic law, and the basis of the moral standards of the Muslims. The circumstances under which Muslims may engage in war according to Islam are determined crucially by the reasons for which the Holy Prophet Muhammad took up arms on any occasion. Similarly, his conduct in battle lays down the Muslim code of conduct under such conditions. If, as is certainly the case, the Muslim army left Madina to fight in self-defence, it sets the seal of confirmation on the Quranic teaching permitting war only for defensive purposes, and makes it unlawful under Islam for a Muslim state ever to use aggression.

**ANGELIC HELP DURING BADR**

It is undoubtedly stated in the Qur'an regarding the battle of Badr: "When you (O Muslims) sought the aid of your Lord, so He answered you: I will assist you with a thousand of the angels, following one another" (8:9)

From his "earliest sources", however, Lings has copied various stories of angels actually being seen by some as arriving and fighting at the scene of the battle, and putting the Quraish to rout. These fables are just too ridiculous to be repeated here. The Qur'an has itself clearly explained that "God gave it only as good news, so that your hearts might be at ease thereby. . . when He made slumber fall on you (during the night before the battle) as a security from Him . . . that He might fortify your hearts and make firm your feet thereby . . . I (God) will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve" (8:10-12). Thus the coming of the angels took place, as it always does, spiritually and upon the hearts. The Muslims were inwardly calm and strengthened, while the enemy felt terrified, such was the force of truth and shakiness of falsehood. It is also true that some
external circumstances of nature, such as rain at an opportune time for the Muslims, came about through Divine support for their cause. This was the Divine assistance which came to the small and weak Muslim army to serve as a fine and subtle sign showing that truth can be triumphant over superior physical might, even on the field of battle. The instances, quoted by Lings, of angels being seen to descend in clouds, mounted on stallions, and actually fighting the enemy, can only be described as extremely crude. If Divine assistance had come in such a palpable and visible manner, how could the disbelievers have continued to reject and oppose Islam? And why was it that when, earlier in Makka, they had demanded the coming of an angel instead of a mortal messenger, or in his support, the disbelievers were told that angels could not come to them as they demanded. (see the Qur'an, 6:8-10; 17:94,95)

If it were argued that Lings has merely reproduced these stories of angelic intervention from his classical Muslim biographical sources, and therefore our criticism cannot be directed at him, we would refer the reader to chapter XXXII of the book, in which the author has described the 'ascension' experience (mi'raj) of the Holy Prophet. This was the 'night journey' of the Holy Prophet, during which he was "transported" from Makka first to Jerusalem, and then on the "heaven". Now while Lings' sources would consider the whole of this journey to be physical, yet as for the second part of this journey (to heaven), he writes: "Led by the Archangel, who now revealed himself as a heavenly being, they ascended beyond the domain of earthly space and time and bodily forms... Everything he (the Holy Prophet) now saw, he saw with the eye of the Spirit." (p. 102)

Thus Lings believes the Ascension to heaven to be a spiritual flight (as indeed we do too), and has drawn a conclusion different from the views of his biographical sources. He thus allows himself the discretion of differing from the standard position of his sources when he so wishes, and therefore cannot be considered as a mere translator immune from any criticism as regards the contents of the book.

OTHER SUPERNATURAL SIGNS

At this point we broaden the discussion for a moment to include the other supernatural signs in support of the Holy Prophet that Lings refers to in the book. When the Holy Prophet, in his youth, travelled to Syria with a Quraish caravan a Christian monk noticed that there was "a small low-hanging cloud" following them overhead "so that it was always between the sun and one or two of the travellers", and the tree under which they sheltered "lowered its branches over them, so that they were doubly in the shade" (p. 29). These were supposedly signs of the presence of the Prophet-to-be among the caravan. Lings reports other such signs as well. Now although many Muslims subscribe to these supernatural happenings, yet the great characteristic of their belief in the Holy Prophet is to regard him as a human being, who led a completely human, down-to-earth life with human needs. To those unfamiliar with Islam, Lings' book is very likely to convey the gross misimpression that the Muslims have filled the Holy Prophet's live with myths and miraculous occurrences in the same way as such are to be found in the lives of founders of other religions. Yet another danger for the novice is that, with there being no discussion in the book concerning the historical authenticity of the information in sources of the Holy Prophet's life, the mention of all these supernatural signs will suggest that there is no sure historical knowledge of any of the other, quite natural, events either. Such an impression would be a tragedy considering that a unique feature of the Holy Prophet, among founders of religions, is the reliability, soundness, and undisputed nature of the information about his life.

CAPATIVES OF BADR

Turning back to the battle of Badr, Lings' chapter on 'The Captives' taken by the Muslims during the battle, and brought back with them to Madina after their victory, uses a selection of material which creates quite a distorted and unrepresentative picture of the Muslims' attitude towards the prisoners. The incidents relating to the release of the prisoners that he quotes suggest that the Muslims were simply interested in extracting the highest possible monetary ransom from the captives' relatives to effect their freedom. He only notes the cases of rich captives from whom a large ransom was obtained. There is no mention by Lings of the fact that poor prisoners were released without any ransom, except that those of them who were literate were required each to teach ten Muslim children to read and write as the only condition of their freedom.

These facts are not only recorded in Lings' own sources, but quite well-known to Muslims generally, and show both the great mercy and love of learning which characterized the Muslims at a time when the very opposite of these qualities prevailed in the world generally.

Lings quotes an incident from Waqidi according to which a man who came to pay the ransom for his son threatened to kill the Holy Prophet if he got the chance. The Holy Prophet is said to have replied, "Nay, it is I who shall slay thee, if God will" (p. 157). An incident which Lings does not quote, but which is found in one of his sources, namely, Tabari, and is also well-known among Muslims, is that one of the captives was discovered to be a certain individual who used to deliver bitter speeches against the Holy Prophet. Someone suggested to the Holy Prophet that now that he was in their power, his front teeth should be knocked out to incapacitate his speech. The Holy Prophet replied, "If I disfigure one of his limbs, God will disfigure mine". On what grounds, we ask, did Lings omit this famous incident but mention the former one (which, being from Waqidi, is highly doubtful in any case)? Obviously this is a result of the author suffering from that widely-prevalent prejudice regarding Islam according to which this faith is violent and vengeful, not forgiving and merciful.

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Another notable omission in this chapter is any mention of the general treatment accorded to the prisoners by the Muslims amongst whom they were divided for the short duration of their captivity. The fine, brotherly manner in which the Muslims treated them, as later described by many of the captives themselves, is recorded in Lings' sources. One prisoner recalled: "The helpers (Muslims originating from Madina) who kept me in their house during my captivity would, when meal times came, give me a meal but have dates themselves (because they were so poor). I would be embarrassed and return the food to them, but they would not touch it and would give it back to me. And this was because the Holy Prophet had directed that the prisoners should be treated well" (Tabari, quoted by Shibli in his Sirat an-Nabi).

Lings, of course, does not actually say that the prisoners were treated cruelly or badly, but the complete omission by him of facts such as the above, and the sole inclusion of only a certain kind of material as seen earlier, gives a highly misleading picture of the Muslims' behavior and policy in this respect.

Another Instance of Selectivity

Having dealt with Lings' treatment of Badr, we move to one of his isolated examples of selectivity in using only a particular kind of material from his sources to reinforce the false, stereotyped image of Islam. This is the case of Rayhana, the widow of a Jewish chieftain taken as a captive, who came into the Holy Prophet's household. It may be noted that the most authentic source by which the Holy Prophet is to be judged - the Holy Qur'an - rules out concubinage (see 4:25), and therefore he cannot be considered to have resorted to this practice. Here, however, we are dealing with the comparative accounts given in the less authentic biographical sources used by Lings. According to Shibli's scholarly work quoted earlier, the biographers offer three different types of report about Rayhana: that she was set free by the Holy Prophet and went to live with her family; that the Holy Prophet offered to set her free and marry her but she chose to become his concubine (Ibn Ishaq); and that the Holy Prophet set her free and married her (Waqqidi, Ibn Sa'd). Now Waqqidi, Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Ishaq are Lings' chief sources, and in his footnotes the first two will be found referred to most frequently. Yet in connection with Rayhana, Lings opts for Ibn Ishaq's report, according to which she said: "O Messenger of God, leave me in thy power; that will be easier for me and for thee" (p. 233). What other reason can there be for Lings to abandon his two most favorite sources and to use the third one, except the desire to fit his book to the popular Western image of the Holy Prophet? He would rather have the world believe that the Holy Prophet kept Rayhana as a slavegirl than disclose the reports that she was set free, even if he has to reject the view of his two prime sources on this point.

CONCLUSION

Lings' work is no doubt a product of great labour, study and scholarship on the author's part. It makes available a cross-section of the information about the Holy Prophet's life as contained in the well-known, popular and voluminous biographies and histories referred to in this review. The book is also well-written and very interesting to read. The publisher's note on the jacket says:

"Based on Arabic sources of the eighth and ninth centuries . . . it owes the freshness and directness of its approach to the words of the men and women who heard Muhammad speak and witnessed the events of his life."

But the question is, in which sources is the testimony and record of these men and women preserved most accurately, authentically and without spurious addition? Certainly not the works on which Lings' book is based, however far these might date back. Unfortunately, the readers will not be aware of the strictures passed against these works by eminent Muslim scholars of Tradition and history (for example, the renowned Imam Shaf'i described the writings of Waqqidi as "collections of lies"). Nor will the readers know that from even within these particular sources it is possible to choose selections which contradict the stereotyped portrayal of Islamic history given by Lings. His book will, therefore, only serve to reinforce the existing false Western misconception of the noble Prophet's times and teachings as standing for violent war, plunder and concubinage.

In the end, it must be added in all fairness that the greatest responsibility for the continued prevalence of such a picture of early Islamic times rests with the 'popular' Muslim authors and writers who have elevated these biographies to the rank of reliable, historical works. Apart from rare and noble exceptions such as Allama Shibli in his Sirat an-Nabi and Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore in his English Muhammad The Prophet, the rest of the modern Muslim historians of Islam persist in slavishly following the biographies and giving them precedence over both the word of God (the Qur'an) and the labour of their forefathers who compiled the authentic Hadith books. Till they are bold and independent-minded enough to overthrow this attitude, authors such as Lings can continue to claim that their books reflect accredited Islamic sources.

Rather than demanding blind faith in inexplicable myths and dogmas, the Quran invites application of the faculties of mind for comprehension of its teachings.

According to the Quran God created man in his own fashion, made him his viceroy in the universe to rule over rest of his creation; and to make easier for the man performance of a ruler, bestowed upon him his own faculties to the requisite extent and made subservient to man whatever is in the universe.
The Goal of a Muslim
cont.
the whole of Muslim India was awakened by a
great shock of the apostasy of its sons by the
thousand, at the hands of a nation that had
hitherto paid a tribute of over sixty million of souls
to the sovereign spiritual power of Islam. After
a full half a century, Muslims have at last come
to know to their great grief that their inattention
the spiritual potentialities of Islam has brought
on their heads the greatest distress which the
Muslim people have ever witnessed in their history.

Professional priestcraft in any
and all forms is alien to the
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—Alphonse de Lamartine in Histoire de la Turquie

QUR’AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

"It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is."

—Bosworth Smith

"Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam. . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world."

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—Dr. Steingass, Hughes’ Dictionary of Islam

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."

—George Bernard Shaw