

RE-EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT



K.A. Rashid



**RE-EVALUATION OF
ISLAMIC THOUGHT
AND
OTHER ESSAYS**

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DEDICATION

This volume is humbly dedicated in humiliation, to the noblest human being, our Holy Prophet Muhammad (OWBP), who will on the day of Resurrection 'Charge-Sheet' us thus :

قَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

(الفرقان)

“And the Messenger will say, O, my Lord my people had treated this Quran as a forsaken thing.”

(Al-Furqan : 30)

خوار از مہجوری قرآن شدی شکوہ سنج گردش دوران شدی
(اقبال)

You have gone astray by forsaking the Quran, And are now complaining of the unkindly times ?

تو غمنا از ہر دو عالم من فستیر روز محشر عذر ہائے من پذیر
ور تو می بینی حسابم ناگزیر از نگاہ مصطفیٰ پنهان بگیر!

(اقبال)

‘O my Lord !

You are the most benevolent of the two worlds ; On the day of Resurrection pay heed to my lamentations :

If you find my balance sheet unacceptable ; Keep it secret from the eyes of Mustafa !

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى حَبِيبِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

May Allah bless His Beloved Muhammad and his progeny and keep them Safe.

FOREWORD

It may come as a very pleasant surprise that Lt. Col. Khwaja Abdur Rashid, in this age of specialization with all his engagements as Administrator in the field of Health and Medicine can find time to write on subtle problems of Philosophy, History Literature, Mysticism and Culture.

But one who knows Khwaja Sahib is not surprised to know that he has created a place for himself in the niche of fame as an established writer. It is a rare distinction for a man of his profession.

In the series of articles under the caption of *Islamic Thought—A Re-Evaluation*, Khwaja Sahib refers to the intellectual deterioration that is manifest in all the aspects of our life. One of the ailments that he has diagnosed as a Therapist is the false pride in our past.

This reminds me of an incident that Sir Syed wrote a foreword to Maulana Shibli's "Al-Mamūn". In it the Great Sir Syed referred to the distinction between the Psychological Character of the rising and declining Socio-Cultural groups, that the rising groups take pride in the glory of their ancestors with a will to excel them, whereas the declining groups feel proud of their ancestors' glory to conceal the want of glory in their own life and remain contented with the pride in their glorious past.

The only remedy, whereby this false pride can be replaced with earnest faith in the glory of our ancestors, is to create a drive that can sustain us in the struggle to revive our glorious past.

The only adequate procedure in this direction is that we should visualise a realisable inspiring objective that can move us to put up a disciplined effort for the attainment of the objective. It is so essential for the creative struggle that unless the adequate drive is provided that can give rise to persistent effort,

maintain it in the direction of the goal and save us from deviation from our destiny, the revival would remain inconceivable.

Such a drive that fulfils all the requirements essential for successful struggle is the re-orientation of our own cultural pattern in order to deny the intellectual leadership of the representatives of the alien culture that has dominated us ever since we have been overpowered by colonialism.

The type of incentive that would emerge for this struggle would be that those who owe their power, prestige and privileges to the betrayal of their own people, will resist the revival of their own values because the so-called moderns cannot tolerate replacement of their borrowed standards and patterns.

Ever since we have lost the consciousness of (i) distinction between the practised and the standard Islam, (ii) the futility of the practised religion, we have reconciled ourselves with secularism, because under the impact of colonialism, life in its social, moral, economic, political and educational aspects was totally deprived of the impact of Religion. This reduced Religion to private subjective personal affair of the individuals life. This ultimately reduced the tenets of faith to myths, and prayers to rituals. The attitude of the scholars is that none is prepared to entertain the question. How can an *Aqidah* be reduced to myth and prayers, distorted into rituals be retransformed into (عقيدة راسخ) and genuine prayers with their full bearing on life?

These articles of Khwaja Sahib are most thought provoking and invite critical attention to many problems concerning our Socio-Cultural life. The only Reason, why Khwaja Sahib feels dissatisfied with philosophical presentation of most of the ideas, in these days, is the want of adequate method in presenting the solution of the Socio-Cultural problems. The significance of method lies in the fact that through method alone it becomes possible to enter the Kingdom of Knowledge and form the Community of Knowledge.

The only remedy lies in research. The research becomes indispensable only when given knowledge grows sterile and fails to solve the problems of life. The only incentive for research

lies in realising the truth that the challenge of modernism can be met through defying the intellectual leadership of those who owe the power, prestige and privileges to the colonialistically orientated pattern of knowledge. Through re-orientation of the knowledge systems we can replace the intellectual leadership that does not suit to the re-orientation of our own Socio-Cultural values.

I wish Khwaja Sahib could take initiative to sponsor a Reference Group which we so direly need at the present juncture.

BURHAN AHMAD FARUQI,

17/G, Iqbal Colony, Teen Hatti,
Karachi-5.

PREFACE

The present volume covers a number of papers, written from time to time, and published mostly in the Pakistan Times of Lahore. The papers cover several subjects, but the basic strain is religious. The reader may perceive some repetition. This became unavoidable, as the papers cover a period of some fifteen years, and some repetition was bound to occur during the process of thinking which obviously was evolving all the time. This is also likely to lead to some contradictions somewhere. This too, is inevitable. Seen minutely, there are neither repetitions nor contradictions. This is the normal process of evolution in a man's thinking, which makes it look so. Even Rumi and Iqbal are not devoid for it !

The papers attempt to project a new spectrum of views on some old problems. I do not profess finality in my views. But I do claim to project a new line of thought to help in the understanding of the Holy Quran. For me the Holy Quran is the only reliable book extant by acting on which man can achieve his worldly desires and spiritual needs. I also do not profess to fully understand the Holy Quran. This is an ocean which is unfathomable during the life time of a man. What little of the problems I have understood, I have put down. But I have always kept to the Quran, whose position remains unchanged. The Quran does not change its position with the advance of science, but instead science advances to embrace the views laid down by the Quran. Whichever of the scientific theories do not corroborate with the Quranic verses, they will be changed sooner or later to conform to the meanings of the Quran. The Word of God remains unaltered.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank Mr. A. H. Kamali of the Iqbal Academy, Karachi, for going through the first part which carries the name of this book ; Mr. Abdul

Majid the Editor of the Pakistan Times for permitting me to reproduce the articles from his paper and finally Dr. Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, M.A., Ph. D., for writing the Foreword. Dr. Faruqi is one of the leading philosophers of Islam in Pakistan. I have been greatly honoured.

51/3, Allauddin Road, Lahore-Cantt.

K. A. RASHID
21st May, 1975

PART I

CHAPTER I

The Mental Attitude

THE Muslim World is faced with many problems today. Grave as they are, such problems present social, economic, religious and cultural features. Unfortunately the entire Muslim World is fallen as-under, and there seems no unanimity in our religious life or our manner of thinking. The thought process seems to have come to a stand still. A nation who was born to guide others, and serve as the torch bearer of progress and learning, has during the last two and half centuries, completely lost hold of all sense of proportion, discipline and ethical values. We are amazed at the achievements of the Western world. Instead of learning a lesson from the causes of our own downfall, we have spent time in trying to justify our misdeeds in thought and action. There is complete disunity in our rank and file. Factions are the pride of the day. In short, a great deal of energy is being dissipated in idle thinking and wasteful actions. Blind imitation and monkeying of own traditions and Western customs carries the day. A sense of false pride in the past glory pacifies us, and the Muslim achievements of the past are projected upon our mind in a glorified manner. Even the inventions which came to us from the Chinese and the Greeks, are being labelled as our own. The Astrolab, the Gunpowder, the manufacture of Paper, and the Mariners's Compass, are instances in question. The manner in which they were improved and utilized is never discussed. It is quite true that the researches of the West in the late 19th Century had attributed such achievements to the Muslims. They had indeed been introduced by the Muslims into Europe. But later, when the sphere of research was further widened by excavations in Rome and its surroundings, and the documents of Chinese contact with the Muslim world had been discovered ; it became clear that the

Muslims had taken them from the Greeks and the Chinese, and the Muslims were not their inventors. Such state of affairs has victimised us with an inferiority complex which is not likely to take us much further. The major defect in such a manner of thinking is that reason has been sacrificed to the cultivation of feeling.

Intellectual toleration is a thing which is merely talked about, but not practised. The first result of a religious discussion with a knowledgeable group these days is, that 'toleration' is forsaken at the very start. No argument is acceptable, however logical it may be, if it does not suit the particular line of thought. The Holy Quran stresses that 'There is no compulsion in Religion', and a Muslim must Think, Ponder, and Rationalise ; but, today one is not permitted to do so ; as it is maintained that the average Muslim has no right to discuss the Quranic or Traditional Exegesis, unless and until he has sat at the feet of a Maulana in Madrassah, who repeats the stories of old which have somehow found their way into the teachings of Islam. It has now been proved that more than half the material in our commentaries and Exegesis is extraneous, having been derived from the Jewish, Greek and Christian sources. The entire system of present day Sufism is clouded with Greece-Persian and Indo-Budhist thought. Where then, is to be found the true teachings of Islam ? Why should the entire heritage of our religious thought not be brought to reassessment. What is the harm if the essence of Islam is directly explored by every body ? Have not the worldly needs changed entirely from those of old ? Is there no way of finding an adjustment for the present day requirements, without altering the injunctions of the Holy Quran and the sayings of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (OWBP) ? Does it now need a referendum to enforce prohibition in the Muslim society to bring peace into it ? Is it necessary to industrialise our women in imitation of the West, rather than truly emancipating them ? A Muslim yearns to know all these things today. Not finding anyone to satisfy his inquisitiveness, he has no other alternative but to study the Holy Quran and Sunnah at first hand. Is there any harm in this ? We are told,

yes. How do we then get along to satisfy our inquisitiveness about the why of things so important to our every day life? We can hardly find a thinker today in the Muslim society, who is prepared to accept our questioning mind as a relevant instrument of enquiry!

The literature which is being poured into the market is not thought provoking. On the international level and comparing with the books coming from the West, our standard of literature is below the average. It does not take one beyond the shadow of one's own nose! Where then does one find an answer to all the questions which keep cropping up in the mind of a person who really wishes to know? Surely one must resort to the original sources and think and ponder as the Holy Quran advocates, and not follow in the foot steps of those who desire to monopolise all interpretation and put a full stop to one's thought process.

Our society today comprises of various grades of intellectuals. First and foremost are those who belong to the old school of teaching and are religiously inclined. Amongst this class are people who have studied in religious Madrassahs, and have spent some years in learning the Exegesis. These people are totally deprived of modern knowledge, and cannot satisfy the growing inquisitiveness of the modern man, who although, not conversant with religious lore is anxious to know something about it. Then there is the class of people who have either not seen the university, and have picked up a smattering of religious lore in mosques and the Madrassah; or have managed to acquire Doctorates in Arabic, Persian or History, through the Oriental Institutions. They have adopted the profession of teaching in the colleges, but have made no efforts to further their knowledge. Being qualified in languages and history they spend their time either in grammatical, diacritical and annotational quibblings, or in writing panegyrics on the achievements of their ancestors. Beyond this they have nothing to contribute towards the nation's intellectual uplift. These people find it difficult to adjust our cultural ideals with the requirements of the age. They are, as

if, suspended between the old school and the modern methods of acquiring knowledge. Lastly, we have the western type of educated people, who have after studying in our own universities gone abroad to receive either technical or non-technical education. Most of them, we admit, are greatly influenced by the Western Culture, and the admirers of Western Civilisation. They are totally uncompromising in their approach towards the old schools of religious thinking. At the same time we cannot also deny that these people having been abroad have seen tremendous progress and a remarkable change in the outlook of the people in the West. They cannot understand, why we cannot look ahead and adjust our lives to promote progress. They find no one to answer questions for them. In short, our ideological life suffers from an intellectual stale-mate !

After a careful study of the situation presented above, I have come to the conclusion that we lack the drive of independent thinking. Our education system has no prompting for the promotion of creative thought, and has therefore failed to lift up the Muslim masses. In fact, the very concept of education, which normally ought to stimulate thought in a people, is lacking. It must not be lost sight of, that man is also a machine, but of a thinking type ! If he does not think he is akin to quadrupeds, and for that, a mechanical apparatus, which is lost in conditioned responses. Consciousness as a free and creative response which distinguishes human machine from all other mechanical set-ups can be kept alive by thinking, pondering and rationalising. If a man is unable to do this after receiving education, not only has education not served its purpose, but the very purpose of man's own creation remains folded upon him. Therefore, man must think. He was created to think, ponder and reflect. It is the greatest insult to mankind and to the Almighty Creator if man's consciousness is not allowed to grow and flower into new ideas. It is thinking which leads to new ideas. Going on and on treading the same old path makes you whirl round in a circle, and does not produce a new path. One must take independent routes to experience and verify the truth for himself. Indeed the books are better guides these

days than the human guides who are but stagnant lakes of out-moded thought, the necessity of directly going to the treasures of knowledge, to the books of scholars and to the methodic researches has therefore become all the more necessary. This will lead us to independent thinking. And once the process of thinking is set rolling it will contrive its many ways and means to overcome the difficulties which we experience in adjusting our outlook with the proper requirements of life. One need not fear of going astray ; thought invariably brings one back to the right path. Living thought never is dogmatic ; it is soon to detect its error and retrace its steps. And if some thinking men are led astray, it would make no difference. We still stand to gain by their experience. There had been periods in the history of Islamic thought when free thinking did go on. In spite of some individual deviations the Muslim intellectuals, on the whole, contributed no insignificant material for the betterment of Muslim society, and opened new venues of thought which have been proved beneficial to the entire mankind. The instance of the Mutazila and the Ikhwan-us-Safa may be cited here. Their contributions have been outstandingly profitable in the intellectual history of the Muslims. But we must avoid the schisms of today, which are eating into the very roots of Muslim society. Intellectual toleration must be the criterion ; and each thinking group must be allowed to develop its own approach.

However, the sanctity of the scriptures must be preserved. There must be no deviation from the fundamentals of Islam. They must be agreed upon, and the people must be allowed to find their own solutions for individual problems remaining within the limits of the prescribed injunctions, with due attention to the Do's and Don'ts of the Holy Quran.

It is here that the difficulty arises. The class of so called Ulama do not wish to give anyone the right to interpret or act independently. They reserve for themselves the right to interpret and impose upon the community the regulations which were suitable to only those situations, which the modern community does not experience. This self imposed authority of the Ulama has narrowed down considerably the outlook of the Muslims, and

makes them docile. They are unable to understand or appreciate the significance of the new situations. The theory of Taqlid presupposes staticism in life, history and society, and reduces the shariah to a static formula. But life goes on, the shariah standing on Taqlid lags behind or there appears a conflict between the life and the shariah. This results in confusion and mass turmoil. In examination it should be found that it is fear of rationalism or analytic thought, which impels Ulama to fall back upon the Taqlid and produce maladjustment in the social system. Sufism, in its historical-genesis should be considered as a revolt against this Taqlid. It was "A reaction over intellectualism, formalism and hair-splitting theology". The Sufis represented a higher level of thought which did not discourage free thinking. "You cannot see God in Kanz and Hidayah; Look into the mirror of the heart, for there is no book better than this."¹

The crux of the problem is that the norm of Taqlid has put a great set back to the progress of Islam, and has been the greatest life-stifling lever within its mechanics. All the progress which one reads about in the book of history was due to the Sufis and the Mashaikh, or to the scientists and the Muslim philosophers who in the main, did not care for authority or sanad like the Ulama whose ultimate source of reasoning had always been some greater authority or sanad. This has been so even today, they do not dare to go to understand human situations or to attempt to deduce from the Holy Quran and the Prophetic Traditions laws suitable for the contemporary society. Since appeal to authority is irrational in its bearing, Maulana Abu al Kalam Azad has wisely said in his Tazkirah, that you can manage to get a scorpion and a snake in one place, but you cannot get two Ulama together.²

1. در کنز و ہدایہ نتوان یافت خدا را
در آئینہ دل بین کہ کتابے بہ ازین نیست

2. Tazkirah by Maulana Abu Al Kalam Azad, Al-Balagh Press, Calcutta, 1919.

The Ulama have never faced the problems of life, nor have they ever allowed anyone to face them squarely. The result is that the fundamentals of Islam have been turned into highly specialised subjects, so that the average Muslim has no other alternative but to look towards the Ulama for guidance, and this guidance they guard with the greatest of jealousy, and monopolise it like a Brahmin. This has resulted in the complete ignorance of the Muslim masses which has further led to their inevitable degradation. I have often wondered what would happen, if people of the West wanted to embrace Islam. Which of their commentaries will come to their help and from which of their books the westerns will seek guidance and light! I must be permitted to add here, that the judicial mind of the Ulama has always betrayed a negative attitude. In the average Muslim, like any one else, judgement grows automatically with years, and education further strengthens it. But the need of the Ulama being persistently judicial is largely negative in contrast to our Creative thinking which calls for a positive attitude, which is a characteristic of Creative people. In the words of Alex. F. Ashorn (Applied Imagination, New York, Charles Scriber's sons, 1961), "From time to time, we must turn off our judicial mind and light up our creative mind. And we must wait long enough before turning up our judicial light again." And again, says he, "Especially in approaching a creative problem, we should give imagination priority over judgement and let it roam round our objective."

The tension which the Ulama have created in the mind of the Muslims has made the masses revolt against this attitude. Not only this, they are already revolting against the religion of Islam, exactly in the same manner as four centuries ago, Akbar the Great revolted against this religion of God, and put forth his own Din-i-Ilahi. There seems no other reason for this repulsion. Instead of making religious injunctions simple, they have created complexities and difficulties in the way of their observances. The attraction for religion which was there for a Muslim has completely disappeared. What remains to-day are rituals and customs and even these do not have the remotest

relationship with Islamic manners and customs. Alas! these too are pious innovations of the learned Ulama. What then is the remedy for the present state of religious and moral degradation of the Muslims? This is a vital question which faces us all today, and we do not seem to find a solution for it.

In my mind I am convinced, that the remedy will be suggested not by the people trained in the old Madrassahs, but by the people educated in the Universities, here and abroad, who have deeply studied the lore of modern sciences and politics. The remedy is re-interpretation and re-evaluation of the existing religious exegesis. Such study has to be made at first hand by seekers of truth, which has become camouflaged by heresies. The inferiority complex must be shaken away and full thought must be given to the contents of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah. Rituals and innovations must be cast aside, and the fair face of Islam allowed to shine in its pristine purity.

When we study the Indian History carefully, we find that from the time of Akbar the Great, the Muslims have produced a good many thinkers who were the product of their time, and had come to renovate religion according to the requirements of their own period. The situation during the time of Mujaddid Alif Thani was entirely different to the situation during the time of Shah Wali Ullah and the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Each one of them struggled to arouse his community to a religious consciousness suitable to the requirement of that period. In the time of Mujaddid Alif Thani the Muslim empire was at its zenith; while in the days of Shah Wali Ullah the Mughal empire was dwindling, and in the time of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan it had completely crumpled. So the problems facing the Muslims in each period were totally different. In the time of Mujaddid Alif Thani, besides other innovations which had cropped up in the religious observances amongst the Muslims, "The Ulama or Theologians had taken exclusively to Fiqh or jurisprudence as the whole of religious learning; they had ceased to refer to the Quran and Hadith—the genuine source of Islam." Consequently only the juristic view of Islam was alive, the spirit of Islam had died. Many a theologian was of the type of Makhdum-

ul-Mulk who, in order to avoid the payment of Zakat or tax on wealth transferred his property at the end of the year to his wife and had it retransferred to himself before the time of the payment next year. "They were busy in the hairsplitting discussions of the problems of Fiqh; minutest differences sufficed to cause perennial quarrels among them. They were generally full of ambition, always hunting after worldly success. They could be induced to give Fatwa that the ordinance of Hajj or Pilgrimage was no longer binding, that it had rather become injurious."³

Shah Wali Ullah who was born in 1703 A. D., four years before Aurangzeb's death was "Perhaps the first Muslim who felt the urge of new spirit in Islam." (Iqbal, Lectures, P. 97).

"Sir Syed Ahmad Khan endeavoured by means of his Urdu journal Tahzib-al-Akhlaq to bring back to the original simple meaning of the Quran which was according to him, perfectly compatible with the exigencies of modern time."⁴

Maulana Jamaluddin Afghani says, "With a thousand regrets I say that the Muslims of India have carried their orthodoxy, nay, fanaticism to such an evil extreme that they run away with distaste and disgust from science and arts and industries the love of their religion should have made it binding on them to consider themselves as having the right to acquire erudition and perfection, knowledge and science, whenever they found them."⁵

The British influence, and along with it the effects of the Western civilisation, had started to show up in the final phase. The analysis of each of them was according to his own period and his appreciation of the situation was quite correct. There could be no other way than to what each one of them had suggested, whatever one might say today as to their line of action; the policy which they had adopted about awakening the Muslims of India was in keeping with demands of their time.

3. Mujaddid's conception of Tawhid by Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, M.A., Ph. D., Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1940, p. 14-16.

4. Gabreil's Wing by Annamarie Schimmel, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1963, p. 22.

5. Gabreil's Wing by Annamarie Schimmel, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1963, p. 22.

Immediately after Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, we see the towering personality of Jamal-ud-Din Afghani appearing on the horizon. He had travelled widely in the Western countries ; much more than any of the Ulama of the Twentieth century. He understood, which way the wind was blowing. His followers in Egypt and elsewhere, like Abdahu, and Prince Syed Halim Pasha, were further stimulated to carry on the struggle to liberate the Muslim all over the world, wherever they had been intellectually culturally, economically and morally enslaved. Each one played his part admirably. Today, we are faced with a totally different situation. The whole problem has to be viewed from a different angle. The world has progressed by leaps and bounds scientifically, economically and politically. Entirely new problems are facing us today. It is therefore futile to expect the Ulama to find a solution for us. They do not understand the problems, and they will not sit together and ponder. There has been no improvement or additions in their curriculum since the Daras-i-Nizamiyah was initiated. Hence their thought is completely static. In fact, the most difficult problem for the Muslim world has been to bring the Ulama on one Platform. We have to take the initiative ourselves and fight to put things right. We must inculcate the habit of thinking ahead and consider proper planning. Thinking ahead means presenting an individual with a ready-made solution of any kind of problem which one may have to face. Everyone thinks, if he ever does, for his own welfare, without realising that he has other human beings surrounding him, and that his behaviour would reflect upon the society. There is no need to go very far. Let us look at our own metropolis, Karachi. Almost a dozen people from each street have been abroad, where they have seen the beautiful parks and play grounds which are the breathing places and the lungs of cities. Karachi has a population of over four million. How many play grounds do we see in this town ? Some might say where is the need. The need has to be realised in the fact that younger generations of school and college going age must be kept occupied with physical exercise, so that they do not think of other mischief which makes life difficult for the peaceful citizens. They

are necessary for inculcating discipline in the youth and to produce team work in them. It is necessary to keep them away from the picture houses, where they flock in herds to learn all the evils of modern civilization. They need to be tired out physically after a day's hard mental labour. We do not wish them to keep late nights. Their minds would not be fresh to work the next day in schools. We do not wish them to frequent public drinking places where alcohol flows freely. If the planning of parks and play grounds is not the responsibility of the Ulama, certainly they can at least impress upon the government to enforce prohibition. The foremost duty of the Ulama has throughout the ages been to teach the population sound morals. They have miserably neglected this. Instead they have diverted their attention towards politics; to achieve what, heaven only knows? The Ulama have spent their energy in creating seventy two sects in the Muslim community and they take it to be a blessing of the Almighty. Such rift has totally demoralised the Muslim nation politically, morally, economically and spiritually. They should utilise their time in unifying them and in bringing about a moral rejuvenation of the Muslims. Perhaps they think that by capturing a few portfolios in the cabinet they will be able to put things right. But they do not realise that already quite a few parties fight the elections in the name of Islam. But when they got into the cabinet they forget all about it; and we do not think that the Ulama are made of a different fiber. This is happening because, the moral foundations of the Muslim community have been shaken. Unless this is repaired by proper example, the community is not likely to stand on its legs. The interest of the country and the religion are not in the forefront. It is self interest everywhere which predominates. Unless this is curbed things cannot be ameliorated.

All these things which I have enumerated above need deep thought. It is with hard thinking that we will be able to get rid of our faults. The nation must resort to sincere heart searching. We must resort to self-observation, and stop observing others. We must mind our own business and not the business of others.

We must do self-remembering to find out our short-comings and self-deceptions. We must face facts and be truthful. We have now deceived ourselves for a sufficiently long time. We must awake to face realities and shun away the garb of inferiority complex which we have worn since the last two and half centuries. Such problems can only be thought about when thinking power has been activated in the man. Where no thinking is allowed such problems cannot be discovered even. In the sphere of higher thought these problems have a bearing, as they open out a way quite different from the already trodden path. It is a new way of thinking. Some problems which have already been discussed previously we have endeavoured to present in a new form. New thought is always painful, as people are not accustomed to shift from their own line of thought. This requires intellectual toleration and we have already said that the Holy Quran upholds that there is no compulsion in Religion. What we require today is a great deal of intellectual toleration.

The West is going ahead in coming back to spiritual life. In fact, the days of materialism are numbered in the West, and modern Philosophy and Psychology are returning unto the Unseen. The West has come to increasingly realise the reality of this Unseen. It is virtually shunning the old attitude of Materialism. In countries like Russia where Communism is the religion of the masses, the trend of thought is dependent upon a vigorous politico-economic system which activates the masses to greater activity in the achievement of worldly affairs. But amongst the Communists too, the idea of God is not completely absent. An all Powerful Being is not ruled out amongst the Communists. Its existence is felt. In short this belief in an Almighty Creator is coming back to the thinking people. But we the Muslims who are supposed to be saturated with Tawhid are drifting away from it. While the other nations are being regenerated and in-vigorated by this belief, we have fallen into an abyss of degradation. If we look into ourselves carefully we will find that there is no difference between a Muslim and a Mushrik today. A Muslim may not worship an idol carved out

of stone or metal, but he certainly does worship certain other more dangerous idols, e.g. he worships wealth, wine and women, he worships the saints and their graves. What mere further degradation can one come to? These intermediaries are much more dangerous than the ones carved out of stone or metal. It is with a view to this that this paper was written to bring back the Muslim intelligentsia to their original faith, and provoke in them the answers to some of the vital problems, the answer to which they find it hard to get. The problems have been rethought and presented in a new attitude. The present crisis in the Muslim society appears to me to be entirely due to the elimination of Reason and acceptance of emotionalism in our thinking. By making the Islamic injunctions highly specialised the Ulama have lost contact with the common man. They have created a closed-in condition thus isolating themselves by a separateness which betrays a Brahmanical attitude. It is our duty to break these barriers and throw wide open the gates of independent thinking and stir our imagination which is the divine spark in us meant to guide our progress. We have rarely stopped to think a while, that in the hey days of our civilization it was creative thinking which made us lead the way to an ignorant world. It is creative thinking again which has made America, Britain and the USSR, the top leaders of the modern world. They inherited new ideas from us. We should have no hesitation now in taking them back to utilise them for our further progress. "Imagineering", is a new science. Let our ideas soar high up, and then engineer them down to earth? Let there be a conscious creative thinking. Indeed a great deal of effort is required to be put into it. This will lead us to creative research, which is as important, if not more, than scientific and industrial research. It is aimed to discover new facts. But alas! the creative spark so badly needed by us is sadly lacking. We must develop understanding and wisdom. We profess to know too many things; but I regret to say that most of us do not even understand what they profess to know? There is hardly a phase in our national life which does not need

our immediate attention, and is not crying for improvement. The only answer is : think ! think !! think !!! Our thinking must be creatively sharp so as to cut at the root of all the barriers and knots which I have enumerated above. Our thinking must produce hot ideas. Lukewarm thinking is dissipation of energy. The amateurs must not be debarred from thinking either. They frequently produce fertile ideas, more fertile than the seasoned Ulama whose imagination has rusted under the stress of an obstinate intellectual humidity ! We need more boldness. This must not frighten us away. Those of us who are aware know fully well how our armed forces create military strategies by 'group-thinking' ! Why cannot we raise a creative group and tackle our peaceful daily strategies to solve our problems of everyday life and keep pace with progress of outside world. We must stop the dramatise our religion and eradicate all sensationalism from the press.

CHAPTER II

Evolution & Renewal of Forms

What ! do you think that we had created you in vain and that ye should not be brought back to us? Wherefore let God be Exalted the king, the Truth ! There is no god but He ! Lord of the State's Throne. (23 : 115-6)¹

This creation is an amazing phenomenon, and man is its most wonderful product. This world was indeed created for him ; but he, was not created for this world : he was created for the world hereafter ! Do you think then, that God Almighty who has created every thing in this Universe with a specific purpose, will discard a perfected creation as a piece of no consequence ? Man has to perform a certain role in this world and for the fulfilment of this function he has been fully equipped with a well designed anatomy, physiology and spirituality.

Man is not entirely an un-understandable entity. In fact, there is nothing in nature which cannot be understood. If it was so ; nature has acted in vain ; but we must realise that the science of man is the most intricate of all sciences. When we talk of man, we are merely looking at his outer surface, which is neither his personality nor his essence, but a mere anatomical appearance. We have no idea of the internal physiological functions of his organs, nor of his mind, which are responsible for his life and existence. What then of his consciousness into which we have no means of access ? It is the body and the soul taken together which give us a comprehensive picture of the

1. افحسبتم انما خلقنكم عبثا و انكم اليئنا لا اترجعون ○ فتعالى الله الملك الحق 1.
لا اله الا هو رب العرش الكريم ○

man. The subject of God, man and Creation, is inextricably bound up with each other, and it is not possible to omit God while talking of man and *vice versa*. Therefore, to discuss the subject of man's creation and its purpose, one must deal with the question not only of God but also His creation and this very existence. It is therefore, necessary that we endeavour to apply our knowledge first in understanding God's creation, as a whole, and prepare ourselves for this baffling question.

Those that deny the existence of God—disbelievers—(Kuffar) content that this world (Creation) has come about on its own. Without going into lengthy arguments, be it known, that nothing comes into existence in this world on its own, be it a stone, a chair, a mountain, a fountain, a tree or a living being. Look wherever you may please, inside or outside your dwelling place, each item living or dead has been brought into existence by a hand, whether of man or God. No intelligent mind can deny this.

New Factors of Evolution

The Western concept of evolution deals exclusively with naturalistic phases of biological variation like the struggle for existence, adaptation to the environment and survival of the fittests, bringing about progressive changes in the genetic structures of the species. But, patent failure of the theories which operate with this conceptual framework is convincingly established, and no ideas of evolution which incorporate the concept of 'Emergence' are seen to replace the Darwinian Evolutionism. But, 'Emergence' that is, sudden explosion of a higher level of act-organization in the organism or that of genetic change leading to a new organism, by itself is not an explanation, and therefore the theories of emergent evolution too are no better than a record of an already accomplished fact in nature without an access to its reasons.

The genetical-environmental nexus, attended by complex intermediary pockets, it seems has its limits and never can it adequately embrace the whole of evolution unless we admit that there is an element of guidance in evolution, a creative purpose

in creation. This point has been completely overlooked by the Western propounders of Evolution. The Holy Quran not only comprehends the above aspects of evolution, stressed by the Western thinkers, but also extends guidance to follow the creative element which governs its phases by pointing out two new factors: (1) the survival of the beneficial and (2)² the renewal of forms. The quality of mercy in nature demands that whatsoever is harmful should be discarded. This is also the true meaning of natural selection. Now the mechanism of nature functions in this direction, has not thoroughly attracted the attention of the Western thinkers of evolution. Says the Holy Quran :

He sends down water from the sky so that valleys flow according to their measure and the flood bears away (the dirt and liter), in its swelling foam and as from that which they melt in the form in order to make ornaments and tools rises a foam like unto it as from the foam, it passes as scum upon the banks while that which is of benefit to mankind remains in the earth.³ (13 : 17)

The other factor in the process of evolution which Western propounders of Evolution have omitted is the important aspect of Renewal of Forms. It is enigmatic to see how the Western Scholars have skipped over this vital problem. They have not only skipped over this vital problem, but have also presented it in quite the contrary manner. Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence culminated in the eulogy of Repitition of Kierkegaard. Iqbal says, "His enthusiasm for the future of man ended in the doctrine of eternal recurrence—perhaps the most

بقائے انفع 2.

انزل من السماء فسالت اودية بقدرها فاحتمل السيل زبداً رابياً و مما يوقدون
عليه في النار ابتغاء حلية او متاع زبد مثله كذالك يضرب الله الحق والباطل

فاما الزبد فيذهب جفاء واما ما ينفع الناس فيمكث في الارض

hopeless idea of immortality ever formed by man. This eternal repetition is not eternal becoming; it is the same old idea of being' masquerading as becoming", and again "Eternal recurrence is not eternal creation; it is eternal repetition" As opposed to this, Muslim existentialist thinkers drew inspiration from the Holy Quran and proved that there was no Repetition in the process of Creation, but offered the theory of Renewal of Forms which was a step forward to the clear formulation of the concept of Evolution.

I cannot here refrain myself from reproducing Iqbal's beautiful summing up of Ibn-i-Maskwaih's theory of evolution from his *Al-Fawz-ul-Asghar*. This not only indicates the trend of Muslim thought a thousand years ago, but contains a scientific meaning which we are trying to bring out in these pages. The summing up of Iqbal in the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* is as follows: "According to Ibn-i-Maskwaih plant life at the lowest stage of evolution does not need any seed for its birth and growth. Nor does it perpetuate its species by means of the seed. This kind of plant life differs from the minerals only in some little power of movement which grows in higher forms, and reveals itself further in that the plant spreads out its branches and perpetuates its species by means of the seed. The power of movement gradually grows further until we reach trees which possess a trunk, leaves and fruit. At a higher stage of evolution stand forms of plant life which need better soil and climate for their growth. The last stage of development is reached in vine and date palm which stand as it were on the threshold of animal life. In the date-palm a clear sex distinction appears. Besides roots and fibres it develops something which functions like the animal brain, on the integrity of which depends the life of the date-palm. This is the highest stage in the Development of plant life, and a prelude to animal life. The first forward step towards animal life is freedom from earth-rootedness which is the germ of conscious movement. This is the initial stage of animality in which the sense of touch is the first, and the sense of sight is the last

to appear. With the development of senses the animal acquires freedom of movement, as in the case of worms, reptiles, ants and bees. Animality reaches its perfection in the horse among quadrupeds and the falcon among birds, and finally arrives at the frontier of humanity in the ape which is just a degree below man in the scale of evolution. Further evolution brings physiological changes with a growing power of discrimination and spirituality until humanity passes from barbarism to civilization.”⁴

Darwin laid great stress on the development of man from the monkeys! This was also known to the Muslim thinkers as brought out in the above quotation but, they did not stress this point much further. Several of them had already expressed similar views in verse and prose; for example, Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil⁵ (1054/1644-1133/1720) has several verses on this. It will thus appear that the Muslim thinkers had devoted attention to other aspects of evolution, which the Western thinkers omitted to pay attention to, and in this respect special mention may be made of the Renewal of Forms which in a way was pointing towards the purpose of this creation. It was very unlike the scholars of the West who did not clearly observe that there was no repetition in the developing forms when life was passing through one stage to another, but, that each time a new creation came into being, it had a purpose to serve and this was leading the entire process of creation to a specific goal. The Muslim Scholars and Scientists did not at any stage presume that the process of

4. تجدد امثال

5. هیچ شکلی بے هیولی قابل صورت نہ شد
آدمی ہم پیش از آن کا دم شود بوزینه بود

and again he says in a Poem :

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| آن زمان کین عمل کنی بنیاد | شکل بوزینه ات نہ باید دار |
| چہ افسون از بغل آوردی | کہ بوزینه ام خبر کردی |
| گر نمی خواندی فسون قیود | شکل بوزینه ات در جہان کم بود |
| ابن زمان ہر چہ آیدت بخیاں | رقص بوزینہ دارد استقبال |

evolution had been perfected and had come to an end, and that man had attained his final evolution. Muslim thinkers were able to perceive new forms coming into being every now and then. If in the past innumerable forms and shapes of life had disappeared and disintegrated giving birth to new forms, there is no reason why the present life also should not disintegrate and disappear, to be replaced by new forms of evolution in the hereafter.

Does man think that he will be left aimless (without purpose for future)? Was he not a drop of fluid emitted, then a clot and then shaped and fashioned in due proportion? (75 : 36-38)⁶

Man indeed has been created in the best of physical and mental proportion?⁷ Yet he is very far from being a perfect creation. Before Islam there is no trace of the problem of Renewal of Forms having been discussed in any ancient or medieval philosophy. But as early as the Asharites⁸ the Muslim philosophers had categorically laid down that 'Forms' do not persist through time,⁹ which means to say that they are continuously changing. This is beautifully expressed in a Persian verse of Bedil :

Every now, every hour, and at every breath. The condition of the universe is changing.¹⁰

6. ایچسب الانسان ان یترک مدی ○ الم یک نطفة من منی یمنی ○ ثم کان
علقة فخلق فسوی ○

7. لقد خلقنا الانسان فی احسن تقویم ○

8. The followers of Abu'l-Hasan Al-Ash'ari 260/873-4, who was born at Basra ; was originally a follower of the Mutazalite. but, disagreeing with them on the priority of God's predetermination, established a separate school. He was the first Muslim Determinist-Existentialist. According to him existence is the very self of His Essence. His system of philosophy was completed by Al-Baqilani (d. 403) and culminated in the teachings of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Tumart.

9. الاعراض لا یتقی زمانین [القشیری]

10. بهر لحظه ، بهر ساعت ، بهر دم دگرگوں می شود احوال عالم

(بیدل)

These forms change with such imperceptible rapidity that one is unable to perceive the change. Rapidity of change is an important factor in this Renewal of Forms. It is something like the static pictures moving on the Cinema screen with such rapidity that they not only over-lap each other but give one the impression of movement. This rapidly succeeding impression on the retina of the eye makes one see the picture moving, but not as separate entities. Similarly these forms are changing in real life in such a rapid manner, that one is unable to see the proper sequence in their change. Continuous evolution therefore depends serially, upon this Renewal of Forms. The previous forms which are not now, in accordance with the set and anticipated plan are eliminated, and their place is taken up by appropriate forms suitable for future evolution. With this elimination creations are being replaced by new ones, which are more profitable and beneficial in addition to their being the fittest to survive. The purpose of life in its present state therefore is far off from the real goal at the present moment. The life hereafter is similarly a continuation of this process of Renewal of Forms in which man might seek completion of his evolution. But, it must be kept in mind that the final goal of evolution of man is not a union with God Almighty as is usually and mystically understood. That is not possible nor is it the end of man's evolution. Union is not fusion into the Higher Being. It is an approximation and an approach into the vicinity of the Ultimate Being. We see the sun by its light ; but we remain apart from it. We do not fuse or unite with it. Similarly a spiritual illumination with the Divine light does not mingle us with God. We remain apart from Him. All illumination or a vision is not seeing God. It is merely a manifestation of His attribute which we witness. It is impossible to behold the Almighty. If it was, He would be confined within the limits of human comprehension !

In Islam, which is a Prophetic religion, God and man never mingle. However, we find this as a very common belief amongst some of our leading later day Sufis. They are a class by themselves amongst the human beings, and must be labelled as

Thee-paths ! They are fully conscious of the fact that they cannot attain to prophetic experience. A Prophet is only identified with God as a messenger to men. His so-called union is therefore only functional. He is only carrying out a specific task for the welfare of humanity.

The potency of the Ego does not lead him to merge in the Super Ego ; the climax of its evolution is to scale down the heights of survitude in relation to the Super Ego. The perfection of man lies in the perfection of obedience and not in his passion to disown himself in the unlimitation of the ultimate Ego. This self-disengagement is an impossibility by the very reason that finiteness itself is internal to the substance of the ego, and that finiteness itself is a denumerable series, inexhaustible in its possibilities : therefore, it is irrevokable. It leads, however, to the criterion of evolution. Each succeeding form (of a thing or an ego) is an improvement upon the preceding one. Creation goes on improving and there is therefore no repetition of forms.

Every day He is creating anew. (55 : 29)¹¹

With the creative progress, new forms go on emerging as the evolution proceeds. There is no repetition whatsoever. The return of Jesus Christ on the basis of evolution therefore is untenable.¹² Creation and evolution are simultaneous processes

11. كُلُّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ (سوره رحمن)

"Creation is opposed to repetition which is characteristic of mechanical action. That is why it is impossible to explain the creative activity of life in terms of mechanism.....The biologist who seeks a mechanical explanation of life is led to do so because, he confines his study to the lower forms of life whose behaviour discloses resemblances to mechanical action".

Muhammad Iqbal, Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam ; Shiekh Muhammad Ashraf Lahore, 1960.

12. The belief in the return of Jesus Christ amongst the Muslims is a Christian tradition, for which some scholars have found support in the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (O.W.B.P) and the Quran. The Holy Qur'an does not support any view of this kind. Nevertheless, a whole lot of literature has grown round this subject of return of Jesus Christ, which is totally un-tenable with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The end of the world is a sudden phenomena : and that which is sudden has no signs : Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil says :

—Contd.

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which proceed hand in hand. At the appearance of new creation the old creation (forms) are being destroyed which have served their usefulness, and are no longer required to fit in the plan of future evolution.

Is the physical evolution of man, the final purpose of this creation? Or, is he to proceed beyond the existing life to evolve into something new, and complete this process of creative evolution? Or, is evolution an infinite process which knows no end? These questions require a larger consideration. Says a tradition :

Everything returns to its original.¹³

Now, if we piece together this insight with the theory of the renewal of forms, the process of evolution becomes a continuous stream in which life is to flow continuously and its flowing tide eventually touches the shores of the unfathomable ocean from which it has started. Maulana Rumi has expressed this in a beautiful verse :—

Everything or every one that keeps away from its original, has to seek out its means of reunion.¹⁴

In fact, the very first verse of the Mathnavi is pointing towards this reunion. We see in the lamentation of the Reed :

باز آمدن مهدی و عیسیٰ اینجا از تجربه مزاج ادیان دور است
(بیدل)

Iqbal has supported him in his view in the following verse :

مینار دل پہ اپنے خدا کا نزول دیکھ
اور انتظار مهدی و عیسیٰ بھی چھوڑ دے
(اقبال)

In a small pamphlet captioned Islam and Ahmadism (1935) Iqbal says :
"The idea of the continuity of the spirit of Messiah belongs more to Jewish mysticism than to positive Judaism. Professor Bubar who has given an account of the movement initiated by the Polish Messiah Baalshem tells us that it was thought that the spirit of the Messiah descended upon the earth through the prophets and even through a long line of holy men stretching into the present time—the Zaddiks" (Sadiqs)

13. کل شیء یرجع الی اصله.

14. ہر کسے کہ دور ماند از اصل خویش باز جوید روزگار وصلِ خویش.

Listen to the Reed (soul) how it is complaining and relating to you its pains of separation.¹⁵

Everything has to return to the source of its origin. But this return is not a change in the nature of entity nor is it a repetition of the creative process for it does not imply return to the same point from where it started its evolution. Nor, is this return an absorption in the source ; it is merely retreat unto the source.

This return is a reunion, a unique experience, which negates mergence into the ultimate Ego. We have already said that this is not possible. If Evolution is lose, the Reunion is an approach into a close vicinity of the Beloved. Its submergence would annihilate the very individuality of the being in love. The goal of our being is consequently not to love our individuality, but to rediscover it in the eternal life of God by return to Him. This union with God neither implies duality nor identification nor absorption. It may best be described as a participation in His attributes, which at the same time keeps the mutual distances intact.

The life hereafter is thus a continuation of the life in this world, and is only subject to the process of Renewal of Forms. It is towards this fact that the Holy Quran has pointed in the following verse :—

From state to state shall ye Surely be carried
(forward). (84 : 19)¹⁶

15 بشنو از نے چون حکایت می کند و ز جدائی ها شکایت می کند

Something very similar has been said by the great living Mystic Jew, Martin Bubar in his "I and Thou" published by T.T. Clark, Edinburgh 1953, which runs as follows :

"Every child that is coming into being rests, like all life that is coming into being in the womb of the great mother, the undivided primeval world that precedes form. From her too, we are separated, and enter into personal life, slipping freely, only in the dark hours to be closed to her again ; night by night this happens to the healthy man. But this separation does not occur suddenly and catastrophically like the separation from the womb of mother ; time is granted to the child to exchange a spiritual connexion that is relation for the natural connexion with the world that he gradually loses."

16. لَر کِبِن طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ

This is further explained by the verse :

Every day He is creating anew. (55 :29)¹⁷

The final end of the Ego is to seek the vicinity of the ultimate Ego ! It is through a cosmic consciousness that the path of man's journey is illuminated. It is through the expansion of the self that the man is able to realise the Ultimate Reality and attain to its highest form of evolution which culminates in spiritual experience, which stands witness to :—

He is the beginning. He is the end.

He is the appearance and He is the Reality. (57 : 3)¹⁸

The perfection of man's evolution lies in his perfect obedience. It does not lie in his submergence in the Ultimate Reality and becoming God.

In order to obtain a clear insight into this problem. imagine to yourself the fate of a spermatozoa after the impregnation ; or, that of a seed after it is put into the ground. As they grow they go on changing form after form never returning to the same again. The old forms disappear and new forms spring up, till they develop into a full grown man or a tree. The culmination of a full grown being takes place after the destruction of the old forms. A continuous process of life while it is developing does not perceive this subtle and imperceptible change. Even when man or the tree is fully grown, its cells are being replaced every moment,¹⁹ and new cells are coming into being. The entire physical structure of the man is being renovated piece-meal, and at every step he stands as a new individual. It is as if the entire process passes off in a sleep unnoticed. But when the consciousness awakens, the various steps become noticeable. This Renewal of Forms persists even in the life hereafter. The process of evolution is therefore infinite and unlimited because the reward is

17. كُلُّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

18. هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ هُوَ الْاٰخِرُ وَ الظَّاهِرُ وَ الْبَاطِنُ

19. وَ اِنَّا شِئْنَا بِدَلْنَا اَمْثَالَهُمْ تَبْدِيْلَةً

unlimited.²⁰ And, each being as we have discussed is an improvement upon its preceding species.

The end is always better than the beginning.²¹ There is hence no repetition in the process of evolution ; for, if it was, there would be no perfection or improvement. The following verses of the Holy Quran will further amply illustrate this point :

1. Were We then weary with the first creation that they should be in confused doubt about the new Creation ? (50 : 15)²²
2. Do you think that we have created you in vain and you will not return unto Us ? (23 : 115)²³
3. To bring in their place (others) better than them, and we shall not be overcome. (70 : 41)²⁴

God's creation comprises of so many things each of which can be considered as a miniature world. Every part of the universe is a microcosm, a miniature reflection of the whole. Look at the photograph of an atom. It is a universe in itself. Every atom consists of a small nucleus approximately 10^{-12} cm in diameter, surrounded by large empty region 10^{-8} cm in diameter, in which electrons move somewhat like planets about the sun. How aptly has, Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil, anticipated this modern research on the structure of the atom :

I am convinced there is life in every drop,
And hidden in every atom is an entire world ;
The mysterious heart is full with innumerable
natural impressions.

The atom is pregnant with sun's essence, the drop

20. اجرا غير ممنون

21. الاخرة خيرو ابقى

22. افعيينا بالخلق الاول بل هم في لبس من خلق جديد

23. افحسبتم انما خلقناكم عبثاً وانكم اليينا لا ترجعون

24. على ان نبدل خيراً منهم وما نحن بمسوقين

driples with ocean's concessions.²⁵

Bedil's thought was probably stimulated by the following verses of the Holy Quran :

From whom is not hidden the least atom in the heaven or on the earth ; nor is there anything less than that or greater but is in the Record Perspicuous.

(10 : 61)²⁶

Each entity of His creation has a set purpose to fulfil which is recorded in the Book : whether it be from the vegetable world, animal world or the world of mankind. Just as their shapes differ similarly their functions differ. Each one of them has separate properties, characteristics and natures. This is their destiny or 'Taqdir'. The distances of the heavenly bodies are determined in so far as their relationship with each other is concerned. This determination under the natural laws exists for everything in nature. They are pre-determined ; beyond this nothing more is meant by the word destiny. It is therefore essential that each one of them should have a different role to play in the scheme of nature ; and if they cannot come up to the standards laid down for them at the time of their creation, they are then considered to have failed in the purpose for which they were created. In other words, we may speak that the world scheme is a phenomenon of the survival of the beneficial. All the things are related to each other in a plan of beneficance. If any of the things wears out its usefulness in the scheme, it exhausts its possibility of survival and becomes eliminated.

25. یقینم شد کہ در ہر قطرہ جان است
نہان در ہر کف ذرہ جہان است
این دل حیرت سرا کہ از نقش قدرتہا پُر است
ذرہ از سامان مہر و قطرہ از دریا پُر است

26. وما يعزب عن ربك من مثقال ذرّة في الارض ولا في السماء ولا اصغر من ذلك
ولا اكبر الا في كتاب مبين ○

This law is true of all the things. It is not their forms that gives them their names and status. It is the functions they are destined to perform and fulfil, which give them their name. It is for this reason that we find so many varieties of animals as having disappeared from the surface of this earth. We now learn from their fossils that they have been in existence. They have disappeared in the process of evolution due to the fact that the change in environment exhausted their usefulness and could no longer serve the purpose for which they had been created. Similarly, if in the future the circumstances ; changed the horse and cow may loose their usefulness and disappear from the scene of existence. We might here recall a verse from the Holy Quran which says :

When the camels shall become discarded (useless).

(81 : 4)²⁷

This verse clearly indicates a time when conveyors of motor cars will replace the caravan of camels. We are witnessing this prophecy coming true before our very eyes today. The camel is gradually losing its utility and one day it may not be beneficial to anything in the cosmic scheme. God Almighty may evolve new creatures to replace it ; or if the need be not there, He may not ! Not only that, even man may suffer the same fate ! In his place then, God Almighty may bring in an entirely new operation. The personality of man is not dependent upon its form. It is primarily the contents which signifies the purpose for which he was created. The future evolution of man's consciousness may raise him to the state of higher beings, and he may find himself entirely a new being in the course of millinium or so.

Man when he was created initially was made with a set purpose which God Almighty disclosed at the time of Adam's inauguration as his Khalifa !

I am about to place my Representative upon the earth.

(1 : 4)²⁸

27. و اذا العشار عطلت

28. انا جاعل في الارض خليفة *

The word Khalifa means a representative i.e., Viceroy. Viceregent and Regent. It does not mean a Ja-Nasheen or a heir of Allah. He is merely a Representative on whom certain onerous responsibilities have been placed. Man at best can be only considered as the Ja-Nasheen or heir in the sense of Khalifa, of an earlier creation, who may have represented God Almighty upon this earth! He is not the same human being who lived in the remote past in the dim ages of pre-history, the particular man who is called the Adam; it is you and me, and every-body.

This responsibility i.e. representation of God is also a part of the purpose for which man was created. Before offering man the position of Khalifa, God Almighty offered it to others in the scheme of His Creation, but they were reluctant to shoulder it. Says the Holy Quran :

“Surely We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to undertake it and feared from it, and man undertook it. Surely he is indeed unjust ignorant.”

(33 : 72)²⁹

It was Man who was foolish enough to accept it. Hence the very acceptance of this responsibility became a purpose for which he was made the Khalifa. It is actually the purpose for which Khilafat was created, and as man accepted to assume the title of the Khalifa, it became also a part of the purpose of Man's creation. In order, therefore, to understand the purpose of Man's creation, it is essential also to understand the nature of this responsibility. This responsibility is not an adjunct to human existence. It is the very substance of his being; for it comprises of freedom, bondage and independence! This responsibility also denotes our relation to other human-beings and towards God Almighty within the dimensions of the above triad.

29. انا عرضنا الامامة على السموات و الارض و الجبال فابين ان يمانها و اشفقن

منها و حملها الانسان " اِنَّهٗ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ○

It is not less than the Divine Revelation itself which discloses to us the meaning of this responsibility. Emil Brunner in 'Man in Revolt' draws a very interesting corollary and says, 'Responsibility is the presupposition of the fact that man is able to be sinner as only the human-being who is responsible is able to sin'. Personally, we cannot agree more with him. The angels refused to accept this responsibility, because, they were not able to sin, and they kept pressing about the faults in human nature, stressing that Man would go into the world and commit sin of all kinds. Yet, God Almighty choose him as His representative ; for, he knew fully well that as Man could sin, he could take upon himself the responsibility ! "Thus the original nature of man is, being in love of God, the fulfilment of responsible being, the responsibility which comes not from a demand but from a gift, not from law but from grace, from generous love, and itself consist in responsive love. From the point of view of God this is His intention for human life, and this is the reason for which He created it". This new and heavy responsibility was further made clear by making everything subservient to Man : Says the Holy Quran :

Everything has been made subservient to man.³⁰

(31 : 20)

How beautifully has Bedil conceived this idea :

Man who brought the conquered heavens law,
Are lost in wonder these, who are in know ;
Both in spiritual and material realms, The creation
came under his sway, being at the helm.³¹

It is therefore the duty of man entrusted with this responsibility to serve his Creator with all the knowledge and wisdom God Almighty has bestowed upon him. And this knowledge was given to enable man to utilise his intelligence and find out the purpose of his operation for himself. Says the Holy Quran :

30. مستخر لکم ما فی السموات وما فی الارض

31. انسان که فلک ها ست سرفکنده او
در حیرت او گم است داننده او
هر چیز که آفرینده شد بنده او

Do you think that we have created ye for nothing and that ye shall not return to us. (18 : 6)³²

To this the Quran gave the following reply :

I have not created Jin and Insan for any other purpose but to be obedient to Me (and conform to my commands). (27 : 2)³³

Mujjadid Alaf Thani, in his Maktubat interprets the word Ibadat in this verse as obedience, which he says, is meant to break the pride of man by making him look low and insignificant so that he does not trespass the modesty of his being. How wonderfully enacted is this drama of the creation of man ! God Almighty broke the pride of the angels by making them bow to man and in turn broke the pride of man and making him bow to Himself ! Thus obedience is primarily meant to render order in this world which has reward in the Hereafter. To obey the command is to be disciplined ; says the Holy Quran :

Do not create disruption upon the earth after We have restored order. (7 : 55)³⁴

However, it must be kept in mind, that man was made the representative in spite of the protest of the Angels, that he would create chaos upon this earth. Man was warned to behave himself and maintain order. He was to abide by the command of the Almighty for which he would become entitled to a reward. Therefore, the purpose for which man was created does not end here. And although, this world was specially created for the Man, man was not created for this world, but for the world hereafter. This is beautifully brought out in the following Hadith :

Beware that this world has been created for you, but you have been created for the world hereafter.³⁵

32. ○ افحسبتم انما خالقنكم عبثاً و انكم اليها لا ترجعون

33. ○ وما خلقت الجن والانس الا ليعبدون

34. ولا تفسدوا في الارض بعد اصلاحها

35. الا ان الدنيا خلقت لكم و انكم خلقتم للاخرة

Therefore, the purpose of man's creation is that he should behave in this world and obey the Creator. All his instincts and urges should remain subservient to the command of Almighty God, just as he has made his creation subservient to man.

The social, economic, and political laws, which man might promulgate in this world, to govern his affairs must conform to the Divine dictates as laid down in His Word of Command. It is by this that he can pave his way to the hereafter. It would be of interest to note that God Almighty lays the greatest stress on man's social behaviour. This is because He desires to maintain perfect discipline. This would be further brought out by the fact that He has announced the severest of punishments for any infringement of His Divine Commands such as committing adultery, theft, cheating, etc ; but he reserves for Himself the punishment for neglecting prayers, fasting etc. or any other religious injunction. This clearly shows that God desires to maintain a wholesome atmosphere upon this earth, and does not like any disturbance or chaos in the world's social atmosphere. At the same time He wishes man to remember Him for his bounties and offer repeated prayers for the innumerable graces that He has showered upon man, so that he may not acknowledge any other authority but God Almighty. Upon these religious, social, and moral acts, depends man's reward in the Hereafter. This is a vital point in the understanding of our problem.

CHAPTER III

Existentialistic Knowledge

When we ask ourself, what is the purpose of man's creation we are at least aware that he has a purpose, but we do not know what it is. What is man after all? He is a combination of body and soul which has the property of modulated speech. Neither the body nor the soul is itself sufficient to be called a man. Man must be discussed, therefore, as a whole man. Man cannot be studied by putting together what the various philosophies have said about him. It is religion and science together which will give us a comprehensive answer, Philosophy will help us to fully wind up the problem if it can. Philosophy from the earliest times has made great claims and achieved fewer results than any other branch of learning. Philosophy has tried to deal with this question single handed since time immemorial but has miserably failed. It can only partially stress the spiritual side of man. Psychology again became confused in mental intricacies and could not lay bare the real facts of man's creation. Anthropology has worked hard to trace the origin of man, but again it could throw no light on the purpose of its creation. Science itself can only explain to you man's anatomy and structure and go no further. "Science deals with man's body and according to it the body did not exist before it was born and is disintegrated after death. Philosophy does not take these questions seriously and considers them to be unnecessary and consequently naive".¹ Religion gives you a definite answer but that too cannot be explained without the aid of the scientific investigation. Religion being a substantive law cannot be

1. The Fourth Way. By P.D. Ouspensky. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London 1953.

faithfully appreciated unless approached through the procedural hypothesis which science alone can give to mankind. Therefore, it is religion and science together that can give us a convincing reply to our problem. Let us then first see what philosophy has to say about the question of our existence before we bring religion and science to assist us in our argument.

The Existentialists say, "Existence does not come within the provision of thought to think".² Admittedly, to philosophise is no crime but, if it leads to despair it is the greatest hinderance to human advancement.

The purpose of philosophy is to bring man nearer to his grounds of certainty by which he is able to continue his existence. To run away or the disengage one-self from the realities of life is not to raise oneself above the world but to fail to become oneself. For those whose knowledge is imperfect the truth of philosophy seems to be contrary to the findings of religion. All knowledge, however, conforms to natural religion in the end. The Existentialists further argue, "I am autonomous but not self-sufficient the unconditioned, I, freed from determinism standing in liberty knows that I am autonomous but not self-sufficient, that I am doubly dependent given to myself from a transcendental ground and in need of limitations and determinations by which I choose myself in the world". We have purposely chosen these quotations, from the theistically minded existentialists who are non-determinists in their outlook. Atheistic determinism would not have served our purpose. It is really not existence then which one should ponder, but the experience in life that one should think about. "The philosophy of existence effaces itself in the irreplaceable experience of personal existence". Alas! This experience does away with Reason. "The new philosophy of life or existentialism has been identified as the protest of life against Reason."³ On the basis of this assumption, Iqbal perhaps is a rank

2. Six Existentialist Thinkers. By H. J. Blackham. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London 1951.

3. Existentialist Thinkers and Thought By Frederick Patka, Citedal Press New York P. 68—1962.

existentialist because he prefers 'Ishq' i.e., emotion over 'aql' or Reason !

To think "What am I" is an irrelevant question, as we have said. We must first presuppose the 'I', which is putting that question to us. "Being is primary and the present knowledge is secondary and cannot prove being or explain it ; for, knowledge works within an affirmation of being and cannot but presuppose it".⁴ Therefore, being is not an object of inquiry but a mystery in the acts of judgement. This mystery becomes most luminous only when it is reflecting upon moral experience. This experience is therefore more comprehensive than another experience to serve as the immediate ground of the metaphysics of being. Now when this experience accomplishes itself in full comprehension of its open possibilities in it is articulated a being who believes in, and not only believes in, but render witness to the existence and power of God Almighty. He becomes the true bearer of knowledge, the ultimate fruition of reason or Aql (عقل).

Is Knowledge A Privilege of Man ?

'Aql' (عقل) or Reason, means an obstruction in the Arabic language, and that which removes this obstruction is denoted as knowledge. 'Ilm' (علم). Reason or Aql is common between the animals and the human beings, but as man was created superior to the animals, he was further distinguished by being conferred the privilege of knowledge. It was this faculty of knowledge which also made him superior to the angels, and it was for this reason that they were made to bow down to Adam.

In the genetic frame of his nature, man is endowed with a certain element of intelligence to acquire knowledge. As a native part of biological equipment, intelligence may be considered as a developed form of instinct, which is also found in animals. Its function is practical ; its object is distinguished from the contents of sensation in so far as it enters into a confronting situation, explore it and collect those cues and ways

4. Between Man and Man. By Martin Bubar. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London 1954.

which solve it for the acting organism. It is therefore a necessary antecedent and accompaniment of the goals implicit in the activity of man. Its presence, consequently leads to the enhancement and more penetrating fortification of Responsibility entrusted to man. Framework of this responsibility, in its turn adds immense significance to the intelligence, for upon it, is thrown and constantly thrown the task of search and research of the cues of manipulation of the situations that surround, press and threaten man to the case of his existence. These situations reproduced as it were in the great framework of the Responsibility necessarily become without exception moral situations. The human situation is moral situation and with intelligent behaviour rest the survival of man endowed with the Responsibility, he has himself accepted when all else refused to accept it from God.

Exploration of the cues to successful handling of the situation is a creative activity. Intelligence in its nature is creative, and as such imitates Divinity. Iqbal has said, "God and man live by perpetual creation".³

The difference between the knowledge of man and the knowledge of God Almighty is this ; Whereas God Almighty has known from all eternity, man has grown to a state of knowledge, from a state of not knowing. Conceptual knowledge was taught to man at his inauguration as the Khalifah. Conceptual knowledge is a faculty having tremendous potentialities. It contains seeds of the various types of knowledge, from which all the significant comprehension springs. Conceptual knowledge has a double edged function. On the one hand it is a symbol-making process, on the other symbol-interpreting activity. These two aspects fuse together in the production of what is called symbolic perception in which is laid the foundation of rational thought, a singular privilege of man that no other animal ever could share. This conceptual knowledge includes the perception of time and space as a mental representation, again a peculiarity which is specific to man only. And, although, biped, man with his symbolic perception is a three brained being by virtue of which he has the inborn faculty of three dimensional space. Of course, we can partially condi-

tion the animals to such perception, but that would not be a mental representation. It is actually this faculty which leads to the evolution of modulated speech and thought which again is the speciality of man.

That melody undetected behind the sacred veil,
Found expression in man's arranged vocabulary ;
While mirrored in minerals are atomic waves of
colour, Reflected in flowery fragrance in vegetables,
and inarticulate voice in animals dumb. (Bedil)⁵

In short this knowledge has been given to man to progress and conquer nature which God Almighty has made subservient to him.

Self Knowledge

The well-known saying, "know thyself and you will know thy God"⁶ is a misnomer. This is presumably not an Islamic idea. It has had an origin in Greek thought, later on imported by the Muslims into Islamic philosophy. A beginner in self-knowledge cannot reach God by knowing himself ; he must seek God first by pondering the works of nature, in which may be included man himself. It is for this reason the Holy Quran stresses on, pondering, thinking and rationalising.

In the early days of his intellectual history, man preservered to locate his own being. And we find him creating his own god-like images to worship. The fault with such a search is, that while man is seeking one-self he falls in love with himself. This would defy the aim of divine love, and lead to Narcisism. It fixes the 'I' in place of the Almighty, and thus becomes the ultimate end. Man stumbles to self glorification and no longer could he make efforts to seek God. He is always seeking himself

5. آن نغمہ بے نشانی پردہ راز
کہ انسان زنوائے اوست مخرج پرواز
در پردہ جہاد موج رنگ است
در طبع نبات بوئے، حیوان آواز

6. من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه

and cannot leave this vicious circle of self-glorification. Thus the 'I' loses itself in the world. It loses its spiritual freedom and circles round the Central point of self desire and activity. Then what is the remedy ?

Man should not begin by sticking to himself or diving into himself. He should go out and seek God. It is this search that will lead him to self-knowledge also, not the other way round. It is in search of God that man comes to his own self-knowledge, for in God alone lies the purpose for which man was created. And unless one has sought Him out, it is not possible to achieve the object of search or even the self-knowledge. In all wisdom, it is comparatively more difficult to know one-self before seeking God. It is advisable therefore to seek God first and then through His knowledge know oneself.

The external creation of God is far easier to perceive than that of God's creation of man. He fills the universe with Himself, and therefore anyone who is searching Him out will find Him out there. This external glimpse of God eventually prepares man to seek Him out within. This means that initially, man must in some way leave himself behind when he is out in search of Him : just as he leaves his house and kin when he goes out in search of an errand. After he has successfully searched his errand, he returns to his own home and amongst his kin ; similarly does he return unto himself after he has sought out the Almighty in the works of nature.

The Holy Quran talks of God being nearer to man than his juglar vein. This is tantamount to saying that God is nearer to man than man is to his own-self or being. This clearly signifies that it is easier to understand God than man himself. It is only the manner of seeking God which may complicate the ultimate achievement. The process itself is not at all difficult.

“Men do not find God if they stay in this world. They do not find Him if they leave this world. He who goes out with his whole being to meet his thou and carries to it all being that is in the world finds Him who cannot be sought.....He is also the Mystery of the self evident, nearer to me than my I..... Actually there is no such thing as seeking God, for there is

nothing in which he could not be found".⁷ We would go a step further and say, he who goes out truly, to meet the world, goes out also to meet his Creator. God Almighty is not far from us. He surrounds us. He is nearer to us than our juglar vein. Says the Holy Quran :

1. It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him for We are nearer to him than his Juglar vein. (50 : 16)⁸
2. When my servants ask thee concerning Myself (Me) I am indeed close to them.
3. It is He who hears all things and is ever near.

(34 : 50)¹⁰

Some might argue that there are atheists who cannot reflect upon the Cosmos in a desirable manner. "If he has no longer any personal god all the more surely he has one or more impersonal gods,—something which he regards as taboo, something which may not be touched at any cost, whether it be his communism or his nationalism, his civilisation or 'life'."¹¹

Man always has a God or an idol. Therefore, it is contradictory presumption that he would not reflect.

Humanity is judged by the concept of God one possesses. It is for this reason that pure secular states or civilization is devoid of deeper sense of humanity. Civilization and state borne of the concept of worship of one true God possess an intense sense of humanity within their fold. God, not man, is

7. I and Thou. By Martin Bubar. T.T. Clark Edinburgh 1953.

8. لقد خلقنا الانسان و نعلم ما توسوس به نفسه و نحن اقرب اليه من حبل الوريد

Muhammad Iqbal says, in the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, "Every Atom of Divine energy, however low in the scale of existence is an ego. But there are degrees in the expression of ego-hood. Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of ego-hood until it reaches its perfection in man. That is why the Qur'an declares the Ultimate Ego to be nearer to man than his own neck vein."

9. و إذا سألك عبادى عنى فانى قريب

10. انّهُ سميعٌ قريب

11. Mysticism in World Religion. By Sidney Spener. London 1963.

their total centre. It is this measure which filters out the purest form of humanity.

“But when as today, there is a general awareness that state action as such is not the expression of a divine will which it is incumbent upon man to obey, there has become dominant a conception of the state as an expression of human will”, and again, “let us learn once more to obey without question ; let us meanwhile, leave action to some all-powerful individual who has seized the reins of the government !”¹²

Philosophers and religious thinkers have devoted considerable time and thought to sort out this problem of man and the underlying purpose of his creation. They are not unsuccessful in conceiving of a real purpose in the scheme of creation. But the sceptics are not also absent. There are thinkers who have doubted their conclusions. These sceptics keep alive doubts in the minds of the doubtful. Such people are not faithful enough in their task of pondering on the work of God, in spite of the fact, that the book of nature is spread wide open before their very eyes. The Holy Quran repeatedly stresses this point, and directs man to ponder the works of nature, such as the change of night and day, the mountains and what is contained in them, the trees and the fruits and the movements of the heavenly bodies. In all this there is a clear design of the Creator. To learn that there are bigger suns in the heaven than our own which twinkle like little stars would itself be awe-inspiring and bringing home to the observer the Omnipotence of the Almighty. A mere look through the telescope at the rising sun will convince anyone that it is the work of a Supreme Creator. The sun spots amidst the glowing flames are the only evidence that it is not a true fire, “A Chain Reaction” kept alive by atomic bombardment, but has a solid core. And all this is so simple to see and to perceive the great design. The details in this vast creation may not be understood by every one but its very existence

12. Karl Jasper. Man in the Modern Age.
Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. London 1951.

points to a Creator and his purpose. Everything here is in perfect harmony and order, beautifully designed, arranged and balanced :

If there is no designer, what then is this (order) plan ?

Nature beneath its confused, surface, has a clear and simple pattern Fatar (فطر) of law and order (Taqdir—تقدير) ; and that this grand design is accessible to the human mind.

“Below the superficial layer of conscious awareness of the world, of solidified objects is an intimate region apprehended as the uninterrupted flux or succession of conscious states, which can, be best described as concrete duration or ‘Life’ itself engaged in the process of dynamic unfolding”.¹³

Every aspect of this creation has a goal and is moving in a determined direction. It is we who abhor this destiny as we do not find our own equations in our own human world and its system and we wish to secure everything without struggling for it. We are unable to adjust our life according to the demands of our true natures, and the dictates of the Holy Quran, which is a book for all time, all climes and every Society.

Is Man Created in the Image of God ?

It is a great presumption to hold that man has been fashioned after the likeness of God. Man cannot be likened to God Almighty in whatever figurative sense it might be construed ; for, there is nothing like unto Him. Unfortunately a great deal of misunderstanding has arisen due to a verse in the old testament the exact translation of which cannot be authenticated. This idea is however, contrary to the teaching of the Hadith and the Holy Quran :

1. There is nothing which can resemble Him and he is the hearer of all and seer of everything (Quran).¹⁴

13. Existentialist Thinkers and Thought.
Fredrick Patke, Citedal Press,
New York 1962. P. 29.

14. ليس كمثلہ شیءٌ و هو السميع البصير (قرآن حکیم) (۱۱ : ۴۲)

2. And nothing from amongst His creation is like unto Him (Hadith).¹⁵
3. He is unlike anything from amongst His creation (Hadith).¹⁶

As far as we can trace this concept of the likeness of man unto God, it is the product of Philo's mind. Philo was an orthodox Jew who had intermingled Jewish ideas with Hellenistic thought, while he flourished in Alexandria about 25 BC. To a considerable extent his thought was shaped by Platonic and Stoic philosophy on which was superimposed the theology of Old Testament. He had also propounded the view that if we wished to know God, we ought to learn to know ourselves. But this knowledge was preliminary to an exploration of our being in relation to the sense world. And with regard to the likeness of man unto God, he had preached that man has a capacity of self-transcendence which has a faculty of mediation by the Logos. This very fact, in our opinion cuts man off from his so called divinity attributed to him by Philo so as to make his existence look quite apart from the Almighty God.

However, this teaching somehow seems to have entered the transmission of the teachings of our Holy Prophet (O.W.B.P.); the prophet is said to have mentioned that, God has created man in his own image.

He has created man after his own image.¹⁷

In the light of the Quranic verse just quoted, we are inclined to believe that this Hadith is not a reliable one, although various interpretations have been put forward to explain its mystical significance, but these explanations cannot mitigate the sublime truth which the Holy Quran has expounded. We find some prominent mystics justifying this Hadith. Majjadid Alif Thani in his Maktubat says in support of this Hadith :

15. ولا يشبه شيئاً من خلقه (حديث)

16. لا يشبه شيئاً من الاشياء من خلقه (حديث)

17. ان الله خلق آدم على صورته (حديث)

Man is a proven and comprehensive representation of all that is present in the universe, but in the manner of a figurative possibility as the replica of ultimate Reality, in the sense, that He has created man after His own image.¹⁸

Actually, this opinion is in justification of the common belief, that man is a microcosm. But this admission of the microcosmic character, in no way, implies that man was created in the image of God. The Holy Prophet (O.W.P.B.) could not have said something contrary to the teachings of the Holy Quran. This false conception of the resemblance of man to God has had far reaching implication in the history of Islamic thought. Even Mansur Hallaj¹⁹ was misled by this as he thought man was essentially divine, because he was created by God, in His own image. That is the reason he further maintains, why God made the angels bow down to man. This is not correct. Man is not of divine nature. He has no share in the Being of God. Man is indeed a product of His divine will, and therefore, His Creation. Mansoor Hallaj was further misled to think that the deity of God enters the human soul, just as the soul at birth enters the human body. But this argument is again wrong as the soul does not enter the human body, at the time of birth. It is present from the very day of fertilization of the human germ cells. The two microscopic cells are mobile and their activity proves the presence of the soul. Hence this theory of Hallaj is untenable. Again his theory of Hulul (Incarnation) has sprung

18. آدمی نسخہ ایست جامعہ ، ہرچہ در تمام موجودات است در انسان تنہا ثابت است لیکن از عالم امکان بطریق حقیقت از مرتبہ وجوب بطریق صورت ان اللہ

خلق آدم علی صورتہ

19. Abu Al-Mughith Al-Hussain B. Mansur B. Muhammad Al-Baidawi. Born 244/858 at al-Tur near Al-Baida. He was executed on a Fatwa on Tuesday the 26th March 922, for charges of Kufar by the Mutazila having declared "I am He". Iqbal thinks that this phrase of Hallaj is a challenge flung against the Mutakallimin, and also thinks that Hallaj could not have meant what the Mutazila construed denying transcendence of God (Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf Lahore 1960).

from the concept of transmigration which has fickle biological foundations, and the justification of either on metaphysical grounds broods of incompetence to think clearly the purpose of this creation. It is actually not transmigration or reincarnation but transmutation, or the conversion of certain form of energies or matter into quite different forms of matter or energy of higher order. Ouspensky lays stress on the transmutation of sex energy in the following words: "The utilisation of this energy", he says, "which is wasted unproductively in ordinary life creates in man's soul the force which leads him to the super-human. There is no other force in man which could replace sex energy. All other energies intellect, will, feeling, feed on surplus sex energy, grow out of it and live by it. The mystical birth of man of which many systems speak is based on transmutation, that is, on the transmutation of sex energy".²⁰

Man has been misled by the attributes of the Almighty which although figurative have been mistaken as primarily human attribute and faculties. God wishes man to copy the Divine attributes in their essence. Unfortunately, instead of elevating his status by their cultivation and hiding his face in the attributes of Almighty God, man has hidden Almighty God in his own image! This is not the purpose of man's creation. This is not raising the concept of man; it is minimising the concept of God in an anthropomorphic way. "Even so oxen, lions and horses, if they had hands wherewith to carve images would fashion gods after their own shapes and make their bodies like their own".²¹

20. The Fourth Way. By P.D. Ouspensky. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London 1957.

21. Xenophanes 600 B.C.

مرا بر صورت خویش آفریدی برون از خویشتن آخرچه دیدی

"Thou hast made me after thine own image! After all what has Thou seen beyond thyself?"

(Nasir Ali of Sirhind)

Iqbal thinks, "An anthropomorphic conception is especially unavoidable in the apprehension of life". But he also regrets that this is a hasty view, and one should be able to avoid such concepts with a little consideration.

—Cont.

The late Maulana Abu al Kalam Azad²² also seems to have been misled by this. In his Presidential address to the International Round Table Conference organised by UNESCO in New Delhi, in December, 1951, the Maulana says in one place, "the Quran proclaims that not only is man created in the image of God but is His regent on earth".²³

Now, in so far as man's regency is concerned, we have discussed this concept in some detail, and consider the Maulana quite correct in what he says, but when he talks about man being created in the image of God, he is very far from being right. His statement is misleading. The Holy Quran nowhere mentions such a thing. On the contrary the verses quoted above should suffice to dispel any such doubt :

However, Iqbal further says, (Chapter II Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam)" "To interpret this life as an ego is not to fashion God after the image of man." We would go a step further and say, that it does not at the same time lie in the mouth of man to fashion himself also after the likeness of God !

22. Moulana Abu Al-Kalam Azad. Born in Mecca 1888, died 1958 in Delhi. He was a profound scholar and thinker in Islamic studies. Several times President of the Indian National Congress, finally became the Minister of Education in the Indian Government which portfolio he held at the time of his death. Pandit Nehru has considered his knowledge overwhelming (Discovery of India-Preface-Signet Press Calcutta, 1947) Moulana Azad had distinguished himself as a rebel even before Mahatama Gandhi (Introduction to Moulana Abu Al Kalam Azad, by Mahadev Desai, George Allen & Unwin Limited London, 1941). He was handsome, dignified and gentle and a practicing Muslim.

23. Indio-Asian Culture July 1955. The Concept of Man.

CHAPTER IV

The Hereafter

WE have used this expression previously quite often. It is desirable now to explain it. This expression is an english translation of the term 'Akhirat'. But this translation is not quite free from confusion and often does it lead to misunderstanding, if the genuine meaning of Akhirat are not properly appreciated. Akhirat does not mean the end. An end is the name given to a series of acts taken collectively when they come to a stop. The end is announced by Qiyamat which in the case of an individual may be likened to his death. But, Akhirat starts after the end, which is the Hereafter. The Hereafter, can be summed up as an Endless-end. Taken collectively, there is a continuity in the creative act of God. This is then the correct translation into which the word Akhirat can be rendered. Dar-ul-Akhirat (the last abode) is therefore, in the Alam-i-Akhirat¹ (world hereafter) which is yet to come, in the Hereafter. The Alam-i-Akhirat is another world besides this world of perception, or Alam-e-Shahadat² and Alam-i-Duniya or the material world.

Three distinct abodes seem to have existence, apart from this world :

- (a) From death to Hasher (حشر) this is Alam-e-Burzakh (عالم برزخ) "A state, perhaps of some kind of suspension between Death and Resurrection". (Iqbal)
- (b) From Qiyamat (قيامت) to Abdalabad (ابدالآباد) which would be Hashar (حشر) itself. And,
- (c) From Hashar (حشر) to Akhirat (آخرة) which is Alam-i-Akhirat' the End-less-end.

1. عالم آخرت

2. عالم شهادت

God Almighty says in the Holy Quran :

The Hereafter in the sight of God is for the righteous.³

Aqibat (عاقبة) again is a stage through which the pious will pass to get admission into the Darul-Akhirat (دارالآخرة) ; says the Holy Quran :

That is the last abode which We will give to those who have not sought greatness in this world and who did not create chaos here. And it is a great reward for those who fear. (28 : 83)⁴

Ouspensky has raised a few significant questions. Does the hereafter fall in the eternity ; he asks ? But what is eternity ? To this he replies, "for the modern mind eternity is an indefinite concept" and adds, "eternity can be an infinite number of finite times." He further amplifies thus, "the circle (circumference) is a two dimensional figure. If the second dimension of time is eternity, this means that the eternity enters into every circle of time and into every moment of the circle of time. Eternity is the curvature of time. Eternity is also movement, an eternal movement. And if we imagine time as a circle or as any other closed curve, eternity will signify eternal movement along this curve, eternal repetition eternal recurrence."⁵

According to our way of thinking, we have already explained this in some detail under the theory of evolution, while

3. والآخرة عند ربك للمتقين (٣٥ : ٣٣)

4. تلك دار الآخرة نجعلها للذين لا يرون علواً في الأرض ولا فساداً والعاقبة للمتقين ○

5. A New Model of the Universe. By P. D. Ouspensky. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1957.

Muhammad Iqbal has something entirely different to say on this problem, which is worth making a note of here. In his III Lecture in the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, he says, "Rising higher and higher in the scale of immaterial beings Divine time—time which is absolutely free from the quality of passage and consequently does not admit of divisibility, sequence and change. It is above eternity ; it has neither beginning nor end."

discussing the subject of (تجدد امثال) Renewal of Forms. Eternity is Abdalabad (Eternal Abode), where there is no repetition or recurrence. Ouspensky's theory of repetition and recurrence leads to the possibility of transmigration. Our notion of eternity cannot recoil into it. If there is eternity, there is no repetition.

We have in the previous paragraphs also discussed that man has to return to his Creator, and that, he was created for the hereafter and not for this world. Man prepares for this life in two ways. Firstly, in obeying God's Commandments in setting this world in order, and secondly, remembering him often so that he may be acceptable in the Hereafter. We cannot duly apprehend the problem of the Hereafter without a sound analysis of the essence, i.e., the soul of man.

The Human Soul

Science has now proved that the soul is a form of energy. It is likely that this energy-soul is produced in the human body by the admixture of bodily fluids more appropriately, fuels which are formed by the blood, and plasma ; or perhaps, by the interaction of the two ; in the presence of an unknown hormone from the endocrine glands, circulating in the blood. There are various types of energies produced and stored in the body. It is by the interaction of these energies that the human life is activated and influenced. What we call the good and the evil in the man are like two electric charges, opposite to each other, just as the negative and positive charges of electricity. If the evil or negative charge is increased, it is prone to cut short the circuit of normal life, and creat disturbance detrimental to the spiritual progress of man. If the good or the positive charge is predominant the circuit strengthens the rush of life and man advances spiritually. The negative charge or the evil faculty may be considered a control of the physical urges in man, while the good or the positive charge is responsible for the spiritual welfare and control of the individual. Ouspensky distinguishes four different types of energies viz (1) Physical or

mechanical (2) Life (3) Psychic or Mental and (4) Energy of Consciousness.⁶ He says, for every thought action and feeling we must have a corresponding energy. But we keep wasting our energy on unnecessary things. Energy also keeps leaking due to negative emotions ; stop them and you will save energy. But the more one accumulates the more is likely to leak out !

The body is created in the womb of the mother under certain physiological and embryological conditions ; and while this is in process of development (according to an old view), God Almighty infuses the soul into the embryo as a man is called before he is born. This results in initial turning which is the first physical movement in the man. In the words of Ouspensky it is probably due to the physical energy which is liberated on account of the inter-action of various fluids in the womb of the mother.

In our opinion the soul is not responsible for the total movement in the body. According to the Holy Quran, the soul also leaves the human-body during sleep ; but we find the movement to be still there, in the beating of the heart, and in the turning of the human body while the man is asleep. This activating principle or physical energy which is the cause of movement in the human-body, must then be something other than the soul. We have already mentioned in the previous pages, that the initial cells of human growth are active or mobile even before the fertilisation takes place in the womb. Therefore, the activating principle which is already there, is responsible for the movement in the human body, and is the soul par excellence.

We would like to divide the human soul into two parts as was done by the ancients :

1. The animal soul (روح حيوانى) and,
2. The Heavenly soul (روح الهى).

In the words of Ouspensky again, we will call the first the physical or mechanical energy, and the second as the energy of consciousness ; for, it is consciousness which man loses during sleep, and it is the physical and the energy of consciousness

6. Ibid.

together, which both depart from the man at the time of his death. Death is not cessation of consciousness as may be construed by some from the above description of the human soul. Death is a transformation of the human being into yet another fully sensitive entity. "Every soul has to have a taste of death"⁷ (Quran) and to have a 'taste' of anything one must be completely alive with all his five senses. But then, we have also to return unto Him.⁸ (Quran) If death was a cessation of the human consciousness this return unto Him would become meaningless. The death is actually the transformation of the human being into a being of higher order with all his faculties intact. This is in accordance with the law of Renewal of Forms. It is as if a third eye opens out leading to a third consciousness that is Supra-normal. "Our dualistic being, such as it is from now on, discovers at last its normal method of functioning by awakening its attention to an autonomous activity".⁹

The animal soul (روح حیوانی) possesses vegetative functions also, besides its own; although, there is a school of thought, which says that there is no animal soul in the vegetables! This is incorrect: the plants also grow. This growth depicts movement for which the animal soul is responsible. There is movement in the vegetable world but no locomotion. Locomotion is brought about by limbs, and is a movement from place to place. This affect of the human soul i.e. movement is common to all vegetables and animals. It is also responsible for the animal instincts of hunger, sex and power.

The heavenly soul (روح الهی) or the energy of consciousness, is called Nafs (نفس). This goes through various stages of development and spiritual elevation. Nafs (نفس) is not the seat of passion or of sexual urge, because when Nafs leaves the

7. کُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ (٥٧ : ٢٩)

8. إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَأَنَا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ (٢ : ١٥٦)

9. Mystecism in World Religion. By Sidney Spencer, Penguin Book London 1963.

human body during sleep man still experiences sexual pleasure in the form of nocturnal emissions. If the Nafs or the heavenly soul, as we have called it, was the seat of lust and of sexual urge, there should then be no such experience when man is asleep. It is the animal soul which is really responsible for movement and for sexual pleasure as we have explained above. The heavenly soul is not responsible for any such movements at all in the man. It is mere consciousness in the modern terminology. It is this heavenly soul or Nafs (نفس) which temporarily leaves the human-body during sleep. It might be of interest to know that we also come across similar discussions in Jewish mystecism. The Nafs, which was then called Nefesh and the Soul i.e. Ruh (روح) as Ruach, have been implicated in intellectual discussions very similar to our own. Ruh or Ruach was rendered as 'Spirit', and Nafs or Nefesh, as the 'principle of life' or consciousness. The cosmic significance of the human form was also greatly stressed then as now, and man was considered to be a microcosm, which included all things higher and lower. It contained secret stores of energy similar to the ones inherent in the universe.

We have preferred to call the heavenly soul as Nafs in contradiction to the accepted Sufistic thought that it is the animal soul which is Nafs. The Sufis have called the Nafs the seat of lust and passion. Our basis of disagreement is the following verse of the Holy Quran :

Allah takes away the (heavenly soul)—Nafs from bodies at death and temporarily when you are asleep. (39 : 42)¹⁰

10.

اللَّهُ يَتَوَقَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا

The question of Nafs and Ruh has misled many thinkers in Islam. Iqbal in his lecture on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam says, "the word Nafs does not seem to have been used in the Qur'an in any technical sense of the kind imagined by Muslim Theologians". He further says, "In fact, Ibni Rushd's view looks like William James suggestion of a transcendental mechanism of Consciousness which operates on a physical medium for a while and then gives it up in pure sport." This is exactly what the above quoted verse from Holy Qur'an indicates. We have tried to explain this in some detail above.

In this verse God Almighty says that He takes the Nafs out of the human body temporarily at the time of sleep. It goes to seek nourishment from its heavenly abode as we shall presently explain. At the time of death, however, it is the soul in toto—the animal and the heavenly soul which departs from the body leading to cessation of all bodily activity and consciousness. The animals are in no way devoid of their share of the heavenly soul, for they too sleep and lose consciousness. In the animals, however it is the animal soul which predominates. In other words in the animals the charge of physical or mechanical energy is excessive and predominant. In man it is the heavenly soul or the energy of consciousness which is over-powering. It is for this reason man is asked again and again in the Holy Quran to control his animal instincts (urges) If the animal soul was to dominate, man would not be able to control it. In fact, the question of controlling it would not arise. This is in order to enable man to obey the Divine Commandments. The heavenly soul is a spark of light from God Almighty. It longs for return to its ultimate abode. The heavenly soul obviously can only be at peace within the framework of the human-body, when it is being constantly supplied with its food, which is the constant and incessant remembrance of God Almighty (ذکر الہی). It is for this reason that God Almighty created sleep for man and his other creatures. Sleep, no doubt, was primarily created for rest after the day's toil, which man requires after the daily struggle. But sleep was also created to enable the heavenly soul to leave the body and fly to its abode to obtain its nourishment i.e. the heavenly food. As in the case of any other being, the food for the soul must also necessarily come from the place it belongs to. Do we not satisfy our hunger by the food grown in the material world of which our body is a product? Therefore, the food for the soul must also come from the place to which it belongs! The soul then, when it leaves the body temporarily, goes to its heavenly abode to obtain its nourishment. The nourishment for the heavenly soul is the remembrance of God Al-

mighty as we have mentioned above.

Now, this spark of light, which we have called the heavenly soul, is called by the Sufis the point of light (نقطه نورانی).¹¹ It is predominant in the man and is further termed in the Sufistic language as Malakiyat (ملکیت) or the heavenly faculty. This faculty of Malkiyat, pertains to Alam-i-Malaukt (عالم ملکوت) or the world of God. This idea in Islamic Sufism is again derived from Hebrew and Jewish Mysticism which in turn owes its origin to Platonic thought. In the Jewish mysticism (Mysticism in World Religion By Sidney Spencer) Malkuth is the kingdom of God, which approximates with the Sufistic rendering Alam-i-Malakut ! By cultivating this aspect of the soul man is capable of rising to great spiritual heights. In fact, this is his consciousness, and by improving his consciousness man is able to raise the level of his being. A neglect of this would let loose his negative emotions and lead him to satanic activities. The properties of this soul are totally different from the animal soul which in contrast to it is called Behimiyat (بهیمیت) or the satanic faculty. This is responsible for the negative emotions in man. The leanings of the animal soul are towards the interest of this world, as for instance, good houses, good clothes, good food, comfortable means of locomotion, anger and lying. In other words, its diversions are worldly interest and progress, which necessitate neglecting of the spiritual requirements of man. On the contrary the leanings of the heavenly soul are spiritual and directed towards remembrance of God Almighty. It does not share the temperament of the animal soul, and is therefore, constantly in conflict with it. The greater the conflict the more perturbed is the human mind. Therefore, the cause of the human unhappiness is the over-powering of the man by the animal soul. Majjadid Alif Thani in his Maktubat has described this state beautifully. He says, "everything which gives pleasure to the

11 Iqbal thinks that it is one of the functions of consciousness to provide a luminous point in order to enlighten the forward rush of life " He further thinks that it is a "Case of tension, a state of self concentration.....it has no well defined, fringes ; it shrinks and expands as the occasion demands !

human-body is a source of pain to the heavenly soul, and everything through which the human body feels pain is a source of delight to the heavenly soul. Therefore, the body and soul are antagonistic to each other".¹²

The way that may lend man an upper hand on the animal soul is paved by his efforts to cut down its worldly attachments. The heavenly soul needs its own nourishment in order to live and flower. That nourishment is constant remembrance of God (ذکر الهی) when the heavenly soul over-powers the animal soul, as it should normally do, the conflict within and chaos without subsides, and man is happy and peaceful. These various stages of the soul are depicted in the following Quranic classification of the various moods of the heavenly soul :

1. The disobeying soul (نفس اماره).
2. The self accusing soul (نفس لوامه).
3. The contented soul (نفس مطمئه).

The Nafs here can also be rendered into the English word 'self' meaning thereby consciousness or Ego. These are the three states of the heavenly soul when it is in conflict with the animal soul. The three states show a degree of conflict in the following manner, respectively :

1. When the animal soul is dominating, it has an entirely evil influence. Man disobeys God (نفس اماره).
2. When the heavenly soul becomes conscious of this conflict, and sees the animal soul dominating it, there is self-accusation with perceptible improvement in the outlook of man. Man begins to control the evil in him (نفس لوامه).
3. When the heavenly soul completely over-powers the evil influence of the animal soul, it rests contented, and is spiritually elevated to the state of complete satisfaction. Man is spiritually consoled (نفس مطمئه).

12. هرچه که جسم در آن لذت است روح را از آن الم است و هرچه جسم از آن متالم است روح را از آن التذاز است ، پس روح و جسم نفیص یکدیگراند- (مکتوبات امام ربانی)

This state of spiritual elevation is upheld by the Holy Quran. This in fact is the creative spirit in man which makes him merge into higher strata of being. In the words of Iqbal, "In his innermost being man as conceived by the Quran is a creative activity, and an ascending spirit who . . . : . . . rises from one state of being to another".¹³ Says the Holy Quran :

From state to state shall ye surely be carried forward. (84 : 19)¹⁴

Plato calls this state of being carried forward, as "The true order of going". Plato's oft quoted passage reads as follows :

"The true order of going, is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which one mounts upwards for the sake of that other Beauty, going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair actions, and from fair actions to fair notions, until from fair notions, he arrives at the notion of absolute Beauty and at last knows what the essence of Beauty is."

And again the Holy Quran stresses :

O Man, you have to undergo hardships and gradually reach your Creator. (84 : 6)¹⁵

If a man can manage to control his animal soul by constant prayers and remembrance of God Almighty, the influence of the animal soul is reduced to a minimum. It is the struggle in controlling the evil spirit which is the greatest hurdle, or calamity, referred to by the Holy Quran. This elevates the being of man. It brings him nearer to God Almighty.

Sleep and the Mechanism of Dreams

In the psychological consciousness of the natural man, dreams are skin to an imaginative film, which rolls off from

13. Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam by Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal. Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf Lahore, 1960.

14. لترکبن طبقاً عن طبق

15. يايها الانسان انك كادح الى ربك كدحاً فمأقبيه

the unconsciousness during sleep. It is based on the concrete reality of the present or not-present characteristic, by a peculiar arrangement of the imaginative impressions in the style of associations, which may be symbolical, realistic or purely intellectual. The meaning of the film sometimes lies in its form, and sometimes behind the film. It is akin today to dreaming, except that the consciousness is not there. The spiritual mechanism of sleep is indicative of the conflict between the two varieties of the soul which results in the release of the heavenly soul when human body is at sleep.

When a child is born, he sleeps most of the time. This duration of sleep goes on diminishing as the child grows. It again increases with the onset of adolescence till the age of youth. It decreases again with the growth of spiritual leanings of man. People who are given to prayers and remember God incessantly, are enabled to do away with their sleep considerably, the reason being that the heavenly soul is being supplied with its nourishment within the human body in the working state. Hence it needs to go out very little. But the moment man forgets his obligation to the Creator, the duration of sleep increases again as the heavenly soul has to keep away for longer periods to obtain nourishment. Therefore it needs to go out for longer periods.

Now, what happens to the soul when it is released from the body during sleep? It flies to its abode in the Mala-i-ala (ملائة اعلى). The journey it adopts is via the Alam-e-Mithal (عالم مثال), the highest plane of which is Hazirat-ul-Quds (حضرة القدس), the Sanctus Permagnum. We must here revert back to Greek thought again; for, we have found that mysticism does not hold a central position in the religion of Islam. The early Sufism had gathered round itself ideas from foreign sources to explain certain implications pertaining to the spiritual world. Such spiritual concepts already existed from ancient times and the early mystics had devoted a great deal of attention to these problems, which the Muslim scholars found ready made for their use and adopted suitable views to

explain alike situations which had been taken note of in the Holy Quran. One of these problems was the question of Alam-i-Mithal (عالم مثال). We read in the Laws of Plato (30-1) that he speaks of a 'World of Forms'. This is identical with the Alam-i-Mithal of the Sufis. For Plato, it is like a basic pattern or a model of the physical world. Similarly, Hazirat-ul-Quds (حظيرة القدس) is also identical with the Sanctus Permagnum. The material world is controlled by the divine powers located here and all future happenings of this material world are rehearsed in this place of holy megnanimity, prior to their enactment in this material world. It is like the blue print of a master plan! This Sanctus Permagnum has been confused with the Unconscious of Freud. But this is only a reflection of the Alam-e-Mithal (عالم مثال), or the world of similitude. Happenings are thus not predetermined as Freud would have us believe like his unconscious trauma. On the contrary happenings can be controlled through inspiration and premonition, thus determining the path of their action.

In this ascent of the soul, the struggle which it experiences is both painful and pleasureable. It is pleasureable because, it is rising to approach its source to derive its nourishment; and it is painful, because it is experiencing a separation while moving away from its counterpart. The soul after obtaining this nourishment returns back again. In this, to and fro journey, it sees things that are yet to happen in this material world. This happens in the form of true dreams (روبائے صالح). The impressions are sometimes remembered and sometimes forgotton, but occasionally they can be recalled with perfect ease, specially at the time of the actual occurrence of the episode when the person feels that he has experienced this scene sometimes during his sleep. Such dreams do not need any interpretation. They happen exactly as they are seen in the dream, true to the minutest details. Such dreams are not symbolical. It is only the people who are truthful and given to prayers that have such experiences; others either do not have them, or forget when they have them.

There are other people who without going to sleep can see

the future happenings by projecting their soul into the Sanctus Permagnum during their wakening state, but this requires a considerable elevation of the being of man when the negative emotions have been thoroughly controlled. As the centre of emotion is purified, it is enabled to reflect the happenings of the Sanctus Permagnum. This reflection on the soul is called 'Kashf' (كشف). It is a faculty, whose acquisition depends on controlling negative emotions through carrying out religious injunctions faithfully. We may acquire the faculty of Premonition (استفتاء); for which religious discipline is not necessary. Premonitions are a natural phenomena with some people, and entail the prehension in some form of the coming event. This is usually a symbolic process. The essentials of this faculty are centralisation of attention and contemplation. This faculty of premonition can combine with unbelief. It is only a psychological state which man can acquire under stress of special conditions for a certain period. Unfortunately, modern psychology observes an attitude of silence when dealing with this subject.

Freudian Interpretation and Transmigration

Freud's interpretation of dreams is mostly symbolical. He has conveniently skipped over the question of true dreams. We are not aware of the reasons of his antipathy towards this most vital aspect of human psychology. His teachings seem to give us no clue to this side of the unconscious in so far as we have been able to trace. However, Freud seems to have conceded the idea of telepathy to the human nature towards the end of his life. In one place he says, "Telepathy throws no new light on the nature of the dreams nor does the dream bear witness for the reality of telepathy. Telepathic phenomena are also by no manner or means confined to dreams. They also manifest themselves during awakening life".¹⁶ As for as the interpretation of the true dreams is concerned he

16. Two Short Accounts of Psycho-analysis by Sigmund Freud (Five Lectures of Psycho-analysis) C, Nicolls & Co., London 1962.

never seems to have accepted any truth in them. His entire system depends on a symbolic interpretation which completely rules out the existence of any real phenomena. In his Fifth lecture on Psychoanalysis he says in one place, "I confess that I feel no necessity for making any mystical assumptions in order to fill the gaps in our present knowledge and accordingly I have never been able to find the prophetic nature of dreams¹⁷". It is regrettable that he has been unable to amplify a most important subject, which in the history of philosophy and mysticism has vitally affected the religious belief of a large proportion of humanity. In Hindu philosophy we notice, that it has played an important part, and it was this aspect of the unconscious-mind which instigated them to propound the theory of Transmigration of Soul, as we shall presently explain.

The concept of transmigration is nothing but the forgotten effects of true dreams in which a person dreams of things to come, but forgets them as having dreamt them, when they actually come to pass. This leads the person to think that he has experienced them in some past life when he must have lived as some other being. It happens with us even now, and if we care to ponder over a few of our experiences, we will come to realise that in most cases when we feel we have experienced such episodes in the past, we have actually been dreaming them, and when they come to pass, it is nothing but true dreams revealing themselves in time. It happens exactly in the minutest details as we see them in our dreams. The transmigration of soul has no logical foundation, and this concept cannot be justified biologically either. Animal life is not static ; it is multiplying. Statistics show that there are far greater number of births than there are deaths in the animal world. How this transmigrational multiplication takes place is totally incomprehensible. There seems also no reason why the soul of men should enter animals who are beings of a lower strata, after man had been given the envious position of

17. Ibid

a Khalifah. Evolution is not a reversible process. Renewal of forms takes man on and on to perfection.

Coming back to the animal soul then, we see that it is also capable of good actions! "The moral and spiritual evolution of man is only at its beginning if man is victorious in the struggle against bestiality and against the evil deformation of his mind and ambitions he acquires human dignity . . The source of evil is in the very substance of man".¹⁸

It is for this reason that man is a superior creation. In spite of the opportunities that man has in turning himself into an animal, he is capable of elevating himself to a higher plane which quality even the angels are deprived of; and if, per chance, he is over-powered by the animal soul :

He is like the quadruped.¹⁹

It is on account of this conflict that man encounters dissociation of consciousness or as modern psychology teaches, has a split personality. In the language of modern psychology, the animal soul in man may be likened to the unconscious of Freud which he calls primitive, and the heavenly soul, as the conscious mind, which he labels as the civilised mind. Consider now the following verses of the Holy Quran :

Some people say that O God give us recompense in this world ; for such people there is no place in the hereafter. And some amongst them say O God give us recompense both here and in the hereafter and save us from the punishment of hell.²⁰

The Holy Quran says again :

Some amongst you desire this world and some the world hereafter.²¹

To this God Almighty replies thus :

18. Man in Revolt by Emil Brunner.

19. اولئك كالانعام بل هم اضلّ

20. فمن الناس من يقول ربنا اتنا في الدنيا حسنة و ماله في الآخرة حسنة وقتنا عذاب النار

21. منكم من يريد الدنيا و منكم يريد الآخرة

He who desires this world, We give him as much as We want, then We propose hell for him. He will enter disgraced into it. And he who desires the hereafter and tries for it, provided he is truthful in his dealings; thus it is such people whose efforts are praiseworthy. (17 : 19)²²

This double-mindedness or, split personality defeats the purpose of truthfulness which God Almighty has called the attribute of a Momin in the above verse. And then, after this, God Almighty proceeds to lay bare the base attractions of this life to make man realise his real purpose of creation, i.e., to inculcate in man the urge to strive for cultivation of his heavenly soul in order to obtain recompense here and in the hereafter. Says the Holy Quran again :

And what is the life of this world, but play and amusement. Real life is in the hereafter. If they knew this (they would have behaved. (29 : 64)²³

A distinction must now be made between the life of this world and the life in the hereafter. The life in this world depends only upon the Actions one performs in this world, whereas, the life in the hereafter depends both upon the way of life he has led (Din) and the faith he has put into his Actions. Further it must also be remembered that it is the life of this world which is a play and amusement; the life in the hereafter is not play and amusement, according to the teachings of the Holy Quran, which says :

Discard those that have made their Din as play and amusement, and the life in this world has deceived them. (6 : 70)²⁴

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22. ثم جعلنا جهنم يصلها مذموماً مدحوراً * و من اراد الاخرة و سعى لها سعيها و هو مؤمن فاولئك كان سعيهم مشكوراً .
 23. وما هذا الحيوة الدنيا الا لهو و لعب * و ان الدار الاخرة لهى الحيوان لو كان يعملون *
 24. و ذر الدين اتخذوا دينهم لعباً و لهواً و غرتهم الحيوة الدنيا *

The base life of this world has to be discarded as it cannot lead to a reward in the hereafter. It is only Din (the way of life) and the Faith (Iman) which can lead to a real reward in the hereafter. It must be clearly understood here that Din is not religion. It is a way of life, which represents the whole man, with all the instincts and urges ; whereas religion is an ideology and represents only a part of the man, or only one instinct or urge in him. And an Ideology is a philosophy which comes into being to justify its particular interest in a typical situation. Islam therefore, is a Din, and not a religion or an ideology. It represents the whole man. In other words, 'it is not a departmental affair'. The animal soul is inclined towards this world (play and amusement), the heavenly soul is inclined towards the reward in the hereafter (Din). There is a beautiful Hadith in tune with this Quranic verse which would be worthwhile quoting here. Says the Prophet of Islam (O.W.B.P.)

Those of you whose main worry is the worry of the hereafter, God Almighty will keep them safe from the worries of this world. (Hadith)²⁵

One must therefore fight the worries of this world (Duniya) with Din, to become entitled to the wholesome life in the hereafter. Now beautifully has the whole purpose of human life been explained in the above meaningful saying of the Holy Prophet !

Science and Religion

Having discussed the Quranic and the philosophical views of the problem, let us now glance at the results of modern scientific investigations regarding this question, and see what the Scientists have to say.

"Man is composed of soft alterable matter susceptible to disintegration in a few hours. However, he lasts longer as if made of steel. Not only does he last, but he ceaselessly over-

25. من جعل الهموم واحداً وهي الآخرة كفا الله دنيا (حديث)

comes the defects and the dangers of the outside world".²⁶ This makes us think a while about human durability. What strength of force does the soul possess that gives him perpetual nourishment so that he is able to last for so many decades. The duration of existence differs from man to man. It may differ even within the same individual ; not only this, it may differ in him at different periods of his life, depending upon the ups and downs of his physical health. The constitution of man possesses a physiological time in contrast to the physical time without, on which the whole frame-work is atuned. Physical time leaves the marks of events in the life of man upon his physiological tissues, according to the actions he has performed. "We keep within ourselves the organic, humoral and physiological marks of events of our life. We may completely recover from disease or from a wrong deed. But we bear for ever the scars of those events".²⁷ This is a modern interpretation of the following Quranic verses :

And We have made every man's action cling to his neck and We will bring forth to him a book which he will find wide open. (17 : 13)²⁸

"As each event is recorded within the body, our organic or humoral personality becomes more and more specific during the process of aging. It is enriched by all the happenings of the inner world".²⁹

It will be appreciated that the modern world of science has considerably advanced to embrace the teachings of Islam. Until recently, the world did not understand the implications of this verse. Science by a process of research has made this verse of 'doubtful meaning' into a verse with a well established significance. This is the function of science in relation to the divine revelations, that it helps clarification of their meaning.

26. Man The Unknown. By Alexis Carrel. Hamesh Hamilton London 1954.

27. Ibid.

28. وكل انسان الزمنه طئره في عنقه و نخرج له يوم القيامه كتاباً يلقاه منشوراً .

29. Man The Unknown. By Alexis Carrel. Hamesh Hamilton, London 1954.

But since science is not something fixed and complete, it goes on developing and completing itself by self-correcting procedures, it may mean that the verses of the Holy Quran have to wait for an appropriate stage of the science. Had it been so, much of their worth would have been lost. But this is not the case. Many verses of the Quran are Mohkmat, well established in their meanings without waiting for the progress of human knowledge. But, besides these are Mutashabehat verses, which go on gradually establishing themselves to the satisfaction of human reason by a process of scientific development newer expansion of the frontier of knowledge, and unprecedented discoveries about the functioning of the Universe. In other words, verses which sometime ago were not clear have become clarified by such intellectual procedure. A time will come when all the verses of the Holy Quran will become firmly established (Mohkamat). There will then remain no suspence regarding the true meaning of any single verse, whose meanings will not have become clear. Innumerable verses of the Holy Quran have become gradually established as hard fact of history, and quite a few of the verses are in the process of being established, the truth of which will become quite clear in the next few years, when scientific investigations have been finalised. To cite a few examples :

1. Only recently it was believed, that the sun did not move ; it was thought to be stationery. The Quran proclaimed from the day its relevant verses were revealed, that all the heavenly bodies are revolving in their orbits. The following Quranic verse is now firmly established.

“Neither is it for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. And all float on in an orbit”. (36 : 40)³⁰

30. لا الشمس ينبغي لها أن تدرک القمر ولا الیل سابق النهار * وکل فی فلک

2. The verse regarding the Pharoah of Moses was not clear to some, in which it was said that his body will be preserved for the future generations to see, and recall the episode. He had believed in God Almighty and sought His help while drowning.

“When drowning overtook him, he said ; I believe that there is no God but He in whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who submit.

What ! Now ! And indeed before (this) thou didst disobey and thou wast of the mischief-makers !

But this day We shall save thee in the body that thou mayest be a sign to those after thee. And surely most of the people are heedless of Our signs.” (10 : 90, 91, 92)³¹

The Mummy of Rameses II has been discovered, and it is now established that he was the Pharoah who ruled Egypt at the time of Moses, and in whose house Moses had grown up to liberate the Israelities. This Quranic verse whose meaning had remained clouded has become established now as a fact of history.

3. The location of the wall of Gog and Magog was not known till its discovery in Caucasia, where its remains have been found to extend in bits from Poti on the Black Sea, to Baku on the Caspian. Even the very structure as described in the Holy Quran has been verified.³²

31. *حقى اذا ادركه الغرق قال امنتُ انه لا اله الا الذى آمنت به بنو اسرائيل وانا من المسلمين آلئن وقد عصيت قبل و كنت من المفسدين ○ فاليوم ننجيك ببدينك لتكون لمن خلفك آية * وان كثيراً من الناس من ايتنا لغفلون ○*

32. Tarjamah-ul-Qur'an By Moulana Abu Al Kalam Azad, Vol. II (Tafsir Surah Kahf).

Now, to cite another verse of the Holy Quran the truth of which is likely to be established in the very near future. This is pointing to the existence of life in different heavenly bodies, besides this planet earth of ours. The Quran clearly mentions that God Almighty has spread living beings in the heavenly bodies in addition to this earth. Says the Holy Quran :

And among His signs is the creation of the heavenly bodies and the earth, And the living creations (DABAH), that He has scattered through them all and He has power to gather them together when He will. (42 : 29)³³

These living creatures include quadrupeds, Rapitiles and the Mammels. The Holy Quran says in amplification of the above verse :

And God has created every living being (DABAH) from water. Of them there are some that creep on their bellies (Raptile) ; some that walk on the two legs (Mammels and birds) ; And some that walk on four (Quadrupeds).

(24 : 45)³⁴

Science today is working hard to conquer the Cosmos and discover life in other planets. They have not come to any conclusive proof regarding the existence of water in those heavenly bodies which is essential for the creation and sustenance of life. But the Holy Quran also says that all life is created from water. Therefore, animal life being present in other heavenly bodies, water of necessity must exist there ; for, life cannot exist without it. It will not be long when these

33. ومن آياته خلق السموات والارض وما بث فيها من دابة و هو على جمعهم اذا يشاء قدير ○

34. والله خلق كل دابة من ماء فمنهم من يمشى على بطنه و منهم من يمشى على رجلين و منهم من يمشى على اربع

verses of the Holy Quran will also become established.³⁵

This material world is a transitory phase in the life of man. The real life is yet to come. Man must prepare himself to avail of the promises made to him by God Almighty. He must, therefore, synchronise his actions accordingly, as laid down by the Divine Commandant, in order to achieve his real end, and purpose in life. Says the Holy Quran :

And surely the hereafter is much better.³⁶

All that man has now to do is to pray to God Almighty to brighten his prospects and guide him on to the straight path, as Allah says :

I listen to the prayers of him who calls unto Me.

(2 : 186)³⁷

We human beings have a meagre knowledge of the things in the hereafter.

We have knowledge only of the things pertaining to the things of this world.³⁸

Therefore, we must bow our heads in obedience to the dictates of Allah, and do as we have been told. The knowledge which has been given to us pertains to this world and is mostly scientific knowledge. We possess no means of acquiring spiritual knowledge or to agree or disagree, with what God says about it in His Holy Writ, unless it be His Will. We must, therefore, refrain from thinking about things which our mind cannot comprehend or understand :

And there are some who dispute about Allah without any knowledge.³⁹

35. Essays on Islam. By the Author. Din Muhammadi Press Karachi 1960.

36. و دارالآخرة خير

37. اجيب دعوة الداع اذ دعان

38. انتم اعلم بماور دنياكم (حديث)

39. و من الناس من يجادل في الله بغير علم

Therefore, we ought to do the right and abstain from thinking things the knowledge of which has not been imparted to us. It was for this reason that the last of the Prophets was sent down to us to warn us to behave ourselves for the coming hereafter. The purpose of man's creation is therefore to be obedient to the Command of God Almighty.

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CHAPTER V

The Superiority of Man

LET us now look into the vegetable world around us. What do we see? All the vegetation is immobile. It cannot move to find food for itself, but God Almighty has provided them with deep roots and standing where they are, they obtain nourishment as best as they can. They derive fresh air from the atmosphere which is very essential for them. They are devoid of inspiration and intuition which faculty is reserved for those who struggle for existence. On the other hand, if we ponder over the animal world, we will find that God Almighty has provided them with limbs for locomotion, and inspired them with different types of knowledge, so that they may move about and find their food. This attribute of inspiration is the faculty of the animal world alone, but there are some necessities of life in which each animal is not inspired equally. Identical is the case of man who differs in his degree of inspiration. This deficiency is compensated by the few individuals which God Almighty selects and inspires to convey His message for the guidance of humanity. Invariably, this message is self-contained for man's spiritual guidance, in so far as it concerns the rules and regulations of this life. Such inspirations can be considered in two ways viz. Revelation and Invention. These two faculties do not lie within the domain of every individual, but are conferred on selected people who are required to preach and invent. The rest of us benefit by the preaching and inventions of the selected individuals. Therefore, for the daily requirements, man is depending on the revelation and invention of other people whom God Almighty chooses to inspire according to the needs of times. The process of revelation having been finalised has come to a stop with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (O. W. B. P.), but the process of invention continues

for the worldly progress and needs of man. This is the privilege of man alone. It is for this reason that man is one of the perfected beings of His Creation. In the form in which man exists today, he could not have been more appropriately created for carrying out the task that lies ahead of him, but we venture to say, that he is not the master-piece of God Almighty. If we were to presume that he was the most perfect of all His creation, we would be limiting the creative power of God which would be tantamount to saying, that He is incapable of further superior creations. Man is not God Almighty's final act of perfection. There are even now better creations of which we have no knowledge, or which He may create in the future. The Omnipotence of God Almighty is inexhaustible. The Holy Quran also in one place clearly points to this fact, from which it can be understood that there are better creations in this world of ours which are better than man :

And We have made him superior to a lot of our creation. (17 : 70)¹

Here God Almighty does not say that He has made man superior to all His creation, but only 'superior to a lot' of them.

In the vegetable world, we find that the head of the trees and the plants are their roots, which serve to absorb nourishment for them from the earth. They are fixed firmly into the ground. This is also their main defence upon which their life depends. If you cut off a branch or a shoot, it will grow again, but if you strike at his head, he is gone ! So long as the roots can be kept intact, there is growth and life in the plant ; but the head is firmly and permanently bent down-wards. In the case of animals the head is fixed to the front. The animals have to bend low, in order to take in their food. And similar is the case with the birds. This bowing of the head is in thankfulness to God Almighty. Look now into the structure of man ; the position of head is most dignified. It is up

1. ○ وفضلنهم على كثير ممن خلقنا تفضيلاً

right, and fixed between his two shoulders, supported upon a firmly fixed neck, which looks upwards and straight. It does not have to bend down to receive its food. God Almighty has provided it with two strong arms terminating in two hands which serve to bring food upto the mouth which is in the head, thus preventing the head from bending down. It is only in thanks giving and prayers that the head of man bends down, and this is to God Almighty alone, and to no one else. Unfortunately, we see quite the reverse today in this world of advancing civilization. What do we witness? Man bowing before man to achieve his ends! He does not bow before God Almighty for the fulfilment of his desires, to whom the head was meant to bow. Simultaneously, what do we see in the animal world? Dogs fighting each other do not lower their heads, but keep it upright and straight! On the contrary man bows before man in spite of being proud of his knowledge and a superior status. There are signs for those who have eyes to see! God Almighty, when creating man, had no doubt made his position in the scheme of nature unique and great. Man must understand this secret and learn for himself why he was granted that enviable position. There is a clear purpose discernable in his anatomical disposition.

The Woman

Let us now pay our compliments, to man's complimentary creation—the woman. The anatomical disposition of a woman is slightly different. It is a fact, that without the woman the picture of creation would have remained incomplete. It is only by virtue of her that the species is propagated. She is not only the propagating agent; she is also a boon companion for the male and is a source of comfort to him. The two are sprung from the same life germ, and have the same primary purpose. Their pro-creative functions however, differ. It is here that the main difference lies, and it is for this difference that man was placed in command of the woman and slightly superior to her, in certain matters of life. The latest scientific investigations collaborate our view. Says Alexis Carrel, "Testes

and Ovaries possess functions of overwhelming importance..... the shorter life of the Ovaries gives the aging woman great inferiority to man, whose testes remain active until extreme old age".² The creative functions of the two sexes depends upon their respective organs of reproduction viz. Ovaries and the Testes. In other words the creative functions of the brain in a woman are taken over by the uterus, which in the man depending on the testicular secretion, effects the brain. This essentially vital secretion is lacking in the woman. Responsibilities of the man are therefore, greater than those of the woman. The woman today is struggling for financial, social and physical parity with man. This is disturbing the natural allocation of functional distribution of creation. Man is intoxicated with the achievement of the industrial age. Instead of emancipating the woman he has industrialised her, thus upsetting the normal balance of human utility and activity ; but in days to come he will repent and retrace the steps he has taken. It is for this reason that man was placed in command of the woman ; Says the Holy Quran :

The men are placed in command of the woman.

(4 : 34)³

Death

We now come close to the end of our story—Death : which is the end of all human life. It is the greatest invention of God Almighty. There is no escape from it. All living beings must have a taste of it. With death, man is transforming into another being. We have already referred to this in the first series of our artical and discussed it under the subject of Renewal of Forms. To substantiate our views further, we quote from the Holy Quran, which says :

We have decreed death to be your common lot
And We are not to be frustrated, from changing

2. Man The Unknown. By Alexis Carrel. Hamesh Hamilton, London 1954.

3. الرّجال قوامون على النساء

your forms, and creating you (again) In (Forms)
that ye know not. (56 : 60, 61)⁴

It is the end of the physical, and the start of a spiritual evolution. The physical evolution of man has attained its goal in death. The criterion of adaptation is usefulness, the criterion of evolution is liberty. Death releases the ego and liberates it once more, but this liberty was also snatched from man in the initial stage of his development, by forbidding him to commit 'the act,' knowing fully well that he would act otherwise. The element of adaptability was thus infused with the essence of perpetual struggle which made difficult the attainment of goals. Man thought his life was determined by forces beyond his control. But he forgot that he had been given the liberty of choice to act. He had the initial control of the situation, but the final control was outside his grip. It was withheld to enable him to achieve higher stages of physical and mental evolution. "By giving man liberty and conscience God abdicated a part of His Omnipotence in favour of His creatures, and this represents the spark of God in man (God is within you)".

We have discussed the Islamic aspect of this question of the spark of light in the previous instalments and it should detain us no more. But to attain the goal man must struggle ; he must fight to progress ; he must fight to attain perfection, and fight no one else but himself ; and to fight himself, he must know himself. This knowledge as we have already explained in the foregoing articles can only be acquired by first acquiring the knowledge of the existence of God Almighty. Having acquired this knowledge all problems for man are simplified.

If man did not have the liberty and control over his actions he could not be held responsible for them, and the question of reward and punishment in the life hereafter would

نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوتِينَ ○ عَلَىٰ أَنْ نَبْدَلَ أَمْثَلَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ
فِي مَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

then become meaningless. But this is not so. Man must know his destiny. It is not the trauma upon the unconscious in early childhood as Freud would have us believe which affects the later part of the individual's life. Life is not determined in this manner, nor in the manner of predetermination. It is a continuous flow of events and experiences. Trauma in the unconscious does not determine trait and character of personality ; "meanings are not determined by situations, but we determine ourselves by the meanings we give to situations".

Some schools of thought have confused the issue of destiny, determinism, and free will, with the problem of good and evil. But, with the increase of knowledge and new discoveries more light is being thrown upon this problem, and it is becoming increasingly clear, that man is the maker of his destiny. Whatever influences are seen from the unseen they are working towards the good of man and for his welfare ; says the Holy Quran :

Whatever good (O man) happens to thee is from Allah. But whatever evil befall thee is from your own self. (4 : 79)⁵

The views of Dr. Freud as mentioned briefly above are almost identical with the deterministic views of the Jabriyah which made man a tool in the hands of Nature. But with recent discovery of Mass Energy Relationship, matter and energy have become interconvertible entities. This amounts to saying that these are two aspects of one and the same Reality. It has also been proved that the behaviour of the atom is not determined (Heisenbergs 1927) : it shows possibility of independent action and alternative modes of behaviour and reaction. Therefore, it has liberty of action and hence, it is impossible to determine its 'Present' ; its future of necessity cannot be determined. Man must accept this as his destiny and go on with the struggle of life ; for, this is his destiny. He should accept nothing unpleasant which cannot be explained

5. ما اصابك من حسنة فمن الله و ما اصابك من سيئة فمن نفسك

in good faith, coming from the unseen and await its disclosure in his favour in the course of time. Shah Waliullah has beautifully summed up this problem of determinism and free will in the following words: "God Almighty has given you control over your actions ; but He has given you no control over this control" !⁶

I have endeavoured to lay down in these pages a few aspects of the vital questions which need further investigation. The problems are indeed not new. They have been discussed before. But a new line of thought has been suggested to open new channels for further research and investigation.

From ancient times, the sum total of human thought has remained constant. The dimensions have however, varied from time to time. When paper was not invented, and the Printing Press had not come into existence, human thought was either preserved in memory or jotted down on skeletal blades, sun baked bricks or leaves of trees. It is evident that knowledge then was not very extensive in length or breadth. It had only one dimension, then, and that was 'Depth'. We therefore, come to the conclusion that the only one real dimension of knowledge is its 'Depth'. Length and breadth in knowledge grew with the invention of paper, and the printing press. From the early days of man's evolution, man is endowed with Conceptual Knowledge, which makes him free from the immediate environment and enabling him to ponder on past, prospective and possible situations. This has, therefore immensely facilitated his progress. The material needs of man were small. But his

6. Shah Wali Ullah (1114-1176 A. H.) He was an eminent mystic divine and an erudite scholar. He was the Mujjaddid—the Renovator of his century. He was the eldest son of Shah Abdur Rahim, and the grandson of Shah Wajihuddin. He translated the Qur'an into the Persian language, and is the author of innumerable other books in Persian and Arabic on Hadith, theology and Mystecism. His greatest exponent in modern times has been the Late Maulana Obeid Ullah Sindhi with whom the author was associated for a while, as his pupil, and studied the Sata'at of Shah Wali Ullah from him.

7. للعباد اختيار لافعالهم نعم، لا اختيار لهم في ذلك الا اختيار
(حجة الله البالغة)

spiritual needs from the very first day he was born, were exactly the same as they are today ; e.g. (1) What is this Life and Existence ? (2) What am 'I' ? (3) What is this heaven, the earth and the stars ? (4) Who created this Cosmos ? (5) What happens to me when I am dead ? etc. etc. etc.

These questions pertain to the domain of spirit and not matter ; hence they need deep thought. This depth of thinking was the one real dimension of knowledge, which was easily kept in memory, or put into writing which was brief. With the growth of Exoteric Knowledge, the length and breadth showed great extensions. Humanity therefore, devoted all its attention and mental effort towards a material growth. Emotions replaced Reason. This was responsible for the great strides which were made to prolong the length and breadth of human knowledge. The 'Depth' however, disappeared ! With the depth becoming volatile, real knowledge and all thinking evaporated !!

This is one of the important intellectual aspects of the Muslim world of today. It has lost the element of depth and takes refuge in emotionalism. The Muslim world is today holding on to mere emotions which are moulding its modes of thinking. In them the power of resolution and decision are almost non-existent. Even our great thinker Iqbal was somewhat inclined in favour of an emotional attitude towards life, and preferred it to Reason. He has in some places questioned the superiority of 'Aql' i.e. Reason. We cannot afford this today in our present state of moral and intellectual degradation. Unfortunate, as it were we have still not realised the damage it has done, and is doing to our creative thinking. Iqbal is a great creative thinker, but he seems to have fallen prey to medieval emotionalism, for which there is no room in the present day advanced thought. However Iqbal was primarily rationalist.

The Muslims in their early days had acquired from the Greeks an emotional attitude towards life. They passed this on to the West. They have taken it back again from them without recognizing the form in which it has come back to

them. Each time the Emotionalism of the Greek philosophers was adopted, either by the Muslims or the West, the nations degenerated, and each time there was a happy marriage between Emotion and Reason the nations progressed. This is a great truth which has not yet been fully appreciated.

The subject of philosophy is inherently aristocratic and intellectually noble, but my one complaint against it is this: that it invariably tends to give way to emotional forms of thinking. It is rather a poor excuse to say, "Since man chooses his existence and its forms, he is held responsible for his choice". I would say that because man has been given a certain amount of will to choose his actions, he is held responsible for them. Man does not choose his existence. He is brought into existence without any choice of his own. He just comes into being. He keeps justifying his being before himself, and others and in this effort of justification he is stumbling upon emotions and loses control. He does not like to see Reason; for he sees no Reason in his being brought into existence! Man is not totally free to exist; hence he is not fully determined. He is free to a certain extent to determine his actions. This is because man must make an effort to raise his level of being to enable him to project himself into the future possibilities for higher experience, which he must have in order to complete his cycle of evolution. It is only in this way that he can feel secure. Pure freedom and total determinism would make his position very insecure.

Look at man's conquest of Science? Man feels today that he has complete control over his scientific investigations. But he is unaware that each discovery of his is a potential danger to the existence of man. There are great possibilities of his being wiped off from the surface of this planet by these very discoveries! Man's scientific achievements and discoveries are therefore the greatest danger which secure for him and his progeny an insecure position. His safety lies in surrendering to the will of the Almighty. He then becomes completely secure. In fact, the entire galaxy of nations whether Muslims,

Christians, Communists, Hindus or Budhists, must completely surrender to the Will of Allah, The Almighty, before they can feel secure, in the same manner as the Quran demands of them, and not in any other manner which they might invent of themselves. There is no departure from this basic truth. A Muslim has himself first to revive his lost true belief, which has become totally comouffaged and adulterated due to his laxity and innovatory juggling. A Muslim has no Faith today. He must convert himself to the true Religion of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (O. W. B. P.) which was revealed upon him. There is no other way out ; there is no other security and there is no other way to achieve Salvation, in the Hereafter. Pure emotionalism will not lead him anywhere. He must also think and think very hard, using his Reason to the fullest extent. A happy marriage between the two as we have said above will lead him to his goal.

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PART II

Saints and Sanity

I

IN THE early days of our history our saints did not exhibit miraculous powers, nor had any inclination towards the supernatural. They were straightforward, honest men leading a life of austerity. They were not ascetic but devoted to the aesthetic values of life. The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (O.W.B.P.) was still fresh in their minds and their actions reflected a utilitarian outlook.

But as the years rolled by the Islamic world came into contact with the Byzantine Empire. During the Middle ages, the spiritual teaching of the Europeans began to be projected on the life of the Muslim mystics. The Catholic Church in the Middle Ages gained power and the influence of the saints grew strong and irresistible. "Medieval Christians then believed that the saints had the power to cure or even inflict a disaster". We find this belief (prevalent amongst their followers) con-comitant with some of our later saints. "At times, the inflictions have the names of the saint : St. Guy, St. Virus, and St. With were eponymous with Chorea". We similarly learn of some of our saints also who possessed the powers of paralysing their opponents. "And there were saints who some times cured hysteria or similar emotional conditions". We have such saints amongst us even today who claim to cure illness by giving strange amulets prepared in the manner of medieval Christians.

"Not aware of the mental illnesses as such the Theologians of the early Christian era also ascribe Bizaraf reactions to Divine intervention. When Psychotics manifested religious delusions, the puzzling question that arose, was, were they

inspired by God or possessed by Satan?" The story of the Phrygian Montanus is well known, who announced with frenzied ecstasy, "I am the Lord God, who dwells in Man". This reminds one of the utterances of Al-Hallaj! After reading these things, one wonders whether the substance of Islamic Mysticism is a growth of its own, or an accretion of foreign influence. In the Quran and Ahadith such spiritual juggling is not evidenced. But in our history of the Sufis such things are rampant. And one wonders further, why does not one come across such experience today. Did they even exist? or are they merely stories concocted by the followers to magnify their respective saints?

We, living in the seventh decade of the 20th Century, are perhaps more rational and inquisitive about such experiences than our predecessors. We are living in a scientific and rational age. Where everything has to be weighed in the scales of scientific knowledge. This did not happen before in the days of Prose and Poetry. Those were the days of romantic imagination. These are the days when facts have to be observed, calculated and demonstrated. If the modern man is unable to do this, it is because he has locked himself up consciously in a psychological cell, from where he is struggling hard to come out through the unconscious window. Man was (is) a three dimensional Biped being; but he has somehow found himself on the horizontal plane of materialism, where he is occupied with making money and having a good time. He has no time for such serious thinking. In Pakistan, we have no books in Urdu on such subjects and the English books have gone beyond one's financial reach. Perhaps people are frightened to write and expose their saints and their own hollowness of spiritual understanding. Time has come to liberate our intellect by some self observation and heart searching. This is the only way open to our future progress. Otherwise we will remain helplessly struggling to free ourselves from the morass of our past history.

II

There is no place for any 'ism' in Islam, no matter whether it be socialism, imperialism, mysticism or sufism. Islam is the natural religion of man. There are no supernatural or spiritual preferences. It is a way of life according to the code prescribed in the Holy Quran.

Man knows nothing about the spirit or the soul, except for the meagre knowledge given to him. Nor does man have any knowledge of the unseen, after the sealing of prophethood. All such claims are pretentious and preposterous. Man was created to reduce the misery of his fellow beings by giving them material help. God is sufficient for their spiritual solace. Islam is a true religion based on Truth: and this Truth was revealed to all previous religions who tampered with it and went astray. The signs of Gnosis, Sufism and Monasticism are the signs of decadence which crept into all religions including Islam—even Muslims have gone astray in their belief and are taking shelter behind false stories in their history or concocted sayings attributed to the Holy Prophet (OWBP). They have already forgotten the teachings of the Holy Quran, and are trying to justify their mystical leanings by the life of a few holy men who never even professed or practised what their followers now tell us. Their autobiographies do not refer to any such occurrences. And so is the life of the first four Khalifas.

Rightly will the Holy Prophet (OWBP) complain to the Almighty on the day of judgement, "My Lord, alas! my people had forsaken this Quran." (25 : 30). They have already forgotten the Quran and that is why they talk of things other than the Quran! And what is that they are after? The Muslims must take stock of the situation which indeed is a very serious one.

In Islam all knowledge is external to man, and nothing springs from within except in the case of His Messengers. It is for this reason that in the Holy Quran, every now and then, God Almighty directs the attention of man to the changes in

day and night, the sun and the moon, the stars and the clouds the rain and vegetation etc. It is only in one place. He has, asked man to look within himself. But when the wind of Gnosis and Mysticism blows, it sweeps the exterior from the sight of man, and diverts his attention inwards. Here he finds nothing but miracles and spiritual juggling. It is a common experience that when man develops the science of astrology to learn about the past, present and the future of man, he has first to learn astronomy. All knowledge therefore is external to the man. Says the Holy Quran :

“Seest thou not that Allah sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth fruits there with of various hues, and in the mountains are streaks (of minerals) white and red of various hues and others intensely black And of men, beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. Those of his servants only who are possessed of such knowledge fear Allah ;” (35 : 27, 28).

Miraculous stories of saints are the concoctions of the credulous. We do not find anything of the kind in any autobiography of any one of them. But the biographies written by the disciples are resplendent with such anecdotes.

It is the dignity of man to be truthful. Unfortunately the first casualty in the cult of mysticism is the truth itself. This is the age of science and rationalism. We must learn to ponder and study the Quran and give up the worship of graves and saints. It is modern form of anthropomorphism. It is the most heinous act in the sight of God. Says Iqbal :

“The life history of nations shows that when the tide of life in a people begins to ebb, decadence itself becomes a source of inspiration, inspiring their poets, philosophers, saints, statesmen and turning them into a class of apostles whose sole ministry is to glorify, by the force of a seductive art of logic, all that is ignoble and ugly in the life history of their people. These apostles unconsciously clothe despair in the glittering garments of hope, undermine the traditional values of conduct and thus destroy the spiritual virility of those who happen to be their victims.

III

Sufism before being called so, was known as Zuhd, and the Sufia were called Zuhad (ascetics). Sufism developed as a political movement, precisely to bring about a compromising between the Sunni and the Shia sects. It is for this reason that we find Sufism revolving round a pivot (Qutb), a concept which was born out of Imam-i-Ghayb of the Shia creed. We, therefore, see the Shias playing a leading role in this branch of Islamic esotericism. All the subsequent Silsilahs (orders) which developed to attain spiritual experience, therefore, lead to Hazrat Ali. This reaction grew as a protest after the gruesome tragedy of Kerbala, which had created an unbridgeable gap between the Shias and the Sunnis (Hossein Nasr in Sufi Essays).

No matter whether you call Sufism as Islamic philosophy, metaphysics, mysticism or Islamic parapsychology, the fact remains that it retains its character of a mystery, and makes everything look mysterious. All the attention is diverted towards the soul and its projection, in spite of the fact, that we have a very meagre knowledge of it. Says the Holy Quran, "And they ask thee regarding the Soul, Say the Soul is Our business, and of its knowledge you have been given but little." (17 : 85). This is tantamount to saying that it is none of your business : This is a shut-up reply. Yet, we insist on an overall knowledge of the Soul, knowing fully well that we know nothing about it. Nor do we know anything about the Spirit (Nafs), except that what has been described in the Quran. And the Quran desires you to believe, that one of the signs of a Believer, is that he "believes in the Unseen." (1 : 1).

Priority of contemplation is inwards in Sufism, while the Quran gives preference to outward pondering. This obviously reverses the preferences and the purpose of creation ; for, to ponder the entitles of creation is to realise the attributes of

the Creator and after comprehending the creation as a whole the Divine Names are invoked in every posture and at any time. This does not require any permission or licence from any guide (Murshid) to repeat the formulas. Such practices which are rampant in the various Silsilahs and Tariqahs are not mentioned in the Quran or Hadith. The relevant methodology required to establish contact and identify oneself with the Supreme Being Allah, are described in the Quran, but in a much simpler way.

“To remain satisfied solely with the outward is to betray the very nature of man, whose profoundest reason for existence is precisely to journey from the outward to the inward, from the periphery of the circle of existence to the Transcendental Centre.” (Hossein Nasr. Sufi Essays). In our opinion this is the true way as recommended by the Holy Quran, and not what is being practised today, namely, to journey from the inside (Irfan) to the outward! This results in splitting of the self and multiple personalities.

COSMOS

The cosmos is a key to the inner problems. It is, therefore, wrong to say that he who masters the soul masters the cosmos. Man knows virtually nothing about the soul or the spirit. Whatever he has written is all conjectures and phantasies; the prevalent Sufism ignores this point.

However, “the more genuine schools of Sufism have no doubt, done good work in shaping and directing the evolution of religious experiences in Islam, but their latter-day representatives, owing to their ignorance of the modern mind, have become absolutely incapable of receiving any fresh inspiration from modern thought and experience.” (Iqbal).

Sufism has indeed contributed greatly towards arts and culture, but these are essentials which come later in the life history of nations, after they have first established themselves. It may have been true in the past but is a totally wrong concept today when the entire Muslim nation is struggling to come

out of a state of complete lethargy. The first essential today is to re-establish the Truth. To lay stress on art and culture today is therefore redundant. The sword and the spear come first and then follow the violin and the guitar ! (Iqbal). The main fault, therefore, with prevalent Sufism is, that it contemplates inwards knowing nothing about the inside and compels man to neglect the outer dimensions which is more important for the existence of man.

It is a strange anomaly that the Sufis are always talking of Divine Secrets, enwrapping them in veils, which none but themselves and their initiates are able to see through them, with the aid of spiritual exercises prescribed by them. The fact is, that the whole cosmos is phenomenal and exposed, and the Almighty keeps continually drawing their attention towards it. But alas ! ever-since man was created he kept weaving mysteries around himself. This was because, his soul remained a mystery to him. He could not unfathom the depth and dimensions of his own self. Labouring under the stress of an inferior complex he strived to continue probing into the Unseen. Thus Sufism (Mysticism) has been made more mysterious than ever, by putting on it a garb which is so dubious ! The Master (Shaykh) may die, but for the disciple he remains always alive. The Quranic figure of Khizr (Qutb) although an angel by all description of the Holy Quran, has been immortalised and persists in Sufi narratives as Rijal al-Ghayb.

In the materialist West today, both on the Continent and the States, there is an increasing feeling of the loss of spiritual solace. And in order to regain this spiritual contentment, which is actually the contentment of the heart, artificial methods are being introduced to acquire this additional state of consciousness. In several cases recourse has been sought in spiritual exercises of the Yoga and Vedanta. A very large number of the population has resorted to Marijuana and LSD ! These are supposed to create in them states of extra sensory perception and give them mental relief. Some orientalists

and scholars from the East have tried to present Islam to them in the garb of Islamic mysticism (Sufism), as if it was a veritable substitute for their ills. In Islam one cannot approach God in a state of intoxication. Says the Holy Quran, "O believers, draw not near to prayers when you are intoxicated" (4 : 45).

"One of the most significant trends in the American culture today, is what might be considered as anti-intellectual or anti-scientific trend, two of whose main highlights are the tremendously widespread use of psychodelic drugs such as Marijuana and LSD, and the tremendous growth of various oriental and mystical religions." (Consciousness and Reality, New York, 1972). Is Sufism then, a substitute for Marijuana and LSD? No. This is a very unrealistic approach. The best way to introduce contentment in the heart of man is the invocation of the names of the Almighty without restriction of time and posture. Says the Holy Quran, "Remember thy Lord in thy heart, humbly and fearfully, not loud of voice, at morn and eventide. Be not thou among the heedless. Surely, those who are with thy Lord wax not too proud to serve Him ; they chant His praise, and to him they bow ! (7 : 205).

THE CREATOR

Man must realise that he has a creator who is looking after his needs and desires and expects him to act according to His Commandments. Unless man makes a serious adjustment in his life, he has no chance of attaining that contentment, no matter what drugs or spiritual exercises he brings into use. Such artificial methods have been in use from time immemorial to bring about extra sensory perception. Drugs like cannabis indica and opium were used in the Sufi Zawiyahs, and perhaps are also in vogue today ! This all results from the pursuit of a false methodology to attain false states of consciousness. All drug addicts and mediators are escapists and mentally ill. Revelational dreams and flashes of illumination are inherent in every man. They are not specifically acquired by spiritual

exercises or by taking neurotic drugs. They do not give you the mental contentment which you seek. That contentment comes only by invoking the names of the Lord, sitting, standing, lying, walking, in the morning and at night. It has no prescribed methodology. "The beginning of such knowledge comes from normally inaccessible levels of human consciousness. In this sense the genesis of all sciences lies in notics, the master science of the knowledge of consciousness and the release of its potentialities." (Ibid).

IV

As the localisation of function of the Brain, and the subject of Para-psychology progress, the various states of mystical and spiritual experiences will be further unfolded. The working of the afferent and efferent circuits through the conscious and the unconscious mind disclosing the nature and form of extra sensory perceptions will become apparent. Cosmic Consciousness, flashes of illumination and other psychic phenomenon lie within the domain of man. Those spiritual experiences which we find in the biographies of Saints written by their devotees, are merely devotional poetical contrivances which in the words of Iqbal are, "figurative, vague and indefinite". "Religion in its more advanced forms, rises higher than poetry". And all poetry in the words of Plato is dramatics (Republic), and is inclined more towards Emotions (Ishq) rather than Reason (Aql) ! The Prophet of Islam (OWBP) was himself inclined towards a rational interpretation of religion. "The search for a rational foundation in Islam, may be regarded to have begun with the Prophet (OWBP) himself. His constant prayer was ; God ! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things" (Iqbal). And says the Holy Quran. "And He casts uncleanness on those who will not rationalise". (10 : 100)

To talk of religious experiences in Islam is a misnomer because Islam is not a religion but a Deen, something far higher than the normally conceived religion. Therefore, the concept of religious experience in Islam (in the western sense of the world) does not hold good. I will, therefore, confine myself to mystical or spiritual experiences only.

There are three ways of certainty described in the Holy Quran, namely, (1) Inference or, Ilm-ul-Yaqin (2) Observation or Ain-ul-Yaqin and (3) Experience or Haq-ul-Yaqin. The value of each is undisputed. The highest grade is that of experience, (Haq-ul-Yaqin). This pertains both to the physical

and spiritual experience which are within the reach of everyone. But when we come to the knowledge of such experience, we start wondering as to its form and nature! While discussing this problem I will omit the experiences of the Holy Prophets (OWBP), as their domain of experience is unique and cannot be contested. They are the recipient of Wahy (a special form of inspiration reserved for the Prophets.) Its nature has not been experienced by ordinary man. The word of God descended upon them in various ways.

VAGUE

It must be understood at the very outset, that a description of such experiences in the Sufi literature is very vague, and evaporates into generalised assertions. As soon as the Sufi group was born it became conscious of its spiritual limitations, as compared with the Holy Prophets (OWBP). The Quranic word Wali, which actually means a friend (whose Wasila, nearness, or Qurb, we are asked to seek) was given a highly significant meaning, so as to make it look as if he was an Intermediary (wasta), and possessed a higher spiritual status than a Prophet (Nabi). Thus Walayah (sainthood) was considered higher than Nabuwwah (Prophethood)! The actual fact is that where Nabuwwah begins the Walayah ends!!! In order to assume this superiority further, various terminologies were invented, borrowed from extraneous sources, to conform to their spiritual status which were vague and contradictory.

Spiritual and mystical experience as has been pointed out, is inclined to move from within outwards. It was therefore quite natural that it neglected the rational basis and become poetic. Says Iqbal again." The culture of Asia, and in fact, of the whole ancient world failed, because they approached Reality exclusively from within, and moved from within outwards. This procedure gave them theory without power, and on mere theory no durable civilisation can be based".

The concept of inward pondering started with the Biblical dictum, "know thyself and you will know thy God." This is

actually and older saying than the Bible, having found its way into ancient spiritualistic methodology. In Sufism it formed the basis of Irfan (Gnosis). The world of man thus became divided into two compartments, the Divine and the Human ! But unfortunately, man has paid more attention to his own being than the Divine ! As a result of this he kept raising his own image. This also, later on, found its way into Sufism, in spite of the fact that Holy Quran declares : "Nothing is like Him !" (14 : 11). So we find in the historical process of Sufism extraneous ideas trickling in, thus raising man's status all the time. This resulted in anthropomorphism.

Man went to the extent of calling himself the masterpiece of Almighty, as if God could not create anything better ! He also calls himself the most perfect of all creation, in spite of the fact that the Quran says. "We have made them to excell most of those whom We have created." (17 : 70) Not all of them but most of them ! This statement of the Quran is categorical. Does man desire to limit the creative power of the Almighty, that he has not created or cannot create anything better than man ? This Quranic verse clearly indicates that man does not excell all.

Iqbal is inclined to accept religious experience as mystical and emotional : but this is certainly not rational and is vague and unverifiable. The famous account of Ibn-i-Sayyad's ecstatic moods, which the Holy Prophet (OWBP) undertook to verify is a clear example of such non-verifiable instances. Mystic consciousness is a kind of cosmic consciousness which is inherent in every man : but again it is vague. Prophetic consciousness is something higher and more concrete and real. Mystic consciousness only serves to verify the lowest grade of knowledge, namely, Iilm-ul-Yaqin, that is to say, by inference only, and not by observation and experience. Such knowledge is not uncommon in dreams, and even in waking states. Mystic consciousness does not bring us in contact with reality : for, what we are seeing is not real ! The real cannot be conceived. Whatever is real is rational. The supernatural is not accessible to human intelligence. All human knowledge is

therefore relative. It is through thought that one enters the deeper dimensions of reality and not the eye.

The very fact of spiritual confirmation of the certainty of Reality is the Response from the Almighty. It is by experiencing such happenings that one comes to realise Reality. There are no happenings in the sense of Waqiat, no coincidences (Itefaqat) nor accidents (hadithat) in this world, All that is happenings is Wardat—meaningful (occurrences) Responses. One only has to keep his eyes and ears alert to discern for himself the meaningfulness of such phenomenon. Wardat are the only spiritual experience that can be accounted and taken note of in mystical consciousness. Beyond this all is illusion and wishfulfilment. Wardat occurs both in the waking states and during sleep. Premonitions and true dreams are also Wardat.

MENTAL CONDITION

Certain unlocalised portions of the Brain have the function of registering and conditioning actions acquired during a certain period of time. William James records the instance of certain persons, who were accustomed to pray in the middle of the night, and were woken up regularly at the exact hour. Such experiences have also been recorded by the Sufis. Due to the establishment of a condition reflexes, the reflexes are triggered off at the right moment. Some hear the knock at the door, some hear voices and some feel a pinch in the body. The nature of such experience is common to all. The Almighty Allah has condescended to grant a mood of relaxation and peace to the individual who invokes His name, and also to raise his status, if he prays during the hours of the night prescribed by the Quran Says the Holy Quran :

- (1) Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in remembrance of Allah. Now surely in Allah's remembrance do hearts find rest. (13 : 28)
- (2) And during a part of the night, keep awake by it, beyond what is incumbent on thee : may be thy Lord

will raise thee to a position of great glory. (17 : 7)

The form in which the body, finds rest is a state of complete relaxation which removes all tension. It is a state of bliss which one experiences in His Presence. Such moments can arise in the life of anyone who is religiously inclined. They are moments of cosmic consciousness and may be likened to the mystical consciousness. This state is not an expansion of the self conscious mind. Simultaneously and along with it occurs a state of intellectual enlightenment which in the Sufi terminology is called flashes of illumination ! This is a state of a higher plane of existence (Maqam-i-Mahmud). There is no more religious or mystical or spiritual experience beyond this.

POST SCRIPT

Three of my critics have published articles and letters in the Pakistan Times. They have objected to my statement that mystical experiences are vague and indefinite. They have however, very conveniently kept mum over a quotation from Iqbal which I have given in my support. They have cited the example of Khalif Umar, who while giving a sermon in masjid-i-Nabvi, warned one of the army commanders conducting a battle approximately 800 miles away to take cover of a hill side nearby. The commander heard his voice and acted accordingly and won the battle ! Such stories are rampant in Islamic history. My answer to this episode is that Khalif Umar was able to see a strategy for far away, but he could not see his own murderer who was hardly a couple of yards from where he was praying !

The second case cited is from Kashf-al-Mahjub of Al-Hajweri. It is stated that while Hazrat Ganj Bakhsh was walking in rain with his Murshid (Sheikh) he got wet while his Sheikh remained dry from head to foot ! It is rather strange that the intellectual value of this book has not been realised up till now. Say, for instance, what is its position or status as compared with the Six Lectures of Iqbal ! Obviously it is not even of a mediocre status. What does it contain ? Some sufiistic terminology and definitions, a few lives of Saints, and a discourse on music, This is all. The lives of saints carry fables

as any other Tazkirahs. In the text of this book is mentioned some account of Khawaja Abdullah Ansari, popularly called Pir-i-Hirat. He was the first person to write on Tassawwuf in Persian. Has any of the critics ever bothered to read his Kanaz-us-Salekin? After all Hazrat Ganj Bakhsh mentions his name with respect. Or have they ever cared to go through the Rasial-i-Junaid Baghdadi, who is the most revered saint in the early days of Islam?

V

The trend of muslim thought, especially in Pakistan is rather retrogressive and conservative, and far from satisfactory. It is mostly stereotyped and out of date. The muslims are so tied down to traditions and rituals that they do not understand that the Mutashabehat (doubtful) verses of the Quran have to be established (Mukhamat) by a process of gradual research for which modern knowledge is required. Whoever will do this will bring in new ideas, and they have to accept them, whether they like it or not. After all so many Mutashabehat verses of the Quran have been established in modern times and this has been made possible with the help of modern research. Just look at the commentary of the Holy Quran by Maulana Abu-Al-Kalam Azad. He gives references of English books in his footnotes ! Who discovered the wall of Gog and Magog ? Who discovered the mummy of Moses's Pharoeah ! Who is discovering the detailed steps of human development and Embryology ? And who has conquered the moon ? The Quran is a book of all times which keeps unfolding with the researches of time, and new thinking. In an advanced scientific world and amidst a Radio-active civilization, it is very necessary that the Quranic contents are projected according to advanced ideas. It is not necessary to shift the Quran from its stand : on the other hand new ideas will advance to embrace the teachings of the Quran. The Quranic teachings are more realistic and true to the times. In fact, the Quran when studied attentively and thoroughly, can guide the researcher to take a truer course. The waves emanating from the radioactive civilization tend to neutralise the urges of Religion, morals and conduct. But the Quran in its turn neutralises the spectrum which emerges out of the prism of this civilization. These nefarious rays are thus prevented from doing any harm.

The Quran is a living book which understands the requirements of man whom the Creator has Created : and He has there-

fore revealed a book which meets with all the demands of the whole man. Unfortunately for the muslims they are wedded to old forsaken ideas which they have embibed from sources other than the Quran, and which through the course of time have diluted the utilitarian teachings of the Revelations. These ideas perhaps fitted into the old picture which has now become blurred and vague. It is time that we whole heartedly reverted back to the Holy Quran, and look for new meanings.

The meanings of the words expand and unfold with experience. Arabic dictionaries are not the sole authority in explaining the Quran. The Quran itself explains its text, and most often if we ponder, the prevalent meanings seem out of place and out of date. When the Quran was first translated into the Persian language; the rendering was perhaps correct and tallied with the ideas of time : but today the world has advanced a hundred fold since the first translation was made. And then, the first translation in the Urdu language which have been made from Persian, have made no additions. This has continued till today. The Urdu language is incomplete and immature as compared with the Persian language, which is more expressive. This is also evident from the fact, that when Iqbal wanted to express higher thought he had to leave writing in Urdu and still further when he had to express modern advances in thought, he had to take to the English language ! In the Urdu translations we find that it is merely re-arranging of the order of words in other translations. There has been no corrections of the mistakes which were made in the Persian translations. Actually today the words have aquired new meanings towards which the Quran was already pointing, but as the new meanings had not been unfolded unto the commentators and translators, the mistakes have lingered on. The translations of the Quran therefore need new and revised editions so that they can throw light on the new discoveries as already indicated in the Quran. We cannot attribute this lastitude due to a lack of knowledge of the Arabic language. It is not so : the Arabs themselves are averse to new meanings in the words of the Quran, even though they may be

existing in the Arabic dictionary ! Many examples can be cited of this attitude. The Arabs are the first culprits in this negligence. They are not excluded from the following serious charge of the Holy Prophet (OWBP). "The prophet will say, O my Lord, these my people had forsaken the Quran." (25 : 30) It is a greivous charge indeed and the Arabs have not been made an exception. Infact, being the people of the language of the Quran, the blame rests more on their heads than on anyone else. The miracle of the Quran is not its language : the miracle is, that whosoever opens the Quran with an open and sincere heart, the Quran opens out for him.

This is a very serious charge of the Prophet against his own people. In spite of this the muslims are bent upon not pondering or paying attention to its contents. They will create problems over the old translations, but not ponder the new meanings hidden in the verses of the Quran according to the needs of their own times. It really reveals itself in its true meaning according to the progress of our times.

Differences are rampant in the muslim society which have shaken it to its very core. Justification is sought to uphold these differences from the Traditions, and these differences are taken as a blessing, although the Quran deprecates this in any form whatsoever. The most peculiar attitude of the muslims is that they will discard the verses for the Traditions ! Whereas the rule should be that if the Traditions do not come upto the standard of the Quranic verses they should be discarded, but not the verses of the Quran. The Quran has come to resolve all differences and not to create them. All evidence, whether it be historical, traditional or exegetical must be weighed against the Quranic verses. Most of the muslims are inclined to accept the traditions, historical facts and sufistic narrations and consider them more reliable. "They do not change themselves, but change the Quran." (Iqbal)

Heretical condemnations which started in the Inquisition period of the Roman Catholic Church in the 9th century AD and became organised in the 12th century AD found their way in Islam in the time of Mansur Al-Hallaj (26th

March 922) who was perhaps the first to be condemned to death as a Kafir in the history of Islam ! An heretic and a Kafir may not be synonymous terms, but there is no doubt that the fatwas of kufr took their inspiration from the institution of Inquisition. Such fatwas or legal decisions became rampant and organised. The Quran has used the word Kafir in three ways only : viz. (1) Non-believer (2) Ungrateful, and (3) An agriculturist, who hides the seed in the ground. These basic meanings have been given a twist, and a legal attire put on them to condemn anyone whose thinking does not suit the clergy. This was a death nail in the body of original thought. The gates of Ijtehad (independent thinking or reasoning) were thus closed, and with this the Quran became a closed book. Factions arose against the clergy, each giving its own interpretations to important problems of life, but to suit the likes and dislike of rulers with whom the clergy was attached to make their own ends meet. The common man was never allowed to participate in this quibbling. In the time of the Holy Prophet (OWBP) there were no different schools of thought. The Holy Quran had come to remove the differences and not to create them, as I have already said above. Society was one knitted whole, and independent views and judgments were allowed and encouraged. Alas ! all the avenues to the understanding of the Quran are now closed. History became a pet pass time of the muslim scholars, and enormous volumes were written to glorify the achievements of the muslims, which carried more fables than facts. Not that the muslims had not achieved much : yes, they did, but the pangyrics were too poetic ! Along with history, Greek philosophy, mystecism, and other occult sciences became the favourite topics of the muslim scholars, of course, the Muslim Scientists were engaged Independently in there researches, and it were they who took the Islamic civilization forward, and left the traces for the westerners to follow. Some prominent historians took to writing commentaries of the Quran and they included all the fables of the historical drama into these commentaries. Traditions of the Holy Prophet (OWBP) were concocted at great speed. With every monarch came a flood of Traditions, which saw its climax in the time of the

Mongols. We all know that Imam Bukhari had to discard approximately three hundred thousand spurious Traditions at the time of compiling his famous Shaikh!

My purpose in going over all this is to show that the Islamic world fell apart from the teachings of the Quran, and they are continuing to do so. As I have said elsewhere the Quran unfolds its fresh meaning in every age. Different people of different intellectual level understand it according to their own capacity. But the highest level of meaning is only perceptible to the highest mind. As the thought evolves, the meanings of the Quran become clearer, because the contents of the Quran are true for all times. It is a book of all climes and ages and suitable for all societies and has clear instructions for adjustment for all. The contents require deep pondering and penetration into the meanings of the Quran, and the Quran goes on explaining most of them without the aid of any dictionary. The dictionaries are not self contained. In Arabic each word has several meanings just as in any other language. But the meanings which are not clear from the dictionaries and do not fit into the Quranic narration, the Quran explains them itself. This is verified by experience and research: for, it is seen that the Quran unfolds itself with the progress of time. This has resulted in the emergence of various schools of thought. This has brought in an unusual spirit of emotionalism in the religion of Islam, which has brought about an unbridgeable gap between the various schools of thought. The Quran is a book of Reason and resolves all differences. As we have pointed out the Quran does not create differences. This emotionalism came from the Greek sources which brought in its philosophy and aesthetics. The Quran is not a book of philosophy. It undoubtedly deals with Botany, Zoology, Mineralogy, Astrology, Chemistry, Cosmology and Cosmogony etc, but there is no evidence of any philosophical matter in it. The discussions about the Soul were discouraged in the very beginning, and it was said that man has been given meagre knowledge of it. So refrain from indulging in any discussion, it was none of man's business! The Nafs was the conscious self. But the mystics gave it the meaning of the spirit,

again perpetrating to create indulgence in the problem of the Soul from which he was prohibited. Nafs therefore is the conscious self and not the spirit or the Soul. A whole philosophy was woven round it derived from Greek sources again, and the Sufis made a capital out of it, by diverting the attention of the whole nation. Thus the Sufistic poetry became full with the philosophy of the Soul-Self, little realising that the Nafs was the conscious self, a physical self, and not a spiritual entity. You could not find anything in it unless you undertook to dissect it. But in contrast to the early Muslim Anatomists who had dissected the human body and made anatomical atlases, the later day clergy prohibited the dissections thus keeping the truth hidden from the inquisitive muslims ! Of course, 'Know thyself and you will know thy God' is true so long as you open up the physical body and see for yourself what marvels of creation lie therein. This is what is meant by the Quranic verse *Wa fi an-fusekum afla tubserun !* Thus we see that philosophy creates problems which if referred to the Quran are easily resolved. Philosophy has always tried to plead the cause of emotion. The impact of this attitude has been great on Islam, and the pure religion of Reason has been reduced to a bundle of rituals and emotions ! The pleasures of sexual orgasm, which is the highest emotion which a human being can experience, has been transliterated into terms like *Wasl* and *Wisal* which are nothing but the echo of a sublime experience of the sexual act. The Quranic word *Muhhabah* is Love, which is entirely different from the emotion of 'Ishq, which is pure passion. A human being who is born impotent cannot even dream of such passions and emotions ! It therefore goes to prove that the Sufistic-Ishaq is born of the sexual urge. The orgasmal experience is the only pleasureable act in the life of a human being for which he yearns all his life. Hence human beings value this emotions above everything and labelled it as the highest spiritual experience that could be attained. And finally he sought a re-union with the Ultimate Ego-*Wasl*. The story of the conflict between Reason and Emotion is well illustrated in the Quran in Surah Yusuf. The combat between Joseph and the Potifers wife is well know.

Eventually Reason triumphed over Emotion ! But our Sufi poets have made a capital out of this story to show it was the triumph of Emotion over Reason !!!

The human eye cannot perceive God. Man can only realise the beauty of creation through the acts of the Creator. The grandeur of creation is awe inspiring, and cannot initiate passion. It can only generate adoration. Emotions have a negative aspect whereas reason has a positive element. Emotions are feminine while reason is masculine. Emotions are passive while reason is active and vigorous. In days of Hellenistic culture beauty was worshipped and this was mostly sought in the female, and not in Nature. The whole of Aegean philosophy then assumed a feminine character, and this affected the early muslim thinkers who translated knowledge from Latin. The muslim Sufi was thus attached to emotional ways of thinking, and his entire philosophy became based on emotions or 'Ishq to which he gave preference and priority in the attainment of his spiritual goals. The entire sufistic terminology became involved in a pessimistic feministic and passive aetiokogy derived from Greek and Vedantic sources. They thus gave preference to 'Ishq (Emotions) over ,Aql (Reason) which was the guiding principal of the Quran. Thus Quranic mystecism became enshrouded in passive thinking of the Sufis, which found its way in sufi poetry. It was this attitude which Iqbal criticised in the first edition of his Secrets of the Self. It was not the personality of Hafiz which he criticised. This attitude of the Sufis had paralysed the spirit of action and Reason amongst the Muslims. This attitude resulted in the adoption of inter-mediaries (Wasta- this was a wrong rendering of the Quranic word Wasila which according to the Quran means nearness !) which suspended personal effort and action of the man.

We have pointed out elsewhere how the orgasmal pleasures were envisaged in the Sufistic Wasl and Wisal : for, there was no other human pleasure in experience of the Sufis by which they could express the pleasure of reunion with the Ultimate Being, thus giving their spiritual experience an anthropomorphic form. Sufism thus became a philosophy of escapism, whereas the Quran was a book of action and overall activity ! The Quranic Tas-

sawwuf is therefore poles apart from the so called Islamic mysticism which is prevalent in the muslim world today. This has grown up and nurtured a progeny of passive and inactive people, given to a sort of monasticism disallowed in Islam. The spirit of Jihad banished and on several occasions religious injunctions were given against it. Even in our own times we have witnessed such declarations a number of times. It is out of fear of the conflict between reason and emotion, that escapism was sought, lest the superior forces of Reason may triumph over Emotions. Today, the philosophy of 'Ishq (Emotions) is so predominantly prevalent amongst the muslim masses that it has become extremely difficult to convince even an educated thinking muslim of the efficacy of Reason. Some muslim thinkers like Rumi and Iqbal have tried to bring about a compromise between the two. But the question of a compromise does not arise. Reason is ipso facto according to the Quran superior to all emotions. The Quran itself is a book of Reason.

I presume that when the muslim philosophers adopted these ideas from Greek thought it could not be avoided as it was the period of borrowing of ideas. Snfistic thought thus preferred emotion over reason and made the society bow down to emotions, thus discarding Reason which the Quran was advocating throughout its contents. This has resulted in the paralysing of the dynamic spirit of the Quran.

PART III

Dimensions and Determinism

IQBAL has raised a very pertinent question in his Lectures, regarding the freedom of a living being, as determined by his dimensions. Quoting Einstein and Ouspensky, more so the later, Iqbal has maintained that greater the number of dimensions of a living being, the greater are his movements free. For instance, a two dimensional being is more free to act than a one dimensional being, and a three dimensional being is even more free than the two dimensional being.

An example may be cited of a tree and an earthworm which are respectively one and two dimensional beings. Iqbal therefore, favours the Quantum theory of Einstein because it repudiates the old Deterministic view of two and three dimensional space. Says Iqbal, "A dimension is an indication of the degree of freedom." But the question arises, what difference does it make if ones actions are already predetermined by mechanical laws? The atoms of our body follow the physical laws as immutable as the planetary motions! There seems to be no room for outside interference. Everything that happens is physically determined including all our actions. Is man then free to act and responsible for his actions?

In so far as the freedom to act depends upon the dimensions of a being, we can clearly see that a tree which is a one dimensional living being, is not at all free to act. It is fixed and all its requirements are being provided to it in the place of its growth and expansion. An earthworm which is a two dimensional being can move straight and to the left and right, and is more free than a tree, although not as free as a horse, a dog and a cow, who can also jump. Man is a three dimensional being moving in the fourth dimension of time with precision, and hence is the freest of them all. And if man is able to raise the level of his being further, and rise into higher dimensions,

he is able to act still more freely, as the beings of higher dimensions. Therefore, a being of higher dimensions is less determined than the beings of lower dimensions. This is tantamount to saying that the beings of lower dimensions, in which the actions are completely or partially determined are less responsible for their actions, and perhaps like the trees are completely absolved from any punishment.

The Holy Quran has some very pertinent verses on this subject, but unfortunately they have been misunderstood, and the subject has been confused. This problem has been dealt with under three headings in the Holy Quran :

- (1) And Who created every thing, then ordained for it measures. (25 : 2)

This means its laws have been determined for guidance, and these laws have been made known and not kept a secret. It is up to man to unravel them by continuous scientific research. Some of these scientific laws have been discovered, and quite a few are on the way to discovery. It is obvious then, that as the laws are made known we have to act according to these laws, just as the moral injunctions require of us to act accordingly. This is for our guidance, and help us to shoulder the responsibility.

- (2) All the adversities that you experience, have been created by us, and are recorded in the Book. (57 : 22)

This verse points to the law which governs activity and which has been created along with each item of creation. These are the physical laws which govern the universe including the living beings. These laws assist man in his day to day activity, and in solving his problems. Is it then justifiable to use physical laws against human freedom ?

The last verse of the Holy Quran on the subject is as follows :

- (3) And that, man can have nothing but what he strives for. (53 : 39)

This verse clearly indicates that man has to make an effort to achieve his end, and without trying he can never reach his

goal. He is therefore, free to strive. Were his actions determined he would be bound down to the eternal laws without choosing his direction, and he would be determined. We would then be justified in calling him an automaton or a machine. His determinism would then become predictable.

But all this does not deny the Almighty His Omnipotence and Omniscience. He is all knowing. Everything is within His knowledge. Says Frithjof Shuon, "to deny predetermination would amount to pretending that God does not know 'future' events 'before hand' and is therefore not Omniscient : this would be an absurd conclusion, for time is merely one mode of the expression of existence and the empirical succession of its contents is only illusory". God can certainly eradicate this or that evil but "not evil as such". This would be tantamount to abolishing all evil ! But the world is an imperfect creation, and evil has to remain as such," otherwise it would be reduced to God and cease to exist", as such.

Classification of Religion

I WAS invited to a dinner party where I was to meet an American Professor of Comparative Religion. I was fascinated with the thought of exchanging new ideas I had been thinking vaguely over the question of classification of Religion for sometime.

But I could not get a clear picture, as the thoughts would remain confused. Driving to the house of my friend, I got the opportunity to think over the problem once again. As I arrived at the house, my friend took me round to everyone, for introduction. When I came to the Professor, I abruptly asked, "Well, Professor, have you evolved any classification of Religion, so far?" My friend quietly took me aside, and said, "Let us first discuss this question ourselves before we listen to the Professor". We sat down and started exchanging ideas. We were beating about the bush. After the dinner suddenly my friend, the host, asked me to put the question to the Professor. The Professor addressed me, "Have you arrived at any classification yourself? I said, "I have not come to any definite conclusion. I believe, if we are able to classify Religion, we could put each into a definite category to enable us to identify it by its teachings and beliefs. The Professor said, "Well, let us have your views ; for, I have not come to any conclusion either." During this time, I had already thought out a rough chart of the classification and I said :

"I would classify Religion into the following four categories:

- I. (a) Theistic. (b) Atheistic. (c) Pantheistic and, (d) Polytheistic.
- II. (a) Supernatural and, (b) Natural.
- III. (a) Evolutionary, and, (b) Non-Evolutionary,
- IV. (a) Theistic Deterministic Existentialistic, and,

(b) Atheistic Non—Deterministic Existentialistic.

The Professor asked me to further explain the categories. I said, "Now you can describe each Religion in terms of these categories knowing fully the characteristics of each e.g. Islam can now be defined as follows :

Theistic, Natural, Deterministic, Evolutionary, Existentialistic !

And Christianity as follows :

Polytheistic, Supernatural, Non-Deterministic, Non-Evolutionary, Existentialistic.

And Hinduism as follows :

Polytheistic, Supernatural Non-evolutionary, Deterministic, Existentialistic.

It should be possible for you to clarify these terms in your mind and work out the details.

He said, "I do not understand certain terms which you have used, e.g. what do you mean by calling Islam a Natural Deterministic Religion and Christianity a Supernatural Non-deterministic Religion".

I proceeded to explain as follows :

"Islam represents both the Nature of Man, and the Nature outside him. They are both synchronised. In Islam all the instincts of Man are represented Islam, in fact, represents the whole Man, and not merely a few of his urges or instincts. It is a Natural Religion because, it is in conformity with the Nature outside, and abides by its laws which are unchangeable. It is for this reason that the values of life in Islam do not change, as they do in the case of Supernatural Religion I have in this also explained to you the term Deterministic. Because the values of life are determined, hence Islam is a Deterministic Natural Religion".

"And why do you call Christianity and Hinduism Supernatural Religions?" was the Professor's next

question.

I said, "Because the laws which these two Religions follow and have propounded do not either conform to the human nature, nor to the Nature around us! They are not utilitarian and do not govern society according to its requirements. Whatever you have been able to achieve is not because of your own inherent laws, but due to the universal truths which you have adopted. The content of these two Religions is therefore Supernatural. Supernatural Religions are also more philosophical and metaphysical and have very little to do with the actual realities of life. They are not practical".

POLYTHEISTIC

"And why do you call Christianity and Hinduism a Polytheistic Religion? I think we are a Theistic Religion," was the Professor's third question. "The Quran divides people into three categories according to their Faith, viz :

1. Theistic—Momin,
2. Atheistic—Kafirs, and
3. Polytheists—Mushrekin.

The Mushriks are not athiests as you will see, because they do believe in God but have intermediaries for Him. The Trinitarians are likewise polytheists and not theists because they create intermediaries for God. And as the Christians and the Hindus believe in a Trinity they are obviously Polytheists. The Christians worship the Mother, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and the Hindus worship, Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh. They form their intermediaries. You achieve your salvation through the intervention of your Trinity. A Muslim does not approach God through an intermediary. This would be idolatry, and against the spirit of Islam. Hinduism although it is polytheistic, it has Pantheistic leanings in its higher strata of thought. But primarily Hinduism is infested with gods at its

various levels. But in its higher philosophy it inclines towards Pantheism, and I dare say even Theism and Unityism. But Christianity in its higher form has no such things. It remains polytheistic throughout.

He put his last question to me, "Why do you call Islam an Evolutionary Religion, and Christianity a Non-evolutionary one?"

"This is very simple," I said. "Although Darwin was a Christian, yet the Church has disclaimed him, and recently several books have come into the market, written by Christian scholars (especially Catholics), who have condemned the theory of Evolution of Darwin." "Yes, I have also seen some books of that kind lately. But why they are doing this" ? asked the Professor.

EVOLUTION

Picking up the thread, I replied, "There are two reasons for doing this : Firstly, there seems to have arisen a confusion between the Christian concept of creation of Adam and the Darwin's evolution of Man. Secondly, the return of Christ does not fit into Darwin's theory. You see in the Quran the theory of Evolution is propounded most soundly and without a flaw. But this is slightly different to that of Darwin. Man does not develop from the apes. There is no missing link. Man develops directly from the single life cell as it emerges out of the water. Says the Holy Quran, "We have created all living beings from Water." In the Quranic theory of Evolution there is no confusion or contradiction, therefore, Islam, accepts both the creative and the Emergent Evolutions. In Islam there is no Recurrence or Repetition in Creation. All is Renewal (Tajaddud-i-Imthal or The Renewal of Forms). No two things created are alike nor is a pattern repeated. Hence there is no coming back. Therefore, Islam is an Evolutionary Religion. The Christians are finding it difficult to adjust their concept of the Return of Jesus Christ. Also of the creation of Adam. You see, Adam was not the first man created. Adam was the

first person in the line of man on whom revelation was brought down. Before Adam man was uncivilised and lived in caves. A certain class of Muslims also hold these ideas. But it is foreign to the spirit of the Quran. They were brought into Islam by the early Christian and Jewish converts to Islam. The idea of the return of Christ is originally Magian, as has been pointed out by Martin Buber and quoted by Iqbal. However, this does not conform with the theory of Evolution, hence the Christian Church finds it unwholesome to devour. It is for this reason that I have called Christianity a Non-evolutionary Religion. The theory of evolution has in fact been propounded by the Muslims long before the advent of Darwin. Rumi, Bedil and Iqbal have mentioned this in their works. The Quran takes life out of water (Single cell which is Nafsin Waheda and after dividing this into Zojain—pairs—by binary fission) and classifies the subsequent creation (living animals Dabah) into :

1. Reptiles (BATNEHI).
2. Mammals (RAJLEN) and
3. Quadrupeds (ARBAA).

This in fact is Darwin's classificational ! Is it then not borrowed from the Holy Quran ? The only difference is that Man remains an independent creation (through evolution), and has not descended from the Apes as Darwin seems to think. Man is an independent perfect creation of God, but not His Masterpiece as some seem to think. Had man been the Masterpiece of Almighty God, it would be tantamount to saying that God cannot create better beings than man, and it would be simultaneously limiting the creative power of Almighty. There are beings in our creation which God Almighty declares to be better creations. Even the creation of this Cosmos was a more difficult task than the creation of Man. This is clearly mentioned in the Holy Quran. The process of creation is continuing. It has not yet come to halt before man assumed his present form. He has to conform to so many conditions. And in his present fully developed form God had to create a suitable environment for him in which he could appropriately develop

and survive, and this was not an easy task. His physical, spiritual, and cultural demands had to be met with by various climes, food, landscape, temperature, aesthetic requirements and the like. So it can be conceived how difficult the task must have been".

The Professor listened to all this very attentively. Some listeners also paid attention and asked questions. Some left as it was getting late. The Professor had no transport, I offered to drop him at his residence. On the way, the Professor showed some interest in my classification and said, if he had time he would like to discuss a few things more. He was going sight-seeing in Lahore next day. I asked him to drop in for tea at my house, and I would elaborate the discussion. The Professor turned up as promised, but for taking some notes and elaboration of a few points of previous day's discussion, nothing new was discussed.

Psychology of Quran

I

WHEN we study the Holy Quran, two things strike us at once. Firstly, it repeatedly lays stress on Tadabbur, Tafakkur, and Taaqul i.e. Pondering, Thinking, and Rationalising. God Almighty draws our attention to every aspect of His creation, and encourages man to use these gifts of mind and heart, and channelise their activity usefully.

The thinking which the Quran provokes is creative. It infuses a dynamic spirit in man, which enables him to seek solution of his problems : dissolution is the property of critical thinking which the Quran abhors. Critical thinking looks for flaws and defects ; creative thinking leads to the birth of new ideas.

God Almighty challenges man to find a flaw in His creation. There can be of course be none ; for, it is a continuous flow of creative activity.' It discourages critical thinking ; as it is the trait of one-track mind, and is non-conductive.

Secondly, in its moral philosophy, the Holy Quran again lays bare the fact of creativity. Khalq (external creation), is one of the two facets of Akhlaq (Character) : the other being Khulq (Internal Creation).

Character, therefore, in the light of the Holy Quran is something which has both external and internal creative properties. This is a significant indication to show that wherever there is creation there is ipso facto an activity of creative thinking, and wherever there is destruction, it is indicative of critical thinking, and lacks character.

With these few words let us now proceed to elaborate on the recent trends in our National thinking, and see how far we have been successful in keeping up to the expectations of the Holy Quran.

CREATIVE QUALITY

Thinking, essentially involves an approach towards the future and motivates a creative effort. With perception and memory the process of thought is brought into action ; as perception points to the present state of things, while memory brings into focus the past experiences. Together they re-instate the process of thinking.

For national build up thinking must necessarily maintain its creative quality. A progressive nation encourages creative thinking and shuns critical thought. Even thought which is critical best serves its purpose when it is constructive.

Unfortunately, what we see today in our society is mainly critical thinking deprived of creative manifestations. It is out to tear everything to pieces ; but not to put them together. It sees no good anywhere except perhaps in the mind of the thinker himself !

The thinking of the majority of our so called educated Pakistanis is critical and destructive. To them there is nothing but chaos and confusion everywhere. Actually there is chaos and confusion in their own minds ! They sneak round corners and wander in alleys of filth, but see no beauty anywhere ; even where it does exist. They are blind to all creative effort, because they cannot think creatively themselves. If there is any good to be seen anywhere, it is within their own self. Their entire thinking is introvert.

This negative attitude is not the criterion of rational human beings. In order to think effectively and clearly we must perceive the world in its correct perspective. We cannot ignore the progress around us. But unfortunately the conditions which prevail in this country leave very little for any one to ponder.

As in any other country there is indeed political thinking going on here too. Religious thought like elsewhere is also percolating the masses. There is social thinking coupled with Industrial planning. But when we make an appreciation of the trend of each thought, we do not find any creative values

attached to each type of thinking. There is no utilitarian projection of ideas to move the nation forward. Thinking is mostly controversial, and conflicting. A great deal of energy is, therefore, being wasted which could have been put to useful ends.

BASIC FAULT

The basic fault appears to be a mixing up of the Ancient method of thinking which was pre-deterministic, with the Modern thought that is somewhat Deterministic ! Today, man has a certain amount of control over the day to day happenings. We must realise that the days of the Oracles are over, when everything was Predetermined. If man did not have some control over the happenings of this world, he could not be held responsible for his actions. What we need today is a happy marriage between the Ancient and the Modern thought.

We do not today relish the idea of an uncertain future. Therefore, we like to plan ahead. "The very stability and security of man's existence depends a great deal upon his ability to anticipate and project himself into the future. He predicts in order to plan."

Let us take a look round and see what is happening around us. Let us take stock of our intellectual efforts. Let us gauge the depths of our literature which is pouring into the market. Let us for a while scan the pages of our daily papers and see what type of thought they are provoking in the nation. What do we see ? The first thing which strikes us is ; there is no toleration in our thinking ! This is an evil which can lead to no progress.

It keeps our minds enclosed in water tight compartments. We cannot produce new ideas. Whenever we seem to come in sight of new thoughts they byepass the horizon of our thinking sphere, as if scared away by some vicious power. We move in a circle which it seems difficult to get out of. We seem to know a lot of things ; but most of them we do not understand !

Nations which have progressed have been tolerant of divergent views. In fact, they jump at new ideas. Lack of toleration in thinking leads to stagnation of ideas, and does not produce creative results.

Creative thought leads to intense action which is constructive. Intolerant thinking leads to destructive critical thinking. Non-creative thought, on the other hand, is mechanical thinking. It is repetitive and akin to dreaming. It puts man fast to sleep. In fact, all thinking is dreaming if it is incapable of creative effects.

The purpose of thinking is to prove useful to the thinking man, in some way or the other. The term "usefulness" here implies raising the level of ones being, whereby one profits spiritually and materially. Mere material gain is no profit. It never helps the progress of nations.

This may appear rather a gloomy picture of the nation. But there is no need to get upset. We must do some heart-searching and self-observation. After all, how long will the nation go on deceiving itself.

The purpose of thinking is primarily to prove useful not only to the thinking person but also to the people upon whom that thought is being projected.

Independent thinking is the birth right of man according to the Holy Quran. Ijtihad (independent thinking and Reasoning) is the biggest Jihad (Struggle), according to our thinking. It is by this process that new ideas see the light of the day. Taqlid (Blind following) is exactly the opposite of Ijtihad (Independent thinking and Reasoning). It is determined by custom and convention, and does not lead to new ideas. "The person will merely mouth those ideas which he has learned from others." This aping defeats the very idea of education, whose function it is to produce the faculty of creative thinking in the man.

CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking reflects a lack of proper education. One should not go away with the idea that to be highly qualified is to

be academically educated. Far from it. On the other hand a man who can think clearly and creatively is not only educated but also highly cultured. Critical thinking is essentially destructive: its primary aim is to tear ideas to pieces: A creative thinker "resists this destruction of his own creation."

This is the fundamental psychology of Islamic Thinking. On this is based the whole Philosophy of human relationship and national character. Today the entire nation is in need of a reorientation of facts: not values as is usually thought. Islam is a Natural Religion and deals with facts. It is not a Supernatural Religion, which deals with values which are always changing. Islam deals with facts, and they never change. So let us face facts and re-orientate ourself and start thinking creatively which is also the demand of Almighty Allah. May we all be guided rightly henceforth in our thinking. (Amin)

II

So far we have talked about 'creative' thinking as a basic recommendation of the Holy Quran. Let us now look round and see what sort of an Action it recommends.

It is 'thinking' which is primarily responsible for 'Action'. The Holy Quran considers Action under two heads viz ; Good Actions which are approved, and Bad Actions which are discouraged.

Any action which leads to a disturbance, disorderliness, disruption and destruction, the Quran condemns outright. "Do not create disruption on land after order has been restored upon it", says the Holy Quran.

It recommends actions which are utilitarian and tend to help humanity in one or the other. Such actions also help to create a way wholesome atmosphere for the perpetuation of society.

It has, therefore, enforced laws imposing restrictions and limitations on the undesirable actions of man. In order to supplement these orders, it has enunciated certain actions as harmful to society and others as beneficial. Restrictions im-

posed are liable to incur penalty if transgressed. This is with a view to rewarding the man for having carried out orders of the Almighty.

The behaviour of man has been categorised in the Holy Quran. It is not possible in this short paper to dwell in detail on each category as it relates to different aspects of society in which the Holy Quran wants to put order.

For the survival of human society, it is absolutely essential that it acts within the limitations prescribed. Transgressors have been taken to task. Examples are cited repeatedly from history to show the end of those who had disobeyed. This is all for the good of man, but man has through the ages resented restrictions.

The Creator has, of course given a certain amount of control to man for certain independent actions, but He has no control over this over-all control. The main switch in the powerhouse of human actions remains in His hand. This is for the good of man again, and for his guidance ; for, whenever man stumbles due to his rashness, the hand of Almighty gives him a support to save him and guide him in the right direction.

“And Allah increases in guidance those who go aright. And deeds that endure, the good deeds, are, with thy Lord better in recompense and yield better return”. (19 : 76)

Quranic psychology has canalised human behaviour into social channels. This pertains to not only individual relations, but between the individual and society and the individual and the state etc. For each aspect of his behaviour it has prescribed basic rules.

These basic rules are further based on the complexity of human nature and conduct, and on the interaction of different human temperaments. While laying down the laws, it closely watches and follows the trend of human reactions, and finally while in the process of enunciating these laws it illustrates by

examples from the history of human behaviour as to how the progress of man suffered setbacks in his advance by disobeying these laws.

While laying down laws, the Holy Quran laid great stress on a few fundamentals which may be briefly enumerated as follows :

1. Humanliity.
2. Modesty.
3. Chastity.
4. Purity.
5. Equality.
6. Truthfulness.
7. Honesty.

These seven pillars keep the society in a perfect state of stability and orderliness. Undoubtedly these fundamentals are to be found in other great religions, but no religion prescribes penalties for their infringements as has been done by the Holy Quran.

These fundamentals strike a note of mental balance in the man and prevents him from becoming mentally dissociated, distrubed or tarnished. Upon these fundamentals the Holy Quran raises the edifice of a disciplined society as it abhors disruption.

Reward and punishment result from a departure from the prescribed limits and control. If these were no penalties imposed, the question of reward and punishment would not arise, and the concept of good and bad actions would disappear.

This life is a continuous process of evolution and as life does not end here, the hereafter justifies the limits prescribed here for a wholesome living. The 'here' is thus linked with the 'hereafter'. The Holy Quran, therefore, in prescribing these limits enable man to control his negative emotions to raise the level of his being, to attain a sate of awareness of a rising consciousness, which further enables man to maintain order and discipline in this life and become entitled to a wholesome reward in the hereafter.

“Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Kingdom, and He is Prossessor of power over all things. Who created death and life that He might try you— which of you is best in deeds. And He is the mighty and Forgiving.” (67 -1,2)

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Creation and Pro-Creation

MAN has through ignorance many a time trespassed the bounds of Divine demarcations. The wrath of God over-took him and the sites of ancient devastation are proof of man's mis-calculations.

The process of human evolution envisages natural adjustments the rationality of which has not yet been fully encompassed by man. Increasing humanity is, therefore, a problem the curtailment of which does not lie within the domain of man to effect adjustments. Certain essential ingredients of life have not been taxed by nature but distributed free of cost for all human beings alike. Such ingredients are air, water, perfume and natural scenery. These are essential items for the physical and spiritual well-being of man, and have been distributed free of cost. On the other hand, to prevent chaos, Divine Wisdom has kept the control of birth, death and sustenance (Rizq) to Itself. For the rest of man's activity, God Almighty has given complete control to man, with the advice that there should be no squandering or disruption. For the maintenance of this object it has prescribed the straight path (Sirat-e-Mustaqeem), which is the path of moderation.

When we look around us, we find that the causes of human unhappiness, today, are its increasing demands on the necessities of life, which has disturbed the peace of society. For an accurate assessment we need not go beyond the limits of Pakistan, but look within our own country. We see that profiteering, black-marketing and bribery are rampant. It is these evils which need to be controlled to bring happiness to the growing population in this country and not birth control or family planning. Family planning at best aims to produce small, but better families undoubtedly, but this will not wipe away the great evil which is the cause of misery. Admitted,

that family planning may be able to bring down the number of its people within the next two decades, who can vouchsafe that the evils would not have doubly multiplied during this interval? It is, therefore, the primary duty of the Government to bring down the prices of the essential commodities so as to enable them to come within the reach of every man rather than fight the process of evolution.

Nature has a purpose in multiplying humanity in permutation which we do not understand at present. Was God Almighty unaware of these facts when he created man? Did God Almighty not know that man when let loose upon the surface of the earth would enter into wedlock to multiply progeny? We cannot attribute such ignorance to the Creator Almighty. If an ignorance of this type is to be admitted, it has to be found at our own door. God Almighty certainly knew that such a state of affair is going to arise. It was for this reason that He made all the sea-animals permissible for the faithful. From one meatless day we now have three meatless days in a week. We fear that doomsday for meat-eaters will arrive in the near future and who knows that within the next decade not a single animal or a fowl may be available on the surface of the earth for meat-eaters to consume. It was with this anticipation that God Almighty laid bare His inexhaustible resources from the depth of the seas. Has God Almighty not given us land to cultivate and shown us the methods of improved agriculture? Who can deny that more than three-fourths of our land today is lying untilled? Can we not render this cultivable land to meet the needs of the growing population? Why not pay more attention towards this important national requirement. We are merely wasting energies in propagating the imported gospel of family planning which is so much at variance with human nature, the Natural plan, and our Ideology.

Fantastic propaganda in the form of films and posters is being carried on at a cost of great National expenditure to infuse into the people something which is revolting to society. Stories based on imaginary data are being projected on the

screen. Lectures are being delivered in support of this planning, the shallowness of which can be exploded by any one with average thinking. Have we no land to construct houses for the growing population? Even if we wish to crowd in big towns, we can go up in the sky and build sky-crapers rather than spread out in spacious and luxurious bungalows. This is no Communistic thought, but something based on common sense. Let the foreign countries seek markets elsewhere for their surplus goods of contraceptives. The very concept of contraception is debased. Who does not know that the invention of contraceptives was necessitated by licentiousness? A thing thus devised cannot be proved to have utilitarian values. Let humanity grow in a natural way.

The duty of the State is to provide for its essential needs for which there is ample scope for the Government to adopt. Leave the design of the Divine plan in the hands of the Creator. Man has been placed as God's vicegerent upon earth and the business of those in authority is to look after the needs of their fellow-beings. Creation and pro-creation go hand in hand. If you stop pro-creating you will stop creating. Pro-creation is progress. Therefore, do not give a set-back to the progress of your country. Will the Pundits of Family Planning stop to think a while?

God, Man & Creation

IN itself all creation is an amazing phenomenon. But what has made it all the more amazing is 'man'. As God Almighty has created everything in this universe with a specific purpose, man too has not been created in vain. He has to perform a given role in this world, and, for the fulfilment of that role, he has been fully equipped with a well-designed physiology and spirituality. To study what man is and to examine his relation with the rest of creation, both here and hereafter, is the subject of this small treatise.

By the word 'man' we do not mean his outer physical appearance alone. It is the body and the soul taken together which give us a comprehensive picture of man. The body is material and concrete but soul, like mind, is elusive and abstract. Man has to be studied with reference to this Creator and also with reference to the rest of creation. The terms "God" "man" and "creation" are so inextricably bound up with each other that it is not possible to omit any of them when studying man. It is, therefore, necessary that we first endeavour to apply our knowledge to Creation as a whole and thereby prepare ourselves to answer the question we have raised.

The Western concept of evolution deals exhaustively with natural selection, struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. This theory has brought in its wake stupendous upheavels in thought, method and material. But, however true this might seem it cannot claim to represent the whole truth. It discusses the process of evolution but not the purpose of evolution. The 'purpose' has been completely overlooked by the exponents of the Theory of Evolution.

The Holy Qur'an discusses both—the process and the purpose of evolution. In addition to the factors of natural selection struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, it

refers to two other factors, namely survival of the beneficial and renewal of forms. The quality of mercy in nature demands that whatsoever is harmful to others should be discarded. This is also the true meaning of natural selection. As regards the renewal of forms, we see that old forms are disappearing, and new ones are emerging. Many Western thinkers have totally skipped over this point, others have presented it in a distorted manner. Take Nietzsche, for example, who hoped for the emergence of 'supermen' through 'eternal recurrence'. According to Iqbal, 'His enthusiasm for the future of man ended in the Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence—perhaps the most hopeless idea of immorality ever formed by man'. Eternal recurrence, after all, is not eternal creation, it is eternal repetition.

IMPORTANT FACTOR

On the other hand, Muslim thinkers, drawing inspiration from the Qur'an have proved that there is no repetition in the process of Creation and that renewal of forms is an important factor in evolution. Iqbal has beautifully summarised Ibne Maskwayh's theory of evolution from the latter's Al Fawzul Asghar, which not only indicates the trend of Muslim thought a thousand years ago but also points to a scientific proposition: 'According to Ibne Maskwayh, plant life at the lowest stage of evolution does not need any seed for its birth and growth. Nor does it perpetuate its species by means of the seed. This kind of plant life differs from the minerals only in some little power of movement which grows in higher forms and reveals itself further in that the plant spreads out its branches and perpetuates its species by means of the seed. The power of movement gradually grows further until we reach trees which possess trunk, leaves and fruit. At a higher stage of evolution, there stand forms of plant life which need better soil and climate for their growth. The last stage of development is reached in vine and date palm which stand as it were on the threshold of animal life. In the date palm a clear sex distinction appears. Besides roots and fibres, it develops something which functions like the animal

brain, on the integrity of which depends the life of the date palm. This is the highest stage in the development of plant life, and a prelude to animal life. The first forward step towards life is freedom from earth rootedness which is the germ of conscious movement. This is the initial stage of animality in which the sense of touch is the first and the sense of sight is the last to appear. With the development of senses, the animal acquires freedom of movement, as in the case of worms, reptiles, ants and bees. Animality reaches its perfection in the horse among quadrupeds and in the falcon among birds, and finally arrives at the frontiers of humanity in the ape which is just a degree below man in the scale of evolution. Further evolution brings physiological changes with a growing power of discrimination and of spirituality until humanity passes from barbarism to civilisation'. (Reconstruction).

Darwin has laid great stress on the development of man from the monkey. This was also known to the Muslim thinkers as brought out in the above quotation but they did not stress this point further. Several of them had already expressed similar views in verse and prose. The scholars of the West did not clearly observe that there was no repetition in the developing forms when life was passing through one stage to another, but that each time a new creation came into being, it had a purpose to serve and this was leading the entire process of creation to a specific goal. The Muslim scholars and scientists did not, at any stage, presume that the process of evolution had been perfected and had come to an end that man had attained his final evolution. They thought that if in the past, innumerable forms and shapes of life had disappeared and disintegrated giving birth to new forms, there is no reason why the present life also should not disintegrate and disappear, to be replaced by new forms of evolution in the hereafter.

Man indeed has been created as the best of physical and mental organisms. Yet he is very far from being a perfect creation. Before Islam, there is no trace of this matter of the renewal of forms having been discussed by any philosophy. But as early as the Ash'arites, the Muslims had categorically

laid down that forms do not persist through time, which means that they are continuously changing.

These forms change with such imperceptible rapidity that one is unable to perceive the change. Rapidity of change is an important factor in this renewal of forms. It is something like the static pictures moving on the cinema screen with such rapidity that they not only overlap each other but also give the impression of movement. This rapidly succeeding impression on the retina of the eye makes one see the pictures moving but not as separate entities. Continuous evolution therefore depends serially upon this renewal of forms. The previous forms are eliminated and their place is taken up by other forms. As such, old creations are being replaced by new ones which seem fitter to survive. The life hereafter is, similarly a continuation of this process, the renewal of forms, in which man might seek completion of his evolution.

FINAL GOAL

However, it must be kept in mind that the final goal of the evolution of man is not complete union with God Almighty as is usually understood by some mystics. That is neither desirable nor possible. Man cannot fuse into the Highest Being. At best, he can approach a little closer. We see the sun by its light. That does not mean that we have fused or united with the sun. Similarly, a spiritual illumination by the Divine light does not make us mingle with God. We still remain apart as a distinct entity. It is merely a manifestation of His attributes which we witness. It is not possible to behold the Almighty. If it was, He would be confined within the limits of human comprehension. In Islam, not even a prophet can identify himself with God. His so called 'connection' is therefore only functional. Whatever a prophet is, is 'borrowed' i.e. he is only by the grace of God. But God is original independent the Supreme Being.

The climax of the evolution of man is not to merge in the Divine but to become subservient to it. The progress of man lies in the progress of his obedience and not in his faculty to

merge in the Ultimate Ego. If such a union were possible, even thinkable, then the Ultimate Ego would become limited to the dimensions of human thought which is an impossibility.

The evolution of man is therefore the succession of forms, each new form being an improvement upon the old, Creation goes on in evolution, not in repetition.

‘Everyday He is creating anew. (55 : 29)

With the creative process, new forms go on emerging in place of old ones. As the new forms are on the whole improved ones, the process may not be called ‘repetition’ but ‘evolution’. Creation and evolution are simultaneous process which proceed hand in hand. At the appearance of new creation, the old forms having served their purpose are being destroyed : they cannot fit in the plan of future evolution.

The return of Jesus Christ, is therefore untenable on the basis of evolution. Iqbal in his ‘Lectures’ says ‘No doubt, one important feature of Magian culture is a perpetual attitude of expectation, a constant looking forward to the coming Zoroasters’ unborn sons the Messiah are the Paraclete of the Fourth Gospel . . . Ibn Khaldun . . . has fully criticised and, I believe, finally demolished the alleged revelational basis in Islam of an idea similar . . . to . . . (the one) which had reappeared in Islam under the pressure of Magian thought’.

Is the physical evolution of man the final purpose of this creation? Or, is he to proceed beyond the existing life to evolve into something new and final so as to complete this process of creative evolution? Or, is evolution an infinite process which knows no end? These are different questions which require considerable thinking to be answered.

If we keep in view the theory of the Renewal of Forms, the process of evolution becomes a stream in which life seems to flow continuously so as to discharge itself into an unfathomable ocean, from where again the process is continued through a cycle of evaporation and condensation. It is because ‘everything returns to its original’.

The cycle is not a change in the nature of entity nor is it

a repetition of the creative process, it is simply a change in the life, cycle which denotes the change in form. Nor is this reunion a total absorption in the source, it is merely retreat unto the source.

From reunion again, it must not be understood to mean that the Ego merges into the Ultimate Ego. What reunion signifies is a moving into a closer vicinity of Him. That is to say, the goal of Ego's insistence is not to lose his individuality but to proceed closer to God. Union with God implies neither identification nor absorption.

The life hereafter is thus a continuation of the life in this world, and only subject to the process of renewal of forms. It is towards this fact that the Holy Qur'an has thus pointed :

'From state to state shall ye surely be carried (forward).

(30 : 9)

To illustrate what has been said above, let us see what happens to a spermatozoa after the impregnation or to a seed after implantation. As they grow, they go on changing form after form, never returning to the same again. The old forms are destroyed and new ones spring up till they develop into a full grown man or tree. The culmination of a full grown being takes place after the destruction of the old forms. A continuous process of lives substituting other lives takes place subtly and imperceptibly. Even when man or tree, is fully grown, its cells are being replaced every moment by new cells. The entire physical structure of man is being renovated piece-meal and at every step he stands as a new individual. The process of evolution is, therefore, infinite and unlimited. And each new being, as we have said, is an improvement upon its predecessor.

And unless each subsequent creation is an improvement upon the antecedent, the process of evolution will remain meaningless.

God's creation comprises of an infinite variety of things each of which can be considered as a miniature world in itself. Every component of the universe would seem to be a micro-

cosm. Look at the photograph of an atom for example. It is a universe in itself. Each atom consists of a small nucleus approximately 10^{-12} cm. in diameter, surrounded by a large empty region 10^{-3} cm. in diameter in which electrons move, somewhat like planets about the sun.

Each of His creations has a set purpose to fulfil irrespective of whether it comes from the vegetable world or animal world or the world of mankind. Just as their shapes differ, their functions also differ. Each one of them has separate properties, characteristics and nature. This is their destiny or 'taqdir'. For instance, the distances of the heavenly bodies from each other are predetermined with a view to best facilitate the discharge of their functions. This predetermination is a part of their destiny. It is, therefore, essential that each one of them should have a different role to play in the scheme of nature and if they cannot come up to the standards laid down for them, they are considered to have failed in the purpose for which they were created. Take, for example, the case of a cow or a horse. It is not the mere forms but the functions they are destined to perform which give them their names. It is for this reason that we find so many varieties of animals have disappeared from the surface of the earth. We now learn from their fossils that they had been in existence. They have disappeared in the process of evolution simply because the change in environment exhausted their usefulness and they could no longer serve the purpose for which they had been created. Similarly in future if the Camel the horse and the cow lose their usefulness, they would disappear from the scene of existence.

Will man also lose his usefulness? The answer is, so long as the present scheme of things continue, he will not. For his usefulness is not dependent upon his form which is only a means to an end. It is primarily his qualities—adaptability, intelligence and spirit—which count.

PURPOSE OF CREATION

Man has been created with a set purpose which God Almighty disclosed at the time of Adam's inauguration in the

following words :

'I am about to place My khalifah upon the earth'.
(2 : 30)

The word 'khalifah' used in the Qur'an means a representative, a viceroy, a vicegerent. This responsibility is the purpose for which man has been created. Before offering man the position of khalifah, God Almighty offered this status to His other creations but they were reluctant to shoulder this responsibility. Says the Holy Quran :

'Surely We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains. But they refused to undertake it and feared from it and man undertook it. Surely he is indeed unjust ignorant'.
(22 : 72)

As such the very acceptance of this responsibility became a purpose—the purpose of his existence. The responsibility expresses our relation not only to God but also to His other creations. It may be noted that man (apart from jinn) is the only creation which can sin, the angels had in fact, protested against man being made God's vicegerent on earth pointing to the follies that man could and would commit. Still God chose man as His vicegerent because He knew that although man was liable to sin, he was nonetheless gifted with qualities of head and heart to cope with the big task. And the performance of the task was made easy by making everything in the world subservient to man.

It is, therefore, the duty of man entrusted with this responsibility to serve his creator with all the knowledge, all the wisdom and all the power God Almighty has bestowed upon him. This is clear from the fact that man was first endowed with knowledge, intelligence and power before being made the vicegerent.

The Holy Qur'an says :

'We have not created Jinn and Insan for any purpose except to be obedient to Our Commandments'.
(27 : 2)

Mujaddid Alf Thani, in his Maktubat interprets the world 'ibadat' in this verse as obedience which he says is meant to break the pride of man by making him look low and insignificant so that he does not trespass the modesty of his being. How purposeful is the drama of the creation of man! God Almighty broke the pride of the angels by making them bow to man and in turn broke the pride of man by making him bow to Himself.

Although this world was specially created for man, he was not created for this world but for world hereafter where he would be rewarded or punished for performing or not performing his responsibility. The purpose of man's creation in this world is that he should obey the Creator. All his instincts and urges should remain subservient to the command of Almighty God. The social, economic and political laws which man might promulgate in this world to govern his affairs must conform to the Divine dictates as laid down in His Word of Command. It is by this alone that he can pave the way to the bliss hereafter.

THE PROBLEM OF EXISTENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

Man, as we have said is a combination of body and soul and has the property of modulated speech. Separately, neither the body nor the soul can be called 'man'. The question as to what is man has been taken up by philosophy, psychology, and thropology, science and religion. Let us see briefly how each of them looks at this question.

Philosophy from the earliest times has laid greater claims but achieved fewer results than any other branch of learning. It has tried to deal with this question by itself but has so far failed miserably. At best, it has partially stressed the spiritual side of man.

Psychology has become confused in mental intricacies and could not lay bare the real facts of man's creation.

Anthropology has worked hard to trace the origion of man but again it could throw no light on the purpose of its creation.

Science could only explain man's anatomy and structure but could go no further. It deals primarily with body which did not exist before it was born and is disintegrated after death.

Religion provides an answer but that too cannot be explained without the aid of scientific investigation. Therefore it is religion and science together that can give us a convincing reply to our problem.

KNOWLEDGE AND INTELLECT

Knowledge and intellect go hand in hand, they are complimentary to each other, the one increasing the other. As man was created superior to the animals, he was given a much greater share of intellect plus the faculty for knowledge. It was this faculty which made him superior to angels and which made them bow before him.

Intelligence is an inborn faculty which has the property of apprehending situations. It keeps growing and is never constant. Its primary function is to bring into focus obscure situations. It is neither acquired nor can be transferred. It fortifies and enhances responsibility and helps man in approaching the goal of life. Its function, then, is the acquisition of knowledge. The two combined have a practical as well as a creative aspect.

Knowledge is the power of interpretation of the symbolic language of nature. A symbol is a part of the human world of meaning. It is on account of knowledge that rational thought arises from the mind of man. Lower animals are not endowed with similar kind of perception. It is the privilege of man alone. In short, this knowledge has been given to man to progress in the conquest of nature which God Almighty has made subservient to him. It is for this reason the Holy Qur'an lays stress on the processes of thought.

The real purpose of man's creation lies in showing full obedience to the commandments of God. It is from Him that he has to seek solution to all his problems. In seeking God's pleasure, man unconsciously locates his own self and begins to apprehend the purpose of creation. Man gains from the search, eventually to find Him within himself. The Holy Qur'an says

that God is nearer to man than his jugular vein. This is tantamount to saying that God is nearer to man than man is to his own self.

Different sections of men have different conceptions of God and hence of themselves. It is for this reason that a pure secular state or secular civilisation is devoid of deeper sense of humanity. The civilisation or state born of the concept of 'One True God' possesses an intense sense of humanity. God and not man is the centre of such a civilisation or state.

There are thinkers who have doubted the real purpose in the scheme of creation. These sceptics have laboured to keep alive doubts in the minds of the doubtful. Such people have not faithfully thought over the work of God, although the book of nature is spread wide open before their eyes. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly stresses this point and directs man to ponder the work of nature, such as the change of night and day, the mountains and what is contained in them, the trees and the fruits the movements of the heavenly bodies. In all, there is the clear manifestation of the power and design of creation. To learn that there are bigger suns in the heavens than our own would itself be awe-inspiring and would bring home to the observer and thinker the Omnipotence of the Almighty. A mere look through the telescope at the rising sun will convince anyone that it is the work of a Supreme Creator. The sun spots amidst the glowing flames are conclusive evidence that it is not a fire in the ordinary sense of the term, that it is not a 'chain reaction' kept alive by atomic bombardment but has a solid core. And all this is so very simple to see and to perceive. The details in this vast creation may not be understood by everyone but its very existence points to a Creator with a purpose. Everything in nature is in perfect harmony and order, beautifully designed, arranged and balanced.

(If there is no All-Wise Maker and Arranger, how all this harmony in the universe has come to be ?)

QURAN—The Final Divine Command

THIS is The blessed book which we have revealed upon you so that people may ponder its verses and men of understanding may seek guidance from it.

(XXXVIII, 29).

I am leaving one thing amongst you. If you hold on fast to it you will never go astray. What is that thing? It is the book of Allah.

(*Bukhari & Muslim*)

After the initial creation of Man (Insan), and the subsequent inauguration of Adam as the Vicegerent of God on earth, there was need for his guidance. From time to time thereafter, God Almighty revealed to Adam and the Prophets that followed. His Divine Word for the daily guidance so that man may progress and beautify this earth and reduce the misery of his fellow beings. This guidance was in the form of a message of varying dimensions, which was revealed for the last time fourteen hundred years ago in the form of the Holy Quran, and which the Almighty vouchsafed upon Himself to preserve.

This was the final form of his message. It was self-contained for all times. It was the book of practical philosophy to enable man to lead a useful life. In it were contained all the Do's and Dont's of life. In this were given thoughtful instructions for the future welfare of Man. It was the final word of God : for, Prophethood having finalised culminated in the personality of Muhammad (OWBP), and a seal was put on future revelations and prophethood.

DAYS OF PROSPERITY

So long as the Muslims abided by these Commandments in their pristine purity they flourished in every walk of life. They progressed to lead the nations and leave distinct footprints for the coming nations to follow on. Unfortunately, the moment the Muslims forgot the true teachings of this Holy Book they went astray and lost all what they had acquired. Their going astray was a matter of their own choice and responsibility. No one led them astray but their own selves. Relaxations in the limits prescribed by Allah brought them nearer to their doom. They gave new meanings to the scriptures, which were untenable to the practical thinking of the Holy Quran. They brought in Greek Philosophy to juggle with some of the established facts of life. They tempered with the fixed values of life and thought them to be changing with the changing times, as if it was the law of a supernatural religion and not that of a Natural Religion like Islam.

THE QURANIC IMPACT

The tremendous force generated by the Holy Quran in the early days of Islam, was due to two reasons : firstly the presence of the Holy Prophet (OWBP) who interpreted and implemented the verses of this Holy Book, and secondly, the Holy Quran was the only Book of guidance for the Muslims which brought them out of ignorance to a state of knowledge. This great Book even after the death of the Holy Prophet (OWBP) continued to exert enormous influence and guide the life of the Muslims for the next two hundred years. Actually it was this vital impetus generated in the first two centuries of Islam which enabled it to push forward and has continued to carry along in our days. Influences super-imposed afterwards greatly reduced this momentum of the Holy Quran, because people's attention was being diverted towards the new interpretations that were

creeping in. The Holy Quran was the last word of God after which there was to be no revelation. Hence it was self-contained and complete in every respect for all time to enable man seek His guidance.

Ever since the creation of man, Revelation had been coming to the selected Prophets which were according to the need of the times and the communities. But as civilisation grew complex the message of God also simultaneously kept catering for the life's new requirements and looked after the natural instincts of man. It was virtually an intellectual guidance which kept pace with the development of human mind. At the time of the advent of Islam almost all known civilisations had arisen and tottered. Islam was to usher in the new era of modern civilisation of scientific advancement. Therefore, the guidance which was now required was to be the final and thus supercede all previous revelations which had lost their original force and had become out of date. The Holy Quran was to be the Book of all time to come which would not only indicate an appropriate middle path for the maintenance of a wholesome order, but would also indicate the possibilities of a future progress along which the human mind had to proceed both scientifically and socially. This was a categorical indication. The crux of the problem is that the Holy Quran was to be the main guiding Book from which all advice was to be sought. The Muslims were not to be influenced by any other source except this as indicated in the verses of the Holy Quran quoted above.

EXTRANEOUS INFLUENCES

After the death of the Holy Prophet things seem to have taken a rapid change and two extraneous influences sprang up which diverted the Muslims mind from concentrating upon the teachings of the Holy Quran. It was also natural that the companions of the Holy Prophet should start collecting and preserving the practices and the sayings of the Holy Prophet. In the course of a short period enormous material was collected, each one putting down what

he remembered. In some cases, and in order to excel the other companions, some of them invented the practices to add their own glory, little realising the damage he was doing to the religion of Islam.

The second extraneous influence which affected the Islamic teachings was the emergence of philosophical ideas from the Greeks. This gave rise to Islamic mysticism in the form we see it today. This was further strengthened by Iranian contacts and later by the influence of Hindu Vedantism.

New converts in large number won over from Christians and the Jews brought in adulterated beliefs which the Quran had already condemned. The religious scholars in later days in order to appease the conquering monarch concocted spurious sayings attributing them to the Holy Prophet, unheard of so far, and tried to justify the relaxations imposed upon the Muslims by this newly conquering potentates. Thus the interpretations and relaxations joined hands to dilute the dynamic force of the practical philosophy of the Holy Quran. We shall see below in what manner these tactics were put into operation to spoil the fair face of Islam. But the word of God stands untampered for us to see and ponder what departures have been made from its true spirit.

Hindu Vedantism, Greek Philosophy and Iranian mysticism had great influence on Islamic religious thought. They influenced the practical philosophy of the Quran, which is not a Book of mere idea. It is a Book of Do's and Dont's. It cuts at the roots of all intellectual controversies, by presenting clear cut facts of life. It lays down broad principles of action in an organised society. It satisfies all the human instincts collectively. It, therefore, deals with Man as a whole Man, and does not tackle with him part-wise. It is for this reason that it calls itself the natural religion of Man. It has a practical code of life. It is a Book of facts and not theories. In it the values of life do not change, as in other supernatural religions like Christianity and Hinduism. Islamic values are fixed. Truth is truth, and honesty

is honesty. There cannot be two interpretations of the values of life stated variantly in the Holy Quran. They are one and fixed. However, as the values of life have always existed, other religions have also evolved their own philosophies regarding such problems. And when the Muslims came into contact with these religions they suffered an impact of their views and theories thus moulding their thought accordingly. This disturbed the Quranic potential which permitted no variation and stated hard facts of life. The Muslim scholars and savants were so much overwhelmed with these new ideas that they accepted them as alternative interpretations of the Quranic verses. Some such variations had also been introduced by the Jews and the Christians who were the first converts and became the authors of the earliest Islamic exegesis. There were no variations in the understanding of the fundamentals of Islam, such as, its five Pillars. But variations were brought in other ways which became responsible for pacifying the dynamic force of the Holy Quran. I shall enumerate a few examples in the following. They were :

- (1) Deterministic Existentialism.
- (2) Mediation. This was of three types, viz.
 - (a) Prophetic, (b) Messianic and (c) Intermediary in the form of a Wali.
- (3) And other Mystic practices, such as avoidance of Jihad.

There are other factors also which have gone to neutralise the Quranic force, and thus produce lethargy amongst the Muslims. These factors have led to the downfall of the Muslims. The strong intellectual force of the Holy Quran was thus diluted by these extraneous ideas which penetrated the very core of Islam and superimposed accretions over the fair face of Islam. I shall briefly dilate upon these points enumerated above and make clear the effects they produced :

DETERMINISTIC IDEAS

Deterministic ideas brought in their wake the categorical

denial of the Free Will of Man, and hence Man was not thought to be responsible for his actions. This produced chaos in society. Man shunned responsibility. In Islam, Man is held responsible for his acts, if it was not so, the concept of good and evil and reward and punishment would evaporate of nothingness. This influence was cast firstly by the Greek philosophy and later by the Vedantic teaching in India :

Mediation is what is called Intercession, which is a rendering into English of the Quranic word 'Shafaa'. This has again been translated into the vernacular as 'Sifarash' meaning recommendation : This completely alters the meaning of the actual Arabic word. The Quran categorically discourages any such idea of a recommendation or Intercession. Somehow the Muslims have come to believe that not only he will get away in the Hereafter with his sins by the recommendations of his Pir, Wali or the Prophet, but here also in this life he seems to have advocated the measure of recommendations to achieve his worldly ends. This has upset the present-day social and economic order. There is no recommendation acceptable either here or in the hereafter.

The Messianic mediation is of a different type although it has its origin in the same concept of 'Shafaa'. The second coming of Jesus Christ is an un-Islamic idea which has been very cleverly twisted by the early Jew and Christian convert commentators of the Holy Quran.

Then we have the concept of a Wali. This is again derived from the Quran. It means a friend of God. And anyone can be a friend of God if he moves along the prescribed path. He has no special distinctions from the ordinary man. The mystics in Islam have raised their status above that of a prophet. This is ignorance. Even admitting to the Wali a status, it must be appreciated that in the mystic procedure, the status of a Prophet starts where the domain of a Wali ends. Not only this, some interpreters have again mixed up the meaning of the word Wasila which has been used in the Quran in connection

with these Walis. The Quran recommends that people should seek nearness of these Walis (Wasilah), but our interpreters have taken this to mean that people should seek the help or recommendation of these Walis so that they can intercede with God Almighty to get their sins pardoned. This is a most serious situation. Such contradictory ideas which have come into our religion have proved and are proving fatal. This has led to numerous un-Islamic practices.

All these factors which I have described above have combined together to give the religion of Islam an entirely different shape. It has unnecessarily involved the Muslims in unwanted controversies, and are wasting their energies. This is being encouraged by the present-day Mystic trend amongst the Muslims. Mysticism is an escapism from the active commands of the Holy Quran. The mystic philosophy is not dynamic. The mystics in Islam have always avoided Jihad, and we do not find a mention of it in any of their books. Those mystics who preached Jihad were really not mystics but true Muslims who were acting on the teachings of the Quran. These grand mystics were prepared to commit suicide but were not prepared to lay down their life for the sake of their religion in the face of an enemy. They detached themselves from the worldly affairs and said that they had nothing to do with it. This is not the teaching of Islam.

ASHAB-US-SUFFA

There were no such schools of mysticism in the days of the Holy Prophet (OWBP). Ashab us-Suffa were a group of people who were interested in the deeper meaning of religion and they gathered together around the Prophet who taught them the real meaning of the verses of the Quran. There was no esoteric or secret teaching being imparted to them by the Holy Prophet. A lot of capital has been made out of these gatherings. It were these close associates of the Holy Prophet who fought in the way of Allah (Jihad) to attain Martyrdom. It were they who learnt the Quran and carried its word wherever they went.

It were they who spread the gospel of Islam. The mystics were stupified by their activities in later days, and they found escape into monasteries and withdraw within the four walls of the hujras and mosques thus shunning the real struggle of life forsaking Jihad. Alas, the mystics of Islam, with due respect to their propagation work, were the persons responsible for the dilution of the teachings of Islam and for its potential downfall.

The force generated by the Holy Quran in the life time of the Prophet Muhammad (OWBP) was so intense that it did not slow down for the next two hundred years. It would not have slowed down even after this, had there been no large scale conversions from amongst the Jews and the Christians, who brought the impact of their own philosophy and the accretions of the Greek philosophy with them. This coupled with the Iranian mystical leanings exhausted the religious potential of the Quran and marred its practical simplicity and mode of action.

The first commentaries of the Holy Quran were written in the second century Hijra and the first thing we notice in them is the concept of a chosen people which the Muslims have preferred for themselves. This concept had been condemned by the Holy Quran. The Christians and the Jews also used it for themselves. Here we see the Muslims falling a prey to the same false idea. Not only this, but they also take it for granted that the Jews and the Christians are two nations upon whom the wrath of God has fallen for all time. The Muslims started taking this for granted that these two ancient nations had been condemned for all time, and now it was them that were the chosen people of God who were entitled to all the recompense here and in the hereafter, what ever be their actions. This struck at the root of all Islamic activity, and paralysed Muslim society. I am not going to go into the details of this problem, but to the careful reader of the Holy Quran it is crystal clear that the Holy Quran does not support any such view in which any particular nation is preferred or favoured. Everyone has to seek his reward according to his belief and his deeds.

We thus see that the force of mysticism and philosophy attacked the practical philosophy of the Quran by a double pronged attack, one from the Greek Philosophy and the other from Persian mysticism. Greek philosophy was translated into Arabic and thus influenced the Muslim thinkers, and the Zoroastrian remnants of Iranian mysticism found its way into Muslim thinking by way of the Persian converts to Islam. Both had a paralysing effect on the dynamic spirit of Islam. The dynamic ego of the Holy Quran was subdued by the passive teachings of these pacifying philosophies, whose main concern was to find an escape from this world of struggle. Controversies raged between the Determinists and the Free Willers. Secret societies like the Ikhwan-us-Safa were created to spread stiltifying thoughts to the masses. Murders took place upon the question whether the Quran was created or un-created. Grave worship started with full force and we see a long line of saints spreading throughout the Islamic world doing enormous damage to the cause of Islam rather than doing any good.

The concept of the return of Jesus Christ brought in its wake several other side-issues, important one being the concept of a Reformer, who was to appear at the end of each century, and along with this came the idea of the Alif Thani, that is to say, a Reformer who comes at the end of thousand years. This is a very ancient pre-Islamic idea found in several religions and has an astronomical background, and perhaps can be traced back to the Vedas and the Gathas.

SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY

As the Muslim empire grew, social and cultural influences also increased. With these increased the stresses and strains seeking justifications for relaxations in the limitations prescribed by Islam. Schools of theology sprang up taking sides to justify the stand of each, thus bringing in more deviations, diversions and dilutions in the pristine purity of the religion of God. There was not one pillar of Islam which was not violated and which did not suffer

ridicule. Prayers, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj, and even belief in the Prophets and God, all suffered at the hands of these new interpreters. The prohibitions and permissions of the Quran were confused. There was actually no need for all this. The Quran is quite clear on every aspect of its orders. But the thinking power of the Muslims was paralysed in such a manner that it did not give any one time to ponder over the controversies. Education became the monopoly of a select few.

The Holy Quran was wrapped in tapestries and put above board to be taken out only on ceremonies.

With the intellectual and religious degradation of the Muslims came their political downfall and they lost their empires one by one. It is only within this century that the Muslims have started to revive their lost sense of proportion. It has taken them two centuries to wake up. But even now they do not seem to be reconciled to a proper reorientation and reform to ameliorate the damage done by them to their own religion. The Muslims do not seem to realise that the Quran does not allow this sort of a lethargy and departure from truths for very long. Sooner or later it brings people round to its own way of thinking. It does not spare intruders who trespass its prescribed limits. It has again and again brought home to us the fate of those nations who went astray. This in itself is an eye opener, for those that have eyes to see.

EMOTIONALISM

Then came a period in Muslim history when they were swept away by emotionalism. This was a time when Rationalism was divorced from Reason. This again happened under the influence of Greek Philosophy, otherwise the Holy Quran was advocating Reason all along. The Quran has no soft corner for emotions. It is an advocate of Reason—'Aql'. 'Ishq'—Emotion is not only un-Quranic but also un-Islamic'. Under the stress of extraneous mysticism, the Muslims fell a prey to emotionalism, and destroyed the spiritual virality of reason. Reason is the weapon of self-defence, of moderation and of progress. It is also Taqwa

with which the man is attired for self-preservation. All this while the Quran has stood its own ground. Its very words that were revealed on the first day are preserved to this day. It is the greatest miracle of all times. Allah is its guardian. It is not to be tampered with. Not a single word of its text has changed. It is for us to see where the sense has been made to look differently.

The Holy Quran threw a challenge to mankind to produce a single verse like it. No one could dare do it. No one has produced a single line to compare with it. Yet, non-Muslims had the audacity to call it the word of Muhammad (OWBP). Far from it, they forgot that the word of Muhammad was preserved in his traditions and sayings ; could the language which was so different from that of the Quran be not compared and the difference made out, as to which was the Divine word and which the utterance of the Holy Prophet ?

Subsequently, the religion of God was split up into various schools, which labelled themselves differently, such as, Ahl-i-Quran, Wahabis, Ahl-i-Hadith, Chakralvis, Qadianis, Pervezis, Mawdoodis, and what not. But where the Muslim was lost could not be made out. They all formed their small mosques separately. It is regrettable to note that they all departed from the true spirit of Islam. Not one has remained within the fold of true Islam. They are engaged in controversies, which puts a stop to all further human progress, and yet they all call themselves progressive and true Muslims. They have struck at the root of Islamic Unity.

Then came a time in the history of Islam when the theory of abrogated verses was put forward. This was to suit the whims of certain minds who did not wish to see the Muslims progress. Every time a new theory was produced proof was sought from the Holy Quran. And the controversies raged ! The number of such abrogated verses dwindled from the time of As-Sayyuti to Shah Wali Ullah, till their number came to be reduced to three. The actual fact is that there are no abrogated verses in the Holy Quran. How can there be such verses when

Allah has taken upon Himself to safeguard the Holy Word? If there be abrogations it amounts to saying that the Book does not exist as it was on the day of its Revelation: The truth is to the contrary. It is a whole and complete Book without the alteration of a single diacritical stroke, and stands as it stood on the day the revelation was completed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad (OWBP).

The fact of the whole story is that the Quran is a Book which contains its own interpretation. Any historical details may be the concern of historians, but its commandments, in so far as they concern the practical philosophy of life, need no interpretation. What it says is the truth and nothing but the truth. It stresses on belief in one true God, its angels and Prophets. It lays down upon every believing Muslim five prayers a day, and thirty days of fasting. It enjoins you to pay the Zakat, which is a tax not to be confused with Income Tax. Things which it prohibits are prohibited in clear terms and there is no vagueness about them. It is futile to twist meanings into the words of God other than what He has clearly said. It pronounces the greatest rewards for honest living and for social service. It condemns adultery, theft, black marketing, dishonest dealings, and smuggling !!! It deprecates back-biting, political opposition and intrigues.

The Quran upholds one party system of Government, any opposition in the government leads to anarchy which Islam does not tolerate. Its entire fabric is woven round unity—unity of worship, unity of government, unity of purpose and unity in the rank and file of its followers.

Thus Holy Quran is a book of Unity—Tawhid. It is a great book which brings the people together whoever wish to stand together. The human being for the unfolding of his existence must live by a constitution properly laying down a law which suits his temperament, and the Holy Quran is the book of human constitution which defines the limits of man's activity. It is book of balanced evolution. If it is not abided by, there is likely to be revolution and chaos. It is book of human rights

and responsibilities, from which there is no escape. It is because of these various diversions that we find the Muslim society disorganised. There is no unity left in their rank and file. There is great disparity and inconsistency between the Principles of Quran and the Muslim practices.

With these laxities came the laxity in the acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge according to the Holy Quran is scientific knowledge, which comes after pondering the various aspects of creation. Human progress depends on the utilisation of such knowledge for the betterment of the lot of society by implementing the information acquired from natural sources and till such time this remained the attitude of the Muslim scholars the Muslims progressed and made scientific advances. They harnessed nature and put it to use for bettering the lot of humanity.

I have rapidly traced the trend of Muslim thought above and show to some extent how the Muslims neglected the true principles propounded by the Quran and went astray to get entangled in controversies, which drowned them in ignorance. This is all against the constitution of the Holy Quran. And this is what has happened to the Muslims at large.

But the Holy Quran stands where it was 1400 years ago, still pointing a clear cut way to victory and spiritual and social bliss, unadulterated and untempered in its word and spirit. The strength of the nation still lies in unity. It is the principle directing force in the life history of nations. The Muslims must hold fast to this if they desire to be successful in their purposeful aims.

ADDRESS TO MAN

The Holy Quran is a unique book and very unlike the other scriptures, it is direct address to man pointing out the way how he has to behave in adverse situations in this world. Its principles are applicable in every society, in every clime and for all times. This is its greatest miracle.

There are quite a few verses of the Quran which have not yet fully unfolded themselves. This unfolding is going on with

the progressive times and with growing needs of society. Unfortunately again, the religious scholars labelled such verses as abrogated : This was clearly an admission of the lack of understanding of such verses on their part. And because knowledge had ceased to flow to them, their thinking power was paralysed and they thought best to declare that such verses should not be pondered by the common Muslim unless he was endowed with special knowledge. It was a great misfortune, and brought about further ignorance of the Muslim masses. Most of these verses pertain to scientific knowledge, and because these scholars were deprived of scientific knowledge they planned to keep the masses away from real knowledge by these tactics : The crux of the problem is that Islam is a religion of the whole man, it is a single indivisible reality and cannot be split up into a duality or departments at the sweet will of those self-made scholars. It is the natural religion of man with fixed values of life which are unchangeable. There is no duality even between matter and spirit, or body and mind. Iqbal has truly said. "The human being is body when you look at it as acting in regard to what we call the external world. It is mind, or soul when you look at it in regard to the ultimate aim of such acting".

Gospel of Barnabas

It has been a custom with the non-Muslim Orientalists to call everything false or fabricated, which establishes and confirms the truth of the Faith brought by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (OWBP) especially when found in their own scriptures.

It is now 1,400 years since the advent of Islam, and the Quran has been translated in almost all the languages of the world. It has given ample time to the non-Muslim intellectuals to ponder its contents. No one has really been able to contradict its challenges to human thought which has time and again been going astray from the straight path of the worship of One God. No one has had the moral courage to openly accept the truth of the Quranic revelation, although in their heart of hearts most non-Muslim intellectuals have started to believe in One Creator, the God of all. This is decidedly a Quranic impact: yet, they do not declare it openly. On the other hand they continue to make insinuations against the fair teachings of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

ANIMOSITY

I do not deny that there have been a few sympathetic voices, but does it make any difference when the whole world is out to anathematise the teachings of the Quran and along with it the Muslims. I ask two questions from the non-Muslim scholars. Have the Muslims ever written anything against their scriptures or holy prophets? And, secondly have they ever written anything against each other? Why are they all united against Islam, and all their efforts are concentrated against the religion of the Quran? The answer is not far to seek. Modern psychology can easily thrash its pros and cons. But I shall leave

the answer to the people themselves. I am sure they can find it. Let me now introduce the subject.

Like the Hindu Gita, the Christian Gospels have also had several versions. And it is a strange anomaly that both the true Gita and the Gospel are not extant amongst the irfollowers. Efforts have been made to prove that what exists is really true and the revealed word of God.

Al-Beruni has quoted from a Gita which to him appeared to convey the nearest to true teachings of the Upnashids, depicting the belief in One God, but Dr. Schau, the translator of 'Al-Beruni's India,' has ridiculed him in his annotations, and says, "The quotations given by Al-Beruni cannot have been given from the Bhagvad Gita in its present form. Admitting even that the translator translated as literally and accurately as possible (and the text of Al-Beruni does not give this impression) there remain a great number of passages which on no account could be derived from the present Sanskrit text simply because they do not exist there. Or has Al-Beruni translated a commentary of the Bhagvad Gita, instead of the original?"

This is an unjustified attack, and reveals the ignorance of the great orientalist. I shall not comment on this, but let the great Hindu Gita scholar, Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak, refute him. In his well known commentary of the Gita known as Gita Rahasaya, Tilak says, "We find that the word Gita is applied not only to Bhagvad Gita of 700 verses but also in an ordinary meaning many other works dealing with spiritual knowledge. For instance, Pinglagita, Sampakagita, Mankigita, Bhodyagita, Vicakkhgita, Haritagita. Vertagita, Parasaragita and Hamsagita..... Besides these there are Gitas also which are well known such as the Avadhutagita, Astvakaragita Isragita Uttragita Kapilagita." (Vol I page 4 of the Introduction).

There are several others mentioned but I am omitting their names for the sake of convenience. It is surprising that Dr. Schau did not have an exact knowledge of the true facts. He houlds have known that there were other Gitas existing besides

the Bhagvad Gita, and Al-Beruni had selected the one which to him appeared to carry the truth.

However, what I wanted to convey was this, that the original religion of man was one and carried the same fundamental teaching of the worship of One God, the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of all alike. This was revealed in all the scriptures, but this teaching had been tampered with for reasons well known to the students of comparative religion and philosophy. Islam the last great religion had come to revive and re-establish this belief. Al-Beruni pointed out that the true Hindu religion was the belief in One God, as given out in the Gita ; and it was the philosophy of Advaita (Tawhid), which is the belief in One True God, and there is no Trinity which was a later development against the revealed religion. "God does not disperse Himself in individual things or natural things," (S. Radhakrishnan. 'Eastern Religions and Western Thought. Page 211. London, 1940).

Similarly, we find in the Christian religion that various Gospels have existed, amongst which were those which depicted the true teachings of Jesus Christ, or very near to it, but which were discarded because the false belief in the Trinity had come in, which Jesus had denied.

THE GOSPEL

Just as the true teachings of the Gita were discarded, similarly the Gospel of Barnabas has been discarded by the Church under the pretext that it is a fabrication, or perhaps, has been amended by the Muslims ! George Sale in his Preliminary Discourse to his translation of The Koran (Vol. I Page 98, London 1812) says, "The Mohammadans also have a Gospel in Arabic attributed to St. Barnabas, wherein the history of Jesus Christ is related in a manner very different from what we find in the true Gospels, and corresponding to those traditions which Muhammad has followed in his Koran." He says again on the same page, "this book appears to be no original forgery of the Muhammadans, though they have no doubt interpolated and

altered it since, the better to serve their purpose."

The truth of the matter is that this Epistle of St. Barnabas is an apocryphal work of the New Testament which is admitted by all schools of Christian thought. Originally it had a quasi-canonical authority and was found in an early manuscript of the Bible. Early Christians undoubtedly attributed it to Barnabas, a companion of Paul. This Epistle was written in Alexandria in the year 70-79 A.D. 'The American Peoples Encyclopaedia'. (Vol. 3. Page 3-075). It also says, "It is an important work because its author was the first of the Apostolic Fathers."

Before I start discussing the contents of the Gospel, let me say something about the Gospel and its author. Very recently this Gospel has been published by Lt-Col. M. A. Rahim of Karachi with the benevolent assistance of Begum Aisha Bhawany Wakf. Col. Rahim has printed this from a photo off-set copy published in Oxford in 1907. The Colonel has written a brief but brilliant introduction to it, and has added three appendices giving details about the author and the Gospel. In appendix III it is stated, "In the fourth year of Emperor Zeno (578 A.D.) the remains of Barnabas were discovered and there was found on his breast a copy of the Gospel of Barnabas written by his own hand (Acia Sanctorum, Toland Junii Tome II, pages 422 and 450 Antwerp 1698). The famous Vulgate Bible appears to be based on this Gospel. Toland in his Miscellaneous Works (published posthumously in 1747. Vol. I. page 380) mentions that the Gospel of Barnabas was still extant. In Chapter XV he refers to the Glacian Decree of 496 A. D. where *Evangelicum Barnabas* is included in the list of forbidden books."

From the above quotations it will have become amply clear that the Gospel was composed long before the advent of Islam. Not only that, it was forbidden long before Islam came into existence. The question of the Muslims forging or tampering with this Gospel therefore does not arise. The Muslims could

not have forged or amended it to suit their own teaching because the dates on which it was composed and proscribed are both prior to Islam. It remains now to be seen what disturbing contents are there that make the Christians feel uneasy. George Sale's remark that the Muslims possessed an Arabic version, does not mean that it were the Muslims only who knew the Arabic language. This area also had a vast population of Jews and Christians whose mother tongue was Arabic, and for their sake the rendering into Arabic must have been necessitated, and it existed before the advent of the Muslims. We thus see that all the arguments of the notable Christian scholars to put the blame on the Muslims is not at all justified. They are merely trying to evade the responsibility of tampering with the true teachings of Jesus Christ by their own people, just as they did with the Old Testament.

Let us now study the contents of this Gospel and see why the Christians disclaim it. The Gospel is divided into 222 chapters each one containing teachings of Jesus on precise subjects. Some times questions are put to him by the disciples and sometimes Jesus himself, in order to explain important problems, asks his disciples about them and then corrects their answer. The main theme on which the Christians are upset are two : namely, Jesus Christ denying that he is the son of God, and secondly, Muhammad (OWBP) is mentioned by name as the coming messenger of God. Indeed the name of Muhammad (OWBP) has very greatly upset them.....But they forget that his name also appears in the other Gospels in the form of Paraclete or comforter, which they have now completely done away with in the most recent and modern editions of the old and the New Testament !

EARLIER CHAPTERS

The first few chapters are concerned with the birth of Christ and his very early life, especially when he starts to preach and heal the sick and the lepers. One thing is very noticeable in his early life, and it is his purifying himself for the three daily

prayers performed in the morning, at midday and dusk. In his manner of prayers the three modes standing, bowing and prostration are very noticeable. It is a well known fact that prayers were prescribed for all the Prophets as mentioned in the Holy Quran. Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, was asked to observe it. All of them have obviously been saying their prayers in the manner the Muslims offer them today. It is also clear that all of them must have also performed the ablutions in the same manner in which the Muslims do today. This has been the Divine teaching for all the religions all the time.

The first indication of Tawhid and the coming of Muhammad (OWBP), appears in the 17 Chapter, where Jesus, when replying to a question by Philip, says, "God is a life without which there is naught that liveth, so great that He filleth all and He is everywhere. He also hath no equal. He hath no beginning nor will he ever have an end, but to everything He hath given a beginning, and to everything he shall give an end. He hath no father nor mother, He hath no sons nor brethren, nor companions. And because God hath no body therefore He eateth not, sleepeth not, dieth not, walketh not, moveth not, but abideth eternally without human similitude, for that He is incoporeal, uncompounded, immaterial, of most simple substance."

This chapter also carries the first indication about Prophet Muhammad (OWBP). It runs as follows: "But after me shall come the splendour of all the Prophets and the holy ones, and shall shed light upon the darkness of all that the Prophets have said because he is the messenger of God. "Muhammad's (OWBP) name is not mentioned here. If the Muslims had so wished they could have easily inserted it, in place of the word messenger. In chapter 26 Jesus says, "Every word of mine is true, because it is not mine, but God's." This is an indication that the Gospel originally was a revelation from God.

Further on the story of Abraham is related in some detail. He is depicted as the image breaker. This is very similar to the one described in the Holy Quran, but with slight difference. There are, in fact, many other stories common to the Bible

and the Quran. It was necessary, for they pertain to the same regions and tribes and carry the same lessons. Abraham had also come like Jesus to preach, and so had Moses. They had all to repeat the same lessons of history, in order to bring the people round to the true teachings of revealed religion.

One thing is not clear to me, and it is this : why did the Muslims have to pick up this particular Gospel of Barnabas to make amendments when it was not considered reliable by the Christians ? Why did they not pick up any of the other four which were the favourites of the Christians. And why was this Gospel of Barnabas proscribed before the advent of Islam ? Certainly at that time there was no possibility of the Muslims tampering with its contents. There must have been something very objectionable from the point of view of Christian belief which they did not relish. This can be nothing else but the one described above ! So it is futile to blame the Muslims. I am afraid the Church has been unable to explain. It is obvious that the reason for its being discarded was that Jesus had denied that he was the son of God, and that Muhammad (OWBP) was coming to complete religion and put the seal to the line of prophethood.

NAME MENTIONED

Chapter 39 carries the name of Prophet Muhammad (OWBP) for the first time in this Gospel. It is recorded in a conversation between God and Adam. Adam having sprung up on his feet, saw in the air a writing, that shone like the sun, which said, "There is only one God and Muhammad is the messenger of God." Whereupon Adam opened his mouth and said, "I thank Thee O Lord, my God that Thou hast deigned to create me but tell me, I pray Thee, what meaneth the message of these words, "Muhammad is the messenger of God "Have there been other men before me ?"

Then said God, "Be thou welcome, O my servant Adam. I tell thee that thou are the first man whom I have created. And he whom thou hast seen mentioned is thy son who shall come into the world many years hence, and shall be My messenger, for

whom I have created all things and shall give light to the world when he shall come, whose soul was set in a celestial splendour 60,000 years before I made anything."

When one reads this passage one is naturally inclined to see an Islamic spirit in it, for it gives so much preference and precedence to the Prophet of Islam, and a Christian would indeed feel that it is an insertion by the Muslims, to establish certain verses of the Holy Quran. But when we go into the history of proscribing this Gospel, we find that the Gospel was forbidden for the Christians almost over a hundred years before the advent of Islam. The Muslims believe the Quran to be the last word of God Almighty, in which there are no contradictions, nor lies. They must therefore think accordingly. The Quran mentions the prophecies about the coming of the Holy Prophet (OWBP) in the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians in clear terms. An example will not be out of place here Says the Holy Quran."

"Those who follow the Prophet, the unlettered prophet, when they find written down with them in the Taurt (Old Testament) and the Injil (New Testament), he biddeth them to be seemly and prohibiteth unto them the unseemly, alloweth unto them things clean and forbiddeth unto them things unclean and relieveth them of their burden and the shackles which have been upon them. Those who believe in him and side with him and succour him and follow the light which hath been sent down with him, those shall fare well."

Is it not then the duty of the Muslims to point it out to the Christians and the Jews the prophecies made in their scriptures about their Holy Prophet (OWBP). In the non-Muslim world today there are very few intellectuals left who do not believe in One God. They may not profess it openly, but in their hearts of hearts they are convinced that what Islam has reintroduced them with is the correct religion. The Christians have become doubtful about the nature of Christ, and him being the son of

God. The Hindus are giving up the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara interpreted from the symbols of AUM, and coming back to the worship of true OM the Creator, the Destroyer and the Sustainer !

A very interesting passage appears in chapter 72. It runs, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither be ye fearful, for I have not created you, but God our Creator who hath created you will protect you. As for me, I am now come to the world to prepare the way for the messenger of God, who shall bring salvation to the world. But beware that ye be not deceived for many false prophets shall come, who shall take my words and contaminate my Gospel."

False prophets are therefore not the fashion of our day. The practice is a very old one. Even Jesus was aware of it. And they appeared even in the time of our Holy Prophet (OWBP). Jesus was also aware that people had been prone to mutilate Holy word from early times. Jesus knew that the Old Testament text had been tampered with. He, therefore, warned his disciples to refrain from altering the words which he utters. This would be direct interference with the revealed word of God, which is the biggest crime in his eyes. He therefore spoke in very strong terms warning them about it.

NATURE OF FAITH

Chapter 90 has a brief description about the nature of Faith. Says Jesus Christ, "Faith is a seal whereby God sealeth his elect : which seal He gave to his messenger, at whose hands everyone who is elect hath received the faith. For even as God is one so is the faith oneby faith are saved all the elect of God." This is very important passage from the Islamic concept of Nijat, i.e., Salvation. Also, Faith I presume here means Iman in the Islamic sense. In Islam Iman or Faith is defined as the belief in God, His Angels, His Books, the Prophets (OWBP), and the Last day of Judgement. And as it has been brought out here that Faith is one, I further assume that it is pointing to the fact that DIN has always been one the prescribed way of life by God Almighty. Faith in the sense of DIN was

completed and finalised in Muhammad (OWBP). Muhammad (OWBP) was thus the last of the line of Prophets.

The Christians commonly believe that Jesus was the son of God born of virgin Mary. In the present Gospel we find in several places Jesus denying this privilege. In Chapter 93 we find the following dialogue :

Then Jesus having lifted his hands in token of silence said, "Verily ye have erred greatly, O Israelites, in calling a man your God. And I fear that God may for this bring heavy plague upon the holy city, handing it over in servitude to strangers. O a thousand times accursed Satan that has moved you to this."

"Having said this Jesus smote his face with his hands, whereupon arose such a noise of weeping that none could hear what Jesus was saying. Whereupon once more he lifted up his hand in token of silence, and the people being quieted from their weeping, he spoke once more. 'I confess before heaven and I call to witness everything that dwelleth upon this earth, that I am a stranger to all that ye have said, seeing that I am man, born of mortal woman, subject to the judgement of God, suffering the miseries of eating and sleeping, of cold and heat, like other men. Wherefore when God shall come to judge, my words like a sword shall pierce each one of them that believe me to be more than man.'

What more elucidation is required to give one a truer picture of the nature of Jesus Christ? In several places in this Gospel, Jesus Christ has refuted his followers' assertion that he is the son of God. In fact, he was very annoyed when they talked in such terms with him. It is perhaps the refutation of this popular and prevalent Christian concept which the Church did not like, and for which reason the Gospel under discussion was proscribed.

A very interesting conversation appears in chapter 97. It proceeds : The priest answered, "After the coming of the messenger of God shall other Prophets come ?"

Jesus answered, "There shall not come after him true

Prophets, sent by God, but there shall come a great number of false prophets, whereat I sorrow....."Then said the priest," How shall the Messiah be called, and what sign shall reveal his coming?

Jesus answered, "The name of the Messiah is admirable, for God himself gave him the name when he had created his soul and placed it in a celestial splendour.....Mohammad is his blessed name. "Then the crowd lifted up their voices, saying. O Lord send us thy messenger : O Mohammad, come quickly for the salvation of the world."

James answered, "O Master if perchance there shall come a false prophet and a lying teacher pretending to instruct us, what ought we to do? (Chapter 123).

Jesus answered in parable : "A man goeth to fish with a net and therein he catcheth many fishes, but those that are bad he throweth away.....Varily I say unto you that if the truth had not been erased from the book of Moses, God would not have given to David our father, the second. And if the book of David had not been contaminated, God would not have committed the Gospel to me ; seeing that the God our Lord is unchangeable, and hath spoken but one message to all men. Wherefore the messenger of God shall come, to cleanse away all wherewith the ungodly have contaminated my book." (Chapter 134).

In chapter 189 we see Jesus again saying, "If the book of Moses with the book of our father David had not been corrupted by the human traditions of false Pharisees and doctors, God would not have given his word to me. And why speak of the book of Moses and the book of David? Every prophecy they have corrupted so much that today a thing is not sought because God hath commanded it but men look whether the doctors say it, and the Pharisees observe it as though, God were in error, and men could not err."

What truth has been revealed by Jesus Christ here needs serious pondering by the Muslim today. Do they not deserve the criticism in this passage? The Muslims are themselves discarding the word of God and have taken to meaningless interpretations of the ulema. They have stopped to practise what

is in the Quran, but go after what the ulema write. Alas it is for this reason that on the day of judgement our Holy Prophet (OWBP) shall complain to Almighty God, in the following words :

“And the Apostle will say, my Lord : Verily my people took this Quran as a thing to be shunned.”
(25 : 30).

Alas ! The Muslims are very busy today in translating the Quran into various languages and in printing correct versions with accurate diacritical signs : but no one seems to bother about correcting the existing translations, which have been copied from other translations, without pondering what sense is being presented of the Holy Word. Every translation which is made, merely rearranges the words in a new fashion, making confusion worse confounded. This has resulted in corrupting the exact meaning of the Word of God thus leading to spurious practices. The Muslims should take a leaf out of this teaching of Jesus Christ, otherwise they will also suffer the same fate as pointed out by Jesus Christ and in their own Quran.

The last chapters of this Gospel deal with Judas betraying Jesus, and Jesus being carried into the heavens. Some very interesting points arise with respect to this problem, which is rather controversial. There are three different versions of this episode which describe the death and transfiguration of Jesus in three different ways :

- (1) Version of the New Testament,
- (2) Version of the Gospel of Barnabas, and
- (3) Version of an Essene in the Eye-witness Account of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.”

In the New Testament version, Judas, one of the twelve Apostles, conspired to betray Jesus. Jesus was arrested and put on the cross. He was taken off the cross by two kindly Jews, embalmed and entombed. We are told that before handing over the body, the breast of Jesus was pierced with a lance by a soldier on guard, thus drawing blood and serum, which was surprising.

However, before handing over the body, it was made sure that Jesus was dead. Two days later the tomb was visited by Mary Magdalene who found it empty! The same day Christ appeared to two of his disciples and talked with them. Then he disappeared. Forty days after his appearance, it is said, Christ ascended into heavens with his body. "The idea of a being 'translated' into the sky in body and life was familiar to the Jews: they told it of Moses, Enoch, Elijah, and Isaiah. The Master went as mystically as he had come." (Will Durant, 'Caesar and Christ.' Page 573).

The second version is presented by the Gospel of Barnabas. In chapter 215 it is said, "When the soldiers with Judas drew near the place where Jesus was. Jesus heard the approach of many people. Wherefore in fear he withdrew into the house. And the eleven were sleeping.

"Then God seeing the danger of his servant, commanded Gabriel, Michael, Rafael, and Uriel, to take Jesus out of the world.

"The holy angels came and took Jesus out by the window and looketh towards the south. They bare him and placed him in the third heaven in the company of angels blessing God for evermore."

This story is continued into chapter 216, which runs as follows: "Judas entered impetuously before all into the chamber whence Jesus had been taken up. And the disciples were sleeping: Whereupon the wonderful God acted wonderfully. Insomuch that Judas was so changed in speech and face to be like Jesus that we believed him to be Jesus and he having awakened us, was seeking where the Master was. Whereupon we marvelled and answered, "Thou, Lord, art our Master, hast thou now forgotten us?" (It is interesting to note that the eleven were asleep and here was no one awake to witness the dramatic exit :) Thereafter Judas was arrested and crucified. It is said in chapter 218: "Those disciples who did not fear God went by night and stole the body of Judas and hid it, spreading a report that Jesus was arisen again, whence great confusion arose."

The third version is that of an 'Eye witness Account of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ' by an Essene. These Essenes were a Jewish sect. This book is again despised by the Christians. It was first written in 84 A.D. and translated several times in various languages. Its English translation was published in America in 1904. Each time the book was translated and published it was destroyed, but each time a few copies always managed to escape destruction. The English version is a translation from the German copy which was found in a Masonic Lodge.

This version says, that when the body of Christ hung from the cross two of the Apostles went to claim it. The soldier who was on guard pierced the thigh of the hanging Christ with a lance. This brought out blood. Thinking that Jesus could not be dead and there was still life in him (as the blood would not flow if he were dead) they brought the body with them and hid it quietly in a nearby cave, where he was treated for his wound and recovered. He led a normal life for some time in secret, while he still preached to some of his followers on the quiet. One cold morning when it was misty, he was giving a sermon to his followers on the slope of a small hill. After finishing he walked away across the hill and disappeared in the mist. It appeared as if he had been raised through the clouds into the heaven. Shortly afterwards a rumour spread in the town that Jesus had ascended to heaven!

It would be worthwhile to study the Quranic version as well. Says the Holy Quran:

“And for their saying that verily we have slain the (Messiah) Isa, son of Mary and apostle of Allah, whereas they slew him not, nor they crucified him, but it was made dubious unto them.” (4 : 175).

It clearly shows that the matter of the death of Jesus was made doubtful for them. If he was not killed nor crucified, the only method left for him to die was to escape and then to die a natural death! The various versions given above besides the Quran are a repetition of an old belief of the return of the Messiah, which even Iqbal has stated to be of Magian origin on

the authority of the great Jewish philosopher of modern times, namely, Martin Buber! This has also crept into the teachings of Islam. But it must not be lost sight of that Islam is an evolutionary religion and there is no return or repetition. It is an emergent process with absolute Renewal of Forms says the Holy Quran.

“Every day He is in a new affair.” (55 : 29)

POST SCRIPT

Some letters from Christian writers appeared in the correspondence columns of the Pakistan Times, contradicting the thesis of this article, and then eventually the Christian Al-Mushir (VOL XVI, of April, May, and June 1974) published a detailed article by Dr. Jan Slomp entitled Pseudo-Barnabas in which the writer again contradicted the article published in the Pakistan Times. The Pakistan Times in its issue of 20th October, 1974 published the following review :

“The author presumes the gospel to be a Muslim forgery as is suggested by its very title. The research is, therefore, presumptuous. After reading this, one wonders why the Muslims should have forged such a document? The author does not answer this most important question! Was the Quran not sufficient for them to expound the true teachings and the original contents of the New Testament? And one also wonders, that if this was a forgery, why was the Epistle of Barnabas forbidden in the Christian world before the advent of Islam? Was the Epistle also forged by the Muslims? Not a word has been said by the author about this! The fact of the whole story is summarised by the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics VOL VI p. 351 1959, in the following words :
“The stories of an Arabic original are probably my-

thical. A wide spirit of tolerance and charity prevades this astonishing production of a Christian mystic who became a Muslim.....The death of Judas, Ascariot substituted for Christ on the cross, is described here in detail, and is probably a feature of the ORIGINAL GNOSTIC GOSPEL OF BARNABAS."

Life in the Heavenly Bodies

VISITORS FROM OUTER SPACE

INTRODUCTION

The increase of depth in our knowledge which has resulted from Scientific discoveries makes the expanding cosmos look proportionately contracted. Mysteries of the yonder limits of our universes no more now remain as mysteries but have become puzzles for the human mind. No sooner man approaches the solution of one mystery when the one lying ahead poses another puzzle for him. But the human mind is not tired in its pursuit. Man has almost conquered the physical time and space by his supersonic inventions. Journeys over land which were being performed on foot and on horseback in months and days are now being scanned in the split of a minute. The physical reach of man has trespassed the limits of his previous boundaries. With the expectation of scaling the Moon, man is hoping to reach other planets to unravel other mysteries. Man is now occupied with the puzzle whether he shall find the planets inhabited, and whether he will find a counterpart of himself living in them. He is also trying to find if life is possible in the heavenly bodies. Scientists are not yet agreed upon this point as no evidence of water has been found in the heavenly bodies. Certain scientists in U.S.S.R., China and U.S.A. are however convinced of a favourable atmosphere on the planets which would be conducive to the development of life. Already in China and Central Asia, archaeological data has been collected from the caves of Bayana Kara-Ula mountains and certain hieroglyphs deciphered to show that thousands of years ago visitors from the outer space did come down upon our planet in mechanically manouevred vehicles. The inhabitants of this globe saw

them and have depicted them in their drawings in the caves and in terra-cotta figurines showing them as wearing space-suits.¹

THE QUESTION

A question is often posed, "To what extent can we trust the knowledge of the ancients and how are we to treat old knowledge in the light of new facts?" This is a very pertinent question, and in this short paper I propose to say something about it. I shall confine myself to the knowledge as revealed in the Quran and try to bridge the gap.

In the Quran we come across certain definite information on the subject of creation of life upon this earth and in the heavenly bodies and its subsequent evolution. Having studied the modern scientific views and the ancient archaeological lore to some extent, I find from the text of the Quran definite indications of life in the heavenly bodies in exactly the same form in which it exists on our planet today. It must be kept in view that the Quran was revealed fourteen hundred years ago when scientific introspection either did not exist or the people had not yet started to think on these lines. Even the present-day Muslim has a conservative attitude on the subject and due to some unknown reservations he does not like to tackle the scientific potentialities of the Quranic verses. The Muslims believe the Quran to be the last communication from God Almighty which was revealed upon Muhammad the last of His Prophets. The Quran contains eternal truths of life which keep gradually unfolding to reveal the mysteries of creation. Simultaneously with the origin of life and the creation of Man on this planet the Quran talks of life and other living beings on other planets, and of their being brought together at the Will of Almighty.

THE DISCOVERY

Recent archaeological investigations have revealed that "Dropas" or visitors from heaven came down upon this earth about 12,000 years ago.² The hieroglyphs from the caves of the Byan Kara-Ula mountains when deciphered have revealed that the "Dropas" came down from the clouds. The inhabitants of this region saw them. They came with peaceful intentions and stayed on. This script has been found on the

innumerable discs found scattered about in this region. The material of these discs has been tested in U.S.S.R. and found to be made of cobalt. These are thought to be parts of an electric circuit. They vibrate with an unusual rhythm.³ Similar discoveries have been made in several other places like Japan, China, U.S.S.R., Southern Yugoslavia, etc. Figurines have been discovered wearing space-suits as I have mentioned above with hearing-aids and space goggles.

Let me now turn over the pages of the Holy Quran, without further elaboration of the recent discoveries and see what it has to say on this subject.

It is surprising to note that even in the light of historical and archaeological data enumerated above, the human mind is still unprepared to accept the existence of living beings in the heavenly bodies. During the course of this short discussion I shall also try and explain the likely shape of these living beings in the heavenly bodies which they may have at this stage assumed. In the discussion to follow I shall try and maintain a sequence in the verses quoted here so as to cover all the steps of evolution from the very first seed of life.

THE TRUTH

وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي

- (1) And We have created everything living from water
(XXI : 30).

This is a categorical statement of the Quran that all life is created from and in water. The presence of water precludes the existence of oxygen and hydrogen in the atmosphere which are the pre-requisite for the sustenance of life. These two form the bases of biochemistry of life and all the essential ingredients necessary for the development of life are derived from these two.

والله خلق كل دابة من ماء

- (2) And God has created every animal from water
(XXVI: 45).

This means that the animals, which later evolved from this

original single (see *infra*) cell after life had crept out of the sea on to the land had actually originated from water. The word 'dabah' (animal) has further been defined which needs very careful consideration. Says the Holy Quran.

فمنهم من يمشى على بطنه و منهم من يمشى على رجلين و منهم من يمشى على اربع

- (3) There are some amongst those that move on their bellies (reptiles): and there are some that walk on two legs (mammals) and there are other which walk on all the four (quadrupeds) (XXVI : 45).

In the above verse all the three forms of evolution have been described. Nothing falls outside this classification. It is quite clear from the above verses that :

- (a) All life has sprung from water.
 - (b) All living beings were created from water.
 - (c) All the forms of living beings are actually the main forms of the accepted classification of evolution, such as the reptiles, the mammals and the quadrupeds.
- The Holy Quran then, further proceeds :

وهو الذى انشأكم من نفس واحدة ط

- (4) It is He Who has created you from a single cell (VI : 98).

This shows that when life was created in water, it was a single cell from which by a process of binary fission (a process of division by splitting into two equal and like cells) multiplication took place and innumerable specks of life were created. The Quran further says that out of this single cell we have created you in pairs. The single cell which splits into pairs by a process of binary fission is the start of evolution for the seeds of a struggle are inlaid at this stage. Those pairs are equal but opposite.

The verses quoted above throw considerable light on the fundamental aspects of the origin of life and its subsequent evolution. Let us now see what the Holy Quran has to say about the life in the heavenly bodies.

Listen :

و من آياته خلق السموات و الارض و ما بث فيها من دابة

- (5) And among His signs is the creation of the earth and the heavenly bodies and the living creatures that He has scattered through them all (XLII : 29).

I have translated the word 'Samawat' as heavenly bodies. 'Samawat' actually means the cosmos, the universe, and all that is included in it. Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his commentary of the Holy Quran says : "It is reasonable to suppose that life in some form or other is scattered through some of the millions of heavenly bodies scattered through the space".⁴

The word 'dabah' has already been defined in (3) *supra*. There is thus no doubt left as to the existence of all forms of life in the heavenly bodies. It is, therefore, a natural corollary that if life exists in the heavenly bodies water must *ipso facto* exist there also, and so must oxygen and hydrogen, because without them life would not be possible. Hence the desired atmosphere required for the sustenance of life, prevails in the heavenly bodies. Not only this, the Almighty Creator also has a programme of bringing these creations spread out in the various heavenly bodies, together. It says :

و هو على جمعهم اذا يشاء قدير

- (6) And He has power to gather them together when He wills (XLII : 29).

We have today only discovered one re-union in the form of dropas dropping 12,000 years ago ; who can tell how many more may be yet discovered. And how long this has been going on.

Yet another verse which is linked with the above verses will be relevant to quote here :

و ربك اعلم من في السموات و الارض

- (7) And your Lord knows what is in the heavenly bodies and in the earth.

He not only knows but is fully aware what is taking place therein and is looking after their welfare and guiding their lives. His knowledge is not unattended by his bounties. They are not

left neglected nor they were created for fun. He is the creator and the sustainer. There is a purpose behind this. On their part the creatures praise and glorify their Lord as is evident from yet another verse :

يسبح لله ما في السموات وما في الارض الملك القدوس العزيز الحكيم

(8) Whatever is the heavenly bodies and in the earth doth declare the praises and glory of God the Sovereign, the Holy One, the exalted in might, the wise (LXII : 1).

Summarising what has been said above, it is clear now that—

- (a) Life sprang out of water.
- (b) Life multiplied by binary fission into pairs from a single cell.
- (c) The process of evolution culminated in reptiles, mammals and quadrupeds under environmental conditions and the struggle for existence.
- (d) All kinds of animals were spread over the entire universe including the heavenly bodies.
- (e) God Almighty will collect them together when He so desires.
- (f) All the beings on the earth and in heavenly bodies are praising His Glory and are subservient to Him.

Let us now proceed and examine to what stage has the evolution of man been reached in the heavenly bodies. Are the men up there exactly like us or there are some fundamental variations in their physical development ?

EVOLUTION IN THE HEAVENLY BODIES

I am quite clear in my mind that the evolution of life in the heavenly bodies has gone on exactly in the same way as on this earth. Life has after all development out of the same single germ cell and the potentialities inherent in this cell would develop into similar beings wherever the seed was cast except for the minor effects of climatic variation which it would show in its particular environment. And in so far as the intellectual evolu-

tion is concerned there is every possibility of its variation. After all do we not find these differences on our very planet? Are the primitive tribes of Bhils and Gonds in India of the same intellectual calibre as that of the rest of the Indians? Or, for the matter of that, are the American Indians or Negroes of the same intellectual calibre as the rest of the Americans? Well, if there is discrepancy in our own planet why should we not expect similar dissimilarity between the inter-planetary creations? In the article quoted from Sputnik above it is mentioned: "In some of the Bayan Kara-Ula caves archaeologists and speclogists have found 12000 years old vestiges of graves and skeletons. The remains belong to human beings with huge craniums and under-developed skeetons. The Chinese expeditions which discovered the burial grounds reported that they had found an extinct species of apes. But so far as is known apes do not bury each other in graves or write hieroglyphic symbols on stone discs."⁵

This increase in the size of cranium is also being forecast by the scientists in the future human beings inhabiting this earth. Perhaps a greater intellectual activity of the human brain and lesser physical activity is visualised and we today are a witness to this activity. Therefore, for the human beings of other planets to have achieved greater and speedier intellectual excellence than us should not be surprising. If 12,000 years ago they were at a stage where we are just anticipating to arrive, this should not be surprising for us at all. Inventions depend upon the needs of a community. Perhaps their needs were of such a nature so as to have guided them to invent much earlier than us.

From the photograph of the figurine Dogu discovered in Japan and reproduced in this article, it appears that the space traveller 12,000 years ago looked very much like us and came down wearing a space suit with appropriate space goggles. At that time man on this planet was in a primitive state and a cave dweller. Human life, therefore, had developed intellectually milleniums ahead in some of the heavenly bodies as compared with this planet. At the same time life has been developing independently but simultaneously on all the planets.

THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE AND LIFE

The entire universe was created from a gaseous nebula (*dukhan*) which transformed into a single glowing mass which separated by fragmentation on cooling. It was perhaps at this juncture of the cooling of this glowing mass that the single life germ was created, which rapidly multiplied by binary fission so that trillions and trillions of these multiplied germ cells spread over its surface and were scattered along with them at the time of splitting asunder of the glowing mass which formed the heavenly system. Thus life trickled upon each of the heavenly bodies to continue its further evolution under conditions of optimum temperature. Let us now proceed to see how man came into being as such and assumed his present form.



After life had passed on to these heavenly bodies in the form of cells it kept developing independently under favourable conditions which could sustain life and which were equally provided everywhere. The pattern of this single cell contained enormous potentialities and it developed accordingly. Under one such environment man developed to his present form. Man, therefore, is the product of his special environmental conditions. Man is not a link in the long chain of evolution which started on some other planet. In each heavenly body, wherever he may be, man has been developing independently. But he is certainly the creation of God Almighty from one single cell. The atmosphere or environment conducive to his development was, moist but hardened earth in which the cell was embedded and took an appropriate form. This may well have been in some delta, when life crept out of the salty sea into the sweet waters of the rivers. This was happening on each heavenly body. After man was fully developed, his subsequent multiplication was through conjugation which goes through the normal embryonic changes in the womb of the mother. These stages are fully described in the Quran. To quote would unnecessarily enlarge this paper. I shall, therefore, only point to one or two very pertinent verses which would clarify my point.⁶

It would be worthwhile in the meantime to remember that for the initial creation of man, the Quran uses the words '*insan*' and '*bashar*', whereas it reserves the word '*adam*' for His Vicegerent on earth. The great philosopher poet of Islam has in a beautiful manner expressed this point in the following words: "Indeed, in the verses which deal with the origin of man as a living being the Quran uses the words, "*bashar*" or "*insan*", not "*adam*", which it reserves for man in his capacity of God's Vicegerent on earth."

The Quran says :

ولقد خلقناكم ثم صورناكم ثم قلنا للملائكة اسجدوا لادم

(9) We created you, then fashioned you, then said We to the angels prostrate yourself unto Adam (VII : 10).

The prostration, therefore, was not after creation, but after

the fashioning. And this fashioning was in the best of proportions.

لقد خلقنا الانسان في احسن تقويم

(10) We have created man in the best of proportions (XCV : 4).

From these verses it is clear that man was created in two stages viz. (1) A stage of initial creation and, (2) A stage of finishing and fashioning. This also settles the controversy whether Adam was the first man. Actually Adam was only the first person in the line of man who was selected to become the Vicegerent (*Khalifah*) on this earth. If this was not so, the angels in answer to the above command could not have submitted that this man would cause disruption upon the earth. They had no knowledge of the unseen. However, they were watching him behave, and could therefore, predict. Actually man had existed before Adam. Adam was one of the persons in the line of man who was selected for this honorific title.

Now listen to a few more verses regarding the creation of man, so that the story be completed before we proceed further with the man from outer space.

Says the Quran :

الذی احسن کل شیء خلقه و بدأ خلق الانسان من طین

(11) He Who had made everything which He has created most good, He began the creation of man with (nothing more than) clay (XXXII : 7).

But let us see what sort of an earth (clay) it was which was selected for the fashioning of man. Says He again :

انا خلقناهم من طین لازب

(12) Them have We created out of a sticky clay (XXXVIII : 11).

It was a pasty earth indeed from which the human being was fashioned. It was here that the evolution of man in his final shape that he was to attain after the single cell had proliferated, began. But the generation of mankind which developed later as

a result of conjugation was a subsequent act resulting from natural consequences of conjugation. The Quran says regarding this aspect clearly :

من اى شى خلقه

(13) From what stuff hath He created him ? (80 : 18).

And answers thus :

من نطفة خلقه فقدره

(14) From a sperm drop, He hath created him, and then mouldeth him in due proportions (80 : 19).

ثم جعل نسله من سائلة من ماء مهين

(15) And made his progeny from a quintessence of the nature of a fluid despised (XXXII : 8).

This is further elaborated thus :

خلق من ماء دافق

(16) He is created from a drop emitted (Ejaculated) (86 : 6).

Then the Quran summarizes the initial and the subsequent creations together so that we may have a collective look at man's total picture as projected through the above-quoted verses. He says :

يا ايها الناس ان كنتم فى ريب من البعث فا نا خلقنكم من تراب

ثم من نطفة ثم من علقة ثم من مضغة مخلقة وغير مخلقة لنبين لكم

ونقر فى الارحام ما نشاء الى اجل مسمى ثم نخرجكم طفلا

(17) O mankind : If ye have a doubt about the resurrection (consider) that We created you out of dust, then out of sperm, then out of the leech-like clot, then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We may manifest (Our power) to you : and We cause whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term, then We do bring you out as babes (22 : 5).

THE CONCLUSION

Man as he exists today, therefore, did not emerge out of the

monkeys or the apes. Monkeys or apes although species developed out of the life cell that went into the thick forest, whereas man developed from the cell which became embedded in the wet clay of the delta of sweet waters. Similarly reptiles developed out the life cells that crept on to the rocks. Man's kingdom was an independent kingdom of life.

He had developed out of the same single germ cell. This single cell had inherent potentialities of a self-contained evolution which when given the appropriate environment developed into an independent species, the man. Basically this original single mother cell had the seeds of an overall evolution also. It is on account of this that the intra-uterine development of the embryo passes through like stages. It is for this reason that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny (every child that is born retraces the footsteps of his forefathers, during the developmental stages--theory of recapitulation). This is also true in the extra-uterine life and can be observed by anyone. All what is required is an appropriate nutrient material to enable this germ cell grow into its proper form. Therefore, the master stroke, or the masterpiece of the Almighty Creator is the creation of the original one single cell, out of which developed all creation and in which was made inherent the possibilities of development of cell the living creation and all the processes of evolution.

Ponder now the anatomy and physiology of man and marvel at the Almighty Creativity in which there is no repetition, but new forms go on evolving out of the same single cell.

It would be interesting to discuss the biochemistry of life in order to get a little insight into the development of the cell. The nutrient materials are the nucleoproteins. They bridge the gap between the living and the non-living world. Before life was created in this cosmos the atmosphere of the universe which was then a glowing mass of a ball of fire, was a reducing one rather than an oxidising one. When the universe started to cool down, this became the earth's primitive atmosphere. There was nitrogen but no oxygen. With the cooling down of the cosmos which was a glowing mass, there was a certain amount of

irradiation of this primitive atmosphere. This led to the re-organisation of the conditions leading to certain factors conducive to promoting survival, reproduction and evolution. As a result of cooling, water appeared on the surface. Water was, therefore, selected as a perfect habitat for the life cell. Life was, therefore, cradled in the sea. Water which had by this time been formed by the earth's cooling surface was the most tolerable and favourable place for the harbouring of life cell. It survived therein. Life moved up from the salty sea to the fresh sweet waters of the rivers, and it was here that the first differentiation took place in the chain of evolution, some life germs moved on to the dry land, some to the marshy lands in the delta, some to the rivers and some remained in the salty sea. All developed according to their respective habitat. The migration of animals to new climates is still taking place, and it is the genetic mutations and not the rapid and sudden changes which are the law of evolution according to which each species has been developing. This certainly takes time, and this time interval differs in case of each class of animal which it takes to develop, as for instance. (1) fresh water animals (2) dry land animals (3) swamp and marshy animals. And who can say this sticky earth which the Quran calls طين لاذب (¹¹ *Supra*) the sticky clay, was not the marshy land just mentioned. The first germ cell which was to develop into man may have become embedded in the soil which was suitable to its development to its final stage of a man.

The life cell seems to have acquired its essential properties while yet in the sea, so that its internal bodily requirements were fully infused and injected to enable it to survive adversities and complete its growth. "The conditions under which cell life is possible are very restricted indeed and have not changed substantially since life first began. The subsequent evolution of different forms of life has necessarily been attended by that mechanism for maintaining within the organism an environment with the properties required for the continued life of its cell".⁸

This clearly goes to show that the creative potentialities

inherent in the single life cell under special environmental conditions channelised the growth and development of various species in their own mood and manner. Hence the variation into reptiles, mammals and quadrupeds (دایة). Modern classification of these products of evolution is by no means final. But the fact remains that the evolution of man as described in the Quran is exactly the path which man has taken to assume his present form and this is exactly the form which he will have taken any where else on any other heavenly body.

The collecting together of the various human beings from different heavenly bodies has been indicated in the Quranic verse above (6 *supra*), therefore, just as 12,000 years ago evidence has been found of people visiting this planet from the space, similarly man from this earth will also succeed in visiting the heavenly bodies above.

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