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ISLAM AND THE TIMES

A few weeks ago, a letter from one of our readers in Turkey was received by the editor together with an enclosed newspaper clipping from the Times, a leading English daily. Our reader from Turkey wrote the following: "With regard to your editorial in your October issue entitled 'The Islamic State', which I read with much interest, I am enclosing a cut of the leading article from The Times of November 1, captioned 'The Muslim Crisis'. The contrast between the Muslim and the non-Muslim views as illustrated by the two articles are most striking. Perhaps you have already seen the enclosed clipping."

That the readers might form a better judgement concerning our objections to the views stated by The Times, we shall reproduce below, the whole of the above mentioned leading article of The Times of November the 1st. It speaks by itself that our interests lie mainly with the judgement of The Times regarding the nature of the Islamic faith. Although we shall not go into discussion concerning the correctness of The Times with regards to its judgement on other matters, stated in the articles which we shall reproduce here, it does not imply that we subscribe to the views of The Times. We are reproducing the article as a whole merely to prevent the suspicion that we snatched certain passages out of its context thus presenting a distorted version of the whole article. The following is the above mentioned article from The Times:

Crises and deep-seated troubles in many of the Muslim States—from Egypt, through Persia and Pakistan, to Indonesia—are continually in the news. In some of the States there seems to have been a common pattern of events. There are difficulties of administration and arguments over the form of constitution; then extreme demands are made by religious zealots; then order is established by regimes with a strong military backing. The question has to be asked whether Islam is the cementing force for a nation that it is often claimed to be. It is of the nature of this great faith that it prescribes a code of conduct in secular affairs which is more precise and evidently less open to elasticity of interpretation than that laid down by other world creeds. Thus the task of erecting on Islamic foundations the type of polity needed now by these new nations presents difficulties of its own. In all these major Islamic countries religion had played an important part in arming the national reaction against western domination which finally achieved independence. But when independence was

accomplished the religious leaders found themselves frequently at odds with political leaders who wished to use their new-found power to set up a type of polity comparable to contemporary western models of a welfare state. It was not easy to reconcile the characteristic political traditions of Islam with the national aspirations for economic and social progress through the agency of the Government.

It is thus no accident that the new Governments which took over power in Egypt, Persia, Pakistan and Indonesia after the war found themselves faced with suspicious and potentially hostile religious movements which were bent on ensuring that the prescriptions of Islam as interpreted by themselves should invariably shape State action. The adherents of these movements fastened upon any national claims that might remain unsatisfied, or upon grievances which promised to command a popular appeal, in order to win support for themselves. The part played by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, by the reactionary mullahs in Persia and in Pakistan, and by Dar-ul-Islam in Indonesia helps to explain the troubles which have overtaken all four countries in recent years.

The formidable effect of these incursions of narrowly intransigent fanatical elements into political life was disastrously enhanced by the failure of the new Governments to meet the urgent and crying needs of the peoples over whom they ruled. In Persia the liberal ideas of the Shah were ignored in favour of vested interests. In Egypt a corrupt monarchy and venal political leaders turned deaf ears to the sufferings of the masses. In Pakistan fate cruelly removed in turn the two great leaders round whom the nation was ready to rally; and, although their successors worked hard to create an efficient administration from the bits and pieces which partition had bequeathed to them, racial divisions, provincial jealousies, and personal rivalries stood in the way. In Indonesia the lack of trained administrators, the multiplicity of political factions, and the over-concentration of political life in the capital led to increasing public disillusion with the first fruits of freedom. Thus, while the first generation of political leaders to exercise power in all four countries after the war broadly failed in their task of giving a clear and decisive shape to national aspirations, formidable forces of reaction, under religious or pseudo-religious guidance, came to threaten the very existence, or at least the internal security, of these States.

Remedies have been found before the plight of these countries became catastrophic. Corrupt politicians have been deprived of power, and new leaders have emerged who

have the welfare of the people at heart. Sectarian intolerance has been suppressed and its exponents discredited; a real effort is being made to set up administrations which are both efficient and just. The precise agency through which salvation is being sought is in its broad outlines identical in all four countries; it is the trained administrators, whether of the Army or of the civil service; these are the anchors to check the drift towards the rocks. In Egypt and in Persia the Army has emerged as the repository of effective power; in Pakistan it is the trained administrators of the old civil and provincial services, with the Army behind them. In Indonesia hopes at least are based on the new generation of State servants.

In Persia, where political institutions on a western model are of long standing, and where the Shah is deeply respected, the fanatics, the xenophobes, and the Tudeh traitors have been driven from power. In Egypt the western Parliamentary forms were too deeply riddled with corruption and party intrigue to survive; their displacement by an efficient military rule has caused no grief outside the ranks of those who exploited them for their own ends. In Pakistan, while the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly is regretted by not a few, control has been given to a "Ministry of All the Talents" which has the hard task of holding an even balance between East and West Pakistan, and between Lahore and Peshawar on the one side, and Karachi on the other. There may well be other changes pending, but anything, it is thought, must be better than a system which allowed the Civil Service and the Army to be exposed to the risk of manipulation by self-seeking (and largely self-appointed) political party caucuses.

It is easy to see that many of the troubles in these countries are due to inexperience in government. The newly independent countries had, in any case, to set up administration and lay the foundations of industry with meagre resources. There was bound to be trial and error, but the attempt of the religious zealots to set the form of government has added powerfully to those troubles. Generally the people themselves distrust the zealot groups, and in many countries there are able and sensible leaders. Yet difficulties and dangers plainly remain. In none of these Muslim lands is the problem of erecting a modern State upon the Islamic base solved.

Our first objection deals with the elasticity of Islam. The Times believed that the code of conduct in secular affairs laid down by Islam is more precise and less elastic than that laid down by other world creeds.

Since this judgement of The Times is highly vague, we could only bring two things forward to enable The Times to form a more precise opinion concerning what The Times thought to be the inflexibility of Islam. One is the fact that any system of life as the Islamic religion which provides an all embracing code of actions, is by the very nature of society itself, induced to become not indifferent and protective to the very existence of its tenets. We see the same tendency in politics. An extreme opposition party which later came into power shall feel the greater need for consolidation than before. The nature of the process itself tends to make them surrender certain flexibility in the interest of integrity. Thus a religion which provides for an all embracing code of life has to be, less flexible than it usually permits in order to preserve the integrity of the life of its community. Furthermore, there are two kinds of inflexibility. One touches the basic requirements of human life, the other not. A Muslim who feels it to be part of his tradition to dress in his national oriental way, and who is insistent on doing so, could be judged as being inflexible, if we believe that in order to become a better man, he ought to put on Western attire. If by the less elasticity of Islam is understood its attitude towards such non-basic and secondary human wants, then indeed, from the subjective point of view of the Times Islam is less elastic than other world creeds. (I presume the Times compared Islam with Christianity for I could not recollect any other world creed that prescribes a code of life more flexible than Islam). Furthermore the comparison of Islam to Christianity in this respect is out of place, for Christianity never claimed to be an all embracing social, political and religious system.

THE POLITICAL TRADITIONS OF ISLAM: The Times thought it no easy matter to reconcile the characteristic political traditions of Islam with the national aspirations for economic and social progress through the agency of the Government. Here the Times remarkably exhibited an ignorance of a subject about which it wrote with a sense of authority. Those of our readers who had carefully perused through the pages of Progressive Islam and other Islamic periodicals or books, or those who are familiar with the thoughts and desires of Muslim leaders, could very well see how far from the mark was the judgement stated by the Times in connection with the political tradition of Islam.

HOSTILE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS: The Times committed a serious blunder probably as a result of its submerged prejudicial attitude towards the Islamic way of life. Anyone having a sufficient sense of logic and propriety would not take a small group as a representative of the total community to which it belongs. Why did The Times

THEOCRACY AND THE ISLAMIC STATE

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The masses have been subjected to ruthless exploitation since time immemorial; leaving aside some brief periods in human history, when the God-fearing persons were at the helm of affairs, this exploitation has continued unchecked. The weapons of exploitation have no doubt undergone a change but there has been no change in the exploitation itself. It is such a bold fact that no earnest and honest student of human history can dare deny. The pages of history are replete with the facts that if at one stage the weak were looted by the haughty kings like Pharaohs and Caesars with the help of their kingly might, at another stage these very persons were plundered by popes and priests in the fair name of religion. Thus if the name of kingship conjures before our vision the horrors of the kings of Assyria, Egypt and Rome, the name of religious states brings to our mind the atrocities of the priestly class. The common man is horrified to think of the terrors of the days when the priests and popes dominated the political life of the different countries. Our minds are immediately diverted to a period when a religious group was all and all in the state and every thing was done according to its whims and caprices. Reason and justice were non-existent. The word of the clergy was law for the people and the state was run with the help of an inquisition, thumbscrew and stake, and the irony of the fate was that all this high-handedness was done for the glory of the Lord. This is the conception which the "theocracy" forms in our mind.

Theocracy has been defined as a "government which has either an overt or covert religious basis"¹) and is run by a priestly class. Here a particular class of

¹) K. A. Hakim: *Islamic Ideology*, p. 201.

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mentioned the Darul Islam movement in Indonesia and connect it with the whole political tradition of Islam as being of a problematic nature to the government? Every Tom, Dick, and Harry, knows that the bulk of the Indonesian Muslims supported the Masjumi, the Nahdatul Ulama, the P. S. I. I., and the PERTI. These organizations do not agree with the Darul Islam movement in its attempt to erect the Islamic State in Indonesia by means of military power. All these movements remained faithful to the political traditions of Islam by employing the democratic method to achieve their aims. Why did The Times not take them as the representative Islamic political activity in Indonesia? Did The Times also think the Islamic parties in Indonesia which do not support the Darul Islam movement as formidable forces of reaction?

The Times, like some other papers in Europe and America, when it comes to speak about Islam, still expresses an attitude and intellectual standard which fall short of its claim. For those who cling to an attitude around which cluster the prejudices of their class and historical traditions, it would be difficult for us to bring home to them the necessity of judging us with that sense of fairness and responsibility which is our due.

chosen mortals alone claims to understand the will and utterances of God, and it has therefore the final say in all matters of life. In some states their priests rule directly in the name of one god or more gods. In others kings are at the head of the state, "but they rule only as representatives and organs of gods, and either are themselves high-priests or under the influence and control of priesthood. The former may be called pure, the latter limited, priest states"²).

A pure priest state was that of the Ethiopians in Meroe, where a "priestly caste was all in all. From their own body they nominated some of the best, "and of these God chose one in a solemn ceremony: the people immediately did obeisance to the divine nominee and revered in him the representative of God. But the power of this chief was restricted on every side by Divine Laws and by the continued manifestation of God's will in the oracles communicated through the priests. A strict ceremonial ordered all his movements and left no room for free decision; everywhere the priests accompanied him and co-operated with him. Even his life was not secure: if he displeased God, this was revealed to the priests, they announced to him the message of divine wrath, and nothing remained for him but to appease the offended deity by a voluntary death."³)

Of the mixed priest state, we see the example in Egypt. According to popular tradition the gods originally ruled directly. Later on, human kings were found but they were thought either as gods or as the descendants of gods, and their power was strictly limited by the divine law, by a strict etiquette, and by the influence of the supreme priestly class. The divine commands covered the whole of the king's life. It is true that he could not be brought to trial during his lifetime, but after his death the priests formed a solemn public tribunal, there it was decided whether the king lived his life along to Divine Laws or not, and upon this judgement depended his honour among his posterity, the reception of his soul in the next world and even his resurrection.

Similar was the case with the old Indian states. The king was regarded far inferior to the Brahmin. But with the march of time the royal dignity arose so high into the estimation of the people that a certain divinity was considered pertain to it. According to the laws of Manu the king's body is pure and holy, being composed of elements which have their origin in the eight guardians of the world. God has created him for the preservation of all beings. No one may scorn him even in fancy and say "he is a simple mortal", for a great divine force dwells within him.⁴) These Indian kings were always surrounded by priests. They must be consecrated by them on their accession.

As the time rolled on, the kings increased their powers by annexing more and more territories, and thus completely overshadowed the personality of the priest. They were then thought to be deputies of Almighty God upon the earth, whom none

¹) J. K. Bluntschli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 346.

²) J. K. Bluntschli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 346.

³) Manava—Dharma—Sastras: *Laws of Manu*, (Translated by Sir W. Jones.)

but He could dethrone. They were answerable to no mortal. God alone had the right to call upon His deputies (Kings) to explain their conduct. The rule of the Lamas in Tibet and that of the monarchs in Japan are the best examples of theocracy in the modern age. They are considered as "God on earth" and are held in deep veneration and respect by, the people of these countries. The famous writer John Gunther in his book 'Inside Asia' tells us that in Japan all the windows are shut as the king passes through the streets. Nobody builds his house loftier than that of the king. No one has the right to criticize his action. He is the object of worship for the Japanese and they think him absolutely infallible.

Of all kinds of theocracies, the most notable was that of Jews in Mosaic dispensation. It was based on the firm foundation of pure religion. The Jews believed that the king was God himself, Yahve or Jehovah "He was both legislator and ruler. The whole system of law, which we call Mosaic, was regarded as the revelation of God, with whom Moses spoke in the solitude of the mountain tops, whose will he received with fear and trembling and announced the people with loyal truth. Thunder and lightning manifested the presence of God upon Mount Sinai"⁵) Later on the Jews, like other theocratic states felt the necessity of a king. Their request was granted by Jehovah through the mouth of their judge Samuel but He consoled the latter by saying, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them"⁶) Thus the state passed on from priests to kings.

If we study the history of theocracy we will find that it has passed into three distinct phases. First, "the ruler was God in person, and kings and priests were His instruments; then the rule passed more and more into the hands of the priesthood, headed by a priestly, or later by a military king, finally the king himself was venerated as a god and superhuman despotism arose."⁷) Whatever different may be the forms of theocracy there is one thing common in them: that it is a type of government wherein the person or persons at the helm of affairs are regarded as superhuman beings who are raised above the common people by the Almighty God Himself, the elevation of the Government is thus divine and therefore absolute. The rulers (pope, emperor and kings) have in their own persons the fulness of His authority.

It is indeed unfortunate for humanity that an Islamic state is regarded as a religious state in this sense of the term. Not to speak of non-Muslims even a good number of modernised Muslims are labouring under this grave misconception. If we analyse the causes which have given birth to this misunderstanding, we will find that the following two factors are very important:

- (a) Islam is taken as a religion in the same sense in which this word is often used. This has given rise to so many confusions.
- (b) The difference in the respective purposes for which the early Christian state and the Islamic state were brought into existence is very unfortunately ignored.

Let us take these two points in detail. Because of strong non-Islamic influences in our intellectual life the word religion means nothing more but a code of rites and rituals. Accordingly it is a private concern between man and God. But, most unfortunately, we totally forget that the case of Islam is quite different. It is not a religion among religions, —

⁴) J. K. Bluntschli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 350.

⁵) Samuel vii, 7.

⁶) J. K. Bluntschli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 348.

merely a scheme of salvation in the Hereafter. It is a complete code of human life. The secular and the religious, the material and spiritual are not separated in the all inclusive system of Islam. The social laws and institutions all come very much within the orbit of religion. The Holy prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him) was not contented with nursing a moral attitude in individual persons, but aimed at the very outset at translating this attitude into a definite social scheme, which embodies the life of both the worlds. The Muslims thus stand for certain absolute and eternal moral values. Their function is not to contact the Creator merely at the tangent of their souls, but to illuminate their entire life and activity—individual as well as collective—with the Light of obedience to the Will of God.

Secondly, Islam and nothing else is meant to be the be-all and end-all of the life of Muslims, the very alpha and omega of their aspirations. The Christian teachings cover only a section and not the whole of life. Thus during the Middle Ages, when Christianity became the state religion, the custodians of the church could not give a comprehensive code of life to the people. They gave people certain transcendental hopes and dogmas which had been prepared by the priests themselves. Thus the centre was shifted from the 'Christian ideal' to the popes and priests, and these people being intoxicated with power behaved in the most irresponsible manner. They issued commands on their own behalf and gave them a religious sanction. They passed on their personal ideas as divine revelations.⁸) Thus instead of the 'Christian teachings', the personal ideas of the clergy became the ideal for the masses. The clergy in fact, followed society instead of directing it, and in most cases corrupted by the lure of wealth and power.⁹) Bishops had vast estates and numerous vassals. Several of them bore the title of duke and even of prince. This community of privileges, in strong contrast with the character of the religious mission, led to a long rivalry between the nobility and the clergy, if the feudal nobility had confused sovereignty with property, the clergy confused temporal power with spiritual power. They so completely lost the sense of any distinction that they encouraged the double investiture of the sword and cross, so that the ecclesiastical dignity was conferred by the suzerain of the Church.¹⁰) The religious influence was exercised not to spread the ideals of Christ, but to develop their territorial wealth.¹¹)

Their claim was that they were the intermediaries through whom one could approach his Lord. All the ceremonials were, therefore, of necessity to be performed through their mediation and all the religious rites should be completed only by their hands. They were regarded the mouthpiece of God. The late Professor Bluntschli gives a description of the method how the High priest of the Jews received directly the commands of Jehovah and announced them to the people.

"The Divine Law", says he, "was preserved in an Ark overlaid with gold, over which arose the golden mercy-seat guarded by two cherubim and revered as the seat of divine revelation. The ark and the mercy-seat were both concealed behind a curtain, in the Holy of Holies within the tabernacle which was God's residence and was carefully guarded by

⁸) Not all the popes were religiously corrupt. Those who were sincere did believe that they were in important religious matters divinely inspired. As such they were not to be accused of base motives. Ed.

⁹) We do not completely agree with the writer here/Ed.

¹⁰) M. Gustav Ducoudray: *History of Modern Civilization*, p. 102.

¹¹) This is also not completely correct/Ed.

the priests. There he received the commands of Jehovah and then made it known to the public."¹²) Thus the priests alone had taken the right to decide between lawful and unlawful. Their word was the verdict of God and it was in this way that the priestly class became the only source of law and they forced people to obey their own commands instead of those of God. The Holy Quran summed up this dismal state of affairs in the words, "They take their priests and their anchorites to be their Lords in the derogation of God. (IX: 31)

Every serious student of the Quran knows it fully well that the point of dispute between the prophets of God and the non-believers was basically the sovereignty of God. The Holy Quran Says, "To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? (say) if ye know! They will say, 'to God! Say: yet will ye not receive admonition? Say: 'Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Throne (of glory) Supreme? They will say, '(they belong) to God'. Say: 'Will ye not then be filled with awe? Say: 'Who is it in whose Hands is the governance of all things—who protects (all) but is not protected (of any)? (Say) if ye know'. They will say, '(it belongs) to God'. Say: 'Then how are ye deluded? We have sent them the Truth: But they indeed practise Falsehood.' (XXIII: 84-90).

These verses make it sufficiently clear that the issue was not as to whether God existed or not or whether He was the Creator and Lord of the heavens and the earth; the whole dispute centred round one point: that God, besides being the Creator of the universe, is also the Sustainer and Nourisher, Master and Lawgiver. Now when the Quran says: "They have taken as lords besides Allah their priests and their anchorites", what it means is that the followers of these priests thought them to be their gods in practice if not in words. They, therefore, looked to them for help and guidance and for succour and redress. They followed their dictates rather than the commandment of Almighty God in all walks of their life. Their sole aim was to earn their pleasure, and not that of God.

This is, as every student of the Quran knows, abhorrent to the very spirit of Islam. The prophets of God exhorted the people to repudiate and renounce the supremacy of every one else except God. Their mission was to deliver mankind from this injustice, this slavery of false gods, this tyranny of man over man, this exploitation of the weak by the strong. The Quran thus says:—

"Those whom you worship beside Him are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers. Allah hath revealed no sanction for them. The decision rests with Allah only Who hath commanded you that ye worship none save Him. This is the right religion, but most men know not."

These words of the Holy Quran are indicative of the fact that the sovereignty rests with God alone, and therefore none is 'entitled to make laws on his own authority and no Muslim is obliged to abide by them. The Sovereignty of God is not confined to the domain of physical laws. It is as much operative in the realm of social and political laws. The Quran explicitly names God as the King of mankind:—

"Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, The King (or Ruler) of Mankind, God (or Judge) of Mankind," (CXIV). Further the Holy Quran says that none can share God's sovereignty:—

"And who hath no partner in the Sovereignty." (XVII: 111).

¹² J. K. Bluntchli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 350-351.

In fact, God alone has the right to legislate:—

"Verily His is all creation and commandment." (VI: 54).

"Follow that which is sent down unto you from your Lord, and follow not, as friends and protectors other than Him." (VI: 3).

These verses speak for themselves in very clear terms, that no person, however enlightened or pious he is, no clan, no class or group of persons, can lay claim to sovereignty. Not to speak of ordinary individuals, even the prophets were subject to God's commands. This is the reason why the prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him) said: "I do not follow anything except what is revealed to me." (Holy Quran).

An Islamic state is "theocratic" in the sense that its fundamentals are believed to be God-given. But it is altogether a different theocracy of which Europe has had a bitter experience and in which a priestly class is sharply marked off from the rest of the population and exercises an unchecked domination and enforces laws of its own making in the name of God and thus virtually imposes its own "godhood" upon the common people. The priest puts himself as a mediator between the people and the Unseen God. Such a system is not Islamic; it is satanic.¹³) The theocracy built up by Islam is not ruled by a particular religious class but by the whole community of Muslims including the rank and file. The entire Muslim population runs the state in accordance with the Book of God and the Sunnah of His prophet. It is a theocracy, rather than a pure theocracy or pure democracy, because under it all the Muslims and not any particular class or group of persons, have been conferred upon with a limited popular sovereignty under the suzerainty of God.

This is a fundamental difference between theocracy and an Islamic state. But before we proceed further, it is desirable that we should clarify one mistaken notion about the fact that "there is no priesthood in Islam". This clarification has become imperative, since there has gathered a good deal of confusion about it and the people have distorted it to such an extent, that even the basic concept of the Islamic state has become almost ridiculous. There is no gain-saying the fact that the Divine faith is not the birth-right of a 'chosen few', nor is it the monopoly of Mullas. Every Muslim is the vicegerent of God upon the earth and thus stands on equal footing with the other. None has any preference over another by virtue of his high birth. Islamic society is a classless society; there is no church and no group with special privileges and interests. But if from this somebody concludes that since in the Islamic state all are equal before the law, therefore all must also be regarded as equally competent in interpreting and applying the law, it is the most absurd conclusion. Nothing is more ridiculous than such a view. When it is said that there is no priesthood in Islam it does not mean that every one, however ignorant and characterless he is, has the right to interpret the law. Islam is decidedly not the property of certain classes. But it is equally absurd to make it a mere plaything in the hands of every Tom, Dick and Harry, including the most irresponsible and incompetent men.

The fact is that the exposition of the teachings of Islam is, as it rationally should be, within the jurisdiction of only those who are best qualified for it. Thus when it is claimed that there is no priesthood in Islam, its significance is that the knowledge of Islam is not the right of

¹³ If we consider other historical factors, although it is un-Islamic, it need not be satanic Ed.

some special caste of persons as is the case with Hinduism. There, the knowledge of vedas is open to Brahmins only; for Sudharas it is a forbidden fruit. But Islam, on the contrary, opens the gates of knowledge to every one irrespective of his social status. No one is debarred from getting it. There is no Brahmanism here to hold monopoly over religion. Here every one can learn the Holy Book and become one of the Ulema (or scholars of religion) in the Muslim society. But if some one distorts this idea and thinks that every one, however low his intellectual and moral standard may be has the right to interpret Islam, he betrays his ignorance of the very spirit of the idea. The interpretation of the law is, therefore, the right of the men of knowledge and integrity only, while the keys of knowledge have been placed at the command of every one provided one cares to unlock with good intentions the treasure-house of Islamic learning.

The second point of difference between Theocracy and Islamic state is about the difference in their respective ideals. After the foundation of the Christian church, a thought has been firmly rooted in the minds of the masses, that Government is the result of sin and therefore an evil. God imposed civil society on mankind of man's will and therefore the state is a "torture-hall, where an elementary wicked humanity is imprisoned for its sin". To them it is an institution so profane as to be practically diabolical. Their duty is not therefore to change the political structure, but to suffer the pains for their 'original sin'. Prof. Collins has told us in his famous lecture "Unity, Catholic and Papal" that the church is a kind of society whose foundations have been laid not by men but by God Himself. Therefore, any effort to effect a change, however minor it is, will lead us astray. The duty of the people is to patiently undergo all kinds of sufferings. It is significant to note that Saint Paul, at a time when the Emperor Nero was persecuting the Christians addressed these famous words to the Romans: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be, are ordained of God." The natural outcome of this was the justification of absolutism.

This view is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Firstly, according to the teachings of the Quran the state or society is not the torture-hall, where the individual is imprisoned for his misdeeds. It is an organ whereby high ideals of social justice and equality which the Holy prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him) set before humanity can be translated into practical reality. Islam, as it has been pointed out before, is not a private relationship between man and God. A Muslim owes a good deal of responsibilities towards humanity also. This aim can be really actualized in the form of a social pattern. Therefore, the founding of a just state is not a sin, but the sine-qua-non of social justice and the life of well-being for an individual. Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." The idea is perfectly right, since no just kingdom can be found on earth by unjust men, who have not first created the kingdom of heaven in their hearts. But Islam said that it is not enough; the kingdom of Heaven within must be externalized into a kingdom of heaven without, so that the organized life of man may be based on love, fraternity and justice.¹⁴) But it should be made clear that the Islamic state is not an end in itself; it is only a means to an end, the end being the growth of a community of people who stand up for equity and justice, for right and against wrong—or to phrase it differently, for the creation and maintenance of such social conditions as would enable the greatest possible number of human beings to live, spiritually

and physically, in accordance with the teachings of Islam. The Quran has succinctly summed up the functions of an Islamic state in the following words:—

Those who, if we give them power in land, establish worship, and pay the poor-due and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong (22 : 6).

This shows that the function of an Islamic state is not only to defend the people from an external attack and internal disorder but it has also to enable individual man and woman to realize the tenets of Islam in their beliefs and in the practical, socio-economic concerns of their life. If the state performs these functions, then it can be rightly described as "God's Vicegerent on earth". Otherwise to call a state "Islamic" without the Islamic characteristics would mean the grossest insult to Islam, and it would be the duty of every Muslim to change the social and political patterns as soon as it is possible. The medieval theocratic state firstly created some vested interests in the society and then guarded them with all its might. The state was regarded as merely an organization of laymen, above whom the priesthood were raised by their consecration. The Christian priests did not, like the Brahmins, rest their claims on divine descent — for they did not perpetuate their order by marriage—but rather on divine institution. They are filled by the Holy spirit, and consecrated by the views of the church. The basest and most corrupt clerk, in virtue of his order, stands high above the eminent and virtuous laymen as gold above iron, or the spirit above the body. The laws of the state were therefore not binding on the clergy; it was for them to examine and judge and then decide how far they would voluntarily obey them. As soon as the privileges of the clergy were in danger, the clergy refused all obedience, resting on the word of Scripture 'we ought to obey God rather than man'.¹⁵) The case of Islam is fundamentally different. Islam envisaged—and brought to life—a system of society in which there is no room for vested interests, no class divisions, no priesthood, no hereditary nobility—in fact no hereditary function at all. No person, however high his social status is, is immune from the law, since the Islamic state is an ideological state and stands for definite ideological ends. The ideals, and not the personalities are therefore more important. It is in fact a theocracy with regard to God and a democracy between man and man. History is replete with the instances of Caliphs being brought to court and publicly criticised at their very feet by ordinary men and women. Even the lowest villager could dare tell the commander of the faithful that he would set him straight like a spindle. This shows that the officials in the Islamic state are responsible both to God and man, and the people have every right to criticize not only their public behaviour but also their private activities.

¹⁴ J. K. Bluntchli: *The Theory of the State*, p. 124.

NOTICE

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¹⁵ K. Abdul Hakim: *Islamic Ideology*, p. 191.

KARL MANNHEIM

(1894—1947)

By HUSSEIN ALATAS, B.A.

Some introductory remarks to the sociology of knowledge and of the social order of Karl Mannheim, formerly professor of sociology in the University of Frankfurt/Main and later in the London School of Economics and Political Science.

★ ★ ★

Karl Mannheim was one of the most important thinkers of our age. Anyone who desires to understand the various problems of man and society, or of thought and human activity, can not afford to neglect the works of Karl Mannheim's contribution to human thinking which in general lies mainly in his bringing to a higher and advanced stage what has come to be known as Wissenssoziologie or the sociology of knowledge. Professors Ernst K. Bramstedt and Hans Gerth described Mannheims sociology of knowledge as an attempt to explain the emergence of ideas and their development as being a response to, and determined by, 'the social-historical situation in which intellectual skill groups find themselves. And not only do such social-historical factors account for the particular political expectancies and demands that representative thinkers elaborate, but social determination reaches into the most intimate recesses of man's mind. The basic categories that inform one's view of social reality, the vision of the past and future, especially the conception of human freedom, are shown to be bound up with the thinker's basic political stand and group identification. Even where the social observer is careful to control his personal bias, to argue 'objectively' by not indulging in special pleading and subjective value preferences, his social-historical background can be shown to condition his ways of thought'. These are the main factors that Mannheim tried to explain and elucidate.

In our endeavour to understand Mannheim, let us try to know what he wrote in some of his important works, namely, *Man and society in an age of reconstruction*, *Ideology and Utopia*, and *Diagnosis of our time*. We shall also include a criticism of Mannheim by one of those who had followed his thought keenly. As to my own criticism of Mannheim, no importance ought to be attached to it. As one who is, with intellectual reverence, trying to learn from Mannheim, I do not feel myself qualified to criticise him. Thus my remarks on Mannheim's sociology of knowledge ought to be regarded more as an inquiry of what are not yet clear to me rather than as a criticism of Mannheim. We shall now commence our description and discussion of Mannheim's thought, as stated in his three books which we mentioned above.

MAN AND SOCIETY IN AN AGE OF RECONSTRUCTION. The main purpose of this book is to show that the traditional principle of laissez-faire can only lead to chaos in the present mass society. A reconstruction of the present should take as a condition a new definition of values such as freedom and democracy. In his analysis of the present condition of mass society Mannheim employed the

same method of the sociology of knowledge. He pointed out that the concept of freedom in the days of liberalism was only fit for that particular social order. The same concept, if applied to our present mass society, which social order is different than that of liberalism, shall only bring chaos and disasters. Thus the main cause of the present maladjustment in modern society is the clash between the principles of laissez-faire and planless regulation.

Mannheim showed some of the displeasing occurrences in modern society. Among these are the disorganization of the personality and the emergence of the mass man. These, together with other undesirable elements in modern society, Mannheim thought as the result of the present social order which has not yet succeeded in adjusting itself to the new situations.

If this continues, he feared that reactionary groups such as Fascists or others who believe in totalitarianism, shall seize power and thereby subordinating human life to the dictates of a group of mass man.

To entangle ourselves from this dilemma, it is necessary that modern society should be planned. By planning Mannheim did not mean complete control of society by the rulers but only the control and regulation of certain strategic points which are decisive in bringing about social changes. He called this planning an endeavour to become free but at the same time freedom should be limited in order to prevent chaos and disorders.

These strategic points of control are those factors which deeply underlie social changes. Such factors Mannheim called the **PRINCIPIA MEDIA**. These principia media are a certain kind of general laws regularly recurring special laws and relationships of a certain social setting in a definite historical phase. It is not the dominant economic factor conceived by Marxism, but temporary groups of general factors which are so closely intertwined that they operate as a single causal factor. An epoch is dominated not by a single principium medium but a whole series of them. A number of mutually related principia media produce a structure in which concrete patterns of factors are bounded with one another in a multidimensional way (p. 183). A change in the principia media constitutes a structural change (p. 184).

The planning which Mannheim had in view is based on the creative impulses and should control living forces without suppressing them. As to the age old question who should be the planners, Mannheim answered that there are two possible attitudes. A religious and quietistic one of hope and resignation or a political attitude that welcomes a scramble for power to become the planners.

DIAGNOSIS OF OUR TIME. The main

thesis of this book is centred around Britain as a country that is developing a new type of society which should be adopted as a model in an age of planning. The present modern society is ill and finds itself in a critical stage. The reason for this lies in the fact that modern society is in a period of transition from laissez-faire to a planned social order. The future social order will either assume the form of planning for conformity under the rule of a dictatorial minority or the form of planning for freedom and variety under the rule of a centralized but democratically controlled government.

For the purpose of governing in the present mass society the application of "social techniques" is of utmost urgency. By "social techniques" Mannheim meant, the sum of those methods which aim at influencing human behaviour and which, when in the hands of a ruling group, act as a specially powerful means of social control.

One of the main features of modern society is the crisis in its valuations. This crisis caused conflicts and maladjustments in the physical as well as in the physical plane. The main reason for this is the changed social conditions. Apart from this, two other factors influenced the crisis, contact between diverging groups and the conscious and rational creation and acceptance of values. This did not happen in the former Liberal and Mediaeval society.

Recent events showed that neither Fascism nor Communism shall replace the laissez-faire social order. The new society shall be a militant democracy which is now taking shape in Britain. Britain represents the correct transformation from commercial democracy of the Liberal order to the militant democracy in the age of planning. Britain has some other advantages than any other country because it preserves intact the method to reach an agreement between dissenting groups and by succeeding to abolish the evils of Liberalism without sacrificing the democratic values such as freedom and variety.

IDEOLOGY AND UTOPIA. This book is an inquiry into the nature of thought and how people actually think. In his method of analysis Mannheim combined the psychogenetic with the sociological approach. It does not only trace the individual genesis of thought but set alongside it the genesis in the social context. It was then revealed that knowledge is not the achievement of a single individual but a collective attainment and co-operative process of the group life. Thus thought has its origin not only in the psychological and emotional root but also in the historical and social situation which confronts the individual. To prove this, Mannheim furnished us with many interesting examples. Individualism as a mode of life and thinking was possible because the social situation made it so. Scepticism prevailed among the Sophists in the Greek Enlightenment because the situation provided them with two conflicting ways of explaining life experience. Another elucidating example which Mannheim cited was how the early Christians came to formulate the ethic "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's". This conception should not only be traced to the psychological forces that operated in the minds of the early Christians but also to the social circumstances in which they had to act. The resentment which sprang from the oppression they suffered as Christians and the structure of their mentality gave them no real desire to rule.

Besides this, Mannheim pointed out that thought is dynamic and heterogeneous by nature. Although the social situation is indispensable as an index to the understanding of the nature of thought, there is still yet another factor that determines our thinking whose nature has not yet been fully understood. This Mann-

heim called the collective unconscious of the group.

It is the irrational element in group life which is at the bottom of the conscious and rational behaviour. This collective unconscious influences the mental structure of the group and plays an important role in the fluctuation and transformation of interests in group life. Thus we have here a theory of thought which seeks to trace the origin of knowledge in the social situation and in the interests and motivations which are linked with the collective unconscious.

Mannheim stated that at the moment there are many styles of thought, whose roots are in the collective unconscious. These differences and divergences of thought in a given social order are brought about by the varying conceptual apparatus which are employed by the different individuals. The difference in conceptual apparatus is caused by the fact that the individuals who employ them occupy different positions in the social stratification and possess different kinds of interest. Thus when a Liberal, a Socialist or an Anarchist uses the word freedom, they mean quite different things. Thus a Socialist minister with a stable position sees quite a different view of labour and democracy than his unemployed colleague.

The conflict between social groups led to the discovery of two important styles of thought which Mannheim called **IDEOLOGY** and **UTOPIA**.

By ideology he meant the style of thought of the ruling group which is anxious to maintain their domination. In their anxiety to dominate they became so bound with the situation that they could no more perceive certain facts which would undermine their belief in domination.

Utopia is the style of thought of the dominated groups who are so anxious to change the condition of their social order that their manner of thinking enables them to perceive only the negative side of the situation. This type of thinking is incapable of giving a correct diagnosis of a situation. In this mentality the collective unconscious hides certain aspects of reality by substituting them, with wishful representations. It is valuable as a driving force of action. But it rejects everything that would cause doubt, or weakens the will to change things.

Mannheim further made the distinction between the total and particular conceptions of ideology.

By the particular conception of ideology he meant the attempt of a group to disguise the real nature of a situation more or less in a conscious manner. If the real nature of the situation is exposed by the opposing group, then the interests of the ruling group would be endangered. This conception of ideology is particular in several senses. In it only a part of the opponents' assertions is designated as ideology, and its analysis of ideas is purely based on psychology and interests.

The total conception of ideology challenges the opponents' total **WELTANSCHAUUNG** including his conceptual apparatuses (intellectual achievements and valuations). For instance the rise of positivism is explained in the light of its background which was a definite kind of Weltanschauung related to certain political interests. The spirit of democracy, contained in its Weltanschauung demanded that truths should be for everyone. Thus this was an indirect intrusion of the democratic attitude found in concrete political life into the realm of science. The dominance, and existence of modern intellectualism was regarded by Mannheim as the result of certain conditions produced by the total process of historical development. To make it clear, Mannheim compared the total style of thought as the style of art which has emerged and disappeared in the succession of ages.

The total conception of ideology at-

tempts to relate this total style of thought to the social and historical circumstances which gave rise to that kind of thought style.

The word ideology in the modern sense was first used by Napoleon to designate the group of philosophers who opposed his imperial policy. This designation expressed Napoleon's deprecative attitude to those philosophers whom he regarded as unrealistic which means impractical.

In accordance with the theme of his book, Mannheim chose the words ideology and utopia as examples of how thought is determined by socio-historical situation. The meanings embodied in the words ideology and utopia also change according to time and circumstances. Today ideology is not only conceived in the particular but also in the total sense. The fusion between the particular and total conception of ideology was started and accomplished by Marxism. By relating the styles of thought of its opponents to the socio-historical setting of which they were parts, and by explaining history according to historical materialism, Marxism managed to obtain in the beginning an intellectual victory over its opponents. The process by which Marxism exposed the total ideology of its opponents, is called unmasking. But now this intellectual weapon is not solely in the hands of Marxism but its opponents as well. Thus the unmasker himself is unmasked.

In the study of ideology and utopia Mannheim dealt with the problems of objectivity and relativity in their relations to social life. He believed that an objective science is possible in the spheres of politics. He denied to call his system relativism because he believed in the existence of the "Irreducible residue of valuation inherent in the structure of all thought." Mannheim related relativism to its historical social contacts and found out that it sprang from a period dominated by a theory of knowledge which validated the presence of certitude in only a kind of knowledge exemplified in the proposition that $2 \times 2 = 4$. Thus other kinds of knowledge which were not of the same nature as the above and which were related to the individual thinker, were considered as subjective. This kind of epistemology is not absolute but rather a historically and transitory type of epistemology.

By rejecting relativism, Mannheim did not accept absolutism. His method he called relationism. Relationism differs with relativism by not accepting that one result of thinking is as good as another. It claims that every assertion must be related to the social historical position of the observer but it does not end by saying that each assertion is as good as another. Through relationism Mannheim demonstrated the possibility of objectivity. Despite the differences in views, it is possible to attain unanimity. Relationism is the method by which a common denominator could be achieved from varying perspectivist insights. The validity of relationism as a method of approach, Mannheim considered to be derived from the modern tendency of judging the tree by its fruits, or pragmatism.

For the existence of objectivity in political science certain conditions are necessary. The observational apparatus and methods of settling intellectual differences must be above the conflicts of the participants in politics. The subject matter of this science must be only structural relationships and not ends and norms.

The necessity to adopt this method is already clear. Although all political knowledge is inherently partisan, it is possible through relationism to synthesize the fragmentary elements to form a component whole. The mutually conflicting views in political life are not infinite in number and are products of the social situation. Now the situation made it possible to have a science of

politics not of a party but of the whole. The group who will act as a medium and guidance to the present society is the unattached intelligentsia. These intellectuals do not belong to any particular class but can align themselves to the various classes. It is the task of this intelligentsia to think in terms of the whole and thus realizing the objectivity in politics.

Summing up the aim of his book Mannheim stated that the sociology of knowledge seeks to analyze the relationship between knowledge and existence. As a historical sociological research it seeks to trace the forms which this relationship has taken in the intellectual development of mankind. The present task of the sociology of knowledge is to solve the problem of the conditioning of knowledge. The result of this attempt shall be used to check the conclusion of our research. **CRITICISM OF MANNHEIM.** H. Speier, a critic of Mannheim, disagreed with Wirth, the writer to the preface of *Ideology and Utopia* who said that Mannheim's contribution represented an advance in the discussion of objectivity. He termed Mannheim's method as historical relativism. Besides this he accused Mannheim of being anti-philosophical and anti-contemplation because of the activist and pragmatic foundation of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge. Speier, in a strong rejection of Mannheim's method wrote: "When action is made both the basis of thought and criterion of truth, philosophy becomes impossible. The problem of the relation between action and thinking is at the bottom of the contemporary predicament of thought" because the predicament itself is engendered by the attempt to descend from language to 'life', or to subordinate thought to action. The very concept of ideology derived its modern connotation from the conceit of 'active politicians' (like Napoleon) who denounced those who 'only' thought. This is indicative of the situation. Not that the conflict between theoreticians and active men is altogether new. Both as a philosophical and as a social problem it is, in fact, as old as social differentiation. What is comparatively new is, the professional self-hatred of the intellectuals, who enter the discussion on this philosophical problem after having accepted its definition from those who boast of not being philosophers. In Mannheim's system this anti-philosophical tendency reveals itself most clearly when he comes to discuss the *vita contemplativa*. Instead of analysing the philosophical proofs that were given for the excellence of contemplative life — for example Aristotle — Mannheim suggests in parentheses that the 'ideal' of the contemplative life originated under primitive conditions, when the ideal of 'mystic vision' was developed by seers from whom it was taken over by philosophers (p. 265). In addition he calls 'purely theoretical contemplation' a 'marginal case' (p. 28), which is true, but this is a statistical judgement irrelevant in the philosophical discussion. He says that the thinking of philosophers, if compared to that of acting men, is not or not so often applicable in practice (p. 1), also this is indeed true. The important argument against contemplation, however, is this — the kind of knowledge which results from it is inferior to a knowledge obtained through participation on life and action (p. 151).

"A sociology of knowledge, which analyses the thought of acting men, is perfectly legitimate and is a very useful branch of knowledge if its principles testify to differences between the thinking of philosophers and that of men who do not think philosophically. But when its principle blurs the distinction between Ulysses, who shares his reasons with the foxes, and Plato who shares it with the gods (A. N. Whitehead in 'The function of reason', Princeton 1929), it can hardly become a 'key science' nor can

it even attain a comprehensive understanding of Ulysses' reasoning (p. 160—161)."

As regards the 'unattached intelligentsia' whom Mannheim thought as the future leaders of society, Speier found his view wanting and unreal. If the intelligentsia, whom Mannheim considered not to be free from the social process, and who, although not necessarily attached to certain groups can be drawn to partisanship, then a non-ideological criterion of selection between the various perspectivist views of the competing groups, becomes a presupposition that is necessary but beyond rational justification.

The above criticism of Mannheim by Speier is not completely relevant and true. In the first place Mannheim was not anti-philosophical in the sense that Speier meant it to be. Mannheim himself took no pains to conceal that his system was closely associated with pragmatism. Furthermore Mannheim saw the necessity of philosophy but only in as far that it clarifies the total situation. He certainly was not against philosophy as such but against philosophical systems which distort the view of the whole situation by its one sided method. That Mannheim's sociology of knowledge blurs the distinction between the thinking of Plato and that of Ulysses is also not true. Mannheim made it clear that thought should be meant to influence our action and he also made it clear that all actions are not of the same value. Thus here, the distinction between different kinds of thought is established. The recommendation of Aristotle's proofs for the excellence of contemplative life as something which Mannheim should examine before he formed an opinion against contemplative life, is also irrelevant. Had Mannheim cited Aristotle instead of Plato as an example, his conclusion would certainly be different because, as we all know, it was Aristotle's empiricism and sense of being practical that distinguished him from Plato. Speier's labelling Mannheim's system as historical relativism is undoubtedly against Mannheim's claim. More than once Mannheim emphatically rejected relativism. His belief in the 'irreducible residue of valuation inherent in the structure of all thought' left no more room for relativism.

Regarding the unattached intelligentsia, Speier's criticism of Mannheim's view is certainly right and acceptable.

My objection to agree fully with Mannheim lies mainly in the fact that his system is inadequate for the understanding of thought and social life. I fully agree that one can not hope to understand the nature of thought if we exclude Mannheim's relationism from our methodology. But to the most, trust in such a method will not enable us to be as all embracing as possible in our search for truth. Mannheim's relationism does not tend to blur the distinction between the thought of Plato and Ulysses but between the thought of an individual and that of a group. That the thought of an individual (after abstracting all the possible conditioning factors of society and nature) can be different than that of a group, is corresponded by the fact that an individual is not the same person when participating in group life. The defect of relationism consists in its tendency to judge the validity of truth only when produced by a society in certain spatial and temporal units. This defect is also contained in the culture-pattern theory of Ruth Benedict. To judge that all truths are relative just because one culture believes to be the truth what another rejects, is to set a limitation to the nature of truth. One should not only see truth as it is expressed by a society but by the single person as well. If our judgement on cannibalism is to be based only in the way various societies looked upon it, then we are forced to agree that it is relative. But if we examine whether

all human beings agree to cannibalism, then we would have a different conclusion because the cannibals themselves disagree if they were to be eaten by some others. Thus the distinction between such an individual thought and that of the group or culture should be strictly followed.

Again if Mannheim believed in the social situational determination of thought, he not only should tell us what gives rise to such and such a thought but also he should tell us, not necessarily to a convincing degree, what prevented such and such a thought to rise in a certain period but appeared later. Why did Hume's criticism of causality appear in the 18th. century in the social situational context of that period while that same criticism was delivered by Al Ghazali (a Muslim philosopher who turned sceptical through his rationalism but found later satisfaction in mysticism) in the 12th. century in quite a different social situational context and also a different period? Why is it that the moral valuations of Europe are not more and not less than the Ten Commandments despite successive changes in the structure of Western society? Why is the controversy among thinkers in Europe centred around the intellectual justification of the Commandments and not the Commandments themselves? What prevented the Greeks to think that they were not by nature more civilized than the Orientals?

The inadequacy of Mannheim's method and its contradictory assertion can further be shown. Mannheim denied relativism but rather preferred relationism with some basic values such as freedom and variety. But in his conception of objectivity, only structural relationship and not ends and norms should be the subject matter of political science. Thus he separated the substance of freedom from its form. Mannheim considered freedom as a value, but freedom for what? When writing about the modern stress on efficiency he asked 'Efficiency for what?' As long as his conception of political science did not answer this question it can hardly be called objective.

He pointed out that political science differs from other sciences in that it deals with political life which is an expression of the interests, motivations, aims, hopes, emotions and the transformation of the participants. Thus, since political life is by nature inseparable from the participants' life, and since this is inseparable from his ends and norms and valuations, it can hardly be possible to separate ends and norms from political science if that science deals with what really is and not what really should be.

Mannheim himself thought that to refrain from stating a value does not mean objectivity. But why then did he refrain from stating the ends of political life in terms of concrete valuations which are indispensable to it? What is the use in trying to save a society from chaos when we do not know what to live for? This will only lead to another crisis-generating crisis. Thus Mannheim's attitude of refrain towards stating the ideal life represents in itself a spirit already permeated by a sense of defeat and surrender to destiny, this time not the Hegelian Idea, not the economic determinant of Marxism, not to Oswald Spengler's fixed span of Time, but to the social situation. But of course the above criticism is valid as long as we stick to one of the two meanings of determinism which Mannheim prepared for us, for his determinism includes the possibility of it not being deterministic at all.

1) K. Mannheim's, "Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning, p. VII. Introduction.

2) Hans Speier (American Jour. of Soc. Vol. XLIII. July 1937.

ISLAM AND MATERIAL PROGRESS

by J. W. Syed, M.A.

"On earth will be your dwelling-place and your means of livelihood for a time". (Quran)

"It is we who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you therein with means for the fulfilment of life. Small are the thanks that you give." (Quran).

The problem of reconciling Islam and material progress does not arise; "reconciliation" can be attempted only between two mutually exclusive or hostile subjects. Full observance of the principles of Islam itself implies the highest moral and material progress of man. The distinctive contribution of the Prophet and the Quran to world religious thought was that they brought religion from the clouds of heaven to solid earth; religion was no longer an affair of tinkling of bells in temples and churches, and of burning incense at holy altars; the whole earth was declared by the Prophet as a holy ground. God has placed man as His vicegerent on earth, and has entrusted him with the tasks of civilization, — producing order, organization, and culture out of disorder, chaos, and barbarism. Man, as the crown of creation, is ordained to make use of whatever exists between earth and heaven, and to achieve enrichment and fulfilment of life: "It is we who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you therein with means for the fulfilment of life" (Quran). Again: "It is He who hath created for you all things that are on earth". (Quran). The Quran invites man to bring the forces of nature under human control and to harness them to the fulfilment of his needs.

The story of civilization and human progress is the story of man's endeavours to conquer hostile nature, to protect himself against the inclemency of the elements, and to mould and shape things nearer to the heart's desire. What distinguishes man from and raises him above other species is his power to give form and shape to his visions and dreams. Man's eternal discontent with the present spurs him to better and improve his condition every day. Since the beginning of history and civilization man has been a tool-making animal; pottery, painting, poetry, sculpture, architecture, philosophy, religion, and science are the distinctive achievements and possessions of man. The striving after something better in our surroundings is the grand human characteristic that distinguishes man from the brute. Perpetual progress is thus both a task for humanity and a law of God. Man looks before and after and pines for what is not; the ancients put their Golden Age in the past, they held to the vision of a paradise lost; we moderns put ours in the future. We are always faced with the great question: whether or not each age is better than the last. "Mans' progress towards a higher state", says Herschel, "need never fear a check, but must continue till the very last existence of history".

Islam being a religion based on divine wisdom and reason, postulates the possibility of man's moral and material advancement if he continues to observe and follow the unalterable laws of God which are uninterrupted working in the physical and the moral world. Islam as a system of thought and way of life aims at man's moral and material well-being and welfare." Islam does not favour

asceticism. The dualism of the temporal and the spiritual, the profane and the sacred, and the political and the religious has never existed in the early and the real Islam as preached and practised by the Prophet and the first four Caliphs. Islam never meant to divide human life into water-tight compartments; it presents a unitary and monistic view of life and the universe. "There is no such thing as a profane world", writes Dr. Iqbal, "all this immensity of matter constitutes a scope for the self-realization of spirit. All is holy ground. As the Prophet so beautifully puts it: 'the whole of this earth is a mosque'". Islam has laid equal emphasis on all aspects of human life, the temporal and the eternal, the material and the moral. It does not recommend renunciation of and withdrawal from the world. Islam as a system of thought and belief is not a religion in the Western detached and private sense of the word; it is, in the words of Professor Gibb, "a fully-rounded society on a religious basis which comprehends every aspect of human life". "This is the Islam of Mohammed," says Amir Ali, "it is not a mere creed; it is a life to be lived in the present — a religion of right doing, right thinking, and right speaking, founded on divine love, universal charity and the equality of man in the sight of the Lord".

Islam is a civil and secular religion, rational and practical because it fully takes into account the temporal world and offers a complete guidance for the conduct of the present life. The fundamental trend of Islamic thought is that the earthly life is worthwhile, and that it has meaning and purpose: "We have not made the earth and the heavens in sport". (Quran). As against the medieval Christian emphasis on the hereafter to the disdainful neglect of the present, Islam lays equal stress on the present life as it can be lived upon earth, "within the bourne of time and space." Islam implied the return of man to his ideal nature, and his consciousness of his dignity, high vocation, and freedom. Islam made no attempt to crush and suppress the nature of man, his natural desires and aspirations; in fact, it aims at the full development of human personality and the attainment of intellectual, moral, and cultural excellence and harmony. The positivist thought of Islam insists that human thought and conduct should be determined with reference not only to celestial bliss and beauty, but also to the present life and social well-being. It lays emphasis on rational knowledge gained from anywhere and everywhere, and seeks to organise society on the basis of empirically and scientifically established truths. Theocratic and monastic conceptions are not only foreign to Islam but are a complete negation of it. Islam did not establish a Church with a sacerdotal hierarchy of clergy men. Islam established a democratic and social-welfare state to promote man's moral and material well-being. Conceptions of the dignity and worth of the human person, of liberty of faith and conscience are the essential part of the message of Islam, and are its distinguished legacy to the modern world. Islam being essentially and ideally democratic in its spirit, aims at the establishment of a society and polity based on the rule of law, jus-

tice, liberty, and human dignity. And such a society and polity alone can achieve an all-round human betterment and progress.

Islam invites man to look simultaneously with the eyes of the body and the mind; Islam and the spirit of science, that is observation of phenomena and discovery of universal laws operating in the universe, are one. In the Quran men are bidden to observe and reflect upon the phenomena of nature, the alteration of the day and the night, the properties of the earth and the air, fire and water, the mysteries of birth and death, growth and decay. Modern Western progress owes a huge debt of gratitude to Muslim scholars who not only recovered and preserved ancient learning and passed it on to Europe, but also made their own original contribution to all branches of learning in science and philosophy which made possible the birth of the modern world. In the words of Briffault, "Science is the most momentous contribution of Arab civilization to the modern world." In fact, Islam and civilization are synonyms. Never before in history has there been such a flowering of the human mind and heart, such a predominance of civilized human values, as between 600 A.D. and 1400, the period when the world of Islam was all light and learning and Europe was in darkness and barbarism, when, in the words of Dr. Johnson, "Christianity was the Queen of Night". To quote Briffault again: "The light from which civilization was once more rekindled did not arise from any members of Graeco-Roman culture smouldering amid the ruins of Europe, nor from the living death on the Bosphorus (Byzantine). It did not come from the Northern but from the Southern invaders of the empire, from the Saracens".

Islam differs from the Western approach to life in its not willing to divorce pure scientific research from faith in the Unseen and in the moral and spiritual ends of life. The Western separation between science and religion is the real danger to world peace and human progress. Because of his lack of faith in religious and ethical ends, man is annihilating his own kind with the weapons which modern science has placed in his hands. Scientific research and inquiry which finds sanction in Islam is a quest and contemplation of the Divine in the phenomena of life and nature. Islam, in the true spirit of science and rationalism, constantly appeals to human reason, good sense, and conscience as the only authority next to Revelation, and insists on individual human responsibility. Islam encourages human effort after self and race improvement; it aims at the cultivation and improvement not only of individuals or groups of individuals but of the entire mankind. Islam stands for the total annihilation of wrong, injustice, and intolerance in the world. All-round human progress is the great goal of Islam, — improvement and refinement of morals, manners, and material conditions of life, providing shelter to the shelterless, bread to the hungry, medical aid to the sick, and education and enlightenment to the ignorant and illiterate. Poverty is not glorified in Islam. The Prophet once said: "If poverty were a man, I would have killed him".

The Quran promises felicity and happiness not only in the hereafter but also in this world to those who live in accordance with the guidance of the Quran. Islam invites man to beautify and refine his existence, and produce culture and order out of anarchy and chaos. Ugliness and degradation in human life are absolutely contrary to the message of Islam. Islam does not bid man accept the existing conditions however bad they may be, but positively commands man never to cease striving for continuous improvement and perfection. Islam repeatedly calls men

to falah in this world and in the hereafter; and falah means success through cultivation. Islam's conception of civilization and progress comprehends both the material and moral improvement of the individual and mankind as a whole. As one of the rare instances in history Islam ruled out compulsion in matters of faith and conscience; it does not impose any particular form of worship and religious practices on any people. Islam's fight against and victory over the people of Mecca, Byzantine, and Persia was a fight against and victory over barbarism, decadence, inequality, and inequity. Islam is not opposed to the cooperation of all peoples, irrespective of race, colour and creed, in the task of improving the condition of man here on earth. In Islam the word 'Alien' has no meaning; for a Muslim no way of life is an alien way of life so long as it is a good and right way. All the worlds and all the peoples belong to One God; He is in the East and in the West. For a Muslim distinctions of East and West are superstitions. According to the well-known saying of the Prophet, "Wisdom and virtue are a Muslim's lost property; he must seek it wherever he may find them".

Without sanctioning materialism and epicureanism, Islam allows the reasonable enjoyment of the good things of life: "Say, who hath forbidden the beautiful gifts of God which He hath produced for His servants, and the things clean and pure which He hath provided for sustenance: they are in the life of this world for those who believe, (and) surely for them on the Day of Judgment" (Quran). Islam enjoins equally the cleanliness of the soul, the body, and the dress. Man is expected to take good care of his appearance: "O children of Adam, wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer; eat and drink but waste not by excess for God loveth not the wasters" (Quran). And yet, Islam positively stresses that man should not attach himself to this world and its goods and gifts, which are after all short-lived, and ephemeral; the best abode of man is in the hereafter with God. We are allowed moderately to use whatever God has created for man.

Islam does not lay down any terminus for the growth and development of the human intellect. Inborn in man is an urge towards perfection, a constant advance directed towards conditions of an ever higher culture and civilization. It is the destiny of man to make himself the master of the earth by thought and action. An active existence is stressed by Islam. Only in creation and action does man attest his kinship with the Supreme Creative Spirit of the Universe. The Quran emphasises action equally with reflection and faith. Iqbal has beautifully said: "Happy is Man, who has a loving and inconstant nature: he is the Knight of Time and the cloak of life fits him well; he creates new things and always changes his appearance." ("Alfak-e-Anjum") Again, in "Zabur-e-Ajam" he says: "Religion in the hearts of men with an ardent heart is not only a dream but is the power to create from this very dust, another world". It is the function of man to cooperate with God in perfecting this world.

The vast universe still lies unexplored; ever new and fresh discoveries and inventions await man. "The world", said Seneca, "is a poor affair if it does not contain matter for investigation for men in every age".

Islam and progress in all its phases are not only not hostile to each other, but are each other's implication. Islam aims at organizing and ordering life for the good of man, bringing out the finest and best in him so that he may enter the eternal phase of life beyond the grave.