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## **Appendix**

## 1. The Ever-Increasing Religious Tendencies In The West

Specimens of the ever-increasing religious tendencies toward Islam by Western scholars and the general public are as follows:

#### The General Public In The West

Technology, experimental sciences, and materialism cannot meet man's spiritual needs. As a consequence, the Western world is experiencing colossal social upheaval arising from the thirst for spirituality.

According to a report released by the *Daily Telegraph*: "Social analysts say that one of the causes of people's further attention toward religion is the fact that religion and science are not regarded as disharmonious as before."1

Dr. Ponty Kainan, the researcher and professor at the University of Finland states: "A tendency has developed in the modern world to embrace religion and this tendency in on the rise."2

In his speech, delivered at Islam and the Differences of World Culture Conference, Peter Schulatur, the well–known German writer and political analyst, emphasizes that "At the time being, the movement of returning to religion and Utopia has begun."3

George Metalnius, professor of political science at the College of Theology, Athens, Greece, states: "In this age, religion and returning to religion is flourishing." 4

Professor Jose Maria, the Spanish scholar remarks: "At present, the world is impressively turning to religion."5

Gustav Yinbur, the American journalist, presented a report at a symposium where American scholars and writers emphasized the return to religion, saying: "Not only in America but also all over the world,

the general public's turning to God and religion is impressively on the increase."6

Today, Western analysts have found out the extraordinary power of religion in society and maintain that "In the present circumstances, there is no social force stronger than religion in the world."7

They emphasize that "The people in the world turn increasingly toward God, religion, and spirituality in the East and the West."8

In the past, extreme scientism directed everyone toward the belief that secularism was the only unrivaled wave dominating the world, but nowadays, modern man's deadlocks have directed him elsewhere.

Analysts remark that "The trend of the nations' return to believing in religions has started like a roaring torrent, putting an end to the assumption that secularism is embracing the world over."9

"Everyone was making the mistake in believing that materialism is enfeebling religion and nothing can stand in its way." 10 Nowadays, there is an increasing tendency toward gatherings and assemblies in the Western world whose participants emphasize their religious and spiritual demands from their governments and express their faithfulness towards their religious beliefs.

On the occasion of the Catholic Youth World Day, an impressive gathering was held in August 1997, in the presence of Pope Jean Paul II, in which more than a million prayed to God. Catholic Youth from 140 countries participated in this event. 11

Participants at the assembly of The American Black Women in Philadelphia whose number ran to a million declared: "Now, it is high time to strengthen the spiritual bond in the black families and society." 12

Hundreds of thousands of Americans took part in a sacred gathering upon the call of the Convention Organization. They prayed to God and demanded the return of spirituality to their society. 13
In another event held in Los Angeles, 43 thousand American youth gathered as Jesus Christ's supporters and declared that their goal in holding the event was to familiarize themselves with spiritual values and reconsider their faith. 14

Fifteen thousand American women gathered at Ohio city hall to call Americans to monotheism and declared that the only solution to the deadlocks of their society lay in turning to religion and spiritual values.

According to Gustav Niebur, the *New York Times*' reporter, Mrs. Robin Roth, one of the organizers of this impressive and unprecedented assembly, mentioned a speech delivered at a recent gathering in Washington, in which one million people participated upon the call of Louis Farrakhan, the Muslim leader, who remarked that it was after the assembly that the statistics of criminal acts subsided and people returned to fairness and good manners in their dealings with one another. 15

It is noteworthy that the increasing number of assemblies in the West, particularly in the United States, and the participants' emphasis on non- material demands merely depict a portion of the deep

transformation in the Westerners' spiritual taste. Further comprehensive studies are required to gain complete awareness of the trends of spiritual tendencies.

A glimpse at the process of the ongoing developments in the West may suffice to perceive the depth and range of the prevalent transformation. A number of the instances of such transformations are as follows.

It is reported that: "The experts of the Western research institutes strongly recommend the marketing designers of commercial firms and the like to take account of the increasing trend of turning to religion in the world. 16

The Westerners', particularly the Americans', ever–increasing tendency toward religion has led to the fact that "The radio stations in the United States broadcasting religious programs have attracted millions of listeners." 17

According to Reuter, one fourth of adult Internet users in the United States – numbering approximately 28 million – search for the network's religious and spiritual information, whose number amounts to three million people per day. 18

The status quo has made religious books to be on the list of best-sellers in the West:

"According to a Gallop research institute, approximately 2,000 books on devotional subjects are available in the American market. The number is three times more than the titles published on similar subjects. 19

Because of the general public turning to religious topics, "Nowadays, it is even a lucrative business for physicists, cosmologists, and astronomers to include God's name in their books, even if they are not concerned about God between the covers.

As a consequence, titles such as, *The Language of God and New Physics, the Mind of God*, and the like have made their presence on the book market. The general public welcomes such books, since many people seek some solution to the disharmony between science and religion. They have been told to choose between the twain. Therefore, scholars have taken advantage of the general public's appetite.20

Today, the incoherent tendencies toward religion in modern societies are on the rise and serve as a kind of awakening and self-consciousness; undoubtedly, since the impressive gathering of black Muslims in Washington in 1995 and the outcry of *God is Greater* in front of the White House is an auspicious example of a moral and spiritual upheaval at the center of a modern society.21

In his report, published in *Christian Science Monitor*, Robert Maquand, the American writer, describes the 20th century as the century of spiritual curiosity and depicts the advent of religion into the culture of the American general public, especially in the last decade of the century.

Presenting a description of diverse religious events, including the demonstration of millions of "the faithful to the Covenant", in which Christian men emphasized their religious obligations, he writes:

"Religion has manifested its diverse forms in the American society and it is presently forming American culture."

According to him, recently (e.g. in 1997), the religious dimension in stories and well-known adventures that either indicate the deeply rooted cultural characteristics or affect the direction of the events – inside the United States and abroad – have been obvious.

Based on this report, religious issues and interpretations which had fallen into oblivion or had been buried in peripheral periodicals for long, occupy the first pages of dailies these days.

Television networks devote most of their programs to religious events "which have achieved surprising popularity," and the books about spirituality have been best– sellers. David Haim, the editor in chief of the Chicago based periodical, *Christian Century*, states: "Nowadays, people like to regard themselves in pursuit of spirituality, arising from religious beliefs. Television movies bearing spiritual messages and angels of the Divine threshold have found innumerable viewers this year.

They were all made by Hollywood which had never paid any attention to religious issues or even used to show animosity against them."

Quoting Warren Little Field, head of entertainment programs of NBC television network, Maquand writes: "Apparently, viewers all over the United States are eager to watch religious themes." He adds that:

1. "According to American Best-sellers Society, books which are mostly written about religion and spirituality are the only non-fiction books which do not lose their marketability." 22

Barbara Controvitz, the Western writer, writes in her report: "Film studios in Hollywood have added the spice of "mysticism" and "life after death" to their products. Pope Jean Paul's new book entitled *Crossing the Gate of Hope* is on the best–sellers' top list.

James Redfield's novel with mystic and spiritual themes entitled *Heavenly Predictions* is on the fiction top list. In the world of music, 2.8 million copies of the album of the Benedict monks of Santo Domingo de Silvas Church which includes religious hymns have been sold.

Kathleen Norris' *Dakota, a Spiritual Geography,* which appeared in 1993, is still on the list of best–sellers. She says that so far, she has received three thousand letters from readers willing to share their spiritual experiences with her.

He adds that "[American] politicians insist that religious services become mandatory at American schools. The number of participants at religious services and lectures has been manifold; they are supposed to write their names on waiting lists and wait for months in order to participate in a number of these lectures."

Thus Controvitz continues: "Students abound in university classes where courses and lectures on mystic

and spiritual topics are presented. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Interface Institute presents seven hundred courses on these topics and twenty thousand applicants have enrolled in the courses this year, but the number did not exceed thirteen thousand last year.

Approximately 2,000 people attended the lectures delivered by Dr. Dien Urnisch in autumn this year and listened to his usually complicated lectures regarding the prevention of heart attacks by finding inward peace."23

There has been an increasing tendency toward religious education and prayers at schools and gymnasiums. According to a report published in *US Today*, Presently, 29% of Americans believe that they do not enjoy sufficient freedom of religious education. In proportion to the surveys conducted in 1998 and 1997, the number shows a 3% and 8% increase respectively.

Approximately 48% of Americans believe that authorities are supposed to allow students to perform their prayers and 64% of Americans protest against the prayer ban in sports centers. ... Innumerable Americans have denounced the Supreme Court's verdict regarding the students' prayer ban at sports centers."24

An Iranian researcher working on another aspect of the spiritual movement and spirituality in the modern world says: "Last week, television satellite networks aired a spiritual song for the first time which is one the manifest indications of the spiritual needs and the spirituality seeking society after the Islamic revolution of Iran.

The symbolic name of this impressive and spiritual song is *Puedes Liegar* and is sung by the most famous singers of modern Spain and also by the religious groups whose choirs were all in religious costumes and had a praying pose."

He remarks: "The production of dolls reciting verses of the Bible, is the repetition of a new phenomenon in spiritual tendencies. Compared to the one hundred million dollars spent prior to the advent of the Islamic revolution in Iran, merely the volume of the spiritual commercial transactions in the American society has increased to three billion dollars.

The development and formation of the new software expertise and skills in the field of commerce and international services have greatly increased at a number of religious education centers and church organizations, aiming at the establishment of spiritual relations with more audience."

The end of the report reads: "Maria Angelica was a poor nun devoid of any capital except for her attire. As a result of the Catholic believers' encouragement, she participated in the commissioning of a purely religious and spiritual cable television network and was able to create a powerful television network whose audience amounted to 45 million and thereby answered to the spiritual needs by making use of television as a medium."25

Not only has modern man not attained needlessness of religion, but feels that he has been deceived and mistaken in the age of modernism; as a result, he pursues religion. The rise and the widespread dissemination of the trend toward religion at the epicenter of the Western neglect, surprises any curious researcher and imparts the inefficiency of scientism to the world.

Based on the results of a statistical survey conducted by Brand Futures Group, the Western citizens' tendency, particularly the modernist class, toward religious issues and topics is on the increase.26

Western experts admit the fact that, "Presently, Western churches are more crowded than in the past"27 and "these days, the return to religion in the United States, England, France, and Spain is so powerful that it has overshadowed everything."28

Experts maintain: "The enthusiasm for seeking God has caused many people to participate in religious demonstrations and thus Americans, individually and socially, have increasingly paid further attention to religious issues. Undoubtedly, it is the most obvious and the most outstanding event in the United States in the 70's and the 80's and it will not be in vain to claim that this trend will thoroughly impress the American society, people's conduct, and the culture of the country in the coming years of this century."29

Robert Wutna, professor of sociology at Briston University, and Dan Latin, religious affairs reporter, following many interviews with the American general public, published two books entitled *After Paradise* and *After Buying Faith.* According to the said authors who have conducted two separate studies in the East and the West of the United States:

"Nowadays, the American sudden turn to religious life is unprecedentedly on the rise. ... Belief in God and visiting places of worship are prevalent more than any period of time in the past.30

Religion is affecting the American society in such a fashion that a Western authority on the subject states: "Religion has manifested itself in the American society in diverse forms and presently it is forming the American culture."31

The wave of seeking God and spirituality is on such an increase in the West that it is considered to be one of the most impressive events of the last centuries. Therefore, taking the significance of the subject into account, mention will be made of a number of reports in this respect: "Nowadays, an important region of South America, from the South East to the West, is termed as the "religious belt," since religious activities in this region have been on the rise in the last two decades.

The number of church goers and respondents to the questionnaires and surveys attest this fact. Presently, more than 80 % of Americans state that they practice religion and 90 % of them acknowledge the existence of God. ... According to these surveys, 60–65 % of the English and 70 % of Italians are of the same opinion."32

A report released by PEW Survey Institute in Washington DC reveals that "Americans are increasingly

turning to religion and compared to the last decade, more people believe in God and miracles in the present decade."33

According to a report released by the Canadian Statistics Bureau: "The number of religious people in Canada is on the rise."5

Making use of a survey in which 19,000 people from 21 countries participated, International Center for Social Statistics declared: "The number of youth from Eastern European countries believing in life after death is on the increase."34

New reports suggest that one third of Americans use the Internet to have access to religious information and closeness to God. The report, excerpted from *Sydney Morning Herald*, suggests that the number of users searching religious material has exceeded from 18 million to 35 million in 2003 which indicates a 94 % increase.

In a comparison concerning the growth rate of turning to religion prior to 2003, studies suggest that the number of Internet users searching religious material has increased from 3 million in 2000 to 5 million in 2002, which indicates a 60 % growth rate.35

The report released by PEW Survey Institute in Washington DC suggests: "Only between March 2000 and September 2001, the number of users with such enthusiasm has increased from 18 million to 28 million.

Particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 catastrophe, more than 40 % of users throughout the world, used the Internet to exchange prayers, 23 % of which involved material regarding the Islamic faith.36

### **Religious Pretension For Winning Elections**

The widespread turning to religion by the general public is such that politicians pretend to be religious to achieve their political goals and win elections. In a report, CNN released statistics in this regard: "The circulation of religious books suggests a 6 % increase in 1995. The increase in the spiritual and religious tendencies of the general public brought about significant transformation in the political arena, particularly in political campaigns.

"Taking advantage of religious propaganda in a number of Western countries to attain the satisfaction and votes of the general public has grown impressively in recent years. Consequently, the nominees from the Conservative and Labor Parties, running for the office of premier in England, presented unprecedented descriptions regarding their religious beliefs." 37

"In their presidential campaigns, the Democrat Bill Clinton and the Republican Bob Dahl made use of religious slogans."38

In the last presidential campaign in the United States, George Bush and McCain, the two Republican

nominees, talked about the impressions of Jesus Christ's teachings on their characters and religious beliefs. Al Gore and Bill Bradley, the two Republican nominees, emphasized their own and also their families' religiousness by stating that religious values were to be reinforced for Social reforms."39

*Al-Awsat* (periodical), in an analytical report on the religious tendency and its examples in the cradle of Western civilization, the United States, reads: "Apparently, religion is one of the significant factors in presidential campaigns in the United States. ... Bill Clinton, the then American president always put an end to his speeches by the formula: "O God! Make the United States happy!"

In this regard, Garry Wafer, professor at George Town University, states: "If Clinton forgets to say this formula at the end of his speech one day, he will not be able to dispel Americans' harsh criticism, since it will be said that he did not respect religion.

However, according to the American constitution, any kind of supporting religion and intermingling religion and politics are forbidden."

The periodical further reads: "The American society has never paid such attention to religion. Today, the attention has reached the extent that Dr. Jabir al-'Ulwani, the president of Islamic Support in Virginia states: "A number of religious Protestants in America engage in discussions and disputations with me concerning Averroes, the Muslim thinker, and state that he is responsible for the advent of secularism in the West."

Dr. John Well, professor of History of Islam at George Washington University, states: "Twenty-five years ago, Americans were amazed when Carter, the former president of the United States, said that he was religious, since at that time, irreligiousness and secularism were considered as sources of pride. It was for the same reason that Kennedy denied religiousness in his election campaign.40

Politicians have also expressed their inclination toward religion. For instance, Johannes Rau, the president of the Federal Republic of Germany, demanded the use of the word "God" in the new constitution of the European Union. According to a report released by Agence France– Press, in his speech at the Polish parliament, Rau said: "Using the word "God" in the new constitution of the European Union, which is in the process of composition, is in line with the traditions of Jesus Christ ('a) in Europe."

He added: "The use of the Name "Allah" in the openings to compositions is not particular to any specific religion, but it is also employed in Christian bodies."41

## The Twenty-First Century: The Decline Of Secularism

Religious tendency in the West has been on such a rise that the 20th century has been described by scholars as "the century of extraordinary religious impression on the different dimensions of human life."42

Robert Maquand, the American author, has termed the twenty-first century as the century of man's spiritual curiosity and on the basis of the available statistics, figures, and evidence, predicts that "The new century will be the era of religious effervescence and the expectations of the general public in this regard will be on the rise."43

To confirm the authenticity of the said issue, *Observateur*, the French weekly, quotes Andre Malraux, the outstanding French writer and the former minister of cultural affairs, who, in the presentation of his prediction, stated: "The twenty-first century either shall not exist or shall be the century of religion."

The said weekly further reads: "Malraux's prediction has been realized as return to religion is to be noticed everywhere."44

Western researchers regard the tendency toward religion to be unimaginable and write thus: "The process of the nations' return to belief in religion has started like a roaring torrent and the assumption that secularism will permeate worldwide has come to an end."45

They explicitly consider the theory of the decline of religion to be erroneous and declares: "Everyone was erroneously thinking that materialism was debilitating religion and nothing was able to withstand it." 46

Today, the West notices that religion, belief in God, and seeking spirituality are innate to man, since making people distant from religion and disseminating hatred against it for long have failed to quench the voice of their innate nature.

### Western Scholars' Ever-Increasing Religious Tendencies

Turning to religion in the West is on the increase among the general public as well as the scholars. The latter have perceived the determining role of religion in opening the deadlocks of modern science and noticed the surprising developments of the last two decades.

## 2. Scholars' Religious Tendencies At The Beginning Of The 20th Century

The development of scholars' religious tendencies reveal that prior to the 19th century, when classical physics was at its zenith, many scholars were among the believers of their societies. For instance, despite a number of preconceptions, "Founders of modern science, e.g. Kepler in the 16th century, Galileo in the 17th century, Newton in the 18th century were religious."47

Generally speaking, it may be said that "Seventeenth century scholars, like Galileo, were practicing Catholics, and scholars like Robert Boyle (1627–1691), believed in the religious mission of science." 48

"Newton, the icon, to whom modern physics owes much, was a theologian, who regarded man to be

God's creature. He was particularly fond of theology. James Clerk Maxwell was another outstanding physicist in the 19th century who spent Sundays studying theology."49

"Most of the classical physicists like Kepler, Galileo, Newton, Alstead, Ampere, Michael, Faraday, Henry, and Maxwell proved the existence of God by referring to systematicity and consistency in nature. All these scholars regarded physics as the means by which God's tokens in the systematic nature are manifest."50

Galileo stated: "The Divine manifestation in natural acts is not less obvious than His manifestation in the sacred sentences of the Bible."51

However, the growth of classical physics in the 19th century led to extreme reliance on the capabilities of science by a number of scholars. As a consequence, the West experienced the rise and spread of empirical thoughts and their dominance on Western academia. Emphasizing empiricism, many scholars in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, rejected the authenticity of any philosophical and religious knowledge.

The thoughts of scholars like Auguste Comte (1798–1857), the French philosopher and sociologist, were dominant. He merely recognized empirical data as valuable and scientific, and regarded himself as the prophet of the religion of humanity. Such intellectual and scientific environment increased the rejection of religious beliefs and marginalized Western religious individuals and scholars.

The apex of these thoughts is noticeable in logical positivism. 52 This philosophical trend originated from the sessions held by intellectuals, including mathematicians and logicians between 1922 and 1936. 53

A number of philosophers, physicists, mathematicians, and logicians invited Moritz Schlick, the German positivist philosopher (1880–1936), to teach Inductive Philosophy at the University of Vienna. They were later known as the Vienna group.54

Alfred Jules Ayer (1910–1989) was one of the best speakers of this intellectual trend in England.55

More than anyone else, he endeavored to raise and disseminate the issues of the Vienna group in the English speaking world. His special work on logical positivism, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, has been regarded as one of the most influential classics in the 20th century.56

The proponents of this view considered all moral and religious propositions to be devoid of meaning and rejected any authenticity in religious beliefs.

There were believing scholars in this dark age, but the rise and spread of scientism, empiricism, and positivism worsened the poisonous atmosphere and entailed destructive impressions on the scientific trend and scholars in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, to the extent that a survey sent to one thousand scholars in different fields, in which 700 of them participated, revealed that only 40 percent of them believed in God.

Based on the results, it was predicted that the percentage of believers diminished at the end of the 20th century.57

In 1950, Ann Peard, the outstanding university professor in the United States said: "I examined fifty psychology textbooks used in American universities, but they did not include even one minor discussion on religion as a human and emotional discussion."58

#### 3. The Deadlock Of Excessive Scientism

In the beginning of the 20th century, empirical views were gradually on the decline. Logical positivism, constituting the apex of empiricism in the sphere of semantics, suffered from critique by the members of the Vienna group, including, Gilbert Raille (1900–1976). a professor and a logical positivist at the outset, separated from the group and warned against the nullification of all philosophical claims including the proceedings of the Vienna group sessions published in *Gnosis* (periodical).59

In *The Nature of Science*, 60 Chalmers uncovers the shortcomings of science. Alfred Jules Ayer, the best proponent and speaker of this intellectual trend, and the author of the most impressive classic on logical positivism, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, in an interview with Brian Magee replied to the question "Have you encountered seminal defects in your logical positivism?" by saying: "I assume that its most important defect was that almost all of it was fallacious and devoid of truth."61

The deadlock of absolute scientism and its consequent crises gradually came to light in the first half of the 20th century. The development of the tendency toward religion found a novel course, and the number of monotheist scholars believing in the harmony of science and religion increased.

In this era, authorities like Max Planck (1858–1947), the quantum 62 physics theorist, explicitly raised the issue of "the harmony between science and religion and their harmony against superstitions." 63

Shallow, the American physicist and Noble peace prize winner, mentioned his belief in God and the necessity of inquiring from religion and receiving answers from it.64

Packinghorn, the English physicist, considered science without religion to be defective. Margenou, the American physicist and Einstein's colleague, presented his opinion concerning the necessity of religion for science and restated Einstein's belief according to which "the discovery of a fundamental, nature–proven law is Divine inspiration."65

Scholars like Morrison, professor at the Academy of Sciences, New York, and Rouvire, professor of anatomy at Medical School, Paris, made use of physics, biology, physiology, and mathematics in order to prove the existence of God and purposefulness of life. 66 Developments in the field of humanities occurred in this era.

For instance, psychology had been non-religious so far, but new horizons gradually emerged. With the

rise of an anti–Freud wave, psychologists, e.g. Victor Frankel, 67 Mary Douglas, Karen Horney (1885–1952), 68 Carl Rogers (1902–1987), 69 Gordon Allport (1967–1997), 70 and Abraham Maslow (1908–1970), 71 discoveries came to light that had the utmost sympathy with religion. Contrary to Freud (1856–1939), 72 who maintains that the tendency toward religion is the result of the Oedipus complex, 73 stemming from the child's sexual love toward his mother, and religiousness is in fact a kind of psychological complication, these psychologists hold that religiousness is a tendency inherent in man. 74

An Iranian contemporary scholar who participated in academic conferences abroad depicts the transforming trend of the scholars' view as follows:

"A few years ago, I had traveled to London to take part in a seminar entitled "The Physical Interpretation of Relativity." The discussion was on cosmology. A Belgian physicist and philosopher, discussing a cosmological model, mentioned God's Name. An American physicist from the University of Oxford stated: "There is no room to name God at a physics conference.

I myself bear witness to it. But no, the situation has transformed to the extent that four years ago, the "American Association of Advancement in Science," the most important scientific Association in the United States, whose members are renowned scientific figures in America, held its conference. What was unprecedented was that besides the common parallel sessions, one session or two concerned "the relation between science and religion."

These sessions were so packed that they overshadowed others and led to the protest voiced by seminar authorities. In other words, the situation has undergone a drastic transformation. Once it was not in vogue to make mention of religion at the academia, but nowadays, it is different."75

The incapacity of science was also confirmed by Bruce Mingan, professor of epistemology at the University of California, Berkeley. At the second conference entitled "Adaptation of Science and Religion" (India, January 1996), he made reference to the increasing and unprecedented scholarly tendency toward religion in recent years and stated: "From the outset of the present century, the scientific method fossilized.

It was limited to the observation of sheer extraneous realities and regarded religion and religious experience as an everlasting foe, but fortunately, since the outset of the present decade, the interest in consciousness and also religious and spiritual experiences in scientific literature have been revitalized."76

In recent years, religiousness has been on the increase in many scientific centers and the renowned universities of the world, particularly in the West in such a fashion that "Presently, around 300 to 500 students regularly participate in devotional services at Stanford University, where prayers were regarded as devoid of value."77

Statistics suggest that "Half of the CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) researchers in

France believe in God and many of them feel that they have approached this phase."78

The available reports reveal that "It has been a number of years that University of Cambridge is presenting the Rhetoric (Science and Theology) program. In 1998, the sum of one million and one hundred thousand pounds sterling was offered to the University of Oxford to institute the chair of Science and religion. The University of Leeds in England has also instituted the first interdisciplinary center for education and research concerning the interaction between science and religion. This university instituted the Master's program of Science and Religion in 1998 and Boston University instituted the PhD program of Science, Religion, and Philosophy."79

The new tendency toward psychological studies in the sphere of religion which had begun in the 60's and 70's, has revealed an impressive increase in recent years to the extent that "Tens of academic journals have been published and tens of symposiums and seminars have been held in recent years and the number of the Christian Psychologists'

Association has exceeded from approximately 200 in 1993 to 1600 in recent years and its researches, concerning religious studies on theoretical bases and those in the field of humanities, posted on the Internet, have been quite on the increase."80

Despite the fact that formerly, "Psychologists maintained that treatment of patients should be separated from judgmental issues, more than six thousand academic papers have been published on the role and importance of religion in the treatment of patients from 1987 to 1993."81

Furthermore, in recent years "Programs on science and religion have been presented at many American and European universities and according to the survey carried out by *New Scientist*, these programs have been on the increase more than any other academic program!"82

"American Political Science Association instituted its Department of Religion and Politics ten years ago and it offers a prize to the best book in this field of study every year."83

# 4. Beginning Of The Collapse Of Sheer Materialism And The Increasing Efforts To Appreciate The Reality Of Religion

The world is experiencing the collapse of anti–God thoughts in the modern materialistic civilization and intense disillusionment with the irreligious culture. According to *Novel Observateur*: "In this era, information technology and technique have advanced astoundingly and the collapse and decline of the intellectual fundamentals of materialists and the irreligious have ever been on the increase. ... It is not theology that makes use of scientific concepts, but it is science that is intensely seeking God."84

According to a report published in *Scientific American*: "The incapacity of science in solving the problems concerning the meaning of life, and judgmental and moral issues, has made a number of

formerly disbelieving scholars to distance themselves from their former beliefs and turn to religious teachings."85

In conformity with the worldwide religious tendency of the general public, intellectuals have also been set in motion by rectifying their academic blunders. They have revised and criticized their formerly negative views concerning religion and have perceived its place in life. Innumerable conferences have been held, many studies have been carried out, and a large number of works have been published to prove the convergence of religion and science.

For instance, establishing the increasing number of associations and research institutes concerned with science and religion in Europe and the United States; holding the International Conference of the Convergence of Science and Religion in India, attended by 1100 physicists, chemists, biologists, philosophers, theologians, from all over the world; or, holding the conference concerning the relation between science and religion at the University of California, Berkeley, in which many outstanding scholars participated, need to be mentioned.86

"Recently the Centre for Religion and Natural Sciences in Berkeley, California, carried out a research project entitled Science and Spiritual Studies. Mark Richardson, the director of the project, said that it preceded the holding of a conference to be attended by scholars in the fields of natural sciences and religion and its objective was to alter the elite's views according to which exact sciences refuted religious beliefs."87

Many books have been published in recent years presenting a positive view regarding the relation between science and religion. Reference may be made to *Physics and Metaphysics* (1994) by Jennifer Trusted, who has published many works in the fields of philosophy and the philosophy of science.

In her book, she intends to dispel the predominant belief according to which religion has impeded the way of scientific advancement. She considers the practical progress of the Middle Ages to be due to the philosophy of Religion.88

The world is experiencing a colossal revolution in the intellectual sphere: "According to a report published by *Time* (April 7th 1980), a silent revolution is occurring in the sphere of thought and intellect and God is returning ... According to *Newsweek* (July 20th 1998): "Science finds God."89

Having made reference to the said development, and the conference on studying the relation between science and religion held in California, *Scientific American* reads: "The seminal point made explicit at the conference was that scholars did not regard religion on the basis of popular beliefs, but considered it as a real world experience which was as real as scientific experiments.

Apparently, many scholars are in agreement regarding the existence of God and the fact that science limps without religion and religion is sightless without science."90

The effect of extreme scientism and rationalism on the West, which has led to theoretical and practical deadlocks, reveals the fact that the twain instruments do not suffice to provide humanity with guidance and the claim to needlessness of religion and substituting it with science and the intellect is, theoretically and practically, doomed to failure.

# 5. Confessions Of The 20th Century Standard-Bearer Of Atheism To The Existence Of God

By way of putting a favorable end to the points included in this section, the intellectual developments of the standard–bearer of atheism and the English positivist philosopher of the 20th century, Antony Flew, will be mentioned. He is considered to be one of the most important claimers of the meaninglessness of religious propositions and the falsity of the proposition, "God exists," in the 20th century.

His book<u>91</u> was so influential that Ninian Smart, professor of Religious Studies at University of Lancaster (1967–1988), regarded it as one of the most influential books of the century.92

Despite his former atheistic claims in the 20th century, Flew turned his back to his former beliefs and acknowledged the existence of God.

This piece of news was regarded as significant in philosophical and religious circles, not only for the fact that one of the most outstanding atheists believed in God, (an atheist who, according to a number of scholars, had set forth the most important arguments against the existence of God within a period of 50 years), but also because his claim, particularly the argument of systematicity in his last version, was quite solid and convincing.

It is significant that this was the argument which the theists' gave to prove the existence of God.93

Associated Press reported (9 December, 2004) that: "An English professor and philosopher who served as the standard-bearer of atheism for more than half a century, has altered his view. Based on more or less scientific arguments and evidence, he believed in the existence of God and stated this point in a video which was aired on Thursday.

The 81 year old Antony Flew, following his denial of the existence of God for a number of decades, has come to the conclusion that a Supreme Being created the world. He stated the same in a telephone interview in London."

Other formerly atheist scholars who have come to the same conclusion, include: Paul Daview, Arno Penzias, Fred Hoyle, and Roger Penrose. In his book, entitled *The Symbiotic Universe*, George Greenstein, the American astronomer, acknowledged this fact. Thus Hugh Ross, the American physicist and cosmologist, ends his article: "A Supreme and Intelligent Creator created the world. The Earth is planned by an Exalted and Omniscient Creator. He planned life."

The above are instances among many scholars who, despite their former atheistic views, have, at last, acknowledged the existence of God.

Based on the above, it may be said that the increasing growth of turning to religion in the West, by the general public as well as scholars, has experienced anti–religion and scientism, and the collapse of pure materialism explicitly reveals the shortcomings of scientism and rationalism.

Furthermore, the modern world faces the wave of Islamism, increasing conversions to Islam by Westerners from different walks of life, and the rise in Muslims' social and global power. The reasons lying behind conversion to Islam, as mentioned by new converts, include: widespread moral corruption; homosexuality; domestic problems; 9/11; Imam Khomeini's character; profundity and balance; logicality; pacifism; and Islam's promotion of justice.

#### **Dissemination Of Islam In The West**

The modern world faces the wave of Islamism, the increasing conversion to Islam by Westerners from different walks of life, and the rise in Muslims' social and global power. A number of such instances will follow.

#### **Acknowledging The Flourishing Of Political Islam**

The spread of religion and the socio-political rise of Islam in the modern world may serve as further evidence to reveal the limitations of scientism. In case, the increase in scientism was capable of solving human problems, Islamism would be on the decline rather than on the rise. However, even enemies acknowledge the universal influence of Islam.

According to a report regarding Islam, published in 1995 in the widely circulated newspaper, *Sydney Morning*: "Islam traverses through geographical boundaries, extends through political schools and national regimes, and different countries confront political movement and increase in the dissemination of Islam."94

In an article, Klaus Kinkel, the former German foreign minister, acknowledges that "Islam's dissemination is ever increasing, and presently Muslims constitute the majority in 45 countries." He adds that "The number of Muslims, approximately 30 years ago, equaled 18 percent of the world population, but presently, they constitute one fourth of the world population (1.4 billion)."95

According to Roget Pasquier: "Generally speaking, it is undeniable that nowadays, great religions are retreating or, at least, are preoccupied with defending themselves and endeavor to resist impediments, but Islam is making progress."96

#### The Holy Qur'an, The Number One Bestseller In The West

A number of reports reveal the ever increasing sale of the Holy Qur'an in the West. It has been a number of years that Dr. Muhammad Leghausen, professor at American universities, converted to Islam. He makes his presence at Iranian academic circles, and spends the summer in the United States. At the conference "Survey of conversion to Islam in America" he emphasized that following 9/11, the Holy Qur'an became the number one bestseller in the West.

Alluding to the transformations in the views of many Americans and Europeans concerning the originality of Islam following 9/11, he said: "Following this catastrophe, anti– Islamic propaganda intensified and resulted in the Christian youth's conversion to Islam."97

The words of the professor of Colgate University substantiate the unprecedented spread of the Islamic faith in the West. According to him, Islam is the second greatest religion in the West.98

#### Recitation Of The Qur'an At The Sessions Of The European Union

Muslims in Europe have attained such a place that at the formal session of the expansion of the European Union held in Ireland, the president of the Islamic Center there, recited a number of Qur'anic verses. According to "Islamonline" website, two verses were recited concerning justice, freedom, and equality, irrespective of race or religion. In response to a question regarding the selection of the verses, Halawa, the president of the Islamic Center, said: "We would like to pronounce our message loudly and explicitly, saying that the Divine message is to call humanity to establish human values, e.g. justice and collaboration among people, despite the differences in their religious beliefs."99

## **Huntington's Theory**

Islam has achieved such significance in the world that Samuel Huntington, the theorist who set forth the "Clash of Civilizations," requested the West to recognize the great civilizations, e.g. the Islamic and Arab world that made progress without appropriating Western values and customs. 100 He said that the only way for the West to face Islam is to recognize it. 101 He said: "The 20th century, the age of fighting Muslims, has begun." He added that the first half of the 20th century was the era of world wars, but the second half of the century was that of cold wars.

The professor at Harvard University and advisor to a number of American administrations stated that one of the reasons lying behind this event was the unrestrained growth in the population of the Muslim world! 102

## **Confessions Of An Archbishop**

Lord Carey, the former archbishop of Canterbury Cathedral, in his statements concerning Islam which are in need of reconsideration, has confessed to the spectacular widespread of the Islamic faith. In his

speech, delivered at the Gregorian University, Rome, he emphasized: "Islam is the epicenter of our concerns.

It is a religion, a civilization, and a culture which is spreading at a fast pace all over the world. It is a civilization which has had an impressive collaboration in the family of humanity and still, has many things to present. It is a culture with a unique context absorbing millions."

Reiterating Samuel Huntington's remarks, the renowned American theorist, as reflected in the book entitled *Dialogue of Civilizations*, stated: "The fundamental problem of the West is not fundamentalism, but Islam, per se. It is a different culture whose people believe in the superiority of their culture and are preoccupied with their own inferiority in terms of power." 103

#### Obligatory Apologies For Expressing Offensive Remarks Against Islam

The dissemination of Islam in the West has been in a manner that, unlike former times, none of their enemies dare to employ abusive language against it and in case they do so, they have to make apologies.

For instance, following the controversial remarks in which he had employed abusive language against the Prophet of Islam (S), Jerry Falwell, the American Protestant evangelist and extremists, made apologies. In a declaration made in Lyncherg, Virginia, he stated: "I honestly apologize for my words in the 60 minute interview with CBS which hurt the feelings of many Muslims." 104

Another instance was the apology made by an American General for using abusive language against Islam." The three-star General who was severely criticized by Muslims for his offensive remarks, had to apologize. General William Boykin, the U.S. foreign ministry intelligence advisor had recently termed the American led war against terrorism as the Christian war against Satan.

To compensate for his blunder, he said: "I believe that terrorists are not the true followers of the Islamic faith, but they merely take advantage of Islam to attack the United States." He further said: "I apologize to all the people who found my remarks offensive." 105

#### **Recognition By Academics And The Social Elite**

Among the enthusiasts seeking the path to guidance, we can mention the ever increasing tendency of the cultured elite in the West. According to Martin Gleave, professor at Manchester University, dissemination of Islam in the West, particularly at universities, is on the rise. Referring to the fact that nowadays, Islam has exceeded the boundaries in the Middle East and spread in the West, he said that scholars in England had begun a widespread endeavor to comprehend the Islamic faith.

This has led to the institution of Islamic studies programs at major universities in England. He added that "a number of English scholars, including Prof. Rouen, made the acquaintance of a number of Iranian

politicians and scholars and was quite impressed by their thoughts. These English academics' were so impressed by the policy of the Iranian Muslim scholars that the chair of Literature from the Islamic Republic of Iran arrived in England."106

A number of the new converts are from the English elite, including: Jonathan Burt (Prince Burt's son) and Emma Clerk (Herbert Henry Asquith, the former British premier's granddaughter). According to *Sunday Times*, a number of renowned English landlords, iconic figures, and individuals from English wealthy families have converted to Islam.

Novel studies concerning Yahya Burt (ne Jonathan Burt), son of Lord Burt, the former president of the BBC, provide first hand and reliable information concerning the Christians' conversion to Islam. Yahya says: "First and foremost, to convert to the Islamic faith, clerics are supposed to talk about it. They should also be quite capable of translating a foreign language into our language."

At the same time, we noticed that Emma Clerk, the former British premier's granddaughter had also converted to Islam. Clerk is the granddaughter of Herbert Asquith, who engaged Britain in World War I.

Telling evidence exists regarding conversion to Islam at the center of the British administration. The queen of Britain has recently arranged for the issuance of leave permits to the Muslim personnel of Buckingham Palace so that they may perform their Friday prayers at mosques. 107

#### **Specific Countries**

So far, general evidence concerning the spread of Islam in the West, irrespective of specific regions, was presented. It would be worthwhile to take a glance at a number of countries separately.

#### **The United States of America**

*Muslims* weekly, published in New York, reports in its latest issue that the Muslim population in America is estimated to be 6 to 7.2 million. The figure constitutes 2.5 to 3 % of the whole population, i.e. 280 million.

The said figures are based on the tentative estimates of the Muslim society in the United States. These estimations also reveal that 90 % of American Muslims concentrate in 15 populous states, including California, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts, Illinois, and Michigan.

According to the unofficial statistics released in this weekly, 45 % of the Muslim population in the United States are below 15, 15 % are between 16 and 25, 30 % are between 26 and 50, and 10 % are above 51 years of age. 108

The unprecedented spread of Islam in the United States is acknowledged by high ranking politicians. Bill Clinton, the former president of the United States, emphasized: "From among different religions, Islam has enjoyed the utmost growth. According to Agence France-Press, at the last session of The Second

American Islamic Council in Doha, Qatar, stating that Americans are supposed to have a better appreciation of Islamic beliefs, he said: "The spread of Islam in the United States has excelled other faiths at a faster pace and at the time being, the number of Muslims in the United States exceeds 6 million." 109

Evidence, revealing the spread of Islam in the United States, is the unprecedented sale of the copies of the Holy Qur'an in this country. The NATO head of the press bureau declared:

"The Qur'an is the number one bestseller in the United States." According to a report released by IRNA from Berlin, at a conference on the role of media and the nations' foreign policies, the former NATO spokesman of the Kosovo warfare stated: "Americans are thirsty to obtain information regarding the world, particularly Islam and Muslims." Jimmy Shima added: "The Qur'an is the number one bestseller in the United States; for and foremost, it reveals Americans' dire need to obtain further general information concerning the world surrounding them."110

Despite the increasing and widespread endeavors of the US Administration to restrict and repress activists, Americans increasingly welcome the Islamic faith. For instance, different circles in the American society criticized the publication of the book entitled *An Introduction to the Koran*, the availability of a course on Islamic studies and the North Carolina students' welcome to it, which ultimately resulted in the severance of the state's financial support. 111

An Islamist torrent is sweeping American penitentiaries. According to Texan penitentiary officials, presently most of the 7500 Muslim inmates have been acquainted with the Islamic faith and have converted to it following their arrival 112

*Tabligh* ("Propagation"), Published by Jame'e-ye modarresin-e howze-ye 'elmiyye-ye Qom ("Qom Seminary Instructors' Association"), p. 115.

American officers and privates in Iraq

According to a report released by a Muslim researcher, concerning American forces' enthusiasm in learning the principles of the Islamic faith, a considerable number of American forces in Iraq have converted to Islam. As reported by Islam on line, Sheikh Mahmud al–Sami al–Daʻi, a member of the Iraqi Muslim Researchers Association, stated: "Many Americans, referring to us to familiarize themselves with the principles of the Islamic faith and convert to Islam, acknowledge that Islam stands at sharp contrast with the media–enhanced depiction presented to them in the United States."

Reminiscing his memoirs regarding a military person's conversion to Islam, the said Muslim researcher said: "I will never forget the American new convert who felt sorry for the members of his family who had died non-Muslims.

According to the report, many male and female military forces stationed in Irag said: "Following a close

observance of Islam and Muslims, all the false propaganda concerning the Islamic faith disappeared from their mind."113

According to Fars News Agency, reporting al–Jazira news website, the US military personnel are ranked among the customers at the largest book market, located on al–Mutanabbi Avenue in Baghdad, and constitute the most supportive readership of the English versions of the Holy Qur'an. 114

As a consequence of their deployment in Iraq, a number of the U.S. military officers, despite leading the war against Muslims, have been acquainted with the Islamic faith and have converted to it. For instance, according to a report released by the official Saudi Arabian news agency, following his acquaintance with the Islamic faith, an American military officer converted to Islam at a personal status court in Baghdad and said: "Following thorough inquiries, I converted to the Islamic faith."

At the same time, making reference to a considerable number of the U.S. military forces' conversion to Islam, Sheikh Mahmud al–Sami al–Daʻi, a member of the Iraqi Muslim Scholars' Association, said: "Following their close acquaintance with Islamic teachings, the American military forces perceived that Islamic teachings were totally different from the enhanced picture depicted by the Western media, and as a consequence, welcomed the Islamic faith ebulliently." 115

#### An American female private at Imam Husayn's holy shrine

Last week, impressed by the Muslim spiritual atmosphere in Iraq, an American female private visited Imam Husayn's ('a) holy shrine to ask for a favor. Holding a green flag in her hand, she entered the shrine in civilian clothes, clutched the metal grid of the domed sepulcher and cried: "Baby, baby."

The surprised pilgrims circled around her and inquired about her presence and cries. She replied: "During my stay in Karbala as an American private, I observed many times that women visited these saints holding a green flag in their hands to request their intercession on their behalf, so that God Almighty may, thanks to the blessings bestowed upon the buried saints in these sepulchers, grant them favors.

Therefore, I held a green flag in my hand to ask God to grant me a son after years of childlessness and sterility. The end of the report reads that the American woman promised herself that if God granted her a son, she would call him Husayn, would convert to Islam and proclaim the same."116

#### **Latin America**

Light News Islamic News Agency reported that the tendency toward Islam in Argentina and other Latin American countries is on the rise. The increasing tendency in Argentina is such that from among public and private schools, there is only one primary school in which Islamic principles and Arabic language are taught. Presently, the Muslim population in Argentina amounts to one million, though they suffer from shortcomings in terms of active Muslim organizations and institutions.

For instance, 400 Muslim families, living in the region close to Fofoy frontiers, are even deprived of a mosque, a cleric or a book on Islam.117

#### Canada

According to the Muslim website, Islam is the most widespread religion in Canada and the United States. Reporting American Council for Islamic Relations and the Canadian Statistics Bureau, the source declares that the Muslim population in Canada enjoys a 128.9 % increase between 1991 and 2001. According to this website, presently the number of Muslims in Canada has surprisingly reached 579,640.

Muslims adds that with such rise, Islam has turned into the most widespread religion in Canada. On the basis of this report, the increase in the number of Muslims in Canada has been in a fashion that, for the first time, the number of Muslims in Canada has exceeded that of Jews in this country. However, the statistics released by Canadian Statistics Bureau in 1991 indicates that the Jewish population in this country exceeds that of Muslims by 25%. 118

According to the statistics released by the Canadian government in 2001, the Jewish population residing in Canada enjoyed a 3.7 % growth and has reached 329,995, whereas the growth rate of the Muslim population was 128.9 %. At the time being, Muslims constitute 2 % of the Canadian population. It is to be noted that Jews merely constitute 1.1 percent of the Canadian population. 119

Based on the latest statistics released by the Canadian government, the number of Muslims in the last decade of the 20th century exceeded 9 %, amounting to 579,000 which made the Muslim population to rise 2 % of the total population in this country and turned Islam into the most widespread religion in Canada. 120

#### **England**

Fourteen thousand English citizens have converted to the Islamic faith. Statistics indicate that, so far, 142,000 people from among the English white population have converted to Islam. 121 According to a study conducted by Sunday Times, new evidence indicates that Islam was welcomed by the general public, a number of whom were acquainted with Islam and converted to it. Christian Baker, a former friend of 'Imran Khan, claims that he was acquainted with Islam through his friend, but converted to it following their separation. He says: "Imran sowed the seeds of this transformation, but when our friendship came to an end, the religion per se motivated me to move." 122

The dissemination of Islam in England is such that Muslims have also been more determined in their religious beliefs and have participated more seriously in devotional acts at mosques. According to a report released by Sunday Times: "The number of Muslims who visit mosques in England has, for the first time, exceeded that of Christians who go to churches to perform their services. Based on the statistics, every week, 930,000 Muslims go to mosques, but the number of Christians visiting churches amounts to 916,000.123

#### **Britain**

According to Mail on Sunday, the widely circulated English weekly, Islam is transforming into Britain's official religion. 124 The weekly warns: "Christianity has disappointed Britons in such a fashion that if the present trend continues, the ecclesiastical chimes and choruses shall fall silent in future, since there is no enthusiasm to attend such religious groups, nor shall they find any audience.

Consequently, churches shall fade away or shall practically turn into private clubs for a limited audience. Furthermore, the right wing English periodical suggests preventing the construction of mosques and other Islamic centers in England: "A colossal and magnificent Islamic center is under construction in Oxford which is one of the most sacred Christian cities in England."

It is further suggested: "How would Muslims react if the English considered constructing a Christian center in Qom, Isfahan or Najaf?" 125

#### **Denmark**

According to a report released by Danish International Radio, three to five thousand Danes converted to the Islamic faith in the last decade, but a considerable number of converts have not been included in the statistics. 126

According to a Danish newspaper, the number of the Danes converting to Islam, the majority of whom are young, is on the increase. The newly converted youth constitute one third of the Danish Muslim converts. Young women form the majority of the converts. 127

#### Germany

Referring to the results of a survey conducted in Germany, Amina Demiobucken, from the German Christian Democratic Party, states that there are more than 3,000,000 Muslims in Germany. They constitute the third largest religious society in Germany and have attracted the attention of the media as well as the general public. The growth rate of the Muslim population has resulted in the optimism of the general public toward Muslims.

The results of a survey carried out by Konrad Adenauer Institute regarding the viewpoint of the general public toward Muslims reveals that Germans hold in esteem the Muslim population in Germany more than the followers of any other religion.

Two thirds of the German respondents emphasized that Muslims are supposed to be able to practice their religion without any restrictions. According to the survey, 69 % of the respondents have rejected the superiority of Christianity over Islam and 46 % of them oppose the view that Islam and Christianity represent the same values. 128

The widespread of the German Muslim minority has produced special self confidence in them and has

directed them towards the preservation and reinforcement of their children's religious identity. For instance, Muslim children's games have found currency at markets and Muslim settlements in Germany and a number of other European countries.

"Bride" is one of these games, in which a child plays the role of a bride, wearing a dress called "Rosan" in a dignified manner with Muslim veil, accompanied by a prayer mat and a Persian rug. Pictures of the Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions in the Arabic script, handicrafts from Muslim countries, educational books, stories, music albums and CDs containing Malaysian Islamic hymns are available for sale on Muslim markets. CDs on the history of Islam, the prophetic traditions, The Holy Qur'an, books on Islamic topics, toothbrushes, perfumes and such items can be found at these places. The name of the Prophet of Islam (S) and Ayat al–Kursi (The Qur'an 2: 255) are inscribed on house portals. 129

#### **France**

Following the sacrilege to the Prophet of Islam (S), the sale of translations of the Qur'an in France indicates a surprising 38 % increase. As a result, approximately 60,000 copies of the Holy Book have been purchased. 130

#### **Sweden**

Based on a report released by the Swedish newspaper, Metro: "Despite the heightening conflicts between Western capitalist regimes and Islamists, the Swedes' enthusiasm toward Islam is on the rise.

Quoting a professor of history of religions, the newspaper report reads: "The number of Swedish converts to the Islamic faith used to be less than fifty, but nowadays, the number is estimated to be two to five thousand, most of whom embraced Islam recently."

Metro adds that the majority of the Swedish new converts to Islam were acquainted with the Islamic faith by associating with the Muslims residing in Sweden, and consequently converted to Islam. 131

#### **Hindus**

According to an official at the Penther Association in Tamil Nadu, 1,000 Indian Hindus converted to the Islamic faith. Based on a report released by the central news unit, the said official stated that they were from Harijan families and lowly Hindu casts. They will declare their conversion on 15 January next year. 132

## **Renaissance In Muslim Countries**

Not only does the Islamist wave indicate a new acceleration in the West, but the Muslims in Islamic countries are demanding an increasing renaissance in their Muslim life. For instance, Islamic schools in Turkey encountered an increase in the general public's welcome at the outset of the educational year

2003–2004 that enrolments at these schools have increased by 70 %. The president of Turkish Islamic Schools Association reported that 35,000 students registered in Islamic schools in that educational year.

According to Agence France-Press, the welcoming trend started after a recession period, since in 1997, the secular army in Turkey deposed the first Islamist regime led by Erbakan, the then prime minister. 133

Similar movements are noticeable in the Islamist wave in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

## Reasons For Converting To Islam As Stated By New Converts

#### The Impact Of Imam Khomeini's Character

A number of the new converts have opted for the Islamic faith as a consequence of their acquaintance with Imam Khomeini. Expressing one of reasons for his conversion to the Islamic faith, Diego Redard, an American Muslim youth, said: "Reading a book by Imam Khomeini led to my conversion to the Islamic faith."

He selected the name 'Ali Akbar and welcomed Islam five months after 9/11. He is 23 years of age, studies liberal arts at State University of New York, Stony Brook, New York. He has embraced the Shiite Islam. 134

#### Spread Of Moral Evils, Homosexuality, And Domestic Problems

The said young Muslim convert, Diego Redard, mentioned permissive life and homosexuality in the United States and the domestic problems arising from the corrupt belief system as factors which led him to convert to the Islamic faith. He said: "The prevalent irreligious life in the United states falls short of solving the problems.

This irresponsible way of life tolerates homosexuality; in such a belief system, families suffer from various problems, and I could not accept this belief system."135

An editorial published in its latest issue, Mail on Sunday, asks whether Islam will turn into Britain's official religion and warns: "Yes, in case the existing cultural, social, and religious chaos continues, one should expect such a day."

Making reference to the transformation of Muslims residing in Britain and the enthusiasm shown by a large number of Britons to learn the Qur'an and their regular attendance at mosques, the editor emphasizes: "The trend of tendency toward Islam is rapidly on the increase nowadays due to the British society's entanglement in sexual problems, alcoholism, family break-ups, and the perplexing use of narcotics."

The weekly warns: "Considering the widespread use of alcohol among the youth, diffusion of narcotic

tablets and cocaine, spread of hooliganism, and normalization of pregnancy among 12 year old girls in Britain, Islam will take advantage of such chaotic circumstances to spread in the present and in future."136

The first serious study concerning the conversion of the British prominent figures to Islam conducted by Sunday Times (22 February), revealed that a number of the most famous British Lords, iconic figures, and people from British families of substance converted to Islam due to their disillusionment with Western values. 137

#### The 9/11 Catastrophe

One of the factors leading to the rise in the number of Muslims throughout the world, particularly in the United States, was the 9/11 disaster. As a result, a large number of Westerners were attracted by Islam and endeavored to know it. Such acquaintance showed them the truth, aroused their latent nature and led them to embrace Islam.

Concerning this issue, Dr. Ahmad Hanif, the American Muslim convert says: "The American strategy following 9/11 was to enfeeble Muslims in the world which led to the American general public's further acquaintance with Islam."

In his speech delivered at Azad University in Tabriz, he further said: "Following this catastrophe, the Qur'an turned into one of the bestsellers in the United States and a large number of people turned to Islam." He added: "The spread of Islam is noticeable in America and Africa, where anti–Islam struggles predominate." 138

#### Islam's Deliberation, Moderation And Logicality

Yahya Burt (ne Jonathan Burt), son of Lord Burt, the former president of BBC says: "The pictures of Islam as depicted by Islamic political movements are not appealing. However, what encouraged me to convert to the Islamic faith were the deliberation, moderation, and logicality noticeable in this religion and the Muslim way of life." 139

#### **Islam's Pacifism And Promotion Of Justice**

In a meeting with the director of the Islamic Culture and Communications Organization, 45 Japanese tourists on their tourist– cultural trip to the Islamic Republic of Iran, pronounced the formula of conversion to the Islamic faith. They were from the Umoto group, aiming at the establishment of peace and justice in the world. On the basis of a report released by the organization, owing to Islam's pacifism and promotion of justice, the members of the group familiarized themselves with the Islamic faith and became interested in embracing it. 140

## Creating Physical And Psychological Comfort In Individuals, And Esprit And Vitality In Society

A collection containing the opinions and ideas of a number of Spanish Muslim converts, entitled Today They Converted to Islam in Seville, was translated from Spanish into French and published with an introduction by Michel d'Appalenna, the French professor of Oriental Studies. The introduction includes a survey of the different manners of conversion from Christianity to Islam in the Spanish society from the 5th century to the present.

The book includes the views of Vecinte Mansur, the Spanish Muslim new convert. He claims that he abandoned "distorted" Christianity, since it was a religion of pain, suffering, complexes, and sin; besides, it ignored the body and physical existence.

In contrast, in Islam, man is liberated from the Christian God, relates to God, the force making life meaningful, regards as permissible the pleasures of the body and the soul, and with its instructions, paves the way for the establishment of a lively and spirited society. 141

#### **Religion For Life And Solution To All The Problems**

Mrs. Yasmina, a Spanish Muslim convert who recently converted from Christianity, talked of her intellectual development, saying that she had found all the answers to her questions and considered the Islamic faith as a practical guide in her life. By embracing Islam, she personally and completely regarded herself committed to God and, based on her free will, revealed this commitment by accepting and observing the Islamic dress code. 142

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- 15. Sobh [monthly], no. 67, Esfand 1375/February-March 1996, p. 80.
- 16. Resalat [daily], 6-3-1376/27-5-1997, quoting from the English periodical, Daily Telegraph.
- 17. Jomhuri Eslami [daily], 8-3-1376/29-5-1997.

- 18. Keyhan [daily], 9-10-1380/30-12-2001.
- 19. Sorush [monthly], no. 635.
- 20. Mahdi Golshani, Az 'Elm-e Sekular ta 'Elm-e Dini ("From Secular Science to Religious Science"), p. 58.
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- 22. Sobh [monthly], no. 78, Bahman 1376/January-February 1997, p. 78.
- 23. Dar Jostoju-ye Amr-e Qodsi ("in pursuit of the sacred"), tr. Amir Qasemi, Mashreq [periodical], nos. 2 and 3.
- 24. Keyhan [newspaper], 11-4-1379/2-7-2000.
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- 28. Ibid.
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- 30. Jomhuri Eslami [newspaper], 14-8-1378/5-11-1999.
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- 32. Dr. Emami, Professor at the University of Tehran, Ma'refat [monthly], no. 21.
- 33. Sobh[monthly], no. 78, Bahman 1376/January-February 1997, p.81. 5. Resalat [newspaper], 28-6-1377/19-8-1998.
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- 35. Khabar-name 838, p. 37.
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- 42. According to the analyst of Novel Observateur, the French weekly, quoted from Abrar [newspaper],
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- 43. Sobh [monthly], no. 78; the Islamic Republic of Iran News Agency, quoted from Christian Science Monitor, p. 78.
- 44. Abrar[ newspaper], 6-6-1375/28-8-1996.
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- 46. David Bart, the chief editor of Universal Encyclopedia of Christianity, quoted from Jomhuri Eslami [newspaper],
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- 47. Dr. Mahdi Golshani, Keyhan [newspaper], 22-4-1378/12-6-1999.
- 48. Ian Barbour, Elm va Din, tr. Baha' al-Din Khorramshahi.
- 49. Dr. Mahdi Golshani, Keyhan [newspaper], 22-4-1378/12-6-1999.
- <u>50.</u> Dr. Mahdi Golshani, "Fizik-danan-e Gharbi va Mas'ale-ye Khoda-bavari" (Western Physicists and the Issue of Believing in God"), Qabasat [periodical], Spring 1376/1997.
- 51. Ibid.
- <u>52.</u> One of the important sources for the study of logical positivism is John Passmore's article in Encyclopedia of Philosophy edited by Paul Edwards. Karl Popper calls this article as an excellent historical article on positivism. The article in question is translated by Mr. Khorramshahi in Pozitivism–e Manteqi ("Logical Positivism"), published by Sherkat–e Entesharat–e 'Elmi va Farhangi.
- 53. Nancy Murphy, Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism, p. 39.
- 54. Khorramshahi, Pozitivism ("Positivism") [n. 195], p. 3-5.
- 55. Brown, et al., Biographical Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Philosophers, p. 884.
- 56. A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth, and Logic (New York: Dover Publications, 1949).
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- 59. Khorramshahi, Positivism-e Manteii ("Logical Positivism"), p. 33-34.
- 60. Allen F. Chalmers, Ciisti-ye 'Elm ("The Nature of Science"), tr. Sa'id Ziba- kalam, pp. 84-88.
- <u>61.</u> B. Magee, Men of Ideas, pp. 106–107; Karnap va Falsafe-ye Tahlili ("Carnap and Analytical Philosophy"), Orghanun [periodical], nos.6–7, p. 211.
- 62. This theory proves that the radiation energy has divisible structure like matter and it may not exist unless in the form of quanta. The theory constitutes the foundation of modern physics.
- 63. Dr. Mahdi Golshani, "Fizik-danan-e Gharbi va Mas'ale-ye Khoda-bavari" (Western Physicists and the Issue of Believing in God"), Qabasat [periodical], Spring 1376/1997.
- 64. Ibid.
- 65. Dr. Mahdi Golshani, "Fizik-danan-e Gharbi va Mas'ale-ye Khoda-bavari" (Western Physicists and the Issue of Believing in God"), Qabasat [periodical], Spring 1376/1997.
- <u>66.</u> C. Morrison, Raz-e Afarinesh-e Ensan ("The Secret of Man's Life"); H. Rouvire, Hayat va Hadaf-dari ("Life and Purposefulness"), tr. Muhammad Sa'idi.
- 67. The German psychologist.
- 68. The German psychologist and the founder of the American psychoanalysis Institute.
- 69. The American psychologist.
- 70. The American psychologist.
- 71. The American psychologist.
- 72. The Austrian specialist in psychological complications and the founder of psychoanalysis.
- 73. According to Freud, God is an illusion and theism is the unconscious consequent of Oedipus complex, i.e. man depicts a picture of an earthly father on a cosmic scale to take refuge in Him for his own peace and comfort. Freud regards religion as human idealism arising from man's faith–seeking. He is like Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) in regarding the concept of God as the product of human imagination. Cf. Ian Barbour, 'Elm va Din ("Science and Religion"), tr. Baha' al–Din Khorram–shahi, p. 293–294.
- 74. Homayun Hemmati, "Rahyaft-e Din-shenasi-ye Emam Khomeyni" ("Imam Khomeini's Approach in Religious Studies"), Keyhan Farhanii, no. 136, Mehr 1376/August-September 1997.
- 75. Mahdi Golshani, Keyhan [newspaper], 7-11-1375/27-1-1996 and 22-4- 1378/13-7-1999.
- 76. Ettela'at [newspaper], 3-4-1376/24-6-1997.
- 77. Sorush [monthly], no. 635.
- 78. Keyhan [newspaper], Safhe-ye 'Elmi ("Scientific Page"), 25-9-1370/16-12- 1991 quoted from from the French Weekly Observateur.
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- 92. Bryan Magee, Modern British Philosophy, London: Secker & Warburg, 1971, p. 167.
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