

Part 2: Islam's Gifts to the World

Islam

Islam stands for harmony and perfectibility with an unmatched depth and breadth of scope that comprises all aspects of spirit and life. It knows all the roads that lead to blessing and happiness. It has the cure for human ills, individual and social, and makes them as plain as the wit of man can devise or comprehend. It sets out to develop all sides of each person : and therefore perforce includes every reality which impacts human existence.

It has not given way, in its doctrine of man, to modern errors or corrupt institutions. It does not set man in God's place. To do so is to leave man with only himself to rely on in all his pride and egotism : or else to reduce him to the slavery of being a beast of burden for his fellows, powerless, will-less, helpless before nature's and matter's tyrannies. This is precisely what modern heresies do with man. But Islam vindicates man's unique nature vis-à-vis all other living creatures, affirming that he is a special creation with a lofty calling all his own.

Islam holds that a man's personality does not cease to exist with death, but is continuous and eternal. "Worldly" and "other-worldly" are an indivisible unity. Body and soul can therefore not be dissolved into disparate elements. Islam, on these grounds, presents both worlds in shining terms. It both trains a man for eternity and also finds the guiding principles for its public institutions on earth in the sublime destiny inherent in man's creation.

Eternity dictates universal principles, unchanging and unchangeable. These Islam proclaims as tenets, convictions, commandments, statutes, in its school of contentment, in its thrust for progress. It offers man the perfection of freedom for thought, for concern, and for exegesis of the divine law on matters of social necessity. It reverts to first principles which provide the sure and unshifting basis of rock-bottom truth in all the chances and changes of this mortal life.

Islam holds that man has certain characteristics which are his link with the material world and certain others which connect him with realities that are non-material and which motivate desires and aims of a

more sublime nature. Body, mind and spirit each has its proper propensities. Each must be duly weighed, so that what one of these indivisible elements desires does not conflict with the desire of another.

Islam takes all the elements and facets of human nature into account and caters for the compound essence of man's combined material and spiritual propensities. It draws him upward towards the highest without cutting his roots in the material. It demands absolute purity and chastity without denying the flesh and its needs. Its current flows from pole to pole over a network of live wires—convictions and regulations which preserve the integrity of all the innate human instincts while rejecting the Freudian doctrine of total freedom which treats man as nothing but animal.

Islam is not a mere set of ideas in the world of metaphysical speculation: nor did it come into being simply to order man's social living. It is a way of life so comprehensively meaningful that it shapes education, society and culture to heights none other ever aimed at. It forms a supreme court of appeal and rallying-point for East and West alike, and offers them an ideology which can answer their divisive materialisms. It can replace their inequities and contradictions with a more universal, more perfect and more powerful idea.

Islam does not concede priority of any kind to material affluence or to hedonistic comfort as basic for happiness. It finds its principles in an analysis of man's true nature. With these principles it constructs a plan for individual, social and international living, framed by fixed and all-embracing moral standards, aimed at a goal for humanity far loftier than the modern world's limited materialist aims.

Islam does not imprison man in the narrow confines of the material and the financial. It sets him in a spacious and expansive air. There morality, principle and the spirit reign. Its statutes are those which spring from the nature of man himself. They encourage mutual help and team-work. They pursue values outside the straitened boundaries imposed on individual and on community by the petty pusillanimous pedestrian patterns of materialist purposes. Instead it yokes man's strength and striving to the change, advance, progress and perfecting inherent in his creation.

Islamic training sets out to refine and enhance human qualities and to harness them to right and reasonable objectives which direct and dictate every forward step to the desired end. It focuses a man's motives, which arise from his natural desires and basic needs, in such a concentrated and streamlined beam that each talent is called in to exercise its function in due succession and order. Impetuous uncoordinated impulses are thus controlled so that no single instinct overrule commonsense nor momentary urge replace reason. Instead man is made master of his fate and captain of his soul. Excess is obviated and every person is accorded his or her legitimate share in the common triumph of all. In this employment every need of body, mind and soul is met and satisfied.

Whenever in history individuals have united in harmonious pursuit of such aims, persons and communities have found themselves. "What is right" has ruled thoughts, conduct and character; human

living has been orderly and secure. Reason dictates this training, and calls to a religion with convictions superstition-free, canons practical, statutes feasible and excellences virtuous. The God-given human intelligence intuitively and logically perceives their truth.

No man is asked to perform a task above that which he is able. But his powers are put at full stretch. Every possibility within him is expressed to the full. And each is, at doomsday, judged; then the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is.

Islam and Politics

Modern political theory exalts "the general will". Democratic government attempts to put that general will into practice by making law out of the policy voted for by "the majority" (which need only be 51%) leaving null and void the will of the minority (which may be that of as many as 49% of the voters). The minority is thus not "free" at all, even though in some cases its will may be sensible, and in the circumstances right. But "Government by the Will of the People" will never voluntarily strip off the sanctity and splendor with which it has endowed "the general will", giving that concept precedence over all other material and spiritual values.

Islam, on the other hand, gives precedence to the Will of the Lord of this world, rather than to the uncontrolled inclinations and sentiments of a majority of humans. Islam refuses to strip the Godhead of control of the legislative and jurisdictional power. Islam's conception of Godhead and of divine government is wide enough to comprise everything that goes to make up human life everywhere on this planet. This makes Islam man's unrivalled guardian. It demands total obedience to its statutes on the ground that these are God-given and that therefore no human being has a right to allow his own desires to dictate any action in breach of these statutes and rules of life.

How can God be proclaimed worthy of total commitment by people who arrange their lives on precepts deriving from other sources than God Himself? No person dare claim divine authority for a partner for God, nor substitute another lawgiver for Him. Islam's aim is to champion truth and right in everything in human society, since truth does not specialize exclusively in social, political and financial matters but also clothes the stature of man himself in its most beautiful vestments.

The human physique is fearfully and wonderfully made. So are the rules and rights that govern human living. No-one can claim a complete knowledge of all the mysteries of man's make-up, or of the complicated social structure it generates. For this structure comprises the specialized areas of the body and the spirit of all its individuals as well as of all their relationships with each other. Nor dare anyone claim to be innocent of sin, of a shortcoming, a fault or an error. No-one is aware of all the elements which go to make up human happiness and welfare.

Despite all the devoted efforts of scientists to penetrate the mysteries of human being, the area they have succeeded in covering is still extremely limited. To quote Dr. Alexis Carrel again ("Man, the

Unknown" p.4): "Mankind has made a gigantic effort to know itself. Although we possess the treasure of the observations accumulated by the scientists, the philosophers, the poets, and the great mystics of all times, we have grasped only certain aspects of ourselves. We do not apprehend man as a whole. We know him as composed of distinct parts. And even these parts are created by our methods. Each one of us is made up of a procession of phantoms, in the midst of which strides an unknowable reality."

Without insight into the human make-up man cannot frame laws 100% suited to the-human condition, nor justly cure the troubles that arise: witness the bewilderment of legislators, their constant alteration of their own statutes in face of today's new problems and unexpected blind alleys. Motives of personal advantage, self-interest, profit, ambition, power, and even of environmental predilections, intrude to distort the legislators' outlook consciously or unconsciously. Montesquieu said of legislation that "none is ever wholly objective and impartial, for the personal ideas and sentiments of the legislator influence his drafting". Thus Aristotle, because he was jealous of Plato, influenced Alexander to denigrate his great predecessor.

Modern slogans of "Liberty and Equality" and "the Public Will" are empty words used by politicians to win support for their laws, laws which in fact represent the interests not of the masses but of the landowners and capitalists.

Henry Ford wrote of England, which boasts itself "the Mother of Democracy": "We cannot forget the 1926 general strike or the way the government tried to break it with every means in its power. Parliament, tool of the capitalists, proclaimed the strike unconstitutional and illegal, and turned police and army out against the strikers with bullets and tanks. Meantime the media of radio and press declared the government to be the servant of the workers, a plain subterfuge contradicted by the fines imposed on the trade unions and by the imprisonment of their leaders as soon as the opportunity offered."

Khrushchev declared in the 22nd Supreme Soviet Congress : "In the era of the personality-cult (i.e. under Stalin) corruption infiltrated our Party's leadership, government and finances; produced decrees which trod the masses' rights underfoot; lowered industrial output ; filled men with fear in their work; and encouraged sycophants, informers and character-assassins."

Thus both Eastern and Western systems of government falsely appear in the guise of the public will, Parliamentary rule, representation of the masses: while capitalism and communism alike frame inequitable laws because they neglect the heavenly decrees which establish fast what is best for man.

Islam and Legislation

Jean Jacques Rousseau wrote:

"To discover the rules of society that are best suited to nations, there would need to exist a superior intelligence who could understand the passions of men without feeling any of them, who had no affinity with our nature but knew it to the roots, whose happiness was independent of ours but who would

nevertheless make our happiness his concern, . . . in fact a divine lawgiver is needed."¹

By these standards the most competent legislator is the Creator of man Himself, He knows all the mysteries of man's being, makes no profit out of any human society, and needs no man. Hence the principles which can shape equitable social regulations must be learnt from a person who receives direct guidance from the Creator, whose teachings are the inspired revelations of that unique Source, and who is wholly reliant on that Infinite Wisdom.

Human laws aim only at the ordering of human society. They do not stray outside those limits, nor touch non-social matters like personal conditions, attitudes of mind, spiritual excellence. They do not try to cure internal pollutions within the personality. It is only when personality problems issue in social disorder in action that they enter the scope of legal measures. A person may be filthy in thought and spirit and still good in the eyes of Western law, which looks only upon outward acts and not upon the heart.

Islam with its wide outlook aims not just at redressing what has been done wrong but primarily at putting individual and society right from inside, regarding the ethical personality as the basic unit, and its perfecting as the priority. Islam aims at an orderly society composed of sound morals, sane thinking, sensible action, serene psyches. It therefore legislates for the inner life of the individual in as much detail as for the outer life of society. It brings order and congruence between large and small in creation, the natural laws and the spiritual, the material and the metaphysical, the individual and the social, creeds and philosophies. It helps man not to come into collision with the natural laws which underlie the orderliness of the universe; disobedience to which collapses and confounds all human affairs.

Man-made institutions pursue performance of the law: but in Islam the trustee for the law's performance is a deep-rooted faith; and a Muslim duly performs his obligations by the force of morality and faith, even in matters where he is seen by no one save by God alone. Armed force is only needed to control the tiny minority of criminal-minded hypocrites. Islam thus pays due regard both to inner purity of heart and to outward purity of action. It calls those deeds good, laudable and meritorious which spring from sincerity and faith.

USA's Attorney General, in his introduction to his book on Islamic Law, wrote: "American law has only a tenuous connection with moral duty. An American may be accounted a law-abiding citizen even though his inner life is foul and corrupt. But Islam sees the fount of law in the Will of God as revealed to and proclaimed through His Apostle Muhammad. This Law, this Divine Will, treats the entire body of believers as a single society, including all the multifarious races and nationalities which go to make it up in a far-scattered community.

This gives religion its true sound force and makes it the cohesive element of society. No bounds of nationality or geography divide, for the government itself is obedient to the one supreme authority of the Qur'an. This leaves no place for any other legislator; so that no competition or rivalry or rift can arise.

The believer regards this world as a vale of soul-making, the ante-room to the next: and the Qur'an makes perfectly plain what are the conditions and laws which govern believers' behavior to each other and towards society; and thus makes the changeover from this world to the next a sure and sound and safe transition."

Despite Westerners' small acquaintance with Islam, and their often mistaken ideas, far removed from reality, a comparatively large number of their thinkers grasp some of the depth and profundity of Islamic teaching and do not conceal their admiration for its clear exegesis and estimable doctrines.

A Muslim scientist's respect for Islam's laws and ordinances is no surprise. But if a non-Muslim savant, despite his slavery to his own religious bigotry, yet recognizes Islam's grandeur and greatness and its lofty leading, that is a real tribute, especially when it is based on a recognition of the progressive nature of Islam's legal systems and their legacy to mankind. This is why this book quotes foreign verdicts on Islam. We do so, not because we need their support, but because they can help to open the road for seekers and enquirers so that who reads may run its way.

Dr. Laura Veccia Vaglieri, Naples University professor, wrote: "In the Qur'an we come across jewels and treasures of knowledge and insight which are superior to the products of our most brilliant geniuses, profound philosophers and powerful politicians. How can such a book be the product of the brain of a single man— and that of a man whose life was spent in commercial, not particularly religious, circles — far removed from all schools of learning? He himself always insisted that he was in himself an ordinary simple man like other men, unable, without the help of the Almighty, to produce the miracle of such work. None other than He whose knowledge compasses all that is in heaven and earth could produce the Qur'an."

Bernard Shaw, in his "Muhammad, Apostle of Allah", said: "I have always held the religion of Muhammad in the highest esteem simply from the marvel of its living vigor. To my mind it is the sole religion capable of success in mastering the multifarious vicissitudes of life and the differences of culture. I foresee (it is manifest even today) that, man by man, Europeans will come to adopt the Islamic faith. Mediaeval theologians for reasons of ignorance or bigotry pictured Muhammad's religion as full of darkness, and considered that he had cast down a challenge to Christ in a spirit of hatred and fanaticism. After much study of the man, I have concluded that Muhammad was not only not against Christ, but that he saw in Him despairing mankind's savior. I am convinced that if a man like him would undertake leadership in the new world, he would succeed in solving its problems, and secure that peace and prosperity which all men want."

Voltaire, who at the beginning was one of Islam's most obdurate opponents and poured scorn on the Prophet, after his 40 years of study of religion, philosophy and history, frankly said: "Muhammad's religion was unquestionably superior to that of Jesus. He never descended to the wild blasphemies of Christians, nor said that one God was three or three Gods were one. The single pillar of his faith is the One God. Islam owes its being to its founder's decrees and manliness; whereas Christians used the

sword to force their religion on others. Oh Lord! if only all nations of Europe would make the Muslims their models."

One of Voltaire's heroes was Martin Luther. Yet he wrote that "Luther was not worthy to unloose the latches of Muhammad's shoes. Muhammad was a great man and a trainer of great men by his example of virtue and perfection. A wise lawgiver, a just ruler, an ascetic prophet, he raised the greatest revolution earth has seen."

Tolstoy wrote: "Muhammad needs no other claim to fame than that he raised a barbarous bloodthirsty people out of their diabolical customs to untold advances. His Canon Law with its intelligence and wisdom will come to be the world's authority."

Islam and Ideologies

Our world is split into two blocs. They hold contradictory ideologies, each backed by its own scientists and savants who, in a spate of pamphlets and books, prove it right and its opponents wrong. Each claims to be the sole sure road to happiness, and says its adversary is the sole cause of confusion and catastrophe.

Both cannot be right. Both may be wrong! Each may be missing a vital point. Yet both have made large contributions to human progress through the brilliance of some of their scientists and technologists.

Progress in one field is no proof of equal progress in every field of human life, any more than an individual's possession of one set of talents indicates a competence in all occupations. An outstanding physician is not ipso facto a brilliant musician! Nor does technological advance ipso facto imply equal advance in thought, wisdom, religion, government, morality.

Dr. Alexis Carrel writes ("Man, the Unknown" p. 27 and 28): "The applications of scientific discoveries have transformed the material and mental worlds. These transformations exert on us a profound influence. Their unfortunate effect comes from the fact that they have been made without consideration for our nature. Our ignorance of ourselves has given to mechanics, physics and chemistry the power to modify at random the ancestral forms of life. Man should be the measure of all.

On the contrary, he is a stranger in the world that he has created. He has been incapable of organizing this world for himself, because he did not possess a practical knowledge of his own nature. Thus, the enormous advance gained by the sciences of inanimate matter over those of living things is one of the greatest catastrophes ever suffered by humanity.

The environment born of our intelligence and our inventions is adjusted neither to our stature nor to our shape. We are unhappy. We degenerate morally and mentally. The groups and the nations in which industrial civilization has attained its highest development are precisely those which are becoming weaker, and whose return to barbarism is the most rapid."

The perfection and sublimating of man in a whole series of different areas requires a body of sound and universal teachings based on realities of human life and free of all faults and errors. Such is only to be found in the teachings of the prophets of God to whom revelation was granted concerning the origins of the world's being.

Morality, to rely on sanctions higher than the natural and to be inspired by what is beyond the material, must build solely on fundamental and basic instructions.

From the moment that man was set upon the globe and laid the groundwork of civilization, a cry rose to heaven from his inward depths. This cry we call religion. Its truth is indissolubly connected with a moral order.

Inhumanity, faction, inequity, tyranny, war, all testify to the truth that governments and their laws have never sufficed to control the sentiments and beliefs and feelings of man nor to establish an order of justice, happiness, peace and quietude in society. Science and knowledge can never solve the problems of human life nor prevent its derailment except in alliance with religion.

Will Durant, American sociologist and philosopher, writes in his "Pleasures of Philosophy" (pp.326/7): "Has a government such power in economic and ethical matters to preserve all the heritage of knowledge and morals and art stored up over generations and woven into the warp and woof of a nation's culture? Can it increase that heritage and hand it on to posterity? Can a government, with all the modern machinery at its disposal, bring the treasures of science to those depressed classes who still think of scientific utterances as blasphemy and witchcraft?"

Why is it that such small men govern America's biggest cities? Why is our administration conducted in such a way as to make one weep over the lack of noble policies and true patriotism? Why do corruption and deception enter into our elections and make havoc of public property? Why has government's basic task dwindled today to an attempt merely to prevent crime? Why do governments not seek to understand the causes of war and the conditions of peace? Churches and families ought to undertake the imposition of civilization on such governments."

Western society can only continue to tolerate moral confusion and its ways of destruction because of its limited powers to take reform into its own hands. But the continuation of this state of affairs already tolls a warning bell. Peril lies close at hand, for civilization stays stable only so long as there is a balance between ends and means, between authority and aspiration. When this equilibrium breaks down, such violence ensues that no goodness can stop it. It rushes headlong to an inevitable disruption. You will find no nation throughout human history which survived the corruption of indulgence and permissiveness.

Rome perished. The glory of Greece collapsed. France, because of the indulgent lives of its citizens, turned soft and gave way to the first Nazi assault. One of their most famous generals himself wrote that the reason for their weakness was the inner erosion of character.

Spengler foresaw the downfall of Western civilization and said that other lands would in the future see great cultures arise. Perhaps the East will be one of the first to return to its ancient heritage. This will not come by worshipping at the false shrine of misguided civilizations. But the decline of one civilization can awaken men to the divine plan and inspire them to follow it; and so, by means of this sublime truth, to found an entirely new social life on sound foundations.

Islam and Nationhood

Today, alas, the symptoms of an inferiority-complex over Western industrial prowess and its deadly consequences mark everything in Eastern nations' life. Many a Muslim is so impregnated with Western ideas that he wishes to see everything through Western spectacles, in the belief that progress demands manners and morals, laws and legislation, which copy Western styles. This total surrender welds the ring of slavery in our ears.

We spread the red carpet of our self-respect, our material and moral wealth, our religious and national heritage of good-breeding, before their feet. This is what saps Muslim nations' strength, both physical and spiritual. Muslims they may be: but they have lost the art of thinking on Islamic lines, cast aside their Muslim outlook on world events, alienated themselves from Islam's creed and culture, and want to Westernize all Muslim ways. Mankind's greatest problems are not those which can be solved in the laboratory.

Shall a foreign force prevent our taking our place in civilization's caravan? Suppose we follow neither the capitalist nor the communist trail. Suppose perfect social justice rules the interior of our land, and wins us an international regard, restoring our ancient prestige amongst the assembly of national governments. Might this not save us and mankind from further horrors of wars?

Why do we not let our religion's laws and statutes solve our internal problems? If it can prevent us occupying the seat of a beggar at the table of humanity, and instead install us as masters in that house to the benefit of all, is this a small thing? Can a rich and generous giver turn beggar? Can a man born to command turn submissive, cringe and crawl as an inferior, and give up his right to choose the road he knows is proper?

Our inherited treasures have blessed humanity in the past. Neither West nor East dare disregard that fact, and despise us as backward and helpless, however much they strive to turn our confidence into confusion and our hope into hopelessness, so that we fall easy prey. Our long experience over three thousand years of history has left us tired. We have culled habits, thought, laws, manners from here and there over centuries, and donned them in indiscriminate combination, so that we make ourselves more like figures in a ridiculous carnival procession than the dignified personalities that we should be, wearing our own national garb with distinction and consuming our national dishes with conscious nobility.

Take our present constitution. We first copied French models: then those of other European nations

were added; and later, on each occasion when new legislation was called for, sought our mound in some other place again, so that there is an endless conflict between the spirit of the laws which we have borrowed from outside, and the national spirit for which the laws are made. As a result, a transgressor of the law gains national renown, hero-worship, and help unstinted in every way.

Why? Through ignorance in the community? Not so! For the educated do not respond to the laws. No! It is the inconsistency between the national spirit and the borrowed laws, unrelated to social needs, historical antecedents, national consciousness, personal convictions that emerged from an environment entirely alien to the spirit of our people. Each borrowed law came from a community with its own history, religion, needs and peculiar realities. Yet none of them can even give a wholly positive answer to its own people, as continuous insurrectionary conditions show.

Professor Hocking of Harvard in "The Spirit of World Politics" writes: "Islamic lands will not progress by merely imitating Western arrangements and values. Can Islam produce fresh thinking, independent laws and relevant statutes to fit the new needs raised by modern society? Yes! — and more! Islam offers humanity greater possibilities for advance than others can. Its lack is not ability—but the will to use it. In reality the Shar'ia contains all the ingredients needed."

Iran's national daily "Keyhan" on 14th Day, 1345 reported: "Yesterday, anniversary of the martyrdom of the Imam Ali, all Tehran practiced Islam's laws 100%. Result : —no crimes; forensic offices unemployed ; no murders; no violence ; no ripple on the calm surface ; borough officers and police untroubled by any calls; even family quarrels within the homes were quickly hushed in reverence for the martyred Leader of the Faithful."

The Persian "Reader's Digest" (No. 35, Year 25) corroborated this, saying: "The average number of corpses in Tehran mortuaries on any one day of last year was 6 — fewer of course on religious holy days and more on some other days. Last week's anniversary (Day 13th) of Ali's martyrdom was total peace— a proof of the persistent strength of religious conviction, and of the calm and sanity society attains on days when sale of alcohol is banned and amusement houses are closed."

Such is the result of Muslims practicing their religion's laws for 24 hours. Could a single Western city report, if not 24 hours, even 60 minutes, without an accident, a theft or a murder? When will mankind attain the adult maturity to learn the simple lesson from which so easily comes the peace, the quiet, the unity that all want? It is plain serendipity for us for, in the poet's words, I round the globe in search of Heaven did roam: Returned, and found my Heaven was here at home."

Islam and Economics (1)

Man has always had to wrestle with the task of exploiting nature's resources to extract his livelihood from there. In the primitive centuries, as Aristotle said, life organized itself socially "to make it possible to live: and continued, to make it possible to live well." In the last four centuries a "science of economics" has

been deduced from the statutes regulating human relations and the exchange of goods which developed through this social organization. Faced with the vast expansion of a technology and affluence, this "science" has broken into two opposing camps.

On the one side "Capitalism" or "free enterprise" believes that nature should take its course in economics, so that an enlightened self-interest causes the genius of some finally to level out to the benefit of all. This is the doctrine for which the Western bloc stands.

On the other side "Communism" holds that the means of production must be controlled by a proletariat state, so that a just and equal sharing of all the benefits of human endeavor is imposed on society.

The rivalry for absolute power between these two ideologies hangs over the modern world with a menace like the sword of Damocles.

We must ask Marxists whether their "classless society" can be ensured by the single measure of making the means of production joint property and abolishing a moneyed class, when in fact a diversity of classes exists arising from other than economic causes. While in Soviet Socialist Republics no bourgeois propertied class exists, other classes distinguished by occupational and environmental differences do exist: e.g. factory-workers, agriculturalists, civil servants, clerks, party officials and numberless others. Do physician and nurse receive equal pay? Or navy and engineer?

There are yet other differences amongst people which exist in reality — Lenin's "reality in which we have to orient ourselves." People differ in age, sex, inclinations, tastes, physical strength, appearance, reasoning powers, ideas and outlooks.

A Soviet economist recently wrote ("Economics" Vol. 2, p.216): "It is impracticable to impose absolute equality right across the board. If we were to pay professors, thinkers, politicians and inventors exactly the same as manual workers, the only end-result would be the abolition of all incentives to brainwork of any kind."

Capitalism claims that only by private enterprise and personal property can an economy be achieved such that the standard of living of all classes constantly rises and the difference between rich and poor constantly diminishes. Against this claim must be set the report of an enquiry arranged by Walter Reuther, President of the U.S.A. United Auto Workers Union, in his capacity as chairman of the "American Society to Combat Hunger."

This committee affirms that ten million Americans suffer from under nourishment; and asks the president of the republic to declare a state of emergency in 256 cities, situated in 20 of the states, where the danger is most grave. As causes of this under nourishment, the committee cited the aftermath of World War II coupled with a number of defects in America's internal economy. The Secretary of Agriculture took extreme measures to purchase from abroad and commandeer from within all foodstuffs he could lay hands on to fill the gap (UP).

We are bound to ask, therefore, how far any regime, whatever its claims, has succeeded in equalizing the classes, eliminating differences and building a sound and just society?

Both Socialist and Capitalist regimes base their systems on theories which are revered without any regard to moral and spiritual values. The aim of each is to increase affluence, and nothing more.

Islam's philosophy reverences the whole man in his world setting. It orders society's material behavior and benefits, while at the same time legislating for moral virtues, spiritual perfections, and a higher standard of living. By this it means, not simply the material, but the mental, the spiritual, the moral, the altruistic, the philanthropic standards which enable all men to live each for all and all for each.

Western law supports property-rights and gives preference to those of capitalists over those of workers. Soviet law, in their own words, exists to strip the individual of all property rights and to extirpate capital as a personal possession, giving preference to the workers' group throughout. Both systems are grounded in human reasoning and judgment.

But Islam's law is grounded in Divine Revelation. Its legislation is not a human expedient. It does not set class against class; but helps each group to respect the excellence of other groups. Dictated by the Lord of all creatures for the general good and for the good of all, it permits no class to lord it over others nor allows injustice to break in. A ruler is in it only an ordinary person with a particular set of duties, himself under law, wielding power solely to ensure that the Divine commandments are obeyed in society. Since confidence reigns that God's Law is sovereign, peace and quiet obtain.

Islam on the one hand opposes Capitalism's doctrine that the rights of property-ownership lie outside the limits of state control, and its permitting "free enterprise" to exercise aggression and tyranny of the stronger over the weaker in an exaltation of the rights of the individual to the detriment of the rights of society as a whole: and, on the other hand, does regard the sanctity of property as a fundamental.

Prosperity is the stone on which independence and freedom are built within a social order. The common good must be the regulating principle governing personal ownership of property. Islam therefore equally opposes the Communist total rejection of private enterprise and property, which entrusts the key of bounty to the state, reducing the individual to so subordinate a position that he is left with no intrinsic value in himself as a person, being regarded as a state tool — a stomach for the state to fill and thereafter exploit, as a farmer does his horses and cattle.

Communists hold that private property is not natural to man. They aver, without advancing evidence to support the thesis that the first communities of primitive man held all things in common in cooperation, love and brotherhood, neither did any man say that aught that he had was his own. The human "community" started as communist with everything in common and parted to each as his need required. The claim to personal ownership of anything, they contend, only developed by slow degrees until it reached the terrifying excesses it manifests in today's world.

Their utopian "Golden Age" is, alas, a pipe-dream: for the facts show that personal ownership is not a result of the development of acquisitive tendencies in a particular environment. Property is coeval with the appearance of man on earth: it is as germane to human nature as all the other innate urges, and no more to be denied than they are. Modern economists say that the universal sense of ownership of property, which is found in every tribe on earth and in every epoch, can only be explained if it is a primal instinct.

Man wants to be the sole master of the goods that minister to his needs, in order to feel truly free and independent. Further, a man feels that goods which owe their existence to the hard work of his hands are in a way an extension of himself, deserving of the same respect as he demands for the integrity of his personality. Finally, he feels the inner urge to build up a store to ensure his future and that of his family, developing thereby a thrift and economy which make him lay up a provision against a rainy day.

This store he thereafter guards jealously as "his own". The community's wealth grows with the increase in private property and productivity, for a social unit subsists by the industry of its individual members. The incentive to hard work lies in its rewards in personal ownership and in increased ease of living. Wherefore society must concede to the individual the right to own what his toil has created, since society's own welfare is itself a product of that toil.

Islam, with its practical and realistic approach to man as he is, recognizes the importance of the urge to own as a creative factor for all social progress; and therefore legislates to secure a man possession of all that his hand has won for him by proper and lawful means, regarding his productivity as the guarantee of his right to ownership.

Islam rejects the contention that oppression, exploitation and violence are inevitable concomitants of private ownership; for they only appear where the legislative power is held by the richest class, and by them, as in Western lands, directed solely to the protection of their own interests. Since Islamic Law derives solely from the supreme overarching Authority of God, it is wholly impartial: so no law can be devised by it with the aim of protecting the rich or injuring the poor. From its inception, Islam has recognized private property, but always only under such conditions that violence and oppression are ruled out of court.

Islam holds that it is wrong to wrest factories out of the hands of those who founded them and who, by patient endurance of hardship and toil, built them up to give labor to many, goods to society, and, of course, also profit to themselves. For Islam holds that such resort to violence in removing the means of production from the hands of men of initiative is injurious to social security and to respect for the rights of the individual. It discourages the spirit of invention and initiative and enterprise. Nonetheless the government can and should so control the administration of great industries and the establishment of factories that social justice, equity in profit, public benefits and the government's own finances are properly cared for.

In sum, Islamic economics gives joint primacy to both individual and community. It equably balances the interests and rights of these two elements by guaranteeing a free economy while safeguarding the freedom of the individual member and the benefit of the whole community simultaneously by certain reasonable and necessary regulations on private ownership. The urge for such ownership it recognizes as innate, and therefore germane to human nature, so that the only limits which may be imposed upon it are those dictated by the general interests of the whole society, which of course contains the best interests of each single member.

Islam regards the instinct to possess as an incentive divinely implanted to inspire men to hard work for the improvement of the means of livelihood and of their increased production: yet regulates the expression of this incentive with conditions that obviate violence, oppression, exploitation, extortion and other forms of misuse of freedom. These conditions safeguard the interests of society and are limits on individual independence in no way injurious to liberty, since both communal living and individual freedom must impose those limits on behavior which will guarantee the survival of both individual and community; and must therefore outlaw profiteering, embezzlement, malversation, hoarding, miserliness, avarice, usury, forcible seizure of other people's property and all similar criminal and anti-social methods of amassing capital.

Islam and Economics (2)

Economic historians tell us that at its inception the capitalist system was simple and beneficent: but that the habit of granting loans at interest step by step grew to its present harmful excess. With this came the bankrupting of small concerns and their amalgamation into huge complex companies and financial structures. Islam labels such usury "sin", as it does also the crises of boom and slump inseparable from the system.

Islam has legislated for a payment of "Zakat" (the Poor Rate) of 20% on capital gains by the rich for the support of the indigent. This helps to level out differences, to draw economic extremes closer together and to curb excessive piling up of wealth. Another Islamic regulation with the same aim and same results is the government's right to tax wealth for national finances, since Islam holds that God has put His good gifts into this world for the benefit of all, as may be seen by the forests, reedbeds, pastures, desert lands, mountain ranges, mines.²

Estates, too, become public either through the intestacy of a deceased owner or because they are paid as fines in restitution; so that they are as much the property of all as God meant all things to be. Islam's testamentary laws also curb undue accumulation of property in the hands of one family from generation to generation.

The conditions, therefore, by which Islam limits its respect for the rights of private ownership, are those which are dictated by the need to assure that the individual's privileges never menace the wellbeing of the Islamic community. Therefore, in emergency or disorder, the just Islamic government can employ the

legal powers put at its disposal both to avert dangers which threaten the future and also so to administer society as to meet the needs of the Muslim masses, any time it sees fit.

A country's land may not fall into the possession of a small handful of proprietors. Indigence and malnutrition of the masses may not be ignored. These points are fixed principles, frankly and firmly, faithfully and forcefully, propounded by Islam. The Faith condemns the injurious intrusion of modern capitalist practices into the Muslim world and bans.

In the Qur'an it is written (Sura 59—"Al-Hashr" —"The Gathering of Troops" verse 7 in part): ***"The dispositions we have revealed for the distribution of property ... are ordained that capital may not merely circulate round the group of capitalists amongst you."***

In addition to the legal enactments which ensure the correct use of finances and resources by punishing transgressions, Islam also brings entirely new motives to bear, as our Qur'anic quotation hints, by directing men's aspirations towards God. It therefore streamlines their conduct within the confines of the road that leads to Him. This road has moral fences on either side over which the aspirant desires not to stray. The road is paved with philanthropy, affection, and sentiments of charity and self-sacrifice, which mean that no Muslim will voluntarily be a party to courses of action which lead to injustice to others. Thus the individual's conscience refuses to pile up excessive capital, and the employer refuses to use tyranny or oppression to compel his workers to produce.

This lofty spiritual challenge, directed towards helping the individual come to a knowledge of God and so to love of his neighbor, is deeply planted within the conscience, so that a man finds his pleasures and his treasures in pleasing his Creator; and these excel all other values for him. In truth it is the decline of faith today, and the diminution of belief in doomsday and judgment, which led to the greed and cupidity and maleficence and the forms of injustice and oppression which we see around us. Unless men's relationships are right with God, their relationships will not be right with one another. A revolution of conscience produces a revolution in the soul, in society, and in the world. Such is the lesson of history in practice, as well as the doctrine of religion.

The same considerations apply to the ideology of Communism, and it will be readily seen that Islamic lore is superior to both the Western and Eastern materialist excesses.

Modern philosophers like William James, Harold Laski, John Strachey, Walter Lippmann, criticize Communists' total abrogation of personal and social affairs in favor of the state authority, saying that the individual's personality and initiative are suffocated in such an ambience. While on the other hand capitalist democracy over-emphasizes individual freedom to the detriment of social progress. This creates an oligarchy of the rich, making them masters of the means of production and turning all men into slaves of economics.

From opposing angles they come to a common conclusion that individuals must impose an inner discipline on themselves if they are to enjoy true freedom, contradictory as that may seem, and that the

welfare of society depends upon the responsible exercise by its members of that self-disciplined freedom. What is their conclusion other than a restatement of the doctrine which Islam has been preaching for 14 centuries? It is time that the lessons of history, the conclusions of the philosophers and the doctrines of religion were made the guidelines for the conduct of men and communities everywhere.

In AD 1951 the Paris College of Law devoted a week to the study of the Islamic "Fiqh" (Canon Law). They called in experts from Islamic lands round the world for elucidation of particular points, e.g.:

1. Islamic Canon Law on property;
2. Conditions for filing deeds of exchange on property to preserve the welfare of society and the public;
3. Criminal responsibility;
4. The reciprocal influence of Islamic faith and Canon Law on each other.

The head of the Parisian Lawyers' Society chaired the conference and summed up at the end thus: "Whatever our earlier ideas about Islamic law and its rigidity or incompetence in documenting transactions, we have been compelled to revise them in this conference. Let me sum up the new insights—new I think to most of us— the conference has given us, in this week devoted particularly to the Fiqh, Islamic Canon Law.

We saw in it a depth of rock bottom principle and of particularized care which embraces mankind in its universality and is thus able to give an answer to all the emergencies and events of this age. In our final communiqué we say: 'Islam's Canon Law should be made one of the formative elements of all new international legislation to meet present-day conditions, since it possesses a legal treasure of stable universal value which fits its Fiqh, amongst the modern welter of religious views and pronouncements, to cope with the exigencies imposed by the new forms of living arising in the modern environment!'

Islam and Intellectual Advance

Most Westerners are ignorant of the debt their civilization owes to Islam, even for modern industrial transformation, scientific advance and philosophical enterprise.

Islam came into the world in the bosom of one of the most backward of peoples. In a very short time it had raised those tribes to pre-eminence in every field.

Its greatest miracle was its appearance as a full grown adult of the spirit in so degraded and poverty-stricken an environment.

Its second miracle was the raising of that environment, by sheer force of inspiration, without any extraneous aids, to an unmatched destiny.

Its third was to create a cultural focus from which strong waves radiated, stimulating renaissance in other peoples of every background throughout the world.

The changes it wrought compose history's greatest revolution so far, a revolution in sense and sensibility, in thought and intellect, in relations of individuals and communities, and indeed in every department of human life.

By the end of its first millennium Islam stretched from the Atlantic coast of Africa in the west to the Great Wall of China in the east, from the Mediterranean to the Sahara in Africa. In Spain its troops took first Andalusia, then all Spain up to the Pyrenees, and even penetrated the south of France as far north as Tours. All the "Jezirat-ul'Arab" was of course Muslim. From Muslim Iran and Afghanistan other troops took Sind, the Punjab and the Gobi— and this within a few short centuries.

In all its dominions the principles worked out in the Arab homeland were applied to the new societies under its sway. In particular its justice, equality and brotherhood, humane fruits of its meticulous care for the individual and his place in society, which are the distinguishing marks of Islam, set their stamp on the communities over this entire vast area.

The first task was the overthrow of tyrannies: the second was the establishment of sound Islamic rule and respect for human rights: the third was the illumination of intellect, research and thought : the fourth was the propagating of the faith by its calm appeal to reason and logic and by its profundity and breadth of vision: the fifth—and perhaps the most glorious because the most anonymous —was the infection of other nations, of all creeds and none, with its own superior moral, mental and spiritual outlook.

This last achievement not merely raised the general level of peoples of every religion throughout the world, but also drew many proselytes to itself from the idolaters of Arabia, the animists of Africa, the Magians and Zoroastrians of Iran, and the Christians of Egypt and Syria.

Pre-Muslim Arabia had no trace of culture, no science, no erudition, no economics; for geographical reasons Arabs lived in penury and squalor, the prey of superstitions, isolated from world currents. Islam changed all that, and went on to open the hearts and brains of men everywhere to new possibilities.

In far-off Andalusia a school of scholars, writers, mathematicians, scientific researchers and philosophers arose, inspired by Islam to revive the level of thought reached by the Greeks 1500 years earlier, and to move on up from there to heights never before touched by man.

Modern scholars in every country, even those whose prejudices would make them prefer to maintain a critical and hostile attitude to Islam, more and more draw attention to the speed of the spread of the Muslim faith, to its beneficent results for mankind's prowess in thought and study, and the progressiveness of the ideas which it brought to other stagnant civilizations.

It should be noted by all our "progressives" everywhere, that this brilliant advance for all humanity was

the concomitant of a moral self-discipline, of an eschewing of the dissipation which follows upon losing the reins of passion, and of a deliberate control of the creative instincts, which channeled them into works of artistic, intellectual, and social creativity worthy of mature human beings. This inner discipline, which man needs, promotes the inner freedom he desires; and it is one cause of Islam's wide dominion over the minds of men of the early Middle Ages. For it offered not merely sounder outward forms of living but reassurance to the inner core of the spirit. It abolished the wild persecutions brought about by purblind bigotry and by narrow-minded fanaticism.

It was for this reason that the Sultan Kemal-ul-Mulk, nephew of Saladdin, talked as man to man, and as scion of the same spirit, to Francis of Assisi when the Saint crossed the lines from the camp of the Crusaders under King Louis, whom the Muslims had halted before Damietta. It was the same universal humanity which caused the vast contrast between Omar's merciful treatment of the Christians in Jerusalem when he conquered it, and the barbarous massacre of Jerusalem's Muslim inhabitants by the European Crusaders who took it back for a brief period 300 years later. Islam replaced such savagery with a constitutional rule, a humanely regulated society, an overarching philosophy embracing all mankind.

In Europe's Dark Ages, while the Church established its power over the different nationalities, and fettered them in restraining bonds in a status quo, Islam was building up a many-sided culture which laid the basis for that flowering of science, knowledge, and artistic and technological creativity which is called the "Renaissance".

This was while the Church was condemning Galileo for confirming Copernicus' theory of the orbiting of the earth round the sun, and forcing him to his famous recantation : "I, Galileo Galilei, in the 70th year of my age (1633 AD), on my knees before your Reverences (the Pope and Bishops) with the Holy Scriptures before my eyes, take them in my hands and kiss them while repenting and denying the foolish claim that the earth moves, and regard that claim as a hateful heresy," even while he muttered rebelliously sotto voce "Eppur si muove".

Yet 500 years previously our own great astronomer and mathematician Omar Khayyam of Nishapur (floruit 2nd half of 11th century AD, when William the Bastard was conquering England) had provided Iran with the Jalali Calendar which to this day enables us to start our new year not merely on the day, but on the exact hour, minute, and second that the earth terminates one orbit and starts another round the sun at the vernal equinox! How few Westerners know this! They think of him as a poet, though he was an indifferent one, but do not realize that if they had picked up his wisdom they might have avoided all their Gregorian alterations of the Julian calendar, and the loss of their "11 days"!

Roger Bacon (1214–1292 AD) the Franciscans' "Doctor mirabilis", was in the reign of Edward I of England compelled to give up the experimental research into science to which his lectures in Paris on Aristotle's works and in particular on the "Liber de Causis" had led him; and was driven out from Oxford back to Paris to be kept under the Church's eye—an eye too narrow and bigoted to see the wealth of the

scientific treasures he was offering them. He was arraigned as a dabbler in devilish and satanic alchemy: and the mob was incited to yell for "this sorcerer's hand to be cut off and this 'Muslim' (1) to be exiled."

Nowadays European and American historians and scholars all recognize and relate the fundamental contributions made by Islam to all modern advances in science, mathematics, technology, philosophy, in many ways of which this brief chapter has only been able to touch the fringe.

Cultural Revolution

No better evidence of the passion of Islam for the spread of erudition, from its very inception, can be given than the words of the Prophet himself who said, after the battle of Badr and the Muslims' victory, to the huge crowds whom they had taken prisoner, that any of them who wished to buy their freedom but had no cash for a ransom could employ their literacy as their resources; and any polytheist who trained ten Muslims to read and write should win freedom. His pronouncement was put into practice; and it was thus that a large number of his original adherents were started on the road of education.

His nephew and successor, the Imam Ali, on whom be blessing, declared that the spreading of science and knowledge and culture and intellectual ability was one of the merits to be coveted and achieved by every Muslim government. In the record of his words it is reported that he said: "O people! I have rights over you and you have rights over me. Your right over me is to insist that I shall always give you guidance and counsel, and seek your welfare, and improve the public funds and all your livelihoods, and help raise you from ignorance and illiteracy to heights of knowledge, learning, culture, social manners and good conduct."

215 years after the Hejra the Abbasid Caliph Ma'amoun founded a "House of Wisdom" in Baghdad to be a center of science, and furnished it with an astronomical observatory and a public library, for which he set aside 200,000 dinars (the equivalent of some 7 million dollars). He gathered together a large number of learned men who were acquainted with foreign languages and different disciplines, like Honain and Bakht-eeshoo' and Ibn Tariq and Ibn Muqafa' and Hajaj bin Matar and Sirgis Ra'asi, and others too numerous to mention, and set aside a large sum for them, dispatching many of them to all the different countries of the world to collect books on science, medicine, philosophy, mathematics, and fine literature, in Hindi, Pahlevi, Chaldean, Syriac, Greek, Latin and Farsi. It is said that the vast collections they sent to Baghdad exceeded 100 camel loads!

Europe had not one university or cultural center to show for itself in those centuries when Islamic lands had large numbers staffed by experts and specialists in all branches of knowledge. These Islamic centers were beginning to radiate waves of brilliant new thinking to the world at the very moment when the Crusades were launched. In fact it might be said that it was the new learning fostered by Islam which itself furnished the Europeans with some of their new thinking that made possible whatever prowess they achieved in those disastrous wars and fired the passion of jealousy and cupidity which made the

West wish to seize for itself the treasures which they saw Islam bringing to the nations under its sway.

Dr. Gustave Le Bon writes on page 329 of volume III of his "History of Islamic and Arab Civilization": "In those days when books and libraries meant nothing to Europeans, many Islamic lands had books and libraries in plenty. Indeed, in Baghdad's 'House of Wisdom' there were four million volumes ; and in Cairo's Sultanic Library one million; and in the library of Syrian Tripoli three million volumes ; while in Spain alone under Muslim rule there was an annual publication of between 70 and 80 thousand volumes."

G. l'Estrange in his "Legacy of Islam" page 230 writes: "The Mustansariyya University was furnished with equipment and built in a huge campus with college edifices of such splendor that its peer exists neither in the Muslim world nor elsewhere. Its four law-colleges, each with 75 students and a professor who taught the pupils gratis, paid its professor a monthly salary, while each of the 300 students was given a gold dinar a month. A college kitchen provided the daily meals. Ibn-el-Farat says that the library contained priceless and unique volumes, on many branches of science, for any student to borrow. Pens and paper were provided for the notes anyone might wish to take. The university had hammams (baths) and infirmaries. Its doctors conducted a daily inspection of the colleges, and wrote prescriptions for any who were ill. The college stores were able to dispense drugs prescribed, immediately. All this at the beginning of the 13th century AD!"

Dr. Max Meyerhof writes: "In Istanbul the mosques possess between them more than 80 libraries, with tens of thousands of books and ancient manuscripts. In Cairo, Damascus, Mosul, Baghdad, and in cities of Iran and of India there are other great libraries full of treasures. A proper catalogue of the precious volumes in all these has not yet been published complete in print. Moreover, the Escorial library in the Iberian Peninsula contains a huge section filled with books and manuscripts produced by the Islamic scholars of the West, which also awaits completion of its cataloguing."

Dr. Gustave Le Bon writes on pages 557/8 of his "Islamic and Arab Civilization": "The Muslims pursued the sciences with profound application. In any town they took, their first act was to build a mosque and thereafter a college. This led to the production of majestic institutions of learning in a vast number of cities. Benjamin Toole (ob. 1173 AD) said that in Alexandria he found more than 20 colleges at work. Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova, and other places all had great universities with laboratories, observatories, huge libraries and all the other requirements for tackling intellectual problems. In Andalusia alone there were 70 public libraries. The library of Al-Hakem II in Cordova contained 600,000 volumes and it took 44 volumes to catalogue the library's contents. When Charles the Just, four centuries later, founded the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris he was only able to assemble a total of 900 volumes, and that after great labors, while one-third of that 900 were books on religion."

The same author on page 562 adds: "The Muslims launched science on the road of exactitude, experiment and forward-looking discovery by hypothesis, with a particular enthusiasm, while producing books and treatises and high schools that spread their intellectual prowess to all corners of the world."

They thereby opened for Europe the road to its renaissance. So it is with justification that the title of 'Europe's Professor' is given to the newly-arisen Islamic power, since it was through them that the treasures of ancient Greek and Roman science were rediscovered and enhanced and given back to Europe as she began to emerge from the Dark Ages."

Josef Marc Kapp writes, concerning the first centuries of Islam's progress in culture, in his book "Muslim Splendor in Spain" (p. 170): "Even the lowest classes in society were athirst to learn to read; and humble workers limited their expenditure on food and clothing and spent their last soul on buying books. One worker collected such a library that men of learning flocked to him. Freed slaves and the children of slaves entered the ranks of the learned; and men like Vafyat-ul-A'iyān Ibn Khalkan laid the foundations for great progress".

Nehru wrote concerning the benefits conferred on social progress and the cultural revolution of the Muslims in Andalusia in his book "A Glimpse at World History" (p.413): "Cordova had over a million inhabitants, a magnificent public park of about 20 kilometers and suburbs stretching 40 kilometers, with 6,000 palaces, mansions and great houses, 200,000 smaller houses of beauty, 70,000 stores and small shops. 300 mosques, 700 hammams with hot and cold baths for public use. There were innumerable libraries of which the most comprehensive and important was the Royal Library, which contained 400,000 volumes. Cordova University was famous throughout Europe and in western Asia. At the same time education was provided for the poor. Indeed one of their contemporary historians writes that nearly everyone in Spain in those days could read and write, while in the rest of Christian Europe, apart from the monks and clerky persons who were educated trough religious houses, no one, including the highest members of the nobility, thought it worth his while even to attempt to master basic arts of reading."

To illustrate these claims I append eight extremely brief chapters, each on a different branch of science or culture; my debt I gladly acknowledge to Arnold and Guillaume's "Legacy of Islam" (publ. O.U.P. 1931) to which I refer any reader who wishes to extend his information.

Medical Science

Dr Meyerhof writes in "The Legacy of Islam" (p. 132): "Muslim doctors laughed at the Crusaders' medical attendants for their clumsy and elementary efforts. The Europeans had not the advantage of the books of Avicenna, Jaber, Hassan bin Haytham, Rhazes. However they finally had them translated into Latin. These translations exist still, without the translators' names. In the 16th century the books of Averroes (Ibn Rushd) and Avicenna (Ibn Sina) were put out in Latin translation in Italy and used as the basis of instruction in the Italian and French universities."

On page 116 of the same work he writes that after Rhazes' death the works of Avicenna (AD 980–1037) were taken up. His influence on thought and philosophy and general science was profound, and his medical works (based on the works of Galen which he had found in the Samarqand library in Arabic

translation) had a sensational outreach. Other scientists followed— Abu'l-Qais of Andalusia ; Ibn-Zahr of Andalusia ; Abbas the Iranian; Ali ibn-Rezvan of Egypt ; Ibn Butlan of Baghdad; Abu Mansur Muwaffaq of Herat; Ibn Wafeed of Spain; Masooya of Baghdad; Ali ibn-Esau of Baghdad; Ammar of Mosul; Ibn-Rushd (Averroes) of Andalusia ; whose works translated to Latin were used in European universities. Europe knew nothing of the cholera bacterium when Islam entered Spain, and the people there regarded the disease as a punishment sent from heaven to exact the penalty of sins: but Muslim physicians had already proved that even the bubonic plague was a contagious disease and nothing else.

Dr. Meyerhof writes of Avicenna's book "The Canon" that it is a masterpiece of medical science which proved its worth by being printed in a series of 16 editions in the closing years of the 15th century AD, 15 Latin and one Arabic. In the 16th century more than a score of further editions were published, because of its value as a scientific work. Its use continued throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, so that it became the most widely known of all medical treatises. It is still consulted in medical schools.

Will Durant writes that Mohammad ibn Zachariah Razi (Rhazes) was one of Islam's most progressive physicians, author of 200 treatises and books well worth studying today: in particular his

1. "Smallpox and Measles" (published in Latin and other European tongues in 40 editions between 1497 and 1866), and

2. "The Great Encyclopedia" 20 volumes mostly unobtainable nowadays: five volumes were devoted to optics ; translated into Latin AD 1279; printed in five editions in 1542 alone; known as the most authoritative work on the eye and its ailments and treatment for centuries; one of the nine basic works on which Paris University composed its medical course in 1394 AD.

Surgery made similar progress in the hands of Islamic practitioners, who even used anesthetics, though these are assumed to be of modern origin. They employed a henbane base.

Among Rhazes' innovations was the use of cold water to treat persistent fever, of dry-cupping for apoplexy, of mercury ointment and animal gut for wound sutures, and many others.

Further information on Islamic medicine can be sought from the many books on the subject. The diagnosis of tuberculosis from the fingernails, the cure of jaundice, the use of cold water to prevent hemorrhage, the crushing of stones in bladder and kidney to facilitate their removal, and surgery for hernia are among advances too numerous to mention in detail. The greatest of Islamic surgeons was Abu'l-Qasem of Andalusia, affectionately called Abu'l-gays, and sometimes Abu'l-Qasees, flourit 11th century AD, inventor of very many surgical instruments and author of books to describe them and their uses— books translated and printed in innumerable editions in Latin and used all over Europe, the last such edition being in 1816.

Pharmacology

Gustave le Bon writes: "Besides the use of cold water to treat typhoid cases — a treatment later abandoned, though Europe is taking this Muslim invention up again in modern times after a lapse of centuries— Muslims invented the art of mixing chemical medicaments in pills and solutions, many of which are in use to this day, though some of them are claimed as wholly new inventions of our present century by chemists unaware of their distinguished history. Islam had dispensaries which filled prescriptions for patients gratis, and in parts of countries where no hospitals were reachable, physicians paid regular visits with all the tools of their trade to look after public health."

Georgi Zeidan writes: "Modern European pharmacologists who have studied the history of their profession find that Muslim doctors launched many of the modern beneficial specifics centuries ago, made a science of pharmacology and compound cures, and set up the first pharmacies on the modern model. So that Baghdad alone had 60 chemists' shops dispensing prescriptions regularly at the charges of the Caliph. Evidence of these facts can be seen in the names given in Europe to quite a number of medicines and herbs which betray their Arabic, Indian or Persian origin." Such are "alcohol, alkali, alkaner, apricot, arsenic," to quote some 'a's alone. all the tools of their trade to look after public health."

Hospitals

Georgi Zeidan continues: "Within two centuries of the death of the Prophet, Mecca, Medina and the other great Muslim cities all had hospitals, while the Abbasid governors and their ministers competed each for his own region to have the best such institution for the care of the sick. Baghdad alone had four important hospitals. By three centuries after the Hejra the governor Adhud-ud-Dowleh Deylami had founded the Adhudi Hospital with 24 specialists, each master of his own particular field, a hospital which soon earned the reputation of excelling all hospitals throughout Islam, though in the course of time it too was surpassed.

"The order and arrangement of Islamic hospitals was such that no distinctions of race, religion or occupation were recognized, but cure was administered with meticulous care to any patient. Separate wards were allotted for patients of specific diseases. These were teaching hospitals where the students learned theory and observed practice. In addition, there were travelling hospitals which carried doctors and their gear by camel or mule to every district. Sultan Mahmud the Seljuk travelled with a hospital which required 40 camels for its transport."

Dr. Gustave le Bon writes: "Muslim hospitals went in for preventive medicine and the preservation of health as much as if not more than for the cure of the already diseased. They were well-aired and had plenty of running water. Muhammad bin Zachariah Razi (Rhazes) was ordered by the Sultan to seek out the healthiest place in the Baghdad neighborhood for the construction of a new hospital.

He visited every section of the town and its environs, and hung up a piece of meat which he left while he

looked into infectious diseases in the neighborhood and studied climatic conditions, particularly the state of the water. He balanced all these various experimental tests and finally found them all to indicate that the place where the portion of meat was the last to putrefy and develop infectious bacteria was the spot on which to build. These hospitals had large common wards and also private wards for individuals. Pupils were trained in diagnosis and brought observation and experience to the perfecting of their studies. There were also special mental hospitals, and pharmacies which dispensed prescriptions gratis."

Marc Kapp writes: "Cairo had a huge hospital with playing fountains and flower-decked gardens and 40 large courtyards. Every unfortunate patient was kindly received, and after his cure sent home with five gold coins. While Cordova, besides its 600 mosques and 900 public hammams, had 50 hospitals."

Chemistry

Jaber ibn Haiyan, disciple of the sixth Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, became known world-wide as "the Father of Chemistry" and of Arab alchemy. His influence on Western chemistry and alchemy was profound and long-lasting. Some hundreds of his works survive. Of him the late Sayyid Hebbat-ud-Din Shahristani of Kadhemain, once Iraq's Minister of Education, writes: "I have seen some 50 ancient MSS of works of Jaber all dedicated to his master the Imam Ja'far. More than 500 of his works have been put into print and are for the most part to be found among the treasures of the National Libraries of Paris and Berlin, while the savants of Europe nickname him affectionately 'Wisdom's Professor' and attribute to him the discovery of 19 of the elements with their specific weights, etc. Jaber says all can be traced back to a simple basic particle composed of a charge of lightning (electricity) and fire, the atom, or smallest indivisible unit of matter, very close to modern atomic science."

The blending of coloring matters, dyeing, extraction of minerals and metals, steelmaking, tanning, were amongst industrial techniques of which the Muslims were early masters. They produced Nitric Acid, Sulfuric Acid, Nitro-glycerine, Hydrochloric Acid, Potassium, Aqua Ammonia, Sal Ammoniac, Silver Nitrate, Sulphuric Chloride, Potassium Nitrate, Alcohol, Alkali (both still known by their Arabic names), Orpiment (yellow tri-sulfide of arsenic : arsenic is derived from the Persian zar = gold, adjective zarnee = golden, Arabised with article "al" to "al-zarnee" pronounced "azzernee" and so taken into Greek where it was turned to the recognizable word "arsenikon" which means "masculine" since the gold color was supposed to link it with the sun, a masculine deity!): and finally—though this does not close the list we might cite—Borax, also an Arabic word booraq. Further, the arts of distilling, evaporation, sublimation, and the use of Sodium, Carbon, Potassium Carbonate, Chloride, and Ammonium were common under the Abbasid Caliphate.

Industry

The Abbasid Caliph Haroun-al-Rasheed sent Charlemagne in Aix from Baghdad a present of a clock made by his horologists which struck a bell on the hour every hour, to the great wonder and delight of

the whole court of the newly "crowned Holy Roman Emperor.

The massacre and expulsion of the Muslims of Andalusia by the Christians carried with it the closure of many of the great factories that had existed under Islamic rule, and the standstill of progress that had been made in science, crafts, arts, agriculture, and other products of civilization.

Towns began to fall into ruin because of the lack of skilled masons. Madrid dropped from 400,000 to 200,000 inhabitants: Seville, which had possessed 1,600 factories under the Muslims, lost all but 300, and the 130,000 workers formerly employed had no more jobs, while the census of Philip IV showed a fall of 75% in population figures.

It was the Muslims also who brought about the substitution of cotton-wove paper for the old parchments; and it was this invention which formed the basis for Europe's later invention of printing, using an old Chinese technique, and so for the vast uprush of learning which came with the Renaissance. More, since monks were starved for parchment on which to write their religious works, they were tending more and more to scrape off priceless ancient scientific texts from old parchments and to use them again as palimpsests. The introduction of paper put a stop to this disastrous practice in time to save quite a number of texts which would have otherwise been lost forever, as, alas, too many were.

A paper manuscript of the year AD 1009 was found in the Escorial library, and claims to be the oldest hand-written book on paper still in existence. Silk-wove paper, of course, was a Chinese invention, since silk was native to China though rare in Europe; and the Muslim genius lay in seeing the possibility of substituting cotton for silk, and so giving Europe a plentiful supply of a practicable material for the reproduction of books by the monkish scribes.

Philip Hitti writes in his "History of the Arabs" that the art of road making was so well developed in Islamic lands that Cordova had miles of paved road lit from the houses on each side at night so that people walked in safety ; while in London or Paris anyone who ventured out on a rainy night sank up to his ankles in mud — and did so for seven centuries after Cordova was paved! Oxford men then held that bathing was an idolatrous practice ; while Cordovan students reveled in luxurious public hammams!

Mathematics

Baron Carra de Vaux, author of the chapter on "Astronomy and Mathematics" in "The Legacy of Islam" (OUP 1931 pp. 376–398), points out that the word "algebra" is a Latinization of the Arabic term Al-jabr (= "the reduction": i.e. of complicated numbers to a simpler language of symbols), thereby revealing the debt the world owes to the Arabs for this invention. Furthermore the numerals that are used are "Arabic numerals" not merely in name but also in fact. Above all the Arabs' realization of the value of the Hindu symbol for zero laid the foundation of all our modern computerized technology. The word "zero", like its cousin "cipher" are both attempts at transliterating the Arabic "sefr", in order to convey into Europe the reality and the meaning of that word in Arabic.

De Vaux writes: "By using ciphers the Arabs became the founders of the arithmetic of everyday life; they made algebra an exact science and developed it considerably; they laid the foundations of analytical geometry; they were indisputably the founders of plane and spherical trigonometry. The astrolabe (safeeha) was invented by the Arab Al-Zarqali (Arzachel) who lived in Spain AD 1029–1087. The word "algorism" is a latinization of the name of its inventor, the native of Khiva called by the name of his home province Al-Khwarizmi. The Arabs kept alive the higher intellectual life and the study of science in a period when the Christian West was fighting desperately with barbarism."

This is not the place to go further into Muslim achievements in mathematics and astronomy. Suffice it to refer once again to the Jalali calendar of Omar Khayyam, with its formulae for exact calculation of the timing of the earth's orbits round the sun, to which reference has been made earlier.

Geography

The Arabian Nights' tales of Sinbad the Sailor, and of his voyages to China, Japan, and the Spice Islands of Indonesia, give quite enough evidence of the brilliance of Arabic commercial shipping and the knowledge of meteorology and geography which was at their disposal. Small wonder that the Faith spread through them from Morocco to Mindanao.

But, besides the SE Asian seas, Arabic sailors penetrated far down the East coast of Africa, and also up the rivers which are channels from the Black Sea into the distant interior of Russia. The Safarname (Travel journal) of Suleiman, a sea-captain of Seraf, the port on the Persian Gulf recently excavated by Dr. David Stronach of the British Institute of Persian Studies, was published at the end of the 9th century AD with accounts of his voyages to India and China. It was translated into Latin, as giving some of the earliest first-hand knowledge of China which ever reached Europe.

The geographer Ibn Hauqal (floruit circa AD 975) wrote in his preface: "I have written the latitude and longitude of the places of this earth, of all its countries, with their boundaries, and the dominions of Islam, with a careful map of each section on which I have marked numerous places, e.g. the cities, the kasbahs, the rivers, the lakes, the crops, the types of agriculture, the roads, the distances between place and place, the goods for commerce and everything else in the science of geography which can be useful to sovereigns and their ministers and interesting to all people in general."

Abu-Reihan al-Biruni, Ibn Batuta and Abu'l-Haussan are amongst other names in the history of the science of geography whose worldwide travels were accompanied by meticulous observation and painstaking notes, which are amongst the proudest achievements of science in our world to this day.

Art

Cordova Mosque is one of the finest monuments of Muslim art in Europe. Its architect and masons were local talent, who introduced a number of novelties. The Muslims excelled at mosaic, inlay, fretwork and

applique work of all types. Marvellous doors, pulpits, and ceilings are decorated in many of the ancient mosques all over the Muslim world with a lacelike design of mosaic, carved ivory and wood and plaster, and fitted pieces of carved wood interlocking with each other with consummate artistry.

Chased and engraved wood and ivory are everywhere. Thus the Altar of the Church of Saint Isidore Hispalensis (archbishop of Seville in the first years of the 7th century AD) like the carved ivory jewel-case made for Queen Isabella in the 11th century and the carved ivory box now in the Church at Bayeux of the 12th century (obviously some Crusader's loot from the East) inlaid with silver in chased gold, are examples of that art which was the glory of Eastern lands. All this delicate and minute handiwork was carried out with the crudest and roughest of tools, itself a further tribute to the skill and artistry of the makers.

Jewel-studded boxes and cases and caskets are to be seen in many places, though the best are on view in the museums of Damascus and Cairo. Well said Sa'adi: "An Eastern artist may take 40 years to make one porcelain vase: the West turns out 100 a day, all alike: the comparative worth of the two products can be easily reckoned!"

The Muslims were also past masters of the art of carved and cultured plaster work, in a style which still subsists though modern technologies are, alas, rendering the skill rarer all the time. Tenth century examples, some with enameled work also, are to be found in Andalusia. The Alhambra has 13th century masterpieces of this work. They glitter like the later Italian Majolica. The famous Alhambra flower-vase, 11/2 meters high, is unique in this line.

Conclusion of Part 2

In this part of our book we have given the briefest of sketches of some of the treasures of mind and spirit which mankind owes to the rise of Islam.

They are not stated in braggadocio but as an assessment of facts of human history. For too long they have been neglected and forgotten not merely by those who benefited from them indirectly but even also by the very descendants of their authors themselves.

Yet if mankind is to attain the power to live as one united family which is our calling and destiny, it will happen on a basis of appreciation of each other.

This adult assessment is growing. Modern scholars are now showing gratitude that the Arab General Tareq-bin-Ziyyad in AD 711 landed his troops by the mountain since called Jebel-al-Tareq (Gibraltar) after him. His Moors were unwelcome invaders at the time. It was a moment when Europe had lost most of the benefit of Roman unification and cultural advance and sunk back into the Dark Ages under the barbarian hordes overwhelming it from the North. With the Moors came in the fresh stimulus of lively minds, bringing in Arabic the best thinking of ancient Greeks and Romans, the impetus of scholarship

and learning, the desire for scientific and philosophic speculation, the aesthetic delight of artistic creation again.

Islamic universities as far apart as Baghdad and Andalusia welcomed Christian and Jewish students, many of whom profited by the instructions to be obtained nowhere else in those days. They were received with generous subventions and assistance by their Muslim hosts, who treated them as honored guests. Dynamics, Statistics, Chemistry, Physics, were among the lessons.

In his "Making of Humanity" Brilioth writes: "Modern European education in all branches stems from the Muslims' curiosity and pertinacity in investigating the secrets of nature."

If our brief summary opens the road for Westerners to the exploration of Eastern discoveries we are content; and can so proceed to Part 3 and an examination of Islam's treatment of some of the social problems which afflict every human community.

[1.](#) Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Social Contract" Book II: Chapter 6: "The Lawgiver".

[2.](#) The arid sunbaked expanses of the Islamic belt of territory which stretches from the Mauritanian Atlantic coast nearly 6,000 miles through the Soviet Muslim Republics of the Western Gobi, can support only a scant human population, while the paucity of vegetation forces a nomad migratory way of life upon livestock-owners, if they are to find pasturage. Hence our author's list of the publicly owned benefits of God's gifts: while his omission of sunlight and rain, which are natural in the thought of Westerners as free for all, are not mentioned because that belt has always too much sunshine and too little rainfall. (Translator's note.) the greed and avarice which lead to enslavement, war and imperialism.

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