# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ways of Interpretation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Characteristic Features of the Koran</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Theological Issues</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Idea of God</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Question of Freedom of the Will</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason and Revelation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prophets</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalism</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'Pillars of Islam'</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polemics</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Koran and Modern Time</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Aspects</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Issues</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Thought</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Life</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Conclusion</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Authors and Subjects</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Koranic Passages</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

This study purposes to be a continuation of and a supplement to the last chapter (Der Islamische Modernismus und seine Koranauslegung) of I. Goldziher's well-known work on Muslim Koran Interpretation (Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung, Leyden, Brill, 1920).

A continuation of Goldziher's research seemed imperative, inasmuch as another 40 years of modern Tafsir has elapsed since its publication. And the present work may be considered as a supplementary contribution in so far as it also, and even by preference, makes use of available Urdu material. I regret not to be able to cover the whole Tafsir literature of the last decenniads; particularly the commentaries of Turkish authors might have been of great value for my inquiry.

The object pursued by the expositions given of Koranic exegesis is two-fold: on the one hand they are intended to provide Western readers with unpublished information about an essential branch of Muslim scholarship. It seems to me that as a result their judgment on modern Tafsir may perhaps become more favourable than it was. At any rate such is my own experience. On the other hand, it is hoped that this survey of all sorts of explanations and inferences may to some extent further Muslim Koran exegesis itself. For it strikes the inquirer how defective and casual inter-change of thought proves to be between the commentators, both among compatriots and in the international sphere. Often views are brought to the fore, as if pronounced for the first time, whereas in fact the same had been said repeatedly before. Too little do Muslim
scholars endeavour to amend and continue arguments and findings of colleagues. When they refer to views of others, it is mostly when contending about principles and rarely because of a desire to reach a better apprehension of the Koran text. Yet, in spite of lack of co-operation, the jointly felt urge to open new ways is not only apparent, but is also on the point of producing results. Historical criticism, though still in its infancy, is going to determine where the authority of the Holy Book begins and ends. If the modernists succeed in this exacting enterprise, they surely will not have laboured in vain and will earn the gratitude of posterity.

Realizing in the end the dependence on so many persons and institutes in order to accomplish a self-appointed task, I have the pleasant duty of rendering thanks for all the indispensable assistance I received. Firstly, I gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the Netherlands Organization for Pure Research (Z.W.O.) in subsidizing a stay in London where Oriental libraries furnished important material. There I was really at home, since I prepared my thesis seven years before at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and I am still conscious of the great debt I owe my former teachers Prof. A. S. Tritton and the late Mr. A. H. Harley.

I thank Dr. P. Voorhoeve, librarian of the Leyden University, and his assistant Mr. A. J. W. Huisman for their constant readiness to help. Also I should like to express my acknowledgments to my Pakistani friends Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Begum Naṣīr al-Din, Muḥammad Bakhsh Djāwid and the authors Ghulām Ahmad Parwez and Muḥammad Ḥanāfī Khān.

They kept me informed of recent commentaries and even most generously gave me a great many books and periodicals.

Finally, I owe many thanks to Mrs. G. E. van Baaren for so conscientiously correcting the English of the present study. Also very useful were the critical remarks concerning passages not clearly worded. Still it remains ‘brushed up’ English of a Dutchman who had to express himself in a foreign language, and for this I ask the indulgence of the Anglo-Saxon readers.

Loppersum, May 1960. J.M.S.B.
ABBREVIATIONS

Bayân Bayân bi'l-Nâr (1936) by Khwâdja Ahmad al-Din.
EI Encyclopædia of Islam.
Ma'ârif Ma'ârif al-Qur'ân by Ghulám Ahmad Parwez.
MIDEO Mélanges d'Institut Dominicain d'Etudes Orientales du Caire.
MW The Muslim World.
Pâra'Am Pâra'Am ki Qur'ân Karin by Muh. Rahîm al-Din.
Q. Fi Zîdâl al-Qur'ân by Sayyid Qâbul.
Reconstruction The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam by Sir Mohammad Iqbal.
Richtungen Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung by I. Goldziher.
Salîm Salîm ke Nam by Ghulâm Ahmad Parwez.
Târdyûmân Târdyûmân al-Qur'ân by Abû 'l-Kalâm Âzâd.
WI The World of Islam.
ZDMG Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

In the transliteration ' is represented by a, and ' is by at. Thus Thaqfât
Lahore is an Urdu periodical and Thaqfât al-Hind a quarterly written in
Arabic.

I. INTRODUCTION

For believing Muslims the Koran represents unquestionably the very Word of God. It is taken for granted by the conservative 'ulamâ (Muslim doctors of law and sacred literature) just as well as by the most radical modernists. For a puritanic orthodox Christian the Bible is equally the Word of God in the true sense of the word. In practice however, the latter proves not to understand it in that precise and literal meaning in which the Muslim applies it to his view of his Holy Book. A Christian fundamentalist may leave Old Testament food regulations for what they are, and he will not have scruples about choosing a candidate for a church college by vote in stead of by lot after the example of the apostles (Acts 1:26). He may be a blue-ribbonist, despite an undeniable appreciation of wine by the Bible (cf. e.g. Judges 9:13). But this way of ignoring explicit scriptural statements cannot possibly be followed by a modern Muslim. He has to consider all Koranic sayings seriously, and the only expedient left to him is to interpret the relative crucial texts in such a way that they may in a measure become palatable to contemporary feeling and thought. So he is, for instance, forced — in contradistinction of the Christian exegete — to discuss at length the scriptural prohibition of eating swine's flesh (see Leviticus 11:7 and Sûra 2:168/173), and to discover its rational grounds.

So-called 'modern Koran interpretation', designating the attempts to adapt the text to the demands of the age, has really appeared a necessity since the death of Mohammed. Already under the reign of the four rightly directed caliphs situations arose with conditions differing from those in the time of the Prophet. Accordingly, Koranic injunctions were soon found
to require re-interpretation. And the more contact with foreign civilizations intensified through the quick expansion of Muslim dominion, the more the need of such re-interpretations was felt. Especially the resolution of the problems posed by the impact of Hellenism proved an arduous task, whose effects can be traced in commentaries of scholars like Fakhri al-Din al-Razi (d. 1209).

But none of the earlier unpleasant confrontations with ungenial cultures and philosophical systems Islam had been faced with, was to be compared to the crisis occasioned by the encounter with the enlightened and more or less secularized Europe of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. No longer could the matter be settled by a few legal adjustments or some reconciliatory theories in the speculative realm of thought. In politics the tables had been turned: Muslim rule was replaced by colonial dominion. In religiois one had no more to deal with fairly similar creeds but with directly disruptive trends hitting the heart of religion itself. And in the sphere of social life the unfeasibility of Muslim society’s mediæval structure contrasted to the active and dynamic way of life of the Westerners became painfully evident. In response to this situation, however, the ‘ulamāʾ confined themselves mainly to spasmodic efforts at maintaining the traditional way of living and thinking, and the Koran commentators serenely ignored the call of the new times.

Yet one exception has to be made. The Delhi reformer and Indian counterpart of al-Ghazâlî: Shâh Wali Allâh (1703-62) appears in his writings to be reacting positively to the changed situation, and we may regard him as a precursor of Modern Muslim Koran interpretation in the qualificative sense it is taken in this study. His time was characterized by a rapid political decay. After the death of Awrangzâb in 1707 the Moghul Empire began to break up speedily. Simultaneously the influx of Western thought soon increased. And it is in the expositions of the Delhi theologian’s views that here and there we recognize tentative endeavours to incorporate newly imported Western ideas. In the second volume of his principal work Ḥududja Allâh al-Bâlîgha he underlines the expediency of the shari’ā (sacred law) institutions, demonstrating so to say the obviously rational basis of Islamic codification. In another work: Ta’wil al-Āhâdir fi Mun‘yiq Qisāṣ al-Anbiyâ it is asserted about the punitive wonders recorded in the Koran, affecting the people who denounced the prophets as liars, that they occurred in accordance with nature’s laws, inasmuch as there were concealed material (that is natural) causes underlying them. In a third writing he states that for the actual happening of karâmât-miracles like e.g. visions, a craving for a revelation on the part of their blessed receivers was absolutely essential. In other words: ‘miracles’, granted to holy men, are said to be dependent not on causes against nature, but on the recipient’s fit psychological disposition 1.

These scattered observations, not elaborate, still remarkable enough if considered within the epoch and environment of the author, do not seem to have brought immediate repercussions to any extent. Not until the end of the nineteenth century were they re-discovered. But from then onwards Shâh Wali Allâh is loudly acclaimed in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent as the man who discerned the signs of his times. And when at present an Urdu-writing modernist is looking for arguments from Muslim lore, he weighs in with opinions of the Shâh.

It was the Mutiny, the Sepoy-revolt in 1857, which became the decisive event for the initiation of a real re-orientation of the Indian Muslims. On account of its most unfortunate direct

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1 Cf. Ḥama’ât (ed. Shâh Wali Allâh Academy, Hyderabad), 126 f.
effects on the Muslims—it completed their fear of and aversion from modern progress through the now extremely strained relations with the British—it became clear to their future leader Ahmad Khan (1817-98) that his community must rapidly give up its passive and indolent attitude, if it would not court total disaster. To this end he started a vast program of social and educational reform after European patterns. Soon, however, he also perceived that the introduction of Western manners and norms as well as the diffusion of Western knowledge necessitated a new version of Islam in the light of contemporary thought. For the Western-educated youth religion had to be expressed in terms adapted to their newly acquired way of reasoning. Otherwise Islamic faith might be rejected as being obsolete and meaningless. For the prevention of this acute danger, Ahmad Khan set himself to the study of the Koran in the firm conviction that the truth it contained would be demonstrable in the spirit of any age. A six-volume Koran commentary on the first 17 Suras was the result. Thus the year of appearance of the first part: 1880 can be rightly styled the initial date of deliberate modern Muslim Koran interpretation.

The well-known Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) might be called the Egyptian counterpart of Ahmad Khan. He too did not see the good of political agitation in the circumstances, and he similarly sought the uplift of his nation through social reform and better education. Further he also made sincere attempts to arrive at a new evaluation of Islamic principles. But unlike his Indian colleague, for that purpose he did not start with writing a tafsir (Koran commentary) but a Muslim theology, called Risāla al-Tawḥīd (1897). This is significative and betrays a different background. The Egyptian lived in religious circles where a thorough acquaintance with classic dogmatics was held a selfevident requirement for a man of knowledge. Ahmad Khan was a descendent of an aristocratic family closely connected with the Mughal court. There Persian culture and refinement was sought after. Consequently, the Indian educationist did not dispose of the proper theological equipment when he was faced with the need of a re-valuation of Islam's faith and institutions. In such a situation it is indeed easier to compose an exegetical work than a dogmatic disquisition. Conversely, an all-round theologian seeking to display familiarity with doctrinal subtleties, more readily fancies the composition of a book on religious tenets. And when in the beginning of 1898 ‘Abduh’s disciple Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā urged his master to write a tafsir besides, the latter made all sorts of objections. Apparently the proposal did not appeal to him. Finally he agreed to it, so that we also possess specimens of Koran commentary by the Egyptian reformer.

The Koranic explanations of Muḥ. ‘Abduh, continued by his pupil Muḥ. Rashīd Riḍā have had the deserved attention of Orientalists, and particularly by J. Joumier they have been exhaustively and capably analysed. It turns out that their way of exposition does not deviate considerably from the traditional one. In my opinion the most distinguishing feature of ‘Abduh’s Koran comments is his apparent desire to give moral lessons whenever the text affords an opportunity.

A similar moderate, if not conservative, stamp marks the commentaries of many other Egyptian ‘modernists’. A departure from the usual course of commenting, however, is the method followed by Ṭahta Djamhari (d. 1940). Without much exaggeration his commentary might be qualified as a manual for the general public on biology and other sciences, accompanied with practical advice and paternal admonitions addressed to the reader, and ornamented with Koranic sayings applied as a kind of headings. So, for instance, the Koranic subject “hell” affords ready occasion to describe the earth as consisting

1 See his Le Commentaire Coranique du Maṇṣīr (1954).
of a fiery globe and to mention particulars about the Etna
volcano. The prohibition, hinted at in S. 4: 119, to alter God’s
creation gives the author cause to assert that one ought to take
account of man’s innate capacities, so that a teacher e.g. should
not require of his pupils more than they are equal to. It is
obvious that such a treatment of the Holy text has nothing to
do with true interpretation. But, when we are blaming the
commentator for it, we must, to be fair, not lose sight of the
fact that in his days the Egyptians were getting information
about Western knowledge for the first time on a wider scale.
In that situation the best chances of its introduction were to
be expected, if a connection could be made with the sacred
Scriptures, so that people might become less suspicious of it.
In recent times Egypt has brought to the fore two intelligent
and independent authors who also won their spurs in the field
of Koranic research. They are Muh. Ahmad Khalaf Allah and
Muh. Kamil Husain.

Khalaf Allah found all too soon that originality is badly
appreciated in a conservative milieu. A thesis of his on the
literary composition of the Koranic tales was not accepted.
Twice he had to recast it. Happily the work, at last released
for publication under the title al-Fann al-Qasasî fi’l-Qur’ân
al-Karim (1950-51), has retained its most striking features and
its basic ideas. It abounds in penetrating observations, and in
this study numerous quotations from it will be met with.

Muhi. Kamil Husain’s chief contributions lie in the realm of
Biblical topics. Thus we possess a dramatized account of Good
Friday, in which the reactions on the events with the Jews,
1 al-Djawâhir ii, 153 ff.
2 id. iii, 81 f.
4 It is called Qurra ‘Elma (1954), and was rendered into English by
K. Cragg (City of Wrong) (1958) and into Dutch by the present writer

Romans and disciples are presented in three separate parts in
the form of long dialogues with a minimum of action. Equally
thought-provoking is a paper of his on the deep-rooted after
effects he supposes the Exodus to have had upon the Jewish
mind. For our object is of value the treatise this distinguished
physician and educationalist wrote on the Arabic eloquence of
the Koran, inserted in a collection of essays, entitled Mutanawwirât (Miscellanea). With the above-mentioned writing al-Fann
of Khalaf Allah, it indicates how rapidly at the moment Egyptian
scholarship is advancing in the field of Koranic study. The
West must come to reckon with it, and one may even presume
that within not too long a time its findings will be noticed and
discussed in the works of Western Orientalists.

The bulk of the material employed for our research is derived
from the exegetical works of three authors on the Indo-Pakistan
subcontinent, viz. Abu’l-Kalâm Âzâd, al-Mashriqî and G. A.
Parvez. It might, therefore, be appropriate to enter into some
details concerning their life and work.

Abu’l-Kalâm Âzâd (1888-1958) was born in Mecca as a son
of Indian parents who emigrated to the Holy City after the
tumultuous days of the Mutiny. In 1898 the family returned
and settled down in Calcutta. There Âzâd’s father found the
standard of the local madrassa’s too low for the proper education
of his son, and the young boy got his lessons at home from
his father, a pir (spiritual guide) by profession, and some
qualified teachers. At an early age he already appeared to possess
unusual literary gifts. Only fourteen years old he contributed
to the magazine Makkzgan. In 1912 he began publishing his own
newspaper, al-Hilâl (the crescent-moon). It caught on with the
public immediately. The editor’s style “appeared like the
language of a high-souled prophet” 1. In it fierce attacks were directed against British rule, and that perplexed the readers, in particular the Muslims who continuing to act on the advice of Ahmad Khan had got used to keep aloof from politics. It also tried to bring Muslims and Hindus closer together, and the conclusion in 1916 of the famed Lucknow Pact between Congress and Muslim League was a result to which al-Hilal must have given a considerable contribution. In 1923 Azad was elected president of the Congress, and in 1940 for the second time. From 1937 onwards he was Gandhji’s adviser in Muslim affairs. In the Independent India State he was minister for Education from 1947 till his death.

10½ Years he spent in jail! When in August 1942 he was imprisoned for the sixth time in fort Ahmadnagar, he was 53. The total amount of the five previous times was 7½ years. On this he notes laconically: “A seventh part of my life, i.e. one day in a week, I have been detained. Thus the English gave me a fine sabbath-rest”. And it was certainly not in bitter irony that he said so. From the same prison he also wrote to a friend: “Whenever I hear during my captivity that by confinement one receives the punishment of seclusion, I wonder why it should be a punishment”. Actually it was not in Azad’s nature to be a man of politics and public affairs. And he confesses furtheron: “If people open a stall in the market-place, one looks for a spot where a good many possible buyers are expected to pass. If I should open a stall, I should look for a spot where merely a few customers were to pass” 2.

In another letter written in fort Ahmadnagar Azad describes the process of his spiritual growth. Since it gives a good idea of the mental habits of the average young Asiatic intellectual, confronted with Western thought and thinking, we append it at some length. He says: “As a rule man receives his belief by tradition, and with me it was the same. Yet I could not be content with the traditional doctrines. The drink they gave could not quench my thirst. Abandoning the old paths I had to search on my own for new ways. Before my fifteenth year I already began to doubt... Firstly, I found diverse trends within Islam, and the mutually contradicting convictions and discrepant dogmas both alarmed and confounded me. Then, when I penetrated still further into the matter, I noticed that in the heart of religion itself there were points in dispute, and this brought me from uneasiness to doubt, from doubt to unbelief... Vital questions which I had seldom posed myself, arose one by one... questions, like: What is truth? Where is it? Does it actually exist? If it should exist, it ought to be one, for there cannot be more than one truth. Why, then, does one see such various ways to attain it?... Over against all those conflicting ways Science stands with the light of its unshakable and well-founded truths in hand, and in that pitiless light all those old obscure mysteries of former times and tradition, at which mankind had got accustomed to look with awe, are dimmed one by one. This path begins with doubt and mostly ends with atheism. And if one runs down it to the end, one has finally nothing left but despair... I too had to pass those stages, but I did not walk down the road to the end. My thirst refused to be satisfied with despair... It became clear to me that amidst the conflicting ways and the dense darkness of fallacies and delusive ideas a bright and safe course is still open, leading to security and a firm ground for faith... The belief I lost by searching for truth, I got back with the aid of this very searching. What had been the cause of my illness turned out to be eventually the means for recovery” 1.

1 See A. H. Alibiruni, Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India (1950), 134.

2 Ghubur Khâfir 115 and 125.

1 Ghubur Khâfir 65 f.
The insights, acquired by the conquest of doubt, concerned a) the true relation between science and religion, i.e. that it is not one of controversy but of harmonious coexistence; and b) the discovery of the actual existence of a Universal Religion, despite all the extant divergent rites and creeds. And it was for the purpose of exhibiting the brilliancy of the One Universal Truth mankind is so badly in need of, that Azād wrote his commentary Tardjumān al-Qur'ān (1930), inasmuch as the Koran is its document 1.

Universalism presumes unity of religion as well as of men themselves. A concrete realization of his belief in the essential unity of mankind Azād pursued in the field of politics and education. Thus he declared in a presidential address to the Congress in 1923: "If there comes a delay in the attainment of sva-rādī (self-rule), it will be detrimental to India, but if our unity (of Muslims and Hindus) endures, it will be detrimental to mankind as a whole". And till the last he resisted the establishment of Pakistan as a separate Muslim State. The next criticism he levelled against the current geographical instruction, speaks for itself: "When we teach a child geography, we do not start by saying that he is an inhabitant of the earth, but on the contrary we start by instilling in his mind that he is from Delhi, and Delhi is in India, and India is in Asia, and Asia is in the Eastern Hemisphere... the idea of his membership of the human species remains a mere abstraction" 2.

Muḥammad Inayat Allāh Khān, better known under his honorary name al-Mashriqī ("The Orientalist"), born in the same year as Azād, is a totally different personality. He likes to step upon the public platform and to send out open letters, addressed to the scientists all over the world — Azād shunned publicity: "I did not seek the hurry-scurry life of the politician", so he once declared, "but the politicians sought for me!" —. al-Mashriqī's impulsive mind produced flashing and far-fetched ideas, often viewing Islamic faith and institutions from a very revolutionary angle — Azād proves to be open to all sorts of trends of thought and belief but everything in moderation. Thus, e.g., for him the shari'ā is authoritative but legalism he fiercely condemns. Actually, he aims at a kind of reconciliation between the 'ulamā who should be better acquainted with modern views and standpoints, and the Westernized youth who ought not neglect what is valuable in the age-old articles of faith —. The trenchant al-Mashriqī scoffs mercilessly at his adversaries, the 'ulamā — Azād, from head to foot an aristocrat, is known for having never applied even one bad qualification to an opponent —.

As a young man, this turbulent and dynamic personality successfully studied Mathematics and Oriental Languages at the universities of the Panjab and Cambridge (England). His energies were still mainly absorbed by academic preoccupations, when in 1916 he was made Principal of the Islamic College at Peshawar. Full opportunity to unfold, however, he got when he was able to start his Khâksâr movement in 1931. To a great extent it can be fitly compared with the Nazi S.A.-organization in its first stage, viz. at the moment that Germany was still held by the Allies to be demilitarized. Its members wore a brown uniform and carried a spade, symbolizing both labour and readiness to fight. The leader himself wished to be looked upon as the benevolent dictator who, if required, could use force for the people's own good 3.

The chiming in of the Khâksâr with Hitler's semi-military

1 For more particulars about this commentary, so highly esteemed by the Urdu-reading public for the superior Koran translation it contains, see the present writer's paper A Modern Urdu Tafsîr (WF, ii, 2, 1952, 95 ff.).
2 Speeches of Maulana Azad (1956), 150.

3 For more details on al-Mashriqī and his movement see W. C. Smith, Modern Islam in India (1946), 235-245.
organization, pointed out in a paper of mine, has led to a dispute by correspondence, as al-Mashriqi categorically denies to have been dependent on German Nazism. On the contrary, he claims to have been a source of inspiration for Hitler whom he met incidentally in the National Library of Berlin in 1926. About the conversation he had with him, al-Mashriqi states in a letter to me, dated the 12th July 1955: “I was astounded when he (Hitler) told me that he knew about my Tazkirah. The news flabbergasted me... I found him very congenial and piercing. He discussed Islamic Jihad with me in details. In 1930 I sent him my Ishirtar concerning the Khaksar Movement with a picture of a spade-bearer Khaksar at the end of that book. In 1933 he started his Spade Movement”.

Notwithstanding his undisguised fascist sympathies (Hitler’s Mein Kampf was a masterpiece in his eyes), one would do our activist an injustice by bracketing him with people like Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. Being deeply concerned with the backward state of his nation, its apathy and idle idealization of the past, he is dazzled by the energy and quick results of the fascist regimes. Such a startling awakening would save India! And it seems that recent history puts him more or less in the right. Asiatic governments at present display an unmistakable preference for the euphemistically styled system of ‘conducted democracy’ in their fight against disruptive forces like corruption, provincialism and so on. So strong personalities are called for to settle matters under circumstances of emergency.

Before launching his Khaksar campaign, al-Mashriqi laid down its principles in a work whose title Tadbikra (“Warning”),

1 Cf. ibid. iii, 3-4 (1954), 187.
2 al-Mashriqi’s principal work, published two years before. In my analysis of it I characterized it as ‘A Modern Muslim Decalogue’, since in it the author draws up ten leading principles, taken from Koranic teaching, as substitutes of the well-known Islamic ‘five pillars’ (see ibid. iii, 3-4, 1954, 189 ff.).

derived from S. 74: 54, foreshadows a heavy programme of action and nation-building. With reference to S. 53: 40/39, the acknowledgment “Man shall have only that for which he exerts himself” is pronounced the most fundamental principle of tawhid (monotheism) 1. The worst of Muslim evils: shirk (polytheism) is described per definitionem as “all that which keeps you from exertion and prevents you from maintaining unity” 2.

A second book of his which is of importance for our study is called Hadith al-Qur’an, and it was committed to paper during a short detention (30 May - 20 June 1951). It attempts to demonstrate the high value the Koran sets on science for mankind’s evolution and unification. The theme itself is far from original in the context of Muslim modernity but the way the author develops it is often interesting, and must be fascinating for the followers who — though decreasing in number — still adore their master as in the high-days of the Khaksar successes.

Ghulām Ahmad Parwez, born in 1903, was a graduate of the Pandjāb university and studied Oriental Languages. He was employed as an Assistant Secretary to the Government of Pakistan, but retired to devote himself entirely to the research centre Tula‘ Islam, working under his direction. This institute in Karachi strives for a better understanding of the Koran in the light of modern thought. It got a certain notoriety on account of its denying any value to hadith (traditional sayings ascribed to Mohammed and his companions) for Koran interpretation.

In our opinion Parwez’ scholarly work has not arrested the attention it deserves. This applies in particular to his four volume study Ma‘ārif al-Qur’an (1941-49). The work is not a Koran commentary in the traditional form, closely following the given arrangement of the verses and sūra’s, but it

1 Tadbikra ii, 111.
2 Tadbikra i, 72.
may best be compared with what is named in Christian terminology a ‘Biblical Theology’, giving an evaluation of basic notions in the Scriptures. The author purposely chose this systematic grouping of Koranic material, as he had the Western-educated youth in view for whom neither the Koran as such nor a verse by verse interpretation of it offered any affinity to their mind and interest. By means of this comparatively new framework he hoped to reveal to them surprising coherences of thought as well as illuminating and imaginative ideas from the storehouse of Koranic meditation.

This ‘Koranic Theology’ begins with the doctrine of God. After some preliminary remarks on the universal apprehension (ikhsās) of the existence of a Divine Being: Ilāh, culminating in the only true worship of Allah, follows a detailed and careful treatment of the divine attributes. Successively one is instructed about the Koranic view of God’s creative power, providence, grace, wrath, knowledge, wisdom, dominion, will and remaining attributes, mentioned in Holy Writ. Part ii starts with the doctrine of man, his relation to Iblis and the angels (= the chapter De Libero Arbitrio of classic Muslim theology). After the elucidation of the ethical sides of human existence Parwez deals with man’s connections with the other world. Thus we are told of Revelation and Prophecy. Discussion of the latter article of faith results in an appreciation of the Koranic prophets. Part iii continues and concludes the review of divine messengers. Part iv gives a survey of the main non-Muslim religions (Judaism, Christianity, Zarathustrism, Hinduism, Chinese and Japanese religions) which is followed by a kind of biography of Mohammed, based on Koranic texts. Then the author finds opportunity to pass under review dominant features and salient questions, arising in the Prophet’s life, like dhīhād (holy war), slavery, organization of his community, miracles, the mi’rāj (ascension of Mohammed), his domestic life and the ḥadīth (pilgrimage). What constitutes an essential part of every Muslim theology: the Eschatology (doctrine of the final issue of things), is lacking in these dogmatics. This is a highly typical trait of Muslim modernity. Instead of it comes as closing chapter — and that is equally significant — an excursus on the New World, to be brought about by the revolutionary views of the Koran. So the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ is not to be regarded as a divine surprise at the end of time, but it is a mission to men, capable of realization if only the Koranic principles are carried out in full.

Parwez’ qualities are not to be sought in the production of brilliant exposés nor in the exhibition of a great literary proficiency. He is, however, a gifted teacher and a paternal friend for the drifting young people who are in need of a religious anchorage. In general he shows himself the happy possessor of a sound and independent judgment on the subjects he is treating and of a clear insight into the situation of the moment. Thus it is to be expected that his influence will become increasingly stronger.

In the next chapters II - V the only criterion applied to the available Muslim elucidations of and reflections about the Koran is, whether in them the impact with Western Weltanschauung and way of living is somehow recognizable. So there is no doctrinal point of issue from which we set out, and authors of the Ahmadiyya Movement, e.g., are not excluded from our research, if they prove to be desirous of giving explanations attuned to the spirit of the age. Also no formal limits are kept to, i.e. we did not stop at the Koran commentaries proper or works on Koranic items, but wherever in a periodical, essay, or book a usable example or good illustration occurred of the manner in which the Koran is treated in view of contemporary thought and life, it is reproduced in this study.
II.ways of interpretation

In the writings of the modern Koran expositors one meets sundry objections against the classic interpreters, serving as favoured grounds of justification for adding one more commentary to the hundreds existing. First and foremost we find the postulate of the Reformation that everybody is allowed to reflect on the purports of the Holy Book. Koran interpretation is not the monopoly of imāms and mudīshids (religious leaders and highest authorities in jurisprudence) 1.

H.A.R. Gibb 2 others have already noticed the modernists’ repugnance against the traditional usage of Isrā‘i‘līyya‘t (Jewish legends) when expounding Koranic tales. In the same way, cultural influence of Byzantium and Iran in the interpretations applied is identified and rejected. 3 And Muṣ. Aslm Djařaš-pūrī is surely speaking in the name of nearly all of them, when he states: “The very first principle for explaining the Koran intelligibly is that the elucidation is done with the Koran itself; for God accepts full responsibility for the interpretation: “Further, it is for Us to make it clear”. 4

Whether, however, beside other Koran passages which may shed more light upon an obscure text, one is also entitled to utilize explanatory traditions, is a moot question. Āzād, who declares that in writing his commentary the old as well as the modern modes of research and thought have been employed, does not set aside hadīth for Koran interpretation. Still he con-

1 Comment made by Āzād on the rhetorical question of S. 4: 84/82, “Do they not consider the Koran?” (Tārījumān i, 381).
2 Modern Trends in Islam (1947), 73.
3 See WI ii, 2, (1952), 96.
4 S. 75: 19. See Preface to Mā‘ārif i.

mines himself chiefly to traditions ascribed to Ibn ‘Abbās and some other tabī‘in (the Muslim doctors who followed the immediate companions of Mohammed), and he is well aware of the fact that even a ‘sound’ tradition remains a testimony of fallible men. 5 But in the opinion of quite a lot of modernists of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent elucidations and historic details stemming from tradition, are to be regarded purely as human fancies. And according to Ahmād Khān the Koran itself hints at the disparity of man-made stories and divinely communicated intelligence. In Sūra 18 at first the account of the āṣāb al-kahf (Fellows of the Cave) is given in a concise form. Then in verse 12/13 there is announced: “We will narrate to you their account in truth (bī‘l-haqiq)” “The word bī‘l-haqiq”, so it is concluded, “is a clear indication that the preceding report was not the story God wanted to tell, but the one publicly known, beautified with miracles, and that after it the true course of events, without miracles, would be communicated” 6.

The best documented combating of tafsīr-traditions has been supplied by Parwez. 7 In the two volume work Maqām Ḥadīth (1953) which treats this matter at great length, we find among other things a confutation of the demonstrative force of Koran-texts, adduced by the traditionists as commending faith in Ḥadīth:

a) it is not right to deem hikma in S. 2: 123/129 4 an equivalent of the Prophetic traditions 8. Ḥikma is a common term denoting ‘wisdom’ and cannot have that special sense. One reads in S. 31: 11/12, “We granted hikma to Luqmān”. Does that mean

1 Tārījumān ii, 103, 434, 500.
2 Tārījum fi Qīsā Aṣāb al-Kahf wa‘l-Raqīm (1889), 32.
3 See the present writer’s art. Pakistani Views of Hadīth in WI v, 3-4 (1958), 219.
4 “Our Lord! send from among themselves a messenger who may teach them the Book and the Ḥikma”.
5 See also I. Goldziher in ZDMG li (1907), 869 f.
that Luqman received traditions delivered by Mohammed, the
Seal of prophets?

b) authority of prophetic sayings is also derived from S. 59: 7b, “What the messenger has given you, take; what he has refused you, refuse”. This passage, however, the author rightly remarks, does not relate to general pronouncements of Mohammed. It bears merely upon a distribution of spoils on a specific occasion. Moreover, дав (to give) cannot mean ‘to command’ or ‘to say’;
c) from S. 53: 3 the traditionists draw the inference that whatever came from the blessed tongue, was revelation. This is nonsense, for it cannot be claimed that e.g. all that the Prophet talked over in the domestic circle would be revelation;
d) the passages, in which God orders obedience to the Prophet, refer to the imāma, i.e. the rule of the umma which after the Prophet’s death fell to the khālifs and which is at present the duty of a central government. In other words, so Parwez summarizes, nowhere in the Koran are we told to put an equally firm belief in Koran and Hadith.

Further, one of his objections against those traditions is that texts of the Koran are restricted to particular meanings, whereas our insight into the Holy Book grows with the centuries. Take, for instance, the case of God’s rescue of the Pharaoh’s corpse at the time of Moses, recorded in S. 10: 92. Nowadays, this has been found to refer to the discovery of the mummy of Ramses II.

1 Mühl, Abū Zaid directs attention to S. 4: 68/65 stating, so he deduces, that Islam postulates people’s approval (al-ridda) of decisions made by the Prophet (al-Ḥidaya wa’l-Irfān ft Tafsir al-Qur’ān bi’l-Qur’ān 69). For particulars about this confiscated commentary see A. Jeffery in MIF, 1932, 78ff. and Der Islam, xx, 301-8.

2 Nor speaks he from mere impulse. It is but an inspiration inspired!"

3 E.g. S. 24: 53/54.

4 Maqām Hadith i, 150 ff.

5 Maqām Hadith i, 272.

In his book on Koranic ideas Parwez also devotes attention to this matter. There he sets forth: “... from the Koran it follows obviously that not every word of the Prophet was revelation. If all that he spoke were revelation, what could it mean when in the Koran decisions of his are criticized and it is said to him: “Why did you act like that?”... If every word of his were revelation, why did he look for revelations regarding items for which no rule had yet been given in the Koran...? In the beginning, at the salāt (prayer) he turned his face to Jerusalem, but in his heart there lived a strong desire that God would indicate the Kaaba as qibla (point of direction for prayer). To this he himself did not resolve, but the Koran tells us that he turned his face heavenward for it, craving for a divine sanction (S. 2: 139/144)”.

Some pages furtheron Parwez argues that, if one values every word and deed of the Prophet as to-be-obeyed-till-Resurrection, the tradition-collections are brought to the level of revelation.

By Ahmad Khān the ancient commentators are also reproached with too great a dependence on the existing lexical works. In his view it always remains possible “that a certain

1 See S. 9: 43 and S. 17: 76/74.

2 Ma’rīf iv, 688 f.

3 Id. iv, 693. Our extended reproduction of Parwez’exposé on hadith, however, is not meant to convey that at the moment such represents the general feeling in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Mah. Hanif Nadawi who is definitely not a man of obsolete ideas, considers that by merely crediting a prophet with the task of delivering divine messages one takes too narrow and mechanical a view of revelation. The prophet has to be an educator as well an ameliorator of human conditions. One ought to note how the Koran when speaking of previous prophets makes mention not only of their tenets but also of the situation of the peoples to whom they were sent. And from S. 4: 67/64 which says that every messenger must be obeyed ‘with God’s permission’ (bi’dhni ‘līsab) it is deduced that the prophets are consequently divine deputies (ma’dhūn) whose lead is to be followed (Thaqāfāt Labors, June 1959, 44 ff.).
word in the Qur'an is used in a way or in a sense not registered in lexical works or literature. A grievance, ventilated by Khalaf Allâh, is that sometimes the literal sense of the words has been too persistently adhered to, without regard to the peculiar composition of the texts and the psychological background of the terminology. Thus al-Kashshâf, the famous commentary of Zamakhshari (1075-1144) analyses the three terms for serpent al-djân, al-thu'bân and al-hayya which occur in the Moses narratives, and harmonizes the available material in this way that at first there would have been a little snake (al-hayya) which gradually developed into a bigger one (al-thu'bân). And al-djân is the biggest of the three! But the point is this, that in these tales the term al-djân is used only when it is intended to convey the terror inspired by it. Hence we read after al-djân (in the story of the moving staff): "he turned back fleeing" (S. 27: 10). The terms hayya and thu'bân, however, are used when there is no need to depict an effect of fright.

A second objection Khalaf Allâh brings to the fore pertains to the historicity so dear to former commentators. A criterion for authenticity of the prophets and reliability of the Koran was sought in the correctness of that which was recorded. So events reported twice or more times were chiefly studied with a view to tracking down all kinds of details in a story. And it was overlooked that according to the Koran true legitimation of a prophet does not lie in his knowledge of empiric facts, but in acquaintance with the unseen world. See S. 3: 39/44 which closes a series of accounts with the statement: "That belongs to information of the unseen world which We reveal to you."

A third gravamen of this author concerns theoretic speculations in which the classics, and in particular Fâhîr al-Dîn al-Râzî, often indulge themselves. E.g. S. 36: 1-9/10 induces them to long and unprofitable discussions on al-qâdâ wa'l-qadar (fate and destiny). That is certainly not the intention of the Koran in this passage.

Muslim Modernism has been greatly impressed by the power of reason, and kept on being fascinated by it, even when in Europe rationalism had long given place to vitalism and existentialism. In consequence, one of the main purposes of modern Koran commenting is to strip the text of legendary traits and primitive notions.

To this end Koranic tales are 'reconstructed'. So 'Abd al-Ḥakîm notes at S. 7: 170/171 (communicating that God shook the Sinai-mountain over the head of the Israelites): "Rafa'nâ fawqakum (in the parallel passage S. 2: 60/63) does not necessarily signify that the mountain was torn up by the roots and placed above their heads, neither . . . nataqna il-djabala (in this place) that it was suspended from the air. People who

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1 Tr. by Mub. Dâ'dâd Rahbar in MW, Oct. 1956, 327. It is complained by Mub. Abû Zaid that many lexica attribute to Koran words the same sense as the writings of fiqh-scholars do, so that they receive a meaning different from that meant by the Koran (see Introduction al-Hikâyê). In this connection it might be of interest to mention that the new Wörterbuch der klassischen Arabischen Sprache of A. Fischer, F. Noldeke and C. Reckendorf has been announced as "unabhängig von den Werken der arabischen National-lexicographen aus den Quellen direkt erarbeitet".

2 Or, as the author observes on another page (p. 269), this is styled by modern psychology "the suggestive power and psychic effect words can possess".

3 al-Fann 7 f.

4 Baljoun, Koran Interpretation
have rambled in mountainous areas know very well that sometimes stone-blocks jut out so far that they are, so to speak, a canopy, and create the impression on those below of being about to fall upon their heads”¹. Parwez considers that min ‘indī‘l-lābi in S. 3: 32/37 need not mean that the food for Mary came directly from God without secondary means, since worshippers of God frequently apply the same expression to matters gained by secondary means. Hence people brought provisions by way of kindness of their own accord, as is done nowadays for cloisters².

Primitive notions might be taken as symbolic figures: “At the time Dhu ‘l-Qarnain reached a point in the West where civilization ended, it seemed to him as if the sun was setting in a well¹, though it did not happen in reality”³.

Then, allusions to magic are not to be expected in the Holy Book. The to-be-avoided evil of witchcraft, knowing as blowing on knots and indicated in S. 113: 4, is said to refer “either to women⁵ who bewitch by their glances, words, and weaken someone’s mind and strength by their coquetry and amorous playfulness, withdrawing him from his duties and work, or to desires and pleasures on account of which the mind and soul of man are injured and cause his eventual ruin”⁶. When in S. 12: 67 the avoidance of the evil eye is hinted at (because the sons of Jacob are recommended by their father to enter the city in Egypt not by the same, but by different gates), then ‘Abd al-Hakim suggests three rational grounds for the advice: “1) Fear of being mistaken for spies⁴; 2) the consideration that, if they were taken for one family, they would receive only one camel-load of grain; 3) apprehension of attracting the attention of thieves and street-robbers, if seen all together”².

Fable-motives, to be found in S. 27: 17-20, are eliminated by Parwez as follows: “By fair (birds) are meant either a kind of doves serving for war-purposes, or (figuratively) swift horses (i.e. an army with cavalry), or a clan (called) Tā‘ir”³. About the budhūd-bird we are informed: “In that time people might be named after birds and animals, as in the Tora an Edomite of royal blood was given the name of Hadad (1 Kings 11: 14)”⁴.

Lastly, a favourite method of de-mythologizing is the recourse to lexicographical artifices. So by a cunning application of a secondary meaning of radjm (stoning), to wit ‘prediction’, S. 67: 5 ḫ⁵ is said to contain a threat against astrologers (= the ‘satans’ recorded in that verse), and the interpretation runs: “… some swindlers among the astrologers claim that they can prophesy the future on account of their knowledge of stars (= the ‘lamps’ mentioned)… and those astrologers mislead men with their conjectures and phantasies; and through their deceit and agitation they resemble devils”⁶.

¹ For this ‘Āṣid refers to Gen. 42: 9 (Tarjumān ii, 237).
² ‘Abd al-H. 678. For a fourth suggestion, see Muḥ. Rashīd Ridā in Taṣfīr Sūrat Yūsuf (1936), 92: “… his (Jacob’s) intention was to enable them to see the impression (x.r. of a glad surprise) each of them would make upon him (Joseph) separately”.
³ Mu‘ārif iii, 413. Namīl (ant) is said to be a name of a clan (p. 41+).³
⁴ id. iii, 413. Similar hypotheses have been made before by Ahmad Khān’s disciple Chirāgh ‘Alī: see Taḥdīb al-’Aḥkām (ed. Faḍl al-Dīn), iii, 172.
⁵ “And We have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps and We have set them to pelt the devils with”.

¹ ‘Abd al-H. 91. Cf. also the explanation of Ahmad al-Dīn: “The Sinai was (at that time) a volcano… an erupting volcano (with accompanying earthquakes) had the effect that people, terrified, thought it coming down upon them” (Hayāt 203).
² Mu‘ārif iii, 489.
³ S. 18: 84/86.
⁴ Ahmad Khān, Iṣāla al-Qhain ‘an Dhi ‘l-Qarnain (1890), 17.
⁵ Already surmised by Zamaksharī (see I. Goldziher, Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung (1920), 142)
⁶ Pāra ‘An 205.
Besides the above-mentioned consistent elimination of all that is supernatural in Koranic narrative we meet amongst more moderate modernists the attempt to minimize as much as possible miraculous elements of the story. When in S. 18: 62/63 it is told that the fish of Moses and his servant took its way in the sea ‘adjahan (‘in a wondrous sort’), then this ‘adjahan is explained by Muh. ‘Abduh’s son ‘Ali Fikrā as: “so that the prophet of God was astonished at it”, an astonishment quite understandable, as he and his servant “had not paid attention to the fish they carried in a basket, so that it had been able to dive away into the sea” 1. On account of the words of Jacob in S. 12: 94, “I find the smell of Joseph”, Muh. Rashid Riḍā observes that, though wonders need not be strange to people of our blessed generation, here we are simply told of Jacob’s perceiving the smell of Joseph on his shirt. Not a word about an odour, originating from paradise 2. The odour of his shirt was nothing but the normal smell of his body 3. The request of the apostles that Jesus should bring down a tray from heaven (S. 5: 112) is interpreted by ʿAzād like this: The apostles had food with them, but a tray was not available. Because of the inconvenience — not out of craving for miracles! — the request for a divine intervention was made (but after all not acceded to). And the author paraphrases the passage: “(And look) when the apostles said: O Jesus, son of Mary! Is your Lord able to send down to us a tray? (i.e. to make a divine provision from heaven for our food), Jesus said: Fear God (and do not give such orders), if you are believing. They said: (By this no test of divine power is meant; but) we want (having obtained food) to eat therewith” 4).

Religious ideas of a more doctrinal nature can also be rationalized. The concept of the Love of God endures a rather intellectualistic treatment from Ṭaṭāwī Dāwārī when he comments on S. 2: 160/165: “Do not see how the blind have no notion of beauty of form, the deaf do not know beauty of music, since they cannot conceive of it. Love is based on knowledge; ‘unknown, unloved’... and who finds the truth of God’s being distinguished for beauty, power, knowledge and nobility..., comes passionately to love His beauty, knowledge, power and nobility... Upright sufī’s are content with a partial love of God... they fail in stimulating their disciples to prepare for study of Western and Oriental learning” 5.

Only a poor bit of belief in the unseen is left over, when Parwez — dealing with the problem how to bring the Koranic demand of belief in the unseen into harmony with the Koranic premise of belief’s rationality (cf. S. 12: 108 ʿalā baṣṭarātun) — states that for the enforcement of the Koran’s social system firstly human faith ‘without having seen’ is needful, simply because, if its feasibility is to be proved, it has to be put into practice first. Such faith is called imān bi’l-ghaibī. Since results did appear after its coming into operation, belief in the truth of this system will be required. That will be belief on rational grounds, acquired by a pragmatic test. Thus in the end one gets a polity tried on its merits 6.

These instances, however, ought not to prompt the thought that by the modernists all religious ideas are deprived of their very content. It is the same Parwez of the rationalization just quoted who also declares that if in heavy case a materialist has

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1. al-Qurān yahūd‘al-sulām wa-l-irfān (1948), ii, 305 f.
2. The commentators generally suppose it to be the same garment with which Gabriel is said to have invested him in the well, and which was imbued with the scent of paradise.
3. Tafsīr Sūra Yānīf, 120.
4. al-Djāwābī i, 161 ff.
6. Tarjumān i, 437.
come to the end of his tether, a believer still has resort to prayer. And in another place he shows the possible result prayer might have on the course of events. For this one should take notice both of the ‘addition’ God can make to His creation (see S. 35:1) and the favourable psychological effect it can produce on the prayer himself: through it he comes to see his condition in another light and learns e.g. to recognize the relativity of things. A purely religious tone is heard in Sayyid Qutb’s note on S. 4: 130/131. “Taqwā”, he says, is that very specific notion of God’s paternal care and of His being closer by than man is to himself”. The elucidation of worship (‘Ibāda) by Muh. ʿAbduh testifies to a like pious mind: “It refers to complete surrender springing from a deep consciousness of the Worshipped One, without knowing the origin of that sense. And faith in His rule is present without knowing its form or essence. The only thing one knows of, is being surrounded by it”. S. 77: 4. 4 gives ʿAḍād occasion to a mystical meditation on rūḥ (spirit) and he claims: Adam was not yet in possession of the rūḥ. This was granted for the first time to Noah. Notice the pluralis majestatis in S. 7: 57/59, “We (anu) did send Noah...” But afterwards the rūḥ-energy gradually waned and even disappeared. Through the Koran, however, God infused new life into the dead rūḥ. And Khalīfa ʿAḥd

al-Ḥakim emphasizes that belief as such never ends being faith in the mystery (tinān bi-l-ghaib), because God’s greatness is so immense (see S. 31: 26/27) that in spite of all revelation committed “no mystical or prophet can claim to know all there is to know about the ghaib”).

Next, Western influence is found again in the application of modern psychology. Thus it might have been written by a Westerner, when we read in the study of Khalaf Allāh that the success of the new message was undoubtedly also owing to the deplorable state of religion in Mohammed’s days. “And possibly”, the author continues, “that is indicated by the Koran, when it describes the mission of the Arabian prophet as coming in a time of cessation of messengers (S. 5: 22/19 ‘alā fatratin mi-nal-rusūlīn’). In a similar context the Jews felt the desire, formulated in S. 20: 134, “O our Lord! If only You had sent to us a messenger”. A psychological interpretation — to take another example — is given to the angelic exclamation towards God: “How is it that You will place therein one (Adam) who shall do evil therein and shed blood? We celebrate Your praise and hallow You” (S. 2: 28/30). According to Muh. ʿAbduh ʿHidjāzī this should not be apprehended as a critical remark regarding man. It is purely envy which made the angels say so. They, and not men, were to be regarded as number one. Occasionally the psychological explanation is an apt means of de-supranaturalizing the text. On the legend, recorded in S. 2: 261/259, Sayyid Qutb comments that “sensations, sus-

1 Mašūrif i, 387.
2 ʿAbduh ʿAḥd 56.
3 “The angels and the spirit descend therein (i.e. the night of qadr) (to the earth), by the permission of their Lord, with a view to every dispensation”.
4 ʿAḍād perceives a difference of meaning in God’s use of anī (I) and anū (We). The singular would merely be employed for a creation of minor importance; the plural, however, would point out an important action of His. Thus in the case at issue the gift of rūḥ must be understood! 6
5 ʿAbduh ʿAḥd 61 ff.
6 Tkājah Lahorah (June-July 1960), 16f.
7 al-Fānn 95 ff.
8 The usual interpretation.
10 “Or like him who passed by a town which had been laid in ruins; he said: How will God revive this after its death? And God made him die for a hundred years, and then raised him to life. He said: How long have you waited? He said: I have waited a day or a part of a day. He
picians and idées fixes are at times so powerful that — though
no rational proof is present — their being true is not in the
least doubted.* * In other words, in the tale related the unnamed
man was not restored to life after a hundred years by a miracle,
but the man, subject to a vehement suggestion, was under the
impression that a hundred years had lapsed.

Once or twice symbolic meanings are taken from the text.
A fine example of it is the exegesis of S. 95:1-3 2 by Muh.
Rahim al-Din. He thinks *tin* (fig) to stand for Mount Sinai
or Mount Djûdî, where Noah after the Flood thanked his Lord;
*zaitûn* (olive) would point at Zaita or Syria, where Jesus
was active; the Mount Sinai is identified with the Sinai of
Moses, and the *balad amin* (safe region) is surely the ground of
Mecca. Thus the passage would hint at “the four main places
where religious and social reforms were started and carried through” 3.
In S. 2: 244/243 4), as is demonstrated by some of our commen-
tators, one must not look for a historic account. Its words
bear a metaphoric meaning and wish to express: Cautiousness
is of no avail, fear does not offer protection and flight does
not save life, for the divine dictum; “Die” indicates the inescapable
fate of the faint-hearted. On the other hand God’s restoring
to life gives us to understand that He may grant the timid a

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1 Q. iii, 17. See also `Abd al-Hakim who thinks of a vision and a vis-
ionary death of a hundred years (`Abd al-H., 214 f.).
2 “By the fig and by the olive; By Mount Sinim; And by this safe region”.
3 Pâra `Am 123 f. Cf. also Muh. “All’s notes in his English Translation
and Commentary of the Holy Qur’an (1920), 1204 f.
4 “Have you not considered those who left their homes by thousands,
for fear of death? Then God said to them: Die — after that He quickened
them again”.

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spirit of courage and firmness through which the enemy is
defeated. 1. Tanâwi Djawhari, always fond of romanticizing,
finds the course of Muslim history reflected in S. 2: 256/255-
262/260. He says: “Three wonderful developments of Tawhid
(monotheism) emerge. It begins with the *âya al-kursi* 2... 
secondly, there is the debate between Abraham and Nimrod,
and in the third place the narrative of Ezra and his ass, of
Abraham and his birds. At first there is the glorification and
doxology of God, the account of His majesty, beauty and
wisdom. His marvellous works in heaven and earth; this goes
best with the time at the outset and with the first (Muslim)
generation... The second resembles the period when quarrels
arose about Tawhid; opposing parties came into being, as there
was Mu‘ta’azilism, Sunni and Shi‘a. And the third refers to the
future of the glorious Nation, when studies shall be made of
the wondrous creation, as Ezra was said to observe his ass, the
form of its flesh, bones, bowels, kidneys, throat and other
particularities of the animal and as Abraham was told to take
cognizance of birds, and he anatomized them... This is the
future of Islam, and by God, great philosophers and scientists
will come to the fore among them (the Muslims), from other
peoples they will inherit knowledge” 3.

Incidentally a commentator may reveal himself as a moralist,
associating the Koran-text with vices and abuses of his day.
From Moses’ sarcastic advice to the sulking Israelites in the
desert: “Get down into Egypt, so you will have what you ask
for” (S. 2: 58/61), Tanâwi al-Djawhari destils the lesson that
luxury and refinement weaken a nation, while simplicity and
nomadism strengthen it (see the success of the Huns who

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1 Cf. Q. ii, 87 f. and Ma‘ârif i, 174.
2 S. 2: 256/255, the renowned verse, containing Muslim belief in a
nutshell.
3 al-Djawâhir i, 234.
overran Rome, and of the Arabs who conquered Persia), and he subjoins the counsel not to make overmuch use of tobacco, wine, tea and cocoa, all disgraceful things of civilization. 1 And in another place — when commenting S. 7: 29/31, "surely He does not love the extravagant" — the same author sets the pompous festivities of Yusuf, sultan of Morocco, on the occasion of the wedding of two of his children against the simplicity of the marriage-ceremony of the Belgian prince Leopold and the Swedish princess Astrid 2. From the first sūra Āḥmad al-Dīn deduces the moralities: "There are seven evils, causing man to err, to wit despondency, greed, avarice, indolence, self-conceit, superstitiousness and insurrection. In sūra al-Ḥamd (S. 1) one finds seven curing verses... If someone starts work with the recitation of bi‘ṣmī ‘llāhī ‘l-rahmānī ‘l-rahīmī 3, can he then be depressed by despondency? If he says: "Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds" 4, i.e. understands that in God all perfections are present, while setting everything, making provision for everything and granting everything from His repositories, can there then exist any reason for greed? etc. 5. Āzād, being an advocate of a joint India for both Hindus and Muslims, looking for a plea to stop useless religious quarrels takes up the retort of Moses to the debate-inviting question of the Pharaoh concerning different cults of former generations, stating: "the knowledge thereof is with my Lord in a book" 6. The exegete Ābd al-Ḥakīm, a former medical student, deems concern for hygiene and sanitation an inference implied in the words: "Plunge not yourselves into perdition with your own hands" 1 (S. 2: 191/195) 2. Muḥ. ‘Abdūh does not want to decide whether ‘aṣr in S. 103: 1 ought to be taken as standing for ‘time’ or for ‘afternoon’. But if it has the first sense, it contains a divine criticism of people who always complain of ‘the times’, and credit all the good things to the past 3.

Further, attention might also be called to some ingenious elucidations of intriguing scenes from the lives of the Aṣḥāb al-Kahf and of Dhu 'l-Qarnain, described in the eighteenth sūra. In a monograph on the Aṣḥāb al-Kahf 4 Ahmad Khan declares against the traditional explanation that the Christian youths, after being locked in a cave, sank into a miraculous sleep for centuries without dying: They really died, and "the true facts of the case are that their bodies, lying in a spot where no air could penetrate, mummified so that from a peep-hole they seemed living bodies without any damage. Therefore, people on seeing them thought...they were sleeping" 5. Āzād comes to nearly congruent conclusions. In his view ayyāq and ruqād in verse 17/18 6 do not mean waking and sleeping, but being alive and dead. Here it refers to Christian hermits who were absorbed in devotional acts to such an extent that death overtook them, while still in postures of worship. And their constantly swinging to and fro was caused by cross-ventilation in the cave

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1 Iṣrā, by not joining the Holy War.
2 Ābd al-H. 172 ff.
3 Tafsīr Sūra al-‘Alā‘, 3rd ed. (1926), 7 ff.
4 The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. A.K. suggests they might have been followers of Paul of Samosata, the contemporary Patriarch of Antioch (260-272) whose Christology was of the Adoptionist type (insistence on the genuine humanity of Jesus) (Tarjīm fī Li‘lta ‘Aṣḥāb al-Kahf wa-l-Qarnain 10 ff.)
5 Tarjīm 18.
6 “And you would have judged them ayyāq, while they were ruqād and We turned them about to the right and to the left.”
which was open from both sides. Owing to the fresh breeze
the corpses were not yet in a state of decomposition. For all
that it must have been a weird scene, so that "if you peeped
(into the cave) at them, you would turn back from them in
flight, being filled with awe of them" (verse 17/18) 1.

When treating the Dhu 'l-Qarnain-story, Āzād begins by
setting forth that it follows from verse 82/83 2 that the hero's
epithet was familiar to the Jews, being an expression used by
the questioners. Then, it must have been a righteous (see verse
86/87) and godly (see verses 87/88, 94/95 and 97 f./98 f.) sover-
eign. In other words, he cannot represent Alexander the
Great 3: "That man was neither godly, nor righteous, nor
generous towards subjected nations; moreover, he did not
build a wall". Further, the author points to the vision of
Daniel 8 with the two-horned ram, and notes: "This vision
held for the Israelites the happy announcement of a new age of
freedom and welfare coincident with the appearance of a
two-horned (Dhu 'l-Qarnain) king, that is to say: the king of
Persia was on the point of making his successful attack on
Babylon... Accordingly, Cyrus appeared a few years later!
He united the Median and Persian empires... Since in that
vision those empires are compared with two horns 4, one should
not be surprised at finding among the Jews the Persian Em-
peror visualized with two horns... However, it is (taken by
itself) a hypothesis only... But a discovery in 1838 5, of which

1 Tardjumān ii, 396 ff.
2 "And they (the Jews) will ask you about Dhu 'l-Qarnain".
3 As is usually assumed.
4 Cf. Daniel 8: 20.
5 Viz. a stone statue of a figure with spread eagleswings and two horns
of a ram on its head, found at the ruins of Pasargadae. Āzād refers to
Dieulafoy who indeed holds it to be a statute of Cyrus (see his L' art antique
de la Perse (1884), i, 34 f.) Cf. also C. Huart et L. Delaporte, L'Iran Antique
(1952), 302.

the results have come to the public much later, supplies this
hypothesis with a firm basis; thus ultimately it became certain
that Cyrus had the epithet Dhu 'l-Qarnain" 1. The campaigns
of Dhu 'l-Qarnain to "the setting of the sun" (verse 84/86)
and "the rising of the sun" (verse 89/90) Āzād interprets as
expeditions made "in western and eastern direction", referring
to Zach. 8: 7, "See, I deliver my people from the land of the
rising and from that of the setting of the sun" 2. Verse 84/86
would touch upon Cyrus' campaign to the West, his conquest
of Asia Minor and his defeating Croesus, king of the Lydians.
In the neighbourhood of Sardes he reached the Aegean Sea
and ashore met with miry water 3. Verse 89/90 would relate to
eastern nomad tribes of the Bactrians and the Sacae who,
according to Ctesias and Herodotus, were overpowered next
by the armies of Cyrus. Verse 92/93 would bear upon a northern
campaign, during which a mountainpass in the Caucasus was
gained. The people who complained of the Mongolian tribes
Yādjudj and Mādjudj were either Caucasians or the inhabitants
of Kulja 4. The wall, mentioned in verse 93/94, is that of the
Darial Pass, to be found between Vladi Kavkaz and Tiflis 5.

We want to close this chapter with some instances of expositions
which bear a remarkable resemblance to results of Western
scholarship, nevertheless attained independently of each other.

As motive of the interdiction to employ the apparently
ambiguous term raṣīnā ("look at us" in S. 2: 98/104), 'Abd
al-Ḥakim advances the supposition that it might have been

1 Tardjumān ii, 399 ff.
2 It is translated by E. Sellin as "aus dem Ostlande und aus dem West-
lande" (Das Zwolfprophetenbuch, 1930, ii, 530).
3 In the original: "he found it (the sun) to set in a miry spring".
4 One of the circuits of the Chinese province of Sinkiang.
5 Tardjumān ii, 405 ff.
given a mocking and denigrating signification by changing its pronunciation into rá'yinā, meaning "our shepherd".

In his treatise on Dhū ḫ-Qarnayn, Ahmad Khān concludes: "It is beyond doubt that the wall, recorded in the Koran, is the same ringwall which was built around China and was thrown up by the Chinese Emperor Chi Wang Ti in 240-235 B.C.".

Parwez compares Mohammed's way of acting in Mecca and Medina with the activities of an architect. When constructing a building, he is engaged in it from the first blueprint plan until the last stroke of the masons' adze. No division is to be made in it! One cannot assert that the architect finishes a building only by means of some ideas or a few draughts.

The cherished view of the modernists that Islam is the universal religion from the beginning of the world agrees approximately with G. Widengren's inference from Koranic thought: "... conceivably all the Apostles were sent out with the heavenly message written in al-kitāb. The congregations founded by the Apostles are said to be ahl al-kitāb, the people (in possession)

1 Compare D. Künstlinger in BOAS v, 877 ff. who observes that according to the views of the Arabs it is almost a blasphemy to describe God as a shepherd. Cf. also the plausible assumption of Sayyid Quṭb who considers it a part of a process of increasing differentiation (ikhtilāf) from the Jews, finding its close in the alteration of the qiblah (Q. 2:192).
2 S. 18: 92/93.
3 Izqī al-Gham 'u Dhi ḫ-Qarnayn 13. Compare M. J. de Goeje in De Muur van Gog en Magg (1888) arguing that the legend of S. 18: 82 ff. must have originated from the foundation of the great wall of Northern China (p. 11).
4 Ma'ārif iv, 339. Cf. H. A. R. Gibb's thesis that Mohammed's proceeding in Medina is to be regarded as a logical continuation of, and not as a turning-point from, his activities in Mecca (Muhammadanism, 1949, 27).
5 E.g. Ahmad Khān: "Islam is the light of God Himself. That very light of Islam shone in Adam's breast, that very light of Islam enlightened the hearts of Noah, Seth, Jacob, Abraham, Moses, St. John the Baptist, Jesus and all the prophets." (Lectures kā Madīnatā, comp. by Muh. Sirādj al-Dīn, 1890, 225).

of the (Heavenly) Book... It goes without saying that the Apostle of God, Muhammad, received this Heavenly Book, which is identical with the Book handed over to earlier Apostles"

Then we read in a Muslim commentary: "... a clinching proof that Shu'āib and Hubbāb were different persons is the communication after the record of Shu'āib's people's destruction: "Then We raised after them Moses with our signs to Pharaoh and his chiefs" (S. 7: 101/103); i.e. after this people of Shu'āib We sent Moses... therefore, how can we fancy that Shu'āib and Hubbāb, the father-in-law of Moses, could have been one and the same person?"

After the quotation of 22 Koranic passages in which the tālāt is mentioned or implied, Ahmad al-Dīn concludes i.a.: "In the verses... three times of prayer are indicated. One prayer by night and two by day... The point is that no difference exists between the prayers of the first verse (S. 11: 116/114) and of the second one (S. 17: 80/78)"

The supposition of some modernists that the annullment of ḍiyāt, stated in S. 2: 100/106, bears upon the message of former prophets (see p. 50), meets with von Grunebaum's approval: "... the abrogation of individual (Koran) verses has to be seen in parallel with the abrogation of revealed codes by later prophets".

In Ma'ārif iv, 736 ff. Parwez expresses the surmise that in

1 Muhammad, the Apostle of God, and his Ascension (1955), 116 f.
2 Classical commentators like to identify them!
3 Mirzā Bāshīr al-Dīn Mahmod Ahmad, Tafsir al-Qūrān (1934) iii, 236. Compare F. Buhl in EI iv, 418: "but there is no foundation for this in the Korān".
4 Bagān 69 ff. and 110. Cf. A. J. Wensinck who follows M. Th. Houtsma in setting forth: "With this sūrah xvii, 80 agrees, ... We thus arrive at three daily sūrat in Muhammad's life-time." (EI iv, 104).
III. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

OF THE KOREAN

WAYS OF INFORMATION
of society should be established. Thus "the Koran is a Book of Preaching and Social Order" 1.

And in pursuance of the fact that the attention of the community has to be fixed on its injunctions and social order — and not, for instance, on the history of its revelation — no specified date of its coming down in the 'night of qadā' is given; the month is only recorded (see S. 2:181/185) 2. Similarly other historical details too seem to be considered not relevant, for instead of giving reports the Koran makes use of stage-setting when dealing with history. 3. In this connection Khalaf Allāh explains, can be reduced to a difference in function and aim. In S. 11 the encouragement of the Prophet is the point at issue 1, and on that account the Koran is keen on mentioning here the injustice Lot had to suffer as well as his attitude of mind. In S. 15 the object is to make clear what sorts of calamities the unbelievers had to expect; hence in this passage the thing that matters is that the angels shall begin by making themselves known in order to be qualified to announce the disasters that were to be anticipated for the outrages committed. And this again links up with the situation of Mohammed, for at the end of S. 15 one reads: "And say: I am a plainspoken warner... But, by our Lord, we will question them, one and all, concerning that which they have done" (verses 89 and 92 f.) 7.

Another method of preaching, frequently applied by the Koran, and brought to notice by the Egyptian writer, is the actualization of the past through which the hearts 8 of the listeners are expected to be touched and turned to conversion. (Here Parwez speaks of the inductive way of historic thinking in the Koran. Not the historiography but the lessons of history, the 'Days of Allāh', is the point at issue 4.) Thus in S. 2:46/49

the notification of the angelic rank of the visitors. This is not logical, for in that case Lot need not have been afraid of being importuned by the people and there would have been no need of 'offering' his daughters. The disparity of both records, Khalaf Allāh explains, can be reduced to a difference in function and aim. In S. 11 the encouragement of the Prophet is the point at issue 1, and on that account the Koran is keen on mentioning here the injustice Lot had to suffer as well as his attitude of mind. In S. 15 the object is to make clear what sorts of calamities the unbelievers had to expect; hence in this passage the thing that matters is that the angels shall begin by making themselves known in order to be qualified to announce the disasters that were to be anticipated for the outrages committed. And this again links up with the situation of Mohammed, for at the end of S. 15 one reads: "And say: I am a plainspoken warner... But, by our Lord, we will question them, one and all, concerning that which they have done" (verses 89 and 92 f.) 7.

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1 See the verses 15/12 and 121/120 ("And all we relate to you of the accounts of the messengers is to strengthen your heart therewith").
2 al-Fānî 37 ff. and 142 ff.
3 Also Muh. Kâmil Husain stresses the point that revelatory scriptures appeal to man's soul and conscience, not to his intellect and reason. Characteristic of human intelligence is to build up a well-ordered line of thought, whereas in man's subconsciousness the perceptions lack a clear order (think of dreaming!). Analogously, since in those scriptures one does not generally meet with much coherent reasoning, they aim to penetrate into the depths of the soul (Mutanawwî'î', 18).
4 Ma'ârif 2, 326.
the people of the Book are reminded of the mercy and bounty God granted them in the long-ago. It is done with tenses which shift the past to the very present, as if the event did not concern the forefathers, but the auditors. Also the opposite way can be taken: descriptions of the here-after, as in S. 14: 24/21-27/22, are not put in the future (as would be logical) but in the perfect in order to raise alarm among the contemporaries of the Prophet.

Then a means to focus attention on the guidance the Koran wishes to give, is to keep historical details vague, as e.g. in S. 2: 261/259, "Or like him who passed by a town..." In consequence of this, scene and time of action as well as characteristics of the figures appearing are blurred on behalf of the Koranic message. In S. 54: 18-21 nothing is told of the families, the houses etc. of the 'Adites, neither of the dispute between Hûd and his people. But haste is made with describing the chastisement which is clothed in figures of speech suited to rouse vivid emotions. Everything is subordinated to the preaching of doomsday and the narrative serves only as a marginal note and illustration of the warning.

Furthermore, Khalif Allah vindicates a Koranic right of making avail of figurative writing. Not that the Lord Himself would be in want of romancing! It is, however, a concession to human needs. So besides historic tales we meet dramatized (tamthili) stories, like the narrative of S. 38: 20/21-24/25 in which is told how David is visited by two angelic (?) figures. It is wrong to historicize the story by presuming that these were assassins who, detected, quickly devised a false account to allay suspicion.

1 al-Fann 151 ff.
2 id. 33. The Manâr-commentary which also likes to underline this point, argues that it makes a typical difference with the Biblical presentation. Thus the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible is reproduced as history, because the scene of action is exactly described (1, 279 and 399).
3 al-Fann 138.
4 id. 177.

The Egyptian scholar even goes one better, declaring that the Koran does not want to deny that it contains legends; it merely wishes to deny these legends to be a proof of its being composed by Mohammed instead of God. See S. 25: 5/4 ff., "And the infidels say: This (Koran) is a mere fraud of his own devising... Tales of the ancients that he has put in writing... Say: He has sent it down who knows the secret in the heavens and the earth". Likewise the Koran does not fight shy of having recourse to the fable. See S. 27 in which the ant and budhâbird are personified, as is done in 'Kalila and Dimna'.

A distinctly recognizable development of themes, ideas and notions in the Koranic narratives is another consequence of the circumstance that they are revealed for the sake of the message of Islam. The first object, in the beginning of Koranic revelation, was to shock the polytheists. The tales in S. 54 and 51 belong to this phase. When some time later on the struggle becomes fiercer, the element of dispute appears in the stories. It is also the period that the main themes of the Islamic message are broached: Resurrection and God's Unity. Instance of this are met with in S. 25 and 7: 63/65-77/79. After it follows the phase that the Prophet is bowed down by the enmity he encounters. Then revelations for his relief come down. See S. 11, 20, 28, 21 and 12.

1 Also Muh. Iqbal frankly speaks of "the Quranic legend of the Fall" (The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, Lahore ed., 1954, 85).
2 al-Fann 200 ff.
3 id. 298 f.
4 Khalif Allah rejects the viewpoint of Orientalists who reduce varieties of themes etc. to an individual spiritual progress of Mohammed. There is in the Koran, he claims, no unity of characters; there is only one of aim and warning. It becomes apparent, if one tries to combine the stories about one person, e.g. about Abraham. Soon the thread of them is lost. One should not take them as fragments, but as independent narratives, each of them with a specific aim (al-Fann 221 ff.).
5 al-Fann 346 ff.
And not only do Koranic tales appear to be configured after the conditions and purpose of the message at the moment of delivery, but also occasionally a detail of a story concerning a former prophet reflects a certain event befallen to the Arabian messenger. An instance of this is the caution which Moses receives in S. 28: 19/20, “The chiefs are consulting together to kill you”. According to our author there is no question but that at that time Mohammed himself was acquainted with a conspiracy to slay him.

Not only the narratives but also certain Koranic injunctions should be viewed and evaluated with reference to circumstances obtaining at the moment of their being spoken. In connection with S. 9: 60 Bashir Ahmad Dār observes: “In the Koran new Muslims also shared in the distribution of alms. But in the time of `Umar such was no longer the case. This is an indication of the fact that at the time of revelation of this verse it was necessary on account of the weak position of Islam... But when by God’s mercy Islam was well established, there was no longer any need of it”.

The author here mentions the case only as a curious specimen of a Koranic rule which lost its meaning in later times. There is no more to it than that. But for `Asāf `Ali Asghar Faidi it constitutes a principle of major importance, and he explains: “Regarding the ordinances occurring in the Koran or Shari’a, we must decide whether they are legal regulations or moral directions. If they are legal regulations, they are valid for a given space of time; if they are moral regulations, their validity is not time-bound... And when someone says that any injunction (in the Koran) requires strict obedience, I declare most respectfully: I cannot agree with this statement. Laws may change. Religion is of a longer duration than law”. Thus out-of-date are in his opinion i.a. the ṭalāq (divorce) — institution and the rule, embodied in S. 4: 38/34, “Men are superior to women on account of the qualities God has granted the one above the other”: according to modern standards a wife is no more a toy but a mate of her husband.

Halide Edib Adivaz draws a practical, yet radical, conclusion from this view-point of `Asāf A. A. Faidi, when she sets forth that “because some parts of the Koran were meant for the people who lived some thirteen centuries ago, and some parts were meant for all human beings and for all time”, one ought not to look for “a reform or a reinterpretation but a Selection of those values from the Koran”. This proposal has far-reaching implications, and we do not expect it to be realized in the near future. The majority of modernists as yet will consider such a selection derogatory in a great measure to the eminence and perfection of the Holy Book.

The time-bound character of the Koran is most clearly seen, however, when one detects in it various antiquated conceptions and ideas. Referring to the dispute of Abraham with the idolaters (S. 6: 80 ff.) `Abd al-Jawhari states that in primitive religions, like that of the Sabians, the number seven plays a prominent part, and that this was still the case at the time of Islam’s arrival: “... the Koran was revealed in the locution current amongst the nations of the epoch; thus we read: God it is Who created seven heavens and as many earths; and it is known that according to the ancients there were seven climates; the Koran came in the last days of antique knowledge,

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1 al-Fānn 365 f.
2 Thaqīfah Labore, Jan. 1958, 29.
and with that it joined". In a similar strain Ahmad Khān expresses himself in an essay on Koranic oaths. He says i.a.:

"People might wonder why so often in the Koran God swears an oath. Such an objection, however, arises, because they do not make a study of Koranic idiom. Firstly, one should recognize that, even though the Koran is undoubtedly the Word of God, it is revealed in the language and locution of man, and its way of expression is exactly the same as that of a well-spoken Arab whose eloquence is unparalleled. Just like human speech, the Word of God uses metaphors, tropes, figures and offers facts. That goes so far that even loan-words are found in the Koran... e.g. the word surādīq is not Arabic but the arabized Persian term sarāparda... In other words, the Koran is revealed in the Arabic idiom of its time... In those days it was a habit with the kābīna (shamans) — who were regarded as saints — to employ eloquent speech, rhyming prose as well as oaths. And the things they considered as a kind of kabīna, i.e. a communication from the mysterious world, and about which they wanted to give certainty to others, they explained with oaths... In the same way in the Koran things about which one ought to have certainty, are explained with oaths; and it is for that reason that the Arabs thought the Prophet to be a kābīn".

Ahmad al-Dīn holds it to be one of the benefits of the ḥurūf muqtā'āt (enigmatic letters before certain sūra’s) that they must have had a magic sound for the superstitious Meccans. "When these people heard ḥurūf muqtā'āt as َعَمَا جَحَمَم, they strained their ears in amazement... In consequence they started to pay attention and to listen".

Khalaf Allāh remarks that the dominant factor of the Arab environment also becomes evident from the datum that in the Koran women (e.g. Eve) are mostly not mentioned by name. Arab custom of the time required that a wife should follow her husband. And in the case of Eve the impression should not be created that she played the leading part in the seduction. It was her part to follow Adam in everything. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Maghribi urges the necessity of a profound knowledge about the circumstances, customs and speech of the Arabs at the time of Revelation in view of the figure 'sparks like a qāṣr' (castle) (see S. 77: 32). If uninformed, one does not understand the simile and might ask mockingly: What sort of a fire must that be if already a spark is equalled to a castle? The point is that the Arabs in those days applied the qualification 'qāṣr' to every kind of building, even though it had merely the size of a tent. Muḥ. Kāmil Ḥusain calls attention to the peculiar desert atmosphere, conveyed by Koranic figures of speech. So he points at the admonition to proclaim Allāh akbar ('God is greater') (cf. S. 74: 3 and 17: 111). A Westerner being told of this expression wishes right away to make further inquiries, and asks: "Yes, but greater than who or what?" The Beduins, however, living in the wilderness of the desert, do not require a fuller explanation of the phrase, since they find no scenic distinction in land lying beyond or below the horizon. This is an impossibility for people in mountainous regions, who realize that behind every top all kinds of unexpected surprises may be found. Next, this author shows how the desert is full of winding paths. But travellers in the desert keep a fixed eye on the goal to be attained and they know how to find their way, tortuous though it may be. "In a like manner for the Koran the end to be attained is the...

1 al-Djāwādbir iv, 61. Regarding the tale of Ṣāliḥ and the she-camel (S. 7: 71/73) Āzād observes that it was an old custom, also known from Babel and India, to let animals loose for Heaven's sake (Tārījman ii, 18).
2 Aḥkām Madā'in (1898), 44 f.
3 Bayān 46.

1 al-Fam 317.
2 Tafsīr Dīning Taḥrīrak (1948), 291 ff.
3 al-Muqānawwāb 9 ff.
praise of God... However numerous the expressions and however divergent the meanings applied by it may be, the direction remains always the same... And the difference between the Koran and a non-Arab logic is that which exists between the desert-road from al-masjid al-harām (Mecca) to al-masjid al-aqṣā (Jerusalem) and modern autostrada" 1. The frequent repetitions in the Koran the author associates with the monotony of the desert landscape which has for the Beduins a charm of its own. And the well composed stories, like that of Joseph, which are also demonstrable, are compared with oases. They are like a resting-point, where one can recover from the harsh threats and stern preaching of foregoing pages 2. Muh. Kāmil Husain also comes to speak of the salīf 3, a figure of style often used in the Koran. It is prose built up of long and short pieces all ending in rhyme, and agrees exactly with the scene of a desert. "For he who tries to bring a long desert-journey to a happy conclusion feels obliged to cut the route in front of him in pieces of different length which are all closed off by similar marks" 4.

We should be well aware that we must speak of a new insight among the modernists into the historical setting of Revelation. For in a restricted sense there was an interest in the historical background of the Koran from the beginning. It has always been a favourite occupation of the classical interpreters to find out what might have been the concrete situation of sundry revelations (the so-called asbūb al-nuṣūl).

This sort of historic 'research', however, which recalls the rabbinic way of tackling Scripture-texts, finds little favour in the eyes of the modernists. To their mind the Koranic message is disrupted through it and outlines get lost. Certainly they do not deny that originally the Koran was revealed to Mohammed by bits and pieces and did not form a whole at once. "For the Prophet himself", as Ahmad al-Din observes, "this state of affairs caused misunderstanding now and then. Therefore God said: Be not hasty in (reciting a part of) the Koran as long as its revelation to you is incomplete" 5. But the point that really matters is to notice its remarkable continuity of thought. Consequently, it is attempted to show close connections in the sûra's, as well in their succession as in their constitutive parts. To give some examples: After having rejected the efforts of the commentators to connect S. 2: 109/115 with a certain event of Mohammed's life, Sayyid Qūb declares: "We take it in its general meaning... and think that in the context a connection must be extant between the assurance that East and West belong to God and the pointing out of the tyrannical and perfidious manner in which people try to prevent God's name being adored in places of worship (verse 108/114)... The hearts wishing to put themselves in God's hand are informed that annoyance in places of worship does not prevent participation in divine mercy, and that everywhere on earth there is a place of worship" 6. In S. 2: 239/238 the subject of prayer is broached. Before that, various matrimonial regulations are mentioned. For 'Azūd the connection is obvious: It is indicated that the only way of standing firm in the midst of the moral trials of marriage is prayer and true worship 7. Muḥ. Rahim al-Din constructs a continuous line of thought in S. 80 as follows: In vs. 1-10 instruction is given by the Prophet to two sorts of people, 1) men of standing (the Quraishites with whom he is conversing) and 2) the poor (the blind man who interrupted, desirous of knowledge); vs. 11-15/16 treats of the Koran, i.e. the instructor; vs. 16/17-22

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1 S. 20: 113/114. See Bayān 95.
2 Q. i, 77.
3 Tardjumān i, 288 f.
gives instruction about human existence, vs. 24-32 about instruments and media which are at the disposal of man, who is taught; vs. 33-42 instruction ends with examination, i.e. the Last Judgment 1. A close connection between sûra 9 and 10 is reasoned out by another writer in this way: Sûra 10 begins with pointing to what is related in the closing verses 129/128 f. of sûra 9: the significance of the Book (verse 1) and the Prophet (verse 2). So in this way sûra 10 rounds off the contents of sûra 9. While it appears from sûra 9 that some people doubted on account of their numerous sins whether God would accept their repentance, it is stated in sûra 10 that God’s mercy predominates 2).

A prophet does not pay heed to coherent reasoning and well-balanced systems. His words are directed to a special critical situation and they are poorly suited to the preparation of a dogmatism, an ethical manual or a civil code. Posterity is left with the problem of finding its way about in the recorded sayings of the holy man, which appear to be full of contradictions. As a result all kind of technics of harmonization are tried.

The Koran as a collection of revelatory dicta passed on and pronounced by Mohammed, does not make an exception to the rule. Former Muslim scholars, in the course of time regularly confronted with this vexed situation, found an easy solution: discrepancies in the Koran were smoothed away simply by declaring contradictory statements or injunctions to be out-of-date. For that they referred to S. 2: 100/106 3, in which God Himself is said to annul foregoing revelations. Thus the theory of nāṣikh-mansūkh was framed, i.e. the rule that in the Koran verses are cancelled (mansūkh) by cancelling (nāṣikh) ones.

No agreement, however, has been gained regarding the number of verses to which the rule must be applied. Some speak of more than two hundred and fifty, others want to reduce it to five.

In general 4 the modernists again are not much pleased with this doctrine of their ancestors: “God’s words are too lofty to be abrogated by human opinion” 5. Indignantly Ahmad Khân declares that in this way the Koran is made ‘a note-book of a poet’ 6.

In refutation of the nāṣikh-principle it is first demonstrated that in various so-called mansūkh-cases there is no question of cancellation by other verses. As an example, Sayyid Qurb takes S. 2: 173/178 which is considered to be abrogated by S. 5: 49/45. The author argues that in both verses different subjects are touched upon: the first verse bears upon personal retaliation, the second upon collective requital 4.

Then an effort is made to connect the abrogation, mentioned in S. 2: 100/106, with another object. Instead of relating it to Koran verses and their commandments, it is put together with: a) the succession of natural phenomena. “In this verse”, so ‘Abd al-Ḥakim explains, “God refers to the world-order in illustration of His omnipotence and He formulates the interrogation: If you behold the alternations of day and night, is for you therein not an indication of God’s omnipotence?” 5; or with

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1 Pâra ‘Am 25 ff.
2 Mirzâ Bashir al-Din Maḥmûd Ahmad, Tafsîr al-Qur’an iii, 3 ff. p
3 “For whatsoever õya We cancel or cause to forget We bring a better or the like”.
4 Q. i, 33.
5 ‘Abd al-H. 134. This interpreter refers to S. 2: 159/164, 3: 187/190 and 6: 35 as parallel passages in which God’s omnipotence is pointed out and the word õya is equally left indefinite.
b) the message of former prophets. So Ahmad Khan draws the conclusion: “From this verse it becomes evident that the subject treated touches upon the starta of foregoing prophets.” On the second passage quoted in support, S. 16: 103/101, Ahmad Khan comments: “The point here is: who are the subject of qal'at? The exegetes write: The disbelievers of Mecca. This, however, cannot be right, for the Meccan disbelievers were ignorant of the revelatory character of the dua that gets changed as well as of the dua that causes the change. But it is only the Jews and Christians who think Koranic instructions, contrary to those of the Bible, to be forged by the Prophet.”

Along with the application of naskh (abrogation) to something else, a concealed sense is detected in it: an evolutionary principle is found at its root. Thus Tanwari Dajwari enunciates: “Know that al-mansikh and al-nasikh belong to the greatest secrets and finest divine rays shining over humanity; verily, both of them are a secret of progress. . . firstly God showed men how night and day ‘abrogate’ each other and makes it clear that the difference in (the appearance of) arable land is the outcome of the difference of seasons . . . and it is as if He spoke: O my worshippers . . . with big letters I have described how in

1 S. 13: 38, “… And no messenger could bring an dua except by God’s permission. For every period there is a book”.

2 Similarly Muh. Tawfik Siddiq elucidates S. 2: 100/106 with the help of S. 13: 38, but he comes to another result. The dua in S. 2: 100/106 would refer to the prophetic legitimation which, according to God’s will, would be no longer needed. If in former days the ‘miracles’ were an indispensible requisite of the prophet, at the time of Mohammed’s mission they were abolished. Then “humanity stepped from infancy to maturity” (Din Alliah fi Khuṭb Anbiyā’ī, 1912, 180 f. and 200 ff.).

3 “And when We change one dua for another — God knows best what He sends down — they say (qal): You are but a forgetter”.

4 Akhiri Madāmīn 24 f. Shalik ‘Abd al-Subhān assumes equally in respect of S. 2: 100/106 that “the controversy here is carried on with Jews . . . who rejected the Quranic revelation, because it supplanted the law of Torah” (The Isl. Lit., Oct. 1952, 26).

heaven and earth night and day, sowing-land and land under crop ‘cancel’ each other and give way to each other; next, I have instructed the nations on earth; then they began to ‘abolish’ old methods to make room for more modern methods.”

A much discussed and disputed point is further the question of the mutashābīhāt (ambiguous Koran verses), indicated in S. 3: 57. Usually, the classical commentators understand by them verses whose meaning is obscure because they are capable of various interpretations. Sometimes the ‘cancelled’ verses, being neither authoritative for belief nor for morals, are reckoned among them (see e.g. al-Ṭabarî d. 922).

The modernist trend is by no means inclined to consider the Koran an obscure book, even less to assume that it might contain superfluous parts. At the most it may be acknowledged that verses dealing with subtle subject-matters such as the Essence of God, the Hereafter, might be classed among the ambiguous verses. But, so Azâd immediately adds: “These things are not anti-rational”; or, as ‘Abd al-Ḥakim suggests: “It refers to matters which, if one has just set about the way of insight, might still be regarded mutashābih, whereas if more insight is gained, they no longer offer any difficulty.”

Mīrzā Bashir al-Dīn Māhām Ahmad draws a parallel between the distinction made in S. 11: 1 concerning fundamental and elucidating Koranic verses (kitābun inkhāmat ayyāhubu bhumma

1 al-Djawhari i, 110 f. Cf. also Muṣrif iii, 641.
2 “It is it who has sent down to you the Book, of which there are some verses that are of themselves perspicuous (μυθκαμάτ) — they are the basis of the Book — and others are ambiguous (mutashābihāt)”.
3 Seemingly, so al-Mashʿīiqi admits, one comes upon contradictions and repetitions in the Koran. But they have the mere intention of serving as an incentive for man, lazy by nature, to take thought and to find out why there is actually no question of a real contradiction or a gratuitous repetition (Tadkīrā, ii, 38).
4 Tarjījmān i, 313.
5 ‘Abd al-Ḥ. 231.
fussilat) and the differentiation found in S. 3: 5/7 concerning muhkamât and mutashâbîhât, and he thinks that in S. 3: 5/7 basic instruction is distinguished from explanatory information of the Koran. 

Tanâwî Djawhari connects the question with a beloved principle of the modernists, to wit the assumed correlation between Revelation, the Word of God, and Nature, the Work of God. Both categories, he claims, are retraceable in the animal world. Al-muhkam might be qualified as the numerous species occurring; and referring to all the disputes being carried on about Darwinian theories, one might define al-mutashâbîh as the question of their order and descent. So the analogy between Koran and the Book of Nature is manifest.

Like Zamakhshari, some of the modernists allot to the mutashâbîhât the merit of inciting to study, or to put it shortly in the words of Ahmad al-Din: “The Koran-verses which relate to fact (baqiqat) are exact (muhkam), and those which are the object of investigation (tabqiqat) are not clear (mutashâbîb)”

As an illustration of this rule Parwez takes the case of the man who was killed and had to be struck with part of a sacrificed cow (S. 2: 67/72 f.). The author is at loss what to think of this passage, and says “Surely it concerns a historic event and in the light of historic research a correct apprehension will be gained... The verses belong to the list of the mutashâbîhât. History will turn up a following page; then these verses will be transferred to the list of the muhkamât.”

1 Tafsir al-Qur'an iii, 141.
2 al-Djawâhir ii, 43 ff.
3 See 1. Goldziher, Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung 128.
4 Bayân 414. Cf. also al-Djawâhir ii, 41.
5 Ma'ârif iii, 355 f.

It a special duty of scientists to make muhkamât of the mutashâbîhât. As a case in point he cites S. 36: 38, “And the sun runs on to a resting-place for it”. Not until the Western scholar F. M. Herschel (1738-1822) had proved a spheric motion of the sun could this verse be added to the muhkamât.  

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1 Tadkikat ii, 47 ff. Cf. also al-Djawâhir ii, 15. More plausible is the attractive theory developed by Mub. Dî'ûd Rabbar, making use of the idea of ‘similarity’ the term mutashâbîh conveys. Mutashâbîhât are to be viewed as “verses of the Qur'an which resemble other verses of the Qur'an, but are confused by reason of their brevity of expression, and can be understood only by being referred to such similar verses as contain their purport more fully and clearly” (God of Justice, 1960, 208).
IV. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

The Idea of God

When Āzād in the letters, written during his imprisonment in fort Ahmadnagar, reveals his innermost thought on life, he confesses at a given moment to be not very pleased with the notion of a Personal God. Owing to this conception "at every turn a hood of one or another expression has to be put on the face (of the Godhead). Now it is a gloomy one, then an affable one, here it frightens, there it attracts, but never can the hood be taken off the face. Hence in the end one becomes tired of seeing only the outside". Apart from the manifestly mystic trend emerging from this feeling of discomfort in regard to a personalistic conception of God, it is an utterance symptomatic for modernist leanings to a depersonalized Deity, a 'Natura naturans'. Such writers do not shrink from defining Allāh as "The Real", 'Absolute Reality', "The Ideal" (naḥh al-ʻain) or 'Ultimate Reality', qualified as "pure duration in which thought, life and purpose interpenetrate to form an organic unity".

The gist of modernity's idea of God is this: God reveals Himself in cosmos and man. The laws of Nature — the 'Work of God' — are the divine words recorded in the Book of Nature. The laws of God for man — the 'Word of God' — are the divine words embodied in the Koran. Work and Word of God correspond with each other, or to put it in al-Mashriqi's formulation: 'there is no doubt that the regulations of that Book (Koran) stemmed from the instruction of God's Book, i.e. the Book of Nature. And there is no doubt that its regulations confirm what takes place in nature'.

Seemingly, the not altogether harmless implications of such a Naturalism for religiosity itself have not eluded the attention of Parwez, though he himself operates occasionally with the terms 'The Real' and 'Absolute Reality'. For he sets forth that the laws of Nature are subordinated to the will of God, and that the inherent qualities of substances, being caused by the divine will, should not be considered as gifts of Nature. "Water quenches thirst, but this is not a natural effect of water. The special quality of satisfying the longing for moisture is put in it through the laws of Gods will".

Very frequently the doctrine of the analogia entis is brought to the fore. S. 30: 29/30 is the basic passage quoted in support of the favourite theme that man's nature is to be regarded as an offshoot of God's nature, as well as the theorem subjoined that Islam is the very religion chiming in with human nature. al-Mashriqi produces the following address of the Creator to man: "Be aware that I am God; you should be God's counterpart (maz̄har), an incarnation in little of the divine attributes; hear and see, like I do ('so We have made him hearing, seeing') My spirit I breathe into you ('and I breathed into him of My spirit'). This is so because I want you to be what I am... powerful and mighty; I want you to be possessed of power and dominion... I am the great Creator; similarly I expect...

1 Ghulām Sarwār, Philosophy of the Qurʾān (1938), passim.
2 Sulaimān 376.
3 Muḥammad Dājādī Phulwārī in Thaqāfat Lahore (April 1960), 38.
5 In the terminology of Muḥammad Iṣṭāḥal: "Nature is to the Divine Self as character is to the human self" (Reconstruction 56).

1 al-Tadhkirāt, i, 81.
2 Maʿārif, ii, 148.
3 "Then lift up your face towards religion, as a God fearing man, according to the natural ability God created in men".
4 S. 76: 2.
5 S. 15: 29 and 38: 72.
from you great creations and inventions” \(^1\). According to Muḥ. Ṭahāf al-Dīn the divine attributes, mentioned in S. 112, are to be reflected in the believer as follows:

“In view of God’s Tawḥīd the Muslims are required to build on one foundation \(^2\); in view of God’s ʿUluwūyat they are required to be independent of others in every sphere of life; in view of God’s Wusūd Mutlaq they are required not to give themselves up to worldly concerns; in view of God’s ʿUlwiyyat they are required to stake everything, trying for the highest degrees (of perfection)” \(^3\).

Analogously, the Godhead grants a considerable part of His guidance through the medium of human nature. And on account of S. 10: 36/35 \(^4\) ʿAzād observes: “Since in this verse both the notions of ḥidayat (guidance) and ḥaqq occur, the commentators think that by ḥidayat the ‘guidance of Revelation’ and by ḥaqq the ‘religion of Truth’ is meant... (but) it is clear that the persons addressed represent pagans who absolutely denied the religion of Revelation and also its demonstration. In other words, supposing that by ḥidayat the guidance of Revelation were meant, then what sort of conclusive force could it have!... (The point, however, is this that) here a matter of faith is dealt with, towards which those addressed did not and could not stand negatively... (Therefore) by ḥidayat the guidance, not of Revelation, but of intuition, senses and reason is intended, and by ḥaqq not the religion of Truth, but literally the true and right course is meant. Again and again the Koran \(^1\) explains the truth that, just as Divine Government assigns creatures a living in accordance with their needs, it provides them equally with the natural means for being guided on the path of life” \(^2\).

On this topic of the analogia entis Parwez again appears to hold a dissenting opinion. It is incomprehensible to him how exegetes may derive from S. 30: 29/30 the doctrine that human nature is an offshoot of God’s nature. How is this to be reconciled with all the human failings, put on record by the Koran: man is quarrelsome (S. 18: 52/54; 36: 77), unjust and ignorant (S. 33: 72), impatient (S. 70: 20), ungrateful (S. 80: 16/17) etc. The fact is that our idea of nature does not cover the Koranic concept of jātra. That is a derivative of the verb ḥāṭara, ‘to rend, cleave something’; with as second meaning ‘to originate, create’, i.e. by cleaving, something new comes out of that which is cleaved. Hence jātra does not signify the ‘nature of God’ but the ‘creative rule of action’, according to which God created the world and man. According to this creative rule of action, potentialities which have to be developed are placed in all things of the world. Thus man has latent faculties. Purpose of human life is the full development of those faculties. In man, however, are faculties of integration as well as of disintegration (see S. 91: 8 \(^3\) where man’s possibilities both of integration and disintegration are pointed out \(^4\)).

The other, often repeated, conclusion from S. 30: 29/30 concerning man’s being Muslim by nature, is implicitly denied by al-ʿAqqād. He asserts that religion ought by no means to be

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\(^1\) Tadhkira ii, 79.

\(^2\) I.e. to keep unity. Cf. also Maʿārif i, 53.

\(^3\) Piṭra ʿAm 201 f. Mirzā Bashir al-Dīn Mahmūd Ahmad translates S. 51: 56 (“I have not created ādīn and men, but that they should worship Me”) as follows: “I have not created men, either great or small, but that they should develop in themselves My attributes” (Almuṣādiyyat or the True Islam, 1924, 241).

\(^4\) “Say: Is there any of your associates who guides (ṣabīl) to the truth (al-haqq)? Say: God guides to the truth”.
held a biological necessity. "For, as a biological being man is attached to life. But as a religious being he is attached to the essence of life". To Khalaf Allâh’s mind one is only allowed to infer from this text that man is religious by nature, without any further qualification about a specific religion. And man’s innate religiosity, so he says, finds expression in a sense of awe man manifests with respect to his Umwelt (mawjûdâr). 2

Then, typical of modernist theology are the attempts aimed at the elimination of daemonic features from the conception of God. The makr (craft) of Allâh in S. 7: 97–99 is rendered as ‘God’s concealed decrees’ and in a note there is referred to catastrophes of nature which happen unexpectedly. 3 For the sense of the divine name al-Djabbâr (the Tyrant) use is made of the derivative djibâra — ‘setting of a fracture of a leg’, i.e. binding fast a broken leg between two laths. “Thus Djabbâr is a name of the Being that ties up the whole universe under its authority so that, while all things are put in their proper place, nothing can be shifted, not even an inch. This tying up is only based upon wisdom and sound policy without the least taint of suppression or despotism”. 4

In line with this blurring out of terrifying traits of the Godhead is the accentuation of affable aspects in Allâh. That He is to be looked upon as the Friend of man we find expounded in a curious excursus on S. 53: 9: “Among the Arabs the custom existed of uniting one’s bows, if two men wished to conclude a league of amity, whereupon the bows, joined into one bow, shot one arrow. It was a symbol of two bodies with one soul… The relation of God and man is a relation of friendship (God is the highest friend). If man’s will and activity are working in

friendship with divine law, creative additions arise in the universe, beauty and harmony increase. So in man a balanced personality develops. This is the aim of Revelation”. 5 Much weight is attached to the divine attribute of grace. In answer to the question why in S. 1: 1 ‘gracious’ is defined with two different wordings (rahmân and rahîm), Azâd says: “Because the Koran wants to stamp rahmat (grace) on man’s memory as the most obvious and conspicuous attribute in the idea of God; nay, it wants to express that God is entirely rahmat” 6. Among the aspects of divine grace this commentator reckons the diversity and variety man finds about him. It belongs to the peculiarities of human nature to become dejected and gloomy, if everything round it be uniform and dull. The extant diversity gives joy of living. Hence in S. 28: 73 alternation of day and night is held a token of mercy 7. And his final conclusion is: “From beginning to end the Koran is nothing else than the message of divine rahmat”. 8 The romantic Tântâwi Djawhari likes to look for marks of grace in the open air, and argues that he who is attentive to the subtle nuances in the realm of nature — how everywhere signs of divine care are found — knows God to be merciful and full of commiseration”. 9

The Question of Freedom of the Will

In the dynamic structure of modern life, as is easily understood, human will must left scope for action. Accordingly,

1 Parvez in Saltan 248. The insider will easily recognize in these sentences echoes of Muh. Iqbal’s teachings. Compare e.g. the latter’s statements: “he (man) alone is capable of consciously participating in the creative life of his Maker” and “The unceasing reward of man consists in his gradual growth in self-possession” (Reconstruction, Lahore ed., 72 and 117).

2 Târdjumân i, 62.

3 Târdjumân i, 79 ff.

4 Târdjumân i, 101.

5 al-Djawâbir ii, 82.
by our interpreters every available sign of a choice or decision entrusted to man is hunted out from the Koran. That the Creator intended to endow man with a free will, follows from the interdict to eat a certain fruit of the garden of Eden. “For, without the forbidden no will can be shaped” 1. Man is set to battle with evil. This is plainly depicted by the kneeling down of the angels before Adam and the refusal of Iblis to join in (S. 15: 30 f.). All powers in the cosmos (= the angels!) man has at his disposal, with one exception (the devil), and that one he has still to get control of. He then becomes a true servant of God 2.

Cited as loci which stress personal responsibility are i.a. S. 6: 164 (“No soul earns but for itself, and no bearer of burden has to bear the burden of another”), S. 74: 41/38 (“Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns”), S. 2: 286 (“... It — the soul — shall have to its credit that which has been credited to it, and to its debit that which has been debited to it”) 3. And sayings of a determinist purport may receive a contrary sense. Thus it is stated about S. 2: 6/7: “... this act of setting a seal upon the hearts is attributed to God in a like manner as at evening-time we speak alternatively of ‘God has put darkness’ or of ‘it’s getting dark’. That which actually happens is the darkening caused by sunset. Likewise is the seal upon the hearts the logical result of man’s actions” 4. S. 10: 99 5 is rendered paraphrastically: “And (o Prophet), if your Lord had pleased, all the inhabitants on earth would have believed (and no distinction would have remained in the matter of faith and works! But you see that this is not the intention of God; it is His

will that different characters and abilities shall come to light; therefore, if men do not believe) why would you force them?” Thus the translator has managed to deduce from a determinist text the implication that it is up to man, and not to God whether he believes or not. The function left to God is that of a “co-ordinating Authority” who maintains the Universe by supervenience of His creatures and by curtailment of disproportionate forms of egocentric individualism 6.

REASON AND REVELATION

More or less in line with traditional thought of Islam, the relation of reason and revelation is not regarded as antipodal, but as complementary — we might say, in the strain of Thomas Aquinas’ famous adagium: “Grace does not repeal nature, but perfects it” 7. Or, like Parwez formulates it: “Since man is something more than physical and empirical world, it is incumbent on him to get acquainted with life’s mystery... And this is not possible without light, gained from the outside, which surpasses reason 8. The field of that light coming from the outside is so large that it amply embraces the sphere of

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1 *Tardjumân* ii, 170.
2 *Ma’ārif*, i, 315. Not consistently, however, does the author stick to the claim of a free will for man. At times Parwez comes very close to the orthodox *kalāb*-doctrine (i.e. the human procurement of acts which have already been created by God). Thus with reference to S. 8: 17 (“... and you did not shoot when you shot, but God did shoot”) he explains: “They were your arrows, but they were the decisions of divine will which were wrapped round your arrowheads as firm decrees” (*Ma’ārif*, iv, 524).
3 It is significant that on this issue the Dominican J. Jomier recognizes view-points of the modernists Muh, ‘Abdul and Rashid Rida corresponding with “la socratique chrétienne” (*Le Commentaire Céramique de Manzor* 82).
4 Le, the continuance of his soul (cf. *Ma’ārif*, ii, 54).
5 For a concurrent line of thought in liberal Protestant theology, see P. Tillich’s assertion: “Reason does not resist revelation. It asks for revelation, for revelation means the reintegration of reason” (*Systematic Theology*, 1951, i, 94).
reason’’. “Reason has a fragmentary view of life. But a mind, enlightened by revelation, sees the reality of an undivided life. The prophet creates that new world of life’s self-revelation and the individuals, enlightened by light of revelation, partake in that reality’’. Azad, following in the footsteps of Muh. ‘Abdulh, distinguishes four stages of guidance for man: 1) by instinct; 2) by the senses; 3) by reason; 4) by revelation and prophets. Each of the first three stages is in need of a higher one for check and correction. If, for instance, our senses tell us that the sun has the size of a golden dish, correction by the intellect is required. Thus revelation ‘perfects’ the guidance, offered by reason. And in a comment on S. 3: 2/3 f. the same writer sets forth how God’s revelation, embodied by al-Kitab (Koran), grants guidance leading to happiness; spade-work for it is done by al-Fiqih (= man’s intellectual faculties), procuring insight into revelation. Or, as Parwez defines it: “Science gathers mere facts, but the object of revelation is not only gathering of data concerning reality, but also construction of human personality”.

“It is revelation which draws up principles of social life, and it summons reason to look for means of their application.”

According to those elucidations, it is clear, human reason is an expedient, though essential, for revelation’s coming into operation, and consequently subservient to it. On the other hand, sometimes revelation seems to have to be content with a minor part, and in the next exposition it must yield priority to man’s nature: “The Koran calls revelation (or its bearers) nnadhr. Indhhr means ‘to caution, wake’… Therefore, the Koran styles itself Tadhibira (see S. 73: 19). Tadhibira means ‘to remind’ of something that was forgotten… Thus revelation is after all a mouthpiece of the soul’s most noble intentions and exhibits nature’s most pure impulses”.

And Ahmad al-Din points out that, whereas at the outset man was simply guided by his own pure nature, he was not in need of revelation until his lapsing into error.”

A special issue of the relationship reason-revelation is the question of the miracles recorded in the Koran. Here we may distinguish three tendencies among modern Muslim expositors: 1) all supernatural origin is denied them; 2) the possible occurrence of wonders is not negated but their relevance to faith is reduced to a minimum; 3) tentative efforts are made to show their ground for existence, even over against the spirit of modern times.

A.A 1) One of Ahmad Khán’s most beloved themes is to set forth that nothing in the Koran contradicts the laws of Nature (see above p. 55). Consequently, the Koranic contents are to be demythologized. Of the way, in which the modernists manage to perform this, we may offer as example the historization of the legend narrated in S. 34: 13/14 by Ahmad Khán’s disciple Chiragh ‘Ali. The interpreter states that here a mummification of Solomon is alluded to (compare Gen. 50: 2, 3, 253.

2 Benún 172.

3 “When We decreed death for him (Solomon), nothing showed them that he was dead but a reptile of the earth that ate away his staff. And when he fell down, the djinn perceived that if they had known the unseen, they had not continued in the shameful torment”.

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1 Ma’arif ii, 190.
2 What is designated here as ‘revelation’, is called by Muh. Iqbal, the mystic, ‘love’ (‘ishq). See his Gulshan Ráz (1927), 229: “Reason deals with plurality, with parts while Love grasps the whole, the one”. Both these terms reach back to Bergson’s concept of Intuition.
3 Ma’arif ii, 240. See also Muhar al-Din Siddiqui: “Revelation is only Reason operating at a deeper level” (The Is. Lit., Aug. 1953, 8).
4 Tafsir al-Fathīha 66 ff.
5 Tarjumān i, 174 ff.
6 Tarjumān i, 312.
7 Ma’arif ii, 243.
8 Ma’arif ii, 249.
26, the embalment of Jacob and Joseph). Next, with a reference to 1 Kings 11: 14, 23 ff., one is reminded of the fact that at the end of Solomon's reign many wars were raging which caused discontent among the people, because of obstruction of trade. A great revolt was the outcome. Then it has struck historians, the author continues, that no mention is made of a magnificent funeral of the great king. This, however, is comprehensible when having regard to circumstances: it was expedient not to divulge the news of his death; it would merely incite to further revolt. Hence it was wise of the authorities to embalm his corpse and to put it up in a place where many could watch him standing erect, leaning on a staff. Accidentally, however, a worm began to gnaw at it, and when it was gnawed through the corpse fell over through its weight. Thus his death became known and the forced labourers of the jinni-nation (Tyrus and Sidon) declared: "It is a pity. Had we known the unseen, we had not lived at high pressure." 1 The underlying idea of such-like expositions 'Abd al-Ḥaḳim defines, when he declares: "Wonders are matters shown by prophets and saints at special times and occasions in a special way through a special favour of God, (but occur) according to fixed laws which, however, their contemporaries could not yet detect with the empiric methods at their disposal. It is a wide-spread mistake to call them 'violations of the usual course of Nature' (kharg al-ʿādā) and to consider them as contrary to the divine laws of Nature." 2

Ad 2) The following reasonings are in point here: "And the position of Koran is this that it does not deny the existence of wonders but it denies that faith rests on this or is relevant to it. Consequently, we see how it reports wonders of previous prophets, of Moses and Jesus, as it (also) makes mention of ʿAlī's she-camel and of Abraham's being cast into fire. But simultaneously it makes it clear that they do not bear upon faith, since miraculous signs are of too short duration to serve as proof. They merely serve for intimidation and warning... God speaks: 3 And nothing hindered Us from sending with signs... so We gave Thamūd the she-camel before their very eyes, but they maltreated her! And so We do not send with signs but to strike terror." 2 Having described man's strong inclination 'in the age of childhood' to credit events with an unknown cause to heavenly intervention, Parwez argues that the prophets " resisted demands to produce phenomena contrary to Nature, but for all that it could happen exceptionally that for the eventual success of their enterprise they had to use in the struggle for truth arms which their opponents were handling... Since the Koranic period (however) no more miracles occurred" 4.

Ad 3) al-Djawhari is willing to attach two restricted functions to miraculous stories. Firstly, a positive effect they may produce on 'the poor in spirit'. For, if you say to them: Look at the wonders of your body and your fields, they think you a bit off. But if you tell them that Mary received food straight from Heaven, they get it and praise God from morning till

1 S. 17: 61/59. On the next page (al-Fann 126) the author (Khalaf Allah) remarks that he has much more to say on this subject, but that he knows by experience originality in these matters is not exactly something eagerly expected!
2 al-Fann 125.
3 As an instance of this, Moses' being necessitated to it in the presence of the Pharaoh is adduced.
4 Maʿārif ir, 702 f. and 706.
5 The argument is part of a comment on S. 3: 32/37, "... whenever
night. The Koran has been granted for thinkers as well as for such-like people. For the second purpose ascribable to Koranic legends, the Egyptian apologist quotes from J. J. Rousseau’s *Emile* the passage in which is set forth that nursery-tales are useful for children, as they may stimulate their imaginative faculties, and as such they are preparative for the study of natural science. On that account the Koran offers a combination of wonderful stories — meant to tickle the imagination — together with teachings of Nature. Muḥ. Rashid Riḍā vindicates the *raison d’être* of *āyat* deviating from the course of Nature, as far as man has knowledge of it, by pointing out that otherwise the world would be nothing but a dull mechanism. Moreover, they shield the absolute power of the Creator, because in that way He appears not to be tied down to the laws (*sunna*), according to which He settled the Universe.

### The Prophets

The prophet is the link between revelation and reason, between God and man. “God is the light of heaven and earth, His light shines upon the apostle, and the latter illuminates mankind... Know, that (this prophetic function of) mediation (*shafā‘a*) has seeds, plants and fruits; its seeds are knowledge, its plants action and its fruits salvation in the hereafter; for the prophets instruct men in this life... and if men act according to what they have heard... they have prepared for themselves the yield, and receive the fruits on the Day of Resurrection.”

The mediatory part Muḥ. Iqbāl assigns to the prophet is to prepare the ground for “the birth of inductive intellect... which alone makes man master of his environment”. Actually his work effects not much more than control of the forces of collective life, and properly speaking he himself belongs to an earlier stage of human evolution! Therefore, it is a great idea in Islam to discern “the finality of the institution of prophethood”. In the end man has to “be thrown back on his own recourses”.

An open and much-discussed poser is the question in which way a prophet is made capable of his task, whether predisposition and surroundings are to be taken into account, or not. According to Muḥ. ‘Abduh it is thanks to the fortunate possession of a special natural talent on account of which a prophet “transcends les frontières entre ce monde et l’autre... et apprend ce qu’est l’autre vie, et les moyens d’y parvenir”.

Parwex, however, rejects the idea that revelation would be acquirable by effort (*ikrārah*), as if prophetic genius were a possibility in human nature, by merely developing which man could become a prophet. Likewise Muḥ. Rashid Riḍā scorns the view that man, however gifted he might be, could attain information of the other world on his own. For the Islamic prophets prophecy was obviously an acquired skill, since most of them were singers and musicians, but that only

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1. *Reconstruction*, ed. Lahore, 125 f. ‘Finality’ must point to the Islamic tenet concerning Mohammed’s closing the row of prophets.
3. By him (cf. *Risāla al-Tawḥīd 61*) and Ahmad Khān a factual plausibility of prophetic illumination is demonstrated in view of analogous experiences to which mental patients are exposed: “So it is not incompatible with human nature”, the latter concludes, “that to such a heart which has no connection with objects perceptible to the senses and is turned to spiritual instruction, revelations descend” (*Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān i*, 29).
5. Sallīm 44.
underlines their inadequacy! The very apostle is wholly dependent on God’s revelatory, otherwise unattainable, tidings. Contrary to this, Muḥ. Dā‘ūd Rahbar thinks of a pre-Wahy preparatory period, in which Mohammed’s “spiritual and mental faculties were equipped to receive the ideas of the Qur’ān as true... and to say that the Prophet’s knowledge of the accounts of earlier prophets was zero before Wahy is too extreme and unpleasing a position”.

In the train of modernity’s thought the prophet is in the first place the educator to impart guidance men are badly in need of. To this end he remains a man like others and is not metamorphosed into a deified figure. And for the following reasons:

a) lest the divine message should be accepted on the ground of impressive effects of a supernatural kind; Man should choose it as guidance agreeing with his own disposition;
b) because the inhabitants of the earth are men, a messenger ought to be one of them (and not e.g. an angelic being: cf. S. 17: 96/94 f.) Furthermore, from this it follows that he is not only responsible for delivery of the heavenly messages (as it is the task of a postman to deliver letters), but also that he has to be an embodiment of divine instruction in order to show men by his way of living that this instruction is feasible.

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2 MW., Oct. 1958, 280 f. Following up Rahbar’s opinion, Āṣaf ‘All Ṭagha‘ī Faidī deems it of great importance to study Koranic sources by historic standards: “The better we get acquainted with the contribution of Judaism and Christianity, the fuller insight we gain into the message and doctrines of the Prophet” (Ṭuḥfah al-Hind, Oct. 1959, 96).
3 When S. 7: 83/85 says that Sha‘īb brought a divine token (bawṣū‘a), Ṭagha‘ī argues that “according to the Koran prophetic teaching in itself already constituted a bawṣū‘a and an evidence. There is no need of an accompanying sign (nīshāh) or a legitimating miracle (ma‘dīzīn) in the technical sense of the word” (Ṭajzunūnī ii, 20).
4 Ma‘ṣūrī, 901 and 906 ff.

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1 Sayyid Abu ‘l-A‘lā Mawdū‘ū, Taḥfīmāt (1940), i, 29.
2 Ma‘ṣūrī, iii, 501 and 506 ff.
3 Compare the present writer’s The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Kān (1949), 82.

BAJON, Koran Interpretation 6
birth of Christ happened without the intermediary of a father, nor that he was a son of Joseph — Still, in the case of other Koranic prophets no mention of a father is made. See e.g. Moses: his mother, not his father, is mentioned! — When Mary received the announcement of a son, she was leading the life of a nun in the temple. It is unthinkable for a nun to have a family. On that account Mary raised the objection: My Lord, how shall I have a son, when man has not touched me (S. 3: 42/47). Thereupon the answer comes: Even so, God creates what He will. Observe! The very same answer also was given in connection with the birth of St. John (see S. 3: 35/40), and it simply means to say: Like all that is created under God's will... And in due course Mary shall become pregnant. The Koran does not deem it necessary to give a detailed description of it. Everybody knows how pregnancy comes about. Kaḥdāhka, i.e. in the way which is known to everyone.

Further, an Ascension of Christ is usually not admitted. On that account S. 3: 48/55, the passage which denotes this event, has been paraphrased by Muh. Mahmūd Ḥājjīzī: “God said: O Jesus, I shall complete your term of life (i.e. you shall not die prematurely through a murder of the Jews)... and I shall raise you to a high rank”. Such an elevation, so he comments, pertains to somebody’s social status and not to his geographic position, as the Almighty says about Idrīs (S. 19: 58/57):

1 That would follow from S. 19: 28/27 where, it is supposed, Mary is accused of unchastity because of the unusual spectacle of a nun with a babe on her arm.

Ma‘ārif iii, 547, 550 f. and 553. Yet the virgin birth remains a point open to controversy. Azād shows that nowhere in the Koran the doctrine of Virgin Birth is contested. Of course, so he continues, it is possible “to claim the opposite by tearing verses out of their context”, as Sayyid Ahmad Khān, Dr Tawfiq Šīḏqī and others tried, but if one bears the context in mind, “one must acknowledge without hesitation that the Koran accepts the dogma” (Fardjumān ii, 444 f.). Equally Abd al-Jākīm combats Ahmad Khān on this issue (“Abd al-Ili. 244, 247 f.).

“...And We raised him to a lofty place”... and it does not signify — and God knows the best — that Jesus ascended to heaven.

If officiating as the Ideal Educator, the prophet must be provided with an irreproachable character. If in the beginning the ʾisma-doctrine 2 may have been regarded by Muslim orthodoxy as a more or less irrelevant affair, it is now for most of the modernists a matter of the greatest moment. As a rule, blameworthy behaviour of prophets is smoothed over by means of all possible acumen. Azād supplies in explanation of Abraham’s dealings in S. 21: 53/52 f. 3 the following intricate disquisition: In an assembly of laity and priests Abraham wanted to show up the impotence of the images dedicated to the sun (Shamas), and therefore he answers: “Rather, this their chief Shamas has done it; he, before whom you always bring your questions”. ... (meaning to say by this: If indeed images reply to questions, ask them. Why ask me?). Learning this answer, all of them became greatly confused, being at a loss what to say against it. They could not declare a reply not to be expected from an idol. Thus this was an indirect demonstration (Judjijat ilgāmī) of Abraham by assuming hypothetically an absurdity over against an opponent 4. Then, to render S. 21: 87 as:

1 al-Tafṣīr al-Wâdīḥ. 1951, iii, 56 f. Sayyid Qutb remarks at this verse: “And God wished him to die a natural death and to take him unto Himself as He takes the souls of righteous worshippers unto Himself” (Q. iii. 76) Parwez points out that a bodily ascension must presume a local limitation of God which runs counter to the concept of His ubiquity (Ma‘ārif iii, 534).

2 Dogma of prophetic immunity from sin and error. Cf. Tor Andreae, Die person Mohammeds im liere und glaube seiner gemeinsd (1918), 138.

3 When commenting verse 64/63 the commentators usually catch Abraham in a lie on account of his denial of having broken down the Chaldean images. But such a supposition, as Azād asserts, cannot be made at all in view of verse 58/57, in which Abraham had denounced beforehand: “And by God, I will certainly foil your idols”.

4 Fardjumān ii, 498 f.
"When he (Jonah) went off in anger and deemed that We had no power over him", makes — according to the same expositor — a blasphemous imputation against the prophet Jonah and his opinion of God. The passage is to be translated as: "We would not put him into strait circumstances". In order that there need be no thought of an infliction Solomon had to undergo on account of a sin he had committed, Chiragh ‘All gives of S. 38:33/34 the version: "We placed upon his throne (of jurisdiction) the body (of a living or dead body)"; thus putting it into the context of 1 Kings 3:16-28.

Though the supposition that a prophet might be disposed to sin is quite rejected, it may, however, be acknowledged that Mohammed shows himself at times a bit loose and tactless in his proceedings, as for instance in the case, hinted at by S. 9:43. Accordingly, one ought to apprehend his dhinaw (see S. 48:2) as 'errors of policy', he could commit because of the circumstance that he lacked knowledge of the unseen world (ghayb), known to God alone. He could only draw his conclusions by deductions from what he saw happening around. Khalaf Allâh diagnoses moments of mental weakness prophets suffered from: Moses' getting into a flurry (S. 28:33), Mohammed's becoming despondent (S. 11:15/12); Dhu 'l-Nûn no longer capable of restraining himself (S. 21:87), etc.

A different function which especially al-Mashriqi likes to allot to the prophet is that of scientist, inasmuch as he is at the same time the man who is conversant with the Word of God, i.e. with the universal laws, established by the Lord. Properly speaking the modern research-worker acts as successor and substitute of the old-time prophet. This is elucidated by a rather amusing explanation of S. 27:18. The speaking ant is accounted representative of insects charged to spread bacteria into Solomon's camp. The king and prophet Solomon, however, knows how to stem the danger, and our interpreter infers: "I am inclined to assume that for the protection of his soldiers from these insects Solomon prepared all the scientific means which modern nations nowadays prepare".

Lastly, it might be worth-while to mention the evaluation Parwez offers with respect to the classic dogma of Mohammed's being the 'seal of prophethood' and the old question of the identity of or distinction between nabîwâ and risâla. After Mohammed, he sets forth, nabîwâ i.e. 'personality' as decisive and most important factor, has been closed, and risâla i.e. the 'ideology' written down in the Koran, has been left to us. How relevant this is for the present appears from the fact that in the world of to-day there is not a fight between personalities but between ideologies, not between individuals but between systems of life. Furtheron the author argues: nabîwâ and

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1 Târîjumân ii, 489.
2 The traditional interpretation of this verse is that it indicates how as a punishment for his absurd fondness of horses Solomon lost his kingdom, his throne being occupied by someone in his likeness.
3 The story of Solomon's wise verdict in the matter of the two babies. See Tahdhib al-Akhlaq iii, 195 ff.
4 With the exception of Ahmad al-Din. Fighting Muslim saint-worship of Mohammed, he states with a reference to S. 2:286: "From this it turns out that prophets as well as other believers might be forgetful and sinful" (Bayân 406).
5 Cf. Ma'ârif ii, 329 f.
6 Cf. Ma'ârif iv, 553.
7 Cf. Ma'ârif iv, 676.
8 al-Fann 109 ff.
9 Hudîth al-Qur'ân 41.
10 Hudîth al-Qur'ân 251. Conformably to the tradition: The scholars are the heirs of the prophets (Bu. 3, 10; Tirm. 39, 19).
11 "Thereupon, when they (Solomon's army forces) reached the valley of the ants, an ant said: O you ants, enter your dwellings, that Solomon and his hosts may not crush you while they do not perceive".
12 Hudîth al-Qur'ân 172.
13 Salim 235.
risāla belong together; the one cannot do without the other. If after the receipt of revelation the prophet remained sitting hidden in a nook, his nabiyyā would be senseless. Nabiyya and risāla are two sides of one and the same truth: the one is its power, the other its practice 1.

Universalism

Following up the theory that man is a Muslim by nature and that the idea of God’s Unity is “easier to be had than water” 2, the modernists maintain emphatically Islam as the universal religion for and from all times: “God’s religion is one, without discontinuance (naskhī) and without any difference between the prophets 3; by the Koran it is called Islām (S. 3: 17/19)” 4. Outward distinctions, so Ażād expounds, are indeed met with in the sundry religions. That is so, because religion itself aims at happiness and prosperity of human society. And the conditions and patterns of human societies neither are nor can be uniform in every epoch and in every country. The disparities in the extant religions, however, are not fundamental 5. And

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1 id. 264. The same theory also affords the author an argument against the claims of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad (1839-1914), the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement. The Mirzā’s contention does not hold, if pretending to be a naﬁ but not a rasūl, since he had come without a Book: “According to the Koran no naﬁ can come without a Book. If a postman has not got letters with him, what is the good of his coming? The task of a rasūl is to deliver divine messages. If he has not got one with him, he makes himself ridiculous” (Maṣūfī iv, 807).

2 Bajān xxv.

3 Some modernists give evidence of an exceptional liberality in this respect and include in the list of prophets divine messengers not in possession of the Scripture like Rama, Krishna (Mirzā Abu ‘l-Fa’in, The Life of Mohammad, 1910, 198), Buddha, Confucius (Tantawī Dżwihāri, al-Dżawhib iii, 45) and Zarathustra (‘Abd al-Qādir al-Maghribī, Tafsir Djū, Tabrāka 95).

4 Mustaṭfa ‘Abd al-Rasūl, al-Dīn wa l-Wāḥy wa l-Islām (1945), 96 f.

5 Tārdjamān i, 186 f. Parwez, however, makes a stand against what he

on S. 21: 92 1 the same author comments: “In one verse three unities are enumerated, the unity of the community, of the godhead and of religion + worship. These three unities are the substance of the Koranic message... By the unity of the community is meant that in the veils of the mass and of the distribution of human individuals one community lies concealed... By the unity of the godhead is meant that however many different names you may give it, however many different houses of worship you may build, you cannot be different in essence. As you are made up of one community, so your Lord is one and besides Him no other can exist. By the unity of worship is meant that, if the community and the Lord are one, religion too must be one” 2. “There is”, so ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm thinks, “no verse in the Koran that merely touches upon a single event, place or time; on the contrary, each verse contains a universal and eternal truth” 3. And commenting S. 1: 7 he rectifies the traditional explanation as follows: Those upon whom God’s wrath is resting, are not the Jews but the atheists; those who err, are not the Christians but people who do not use the talents, granted by God, and do not exert themselves with their physical and mental powers 4. Another specimen of anti-particularistic thought may be recognized in Muḥ. ‘Abdūl’s interpretation of the word jāhil, occurring

calls “the idea caught on nowadays that if every religious person would act according to the ‘sound faith’ of his private religion, it would be conducive to the world’s welfare and happiness” (Maṣūfī iv, 5), and he fears that in this way Islam’s superiority is seriously endangered. As for the divine names he differentiates deliberately between Ilah, a term fitting to every worshipped one, and Allāh, the truly worshipped Godhead (Maṣūfī i, 28).

1 “Verily, this your community is one community; and I am your Lord, so serve Me”.

2 Tārdjamān ii, 490.

3 ‘Abd al-Ḥi, 65.

4 id. 43 f.
THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

in S. 103:3. These are works, he says, to be found among
nations in the possession of a prophetic ihsán, as well as among
nations to whom no prophet was sent, since the principles of
the salát are universal; hence they are indicated by the Holy
Book as bi'l-ma'rifā.\(^1\)

For the effectuation of such universalism al-Mashrīqī assigns
a prominent part to the 'ālim, the man of learning who by
virtue of his objectivity would be most qualified for elimination
of religious discrepancies, etc. And the author outlines the
Utopian scheme: "The 'ālim will get the opportunity to snatch
away (the citizens) from the grip of unjust capitalists and
political swindlers, to rule the world under the laws of the
Book of Nature, to look upon mankind as a whole instead of
dividing it into various small nations, to stop definitely war
and the fighting of men, and to establish a new political Paradise,
corresponding to the Paradise of his own scientific findings,
through which eventually mankind will build up one community
with the aid of knowledge from the Book of Nature."\(^2\)

THE 'PILLARS OF ISLAM' \(^3\)

1) Ṣalāt.

Quite often an unmistakable anti-ritualistic tendency is
noticeable, and in particular it finds expression in dissertations
about what is to be understood by acts of devotion. In a paper
on 'ibādat Āḥmad Khān expounds that worship should not
be confined to strictly religious duties, but that it embraces
as much the development of all powers created in man,\(^4\)
among which the cultivation of science ranks first.\(^5\) Ṣalāt, so
it says in al-Mashrīqī's principal work, "is nothing else
but arrangement and order, concord of the community and
obedience to the leader, public spirit and self-command, battle
against and firmness towards the enemy, deliberateness and
justice. Control of land and sea, as reptiles have it, command
of the air, as birds have it... All Westerners know what
ṣalāt means, occupying the earth from top to bottom".

Further, it is attempted to prove a broad sense of ṣalāt and
its components on etymological grounds. "al-Ṣalāt", it is
argued, "is a term for 'walking on a straight road'... mušallī
is a word for a horse running in a race right behind the first
group of horses; no mušallī is a zigzagging horse. Accordingly,
it is stated about somebody who turns away from the body
of Islam that "he does not believe, does not observe ṣalāt but
denies truth and takes by-roads" (S. 75: 31 f.)." And Parwez
holds forth in another excursus: "Ṣḥḥ signifies 'to swim, to
race with the fierceness of a horse', that is to say: as, while
swimming, the arms are spread widely, so it is called ṣḥḥ if a
horse gallops at full trot. Consequently, in this notion both
the elements of fierceness and expanses are implied. So e.g.
sahāba fī ʾ-l-ard means 'to travel in distant countries'; inna
laka fī ʾ-nahāri saḥḥan Ṭawilān (S. 73: 7) — "you have in
the daytime an extensive and busy occupation". Hence, if it

Nehru saw the headworks (of the Bhakra canal system) to-day he said
that they were temples and places of worship".\(^5\) Ṭadbīr al-Aḥlāq ii, 167 ff. Similarly Mawdūdī: "... fasting, ṣalāt,
ṣuṣnā, sāḥid, dīvār and ʿabid are in fact training-courses for man to fit
him for the great worship which leads human life from the low stage of
animal existence to the lofty stage of true humanity" (Ṭadbīrī, 1, 61).
4 al-Ṭadbīrī, 1, 64.
5 Sahā 209. See also al-Mashrīqī's statement: "On the whole ṣuṣnā in
the Koran does not stand for 'to rub the forehead on the ground' but
'to act upon the commands of God'. Thus S. 55: 5/6, "And the herbs
and trees made a suṣnā" (i.e. obeyed the laws of God) (Ṭadbīrī, 1, 107 f.).
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A final aspect of this subject we should like to mention, is the liberty Ahmad al-Din takes with regard to the salât-rituals themselves. He sets forth that verbalism does not exist in the Koran. The same things may be defined by different wordings. Take for instance the address of God: now we find the name ‘Allāh’, then the designation ‘Raḥmān’. From this it follows clearly that the worshippers are allowed to formulate tasbîh (praise of God) with their own words. Next, the author rejects a fixed order of the salât. As in the Koran qiyām, rukû', sajdâ are recommended separately, one is permitted likewise to perform them separately. So the commemoration (duḥkr) of God may be performed with a qiyām only, without a sajdâ and rukû' (cf. S. 4: 104/103). Lastly, our reformer wishes to reduce the amount of salât to two in a day. In S. 11: 116/114 and S. 17: 80/78 f., he admits, three prayers are summed up but in S. 17: 81/79 one of them is styled nafî (supererogatory), so that only two are left. 4

2) Zakât.

The institution of the alms tax is put on a socio-political level. It is pointed out that it remedies in part the inequality

1 E.g. in S. 17: 46/44.

2 Mašrīf, 520.

3 Cf. also Muh. Iqbal: “The form of prayer ought not to become a matter of dispute. Which side you turn your face is certainly not essential to the spirit of prayer. The Qur’ân is perfectly clear on this point: ‘The East and West is God’s; therefore whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God’ (2: 109)” (Reconstruction, ed. Lahore, 93).

4 Başûn 63 f., 104 f., and 114 ff. On page 119 the middle salât, recorded in S. 2: 239/238, is explained away as “the prayer which is to be a medium to bring about contact with God”. Muh. Abû Zaid may not impossibly be suggesting in covert terms the sufficiency of one salât in a day, when he comments on this text: “The middle one is the best and the most appropriate” (al-Hidâya 32).

of poor and rich 1, that it offers the solution of the posed alternative communism or capitalism, as it represents a kind of happy mean, and that it is an effective instrument for restraining the greed of the rich 2). Muh. Dja’far Phulwâri makes the bright suggestion to speak no longer of income tax, but of — what would amount to the same thing — zakât! The great advantage of such a metonymy would be that in that way people will pay their taxes with pleasure and no more attempts will be made to conceal receipts 3.

3) Sawm (Fasting).

By Muslim modernity this religious duty is mainly, if not exclusively, valued as an institution for the good of morality. “En Islam, le Jeûne se destine a l'amélioration des conditions morales et spirituelles de l'homme, ainsi que le montre clairement ce verset coranique 4: ô vous qui croyez, le Jeûne vous est prescrit, ainsi qu'il l'a été a ceux qui vous ont précédés, pour que vous puissiez vous préserver du mal 5. Morale ou spirituellement, le Jeûne sert donc à se garder du mal: en pensée, en paroles et en actes. Car l'homme capable de renoncer à la satisfaction licite de ses désirs, c'est-à-dire: nourriture, boisson, sexe et propriété, en obéissance au commandement divin, acquiert certainement le pouvoir de renoncer à leur satisfaction illégitime” 6. Mustâfâ Şâdiq al-Raifi advises European socialists to adopt the custom of fasting in the month

1 See i.a. Hadîth al-Qur'ân 249.


3 Thaqîfât Labore, July 1959, 62.

4 S. 2: 179/183.

5 The last clause is a translation (i) of the words: la kullum tatqaqina — “perhaps you may become God-fearing”.

6 Shams al-Nâhir Mahmûd in Jenne Islam (Alger), mai 1949, 3. For the same see also Muḥammad ‘Ali: “... hence fasting in Islam does not mean simply abstaining from food, but from every kind of evil” (The Holy Qur’ân, 1920, note 225).
Ramaḍān, because this system of obligatory poverty compels the people to equality of their belly, irrespective whether one possesses millions or only a penny.

Whereas in this way the typically religious structure of fasting is affected, it is not amazing that it is beginning to lose its obligatory character. In a perturbative essay of ‘Abd al-Ḥamid Bakhit, professor of Islamic History at al-Azhar, the bold view is launched: “Everyday we see hundreds of people who are unable to keep Ramaḍān go into isolated places where they eat and drink... Fasting should be observed only by those who can stand it. Those who cannot fast, may acquaint themselves before God by feeding the poor or giving them money”.

4) Ḥadīḍ.

To an equal extent as the preceding rite pilgrimage has become rationalized. In the opinion of Parwez the very purport of it is to serve as a broadcasting station for Islam. By ‘Abd al-Ḥakim we are told that as good points of it may be marked: a) the opportunity it creates to contrive reformatory schemes, since through it representatives from all over the Muslim world are brought together; b) the curing effect it has on bad habits, owing to the hardships to be endured before reaching Mecca; c) the educative element it possesses: on account of the long travels to be made one passes several foreign countries, and this broadens people’s mind. An advantage Ahmad al-Din wants to ascribe to it, is that such an annual international conference ought to be of avail for prevention of wars.

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1 Wabi al-Qalam (1936), ii, 73.
2 Appeared in al-Akhbar, mai 9, 1955.
3 Maṣā‘ir, 763.
4 ‘Abd al-Ḥ. 292 ff.
5 ‘Abd al-Q. cites in this connection S. 22: 45/46, “Have they not travelled all through the world so that they should have hearts with which to understand and ears with which to hear?” (al-Falsafā 162).
6 Bayān 326.

The diverse rituals of Ḥadīḍ are no matters for much argument. There is only some comment on the true purpose to be attached to the pilgrimage sacrifices. Āzād finds it explained by S. 22: 29/28, when it says: “Eat of this meat yourselves and feed the distressed one, the needy”. That means to express that not—as it is generally assumed—the shedding of animal blood is the real object but feeding of the poor. And in verse 38/37 there is plainly stated: the heart of worship is the surrender of souls, not sacrificed animals and obligatory blood.

POLEMICS

From the outset Muslim Apologetics has made a welcome use of the fact that Mohammed appeared after Moses and Jesus in order to claim Islam to be the crown and perfection of all that Jewish and Christian faith have to offer. The modern version of the same idea is the favourite enunciation about Koran’s exclusive quality of supplying the last—and consequently the most perfect—edition of all heavenly books; or as Sayyid Qutb defines it in a somewhat rhetorical manner with reference to the covenant concluded between God and the Israelites (see S. 2: 38/40): “And Islam with which Mohammed came, is nothing but the eternal religion in its final form; it is an extension of the message and covenant of God, relative to the first men; it spreads its wings over the past and takes man by the hand into the future; it unites the Old Testament and the Last Covenant (= the Koran)”.

And insomuch as the Koran includes the basic fine qualities and enduring values, proper to all religions, shows the right...
direction and corrects the principles of all believing people, it is the pre-eminently capable arbiter of religious dissensions

Before dealing with the more elaborate polemics against Christianity, we would first draw attention to the attacks of the modernists against Hinduism. They are scarce: the Koran-text does not give much cause for it, and also Muslim and Hindu faith have very little in common with each other. An objection against the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is made by Parwez in connection with the story of Adam. Here the Koran teaches us that no influence is exerted on man by deeds of a former existence (dīnān) 3. Then, the commentator finds three aspects of human evil represented by three characters in the Moses narratives, to wit “the Pharaoh as the impersonation of tyranny, Haman 4 as the diabolic representative of Brahmanism, while Qārūn serves as an illustration of the curse resting on great riches” 5. An unequivocal hint at Hindu worship of cows is made by ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm, when he notes on S. 2: 63/67 ff.: “Because this people acted very sullily and was guilty of trespasses, impiety, cult of calves and cows, Moses said to them: God commands you to kill a cow... The ordered slaughter was intended to put an end to the cult and excessive veneration of this animal” 6.

As for polemics against Christianity, besides several charges already repeatedly advanced by classical opponents of Christian

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1 Bayān lxxiv ff.
2 A point of contact may be furnished by the Hindu concept of bhakti. In a dissertation on it Bashir Ahmad Dārī tried to demonstrate that the idea grew up in India under influence of Islamic mysticism with its corresponding notion of taawīk (trust in God), retraceable in S. 6: 79, 162/161 f. (Thaqīf al-Lubm, March 1988, 37 ff.).
3 Ma‘ṣrīf ii, 30.
4 Parwez thinks him to belong to the circle of magicians who are put on the scene to fight Moses (Ma‘ṣrīf iii, 361).
5 Ma‘ṣrīf iii, 186.
6 ‘Abd al-Ḥ. 99.

belief like Ibn Ḥazm and al-Qarāfī also more original views crop up. Parwez compares the Christian dogma of original sin with the Hindu doctrine of migration of souls 3. Muhammad ‘Ali sets his opinion against the ‘sola fide’ of Protestantism, declaring: “Various religions before the advent of Mohammed (Salm) believed that faith alone could secure the salvation of an individual. But Islam made personal endeavour, conduct, a sīn qua non of salvation. Says the Qur‘ān 2: “And the followers of other religions) say: Fire shall not touch us but for a few days (Our faith will be enough to save us from that). Say: Have you received a covenant from Allah, then Allah will not fail to fulfill His covenant, or do you speak against Allah what you do not know” 3. And Muh. Abū Zaid attacks Roman Catholic Mariolatry, when he states in reference to S. 1: 4/5: “Who seeks help beyond God, commits sīrīk, like him who seeks help from virgins, asking for support and intercession” 4.

Then, an important part of these polemics consists of criticism on the Biblical version of ancient history. The Biblical accounts of what happened to the prophets, so Muh. Rashīd Rida supposes, “are comparable with a garden full of trees, grass, thorn-bushes, fruits and insects, whereas the Koranic accounts of them are more like the fragrance which rises from those flowers and like the molasses prepared from those fruits when fresh-gathered” 5. As another case in point the contents of Genesis 1-3 are adduced by Parwez and found inferior because of the following misrepresentations:

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1 Šāliḥ 327.
2 S. 2: 74/80.
3 Islamic Culture (1928), ii, 449.
4 al-Hidāya 64.
5 al-Wāhi al-Muḥammadi 17.
THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

a) Man's creation after God's image. God goes beyond human imagination;
b) Paradise. In the Bible it is a piece of land, surrounded by Tigris and Euphrates. Thus the Biblical narration of Adam bears on a concrete human individual on God's earth, and is not a description of human nature. The particularity of the Koranic report of the story is that name nor place are recorded; by which it suggests a deeper meaning.
c) The forbidden tree. Knowledge of good and evil is the very base of mankind's special status! To keep man from knowledge is the same as to prevent him from attaining the level of true humanity;
d) The creation of Eve. In the Torah woman is stigmatized as the cause of evil. As a result in the eye of Christians woman is held a cursed being and up to the sixth century A.D. the question was discussed in sober earnest whether or not she had a soul.

Further, the author enumerates as disparities between the Biblical and Koranic tale of Noah:
a) Motivation of the Flood is according to the Koran the

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1 But according to another apologist this Biblical view has its counterpart in S. 30: 29/30 (Bashir Ahmad Dâr in Thaqafat Lahore, March 1958, 38 f.).
2 In other words: the Koranic account is to be preferred because of being not historical but metaphorical with a moral import. Cf. also Yusuf 'All in Id. Cult. v, 540.
3 Cf. also K. A. Hamid: "The Garden' in which Adam and his wife lived was obviously the garden of innocence... The twin's eating of the forbidden tree put an end to that state of innocence" (Id. Cult. xii, 154). Muh. Iqbal asserts: "The Old Testament curse for Adam's act of disobedience", whereas the Koran makes mention of the Fall in order "to indicate man's rise from a primitive state of instinctive appetite to the conscious possession of a free self, capable of doubt and disobedience" (Reconstruction, Lahore ed. 84 f.).
4 Ma'arif ii, 65 ff. "The Koran, however", so Azad demonstrates, "... puts an equal blame on both of them (Eve and Adam)". Cf. S. 2: 34/36 ("And Satan made them both backslide therefrom") (Tarjuman ii, 266). requital of the unbelievers' sins, according to the Bible God's regret at having created the earth (see Gen. 6: 5-8);
b) In the view of the Bible the Flood was universal, whereas the Koran takes it for local only;
c) Whilst in the Koran the wicked son was drowned too (S. 11: 45/43)—his blood-relationship with the prophet could not save him from a condign punishment!—we read in Gen. 9: 20-27 that not Cham was punished but that the curse struck the guiltless Kanaan, a son of his.

An imputation of a more theological nature we meet in Sayyid Qutb's explanation of the divine predicates al-Rahmân al-Rahim in S. 1. He argues that they relate to "a bond of love with the Creator, free from terror and compulsion". The Lord is not the vindictive Godhead of the Old Testament who wanted to revenge Himself on the worshippers, "because He feared that they would lose their heads completely, if they were to find themselves capable of constructing whatever they wished, as it says in the myth of Babel's tower".

Not always such a sharp tone is adopted. Seeing that in S. 48: 29 Torah and Gospel are mentioned in a favourable sense, we may conclude so al-Masharfi remarks—that also Jews and Christians possess qualities of faith and good works. For a further proof the author refers to the construction of the atomic bomb and the ascent of Mount Everest. People with such achievements must be following the right religion. And in another place the same writer is so kind as to note: "Undoubtedly the Christians of to-day have asked God's forgiveness... for as a rule they no longer stick to the divinity of Christ... and
they make no more idols of him, as in earlier ages... (They declare:) We do not believe him to be the Son of God in an ontological sense, only we regard him so in a metaphorical and figurative sense" 1.

More than once it happens that our expositors call in the assistance of the Bible as clarification of a Koran-passage. When elucidating S. 72: 9b (“... but he 2 who composes himself to listen 3, finds forthwith a shooting-star for him on guard”), al-Maghribi states: Just as in the Bible the rainbow (see the Noah-story) serves as a token of God’s covenant and promise, so here meteors are set as a token to indicate that owing to Koran’s verdict and Mohammed’s mission human reason is to be liberated from delusive ideas with which magicians (= the djinm) were tricking it 4. Azâd declares in explanation of the vague determination of ‘an eastern place’ in S. 19: 16, “that Mary departed from the temple, where she got her education, going to her native town Nazareth, situated N.E. of Jerusalem. This is corroborated by the New Testament (see Luke 1: 26)” 5. And this author arrives at the conclusion: “Ultimately there exists no real fundamental difference between the doctrines of Christ and those of the Koran. Both of them apply the same criteria to their precepts. There is merely a difference in respect of the conditions under which they had to be explained and the form in which they had to be clothed. For Christ it was sufficient to lay stress on ethics and purity in heart, since the Mosaic Law was available... But the Koran had to explain at the same time ethics and regulations. Therefore it chose such a mode of expression in which precepts and regulations were explained in clear, practical and precise wordings, instead of in metaphors and similes (as Jesus did)” 6.

Lastly, once or twice a commentator carries on a controversy against atheists. So Ahmad al-Din combats the view that God does not exist ‘in actual fact’ (fi ‘l-khâridj), but only ‘in the mind’ (fi ‘l-dhim). It is just the reverse! “A rational being does not exist ‘absolutely’ (fi ‘l-khâridj). It is dependent on reason... And one cannot be self-existent, if reason be the mere ground of existence. If the Self-existent were simply an invention of human reason and could not tread outside Himself, He cannot possibly be self-existent... In other words: the Self-existent, i.e. God, exists out of necessity” 7. By Muḥ. al-Taniki’s conclusions are tried with Existentialism and over against the statement of J. P. Sartre: “Everybody is born into the world without any rational cause or motive”, he puts forth that every born child is destined to cultivate the earth and to be tried on it. See S. 67: 2 8.

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1 Tadhkira i, 91.
2 i.e. a djinn.
3 In order to overhear the discourse of the inhabitants of heaven.
4 Tafsir Djâjz Tabâraka 155.
5 Tarjumân ii, 433.
6 id. i, 109 f.
7 Beşân vii.
8 Muḥallâ al-Azhar, 13 Febr. 1956, 752.
V. KORAN AND MODERN TIME

Scientific aspects

Every Holy Book is loaded with the ambivalence both of being originated in a given space of time (its ‘earthly’ character) and of pretending to offer transcendent information and everlasting values for the believer of whatever age (its ‘heavenly’ aspect). The ineluctable consequence of this contradictory datum for the interpreter who wants to keep pace with the times, is to engage in apologetics in order to prove that the Holy Scripture adequately meets the needs of the present, both materially and spiritually. Consequently, the transcendent has to be made actual!

Muslim commentators of the Koran and Christian exegetes of the Bible are faced with the same awkward problem, and both of them sometimes cut queer capers. So — to begin with an instance of the latter — the Protestant Dutch economist W. J. van de Woestijne claims that Jesus' paroekasis in Matth. 6:26 not to worry about the day of to-morrow does not preclude the possibility of keeping a savings-bank book. Such a treatment of Bible wording may hardly be qualified as an interpretation e mente auctoris; modern life, however, has its exigencies... Analogous elucidations of Muslim modernists with regard to the Koran text soon caught the attention of European orientalists, and the paradigma, adduced by I. Goldziher and derived from the 'Abduh-school, finding telegraph, telephone, tramway and microbes recorded in Koranic passages, have become almost classical. And indeed,

here our expositors stick at nothing: even a vexed question such as the existence of flying saucers does not offer any trouble. For this S. 17: 72/70 b. is cited and rendered: "... but among all creatures created by Us We presented many with superiority (above men). The comment follows: It is just the flying saucers on account of which "people on earth are more or less getting the feeling that on other planets there might live creatures, superior to us, whose scientific achievements are likely to surpass ours".

Further, not only are results of modern research to be rediscovered in the Koran, but the reverse also holds good, viz. that the present-day state of science may make divine statements transparent. So in respect of S. 4: 59/56 it is noted: "Whenever their skins burn, God changes them for other skins in order that they (the damned) will suffer the most severe tortures... And the late Dr 'Abd al-'Azīz Bāšā Ismā'īl declares in his book al-Islām wa'l-Tibb al-Hadīth: The reason of it is that the pain-nerves are in the epidermis; in tissue, muscles and internal organs pain-feeling is comparatively weak. Hence the physician knows that burning of the scar-flesh occasions the most severe smart".

As for apologetics applied to doubts rising from intellectual deliberation a distinction is to be made between a) endeavours to blur out or to 'explain' antiquated conceptions met with in the Koran and b) attempts to bring forward Koranic notions appropriate to the thought-world of to-day.

A fine specimen of the first category is the shrewd application of a divine accommodation-theory, made by Khalaf Allāh with

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2 Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung 356.
3 With reference to S. 6: 98 b. ("We have detailed the signs unto men of intelligence") Muh. Aslam Džairādži notes: "In proportion to the increase of his knowledge about natural phenomena, man shall be enabled the better to understand Koranic expositions!" (See his Preface to Ma'dārif).
regard to primitive ideas occurring in the Koran. He enunciates in this connection that in the story of Dhu 'l-Qarnain views of the Arabs of Mohammed's days concerning sunset are reflected. The same is relevant to some notions about hell, devils and djinns. In S. 37: 6-10 and 72: 9 the Koran speaks as if devil and djinns could eavesdrop in heaven on what is going to be arranged for the future. But when afterwards Islam is getting a stronger hold in Arabia, the Koran comes to combat pagan views. Then it proclaims that the djinns are not acquainted with the unknown; for had that been the case, they would not even after Solomon's death have tired themselves out with the arduous construction of the temple (see S. 34: 13/14). If, therefore, the Koran does not combat immediately such heathen conceptions, it is not on account of considering them to be right, but merely out of the desire to nullify them little by little.

The desire of modernity is not only to dismiss the appearance of primitive notions but also the references to barbarous practices. In a dialogue with a Western-educated youth Parwez remarks on S. 4: 38/34b. (passage in which it is recommended to chastise wives in case of stubborn disobedience against her husband): "At this passage thoughts occur to you which I understand. Surely you will say: It is barbarous to beat women. Indeed, it is a very special matter if a man arises to beat his wife. But this thought came to you, because you suppose it a regulation for individual life, i.e. a sanction for every husband to punish his wife. This opinion is not right. It is a regulation for social life — not for individuals — i.e. such an affair is to be propounded to magistrates." In former ages already

1 See S. 18: 84/86, "he found it (the sun) to set in a miry spring".
2 al-Fann 66 ff.
3 Sālih 60. The same Ahmad al-Din who fancies that the men, mentioned in that verse, are truly protectors of women, viz. in their capacity of persons in authority (Bayān 581).

commentators and jurists made so many stipulations for the execution of the punishment of cutting off the hands for theft (see S. 5: 42/38) that the actual application seldom, if ever, took place. But it testifies to typically twentieth century morality, if it is argued that the prescript refers only to thieves who steal craving for more riches — and not to him who steals out of poverty. Since it is the community which bears the responsibility that everyone should receive his daily bread, belonging to him by right. Accordingly, in that case the community — and not the thief — is guilty.

The above-mentioned instances of apologetics are of a more defensive nature: the aim is to demonstrate that it is to mistake the shadow for the substance, if one suspects the Koran of being not disinclined to the use of primitive and obsolete notions and to prescribing uncouth manners and rules. On the other hand, the second kind of intellectual apologetics we now have to deal with, appear to be bent on the exhibition of undeniably positive points which are simply to the advantage of the Holy Book. Here most energy is spent to show what an eminent promoter of science the Koran proves to be. To this end al-Mashriqi, himself once a physicist and mathematician by profession, points at S. 32: 15-17 and states that in the text

1 Q. vi. 57.
2 This passage is rendered paraphrastically as follows: "Only those people put faith in Our ſiyyat (i.e. the ordinances derived from the Book of Creation: the statutes of Revelation) who — having discovered these ſiyyat — fling themselves down before them trembling, praise their Lord (with all their hearts) — and they are not conceited (by fancying these ſiyyat not worthwhile or by considering them useless). They (are fascinated by the study of them to such a degree that they) do not notice the beds next to them. On account of fear of punishment or out of desire (for profit by the Book of Nature) they call to their Lord (for an encounter by studying continuously His creation), and with (much of) the blessing derived from the study of the Book of Nature they benefit the community. Hence (o people!) nobody knows how many refreshing blessings (from
“neither the throwing down of salāt-ritual nor the execution of devotional acts in the way of the Jews are indicated, as short-sighted mawlawīs think, nor the performance of ṭahādžjud-prayers \(^1\) for which one gets up from bed; nor does āyatīnā refer to the recitation of Koran verses, nor does ḍhikrīnā bi-hā mean that somebody should remind other of Koran verses... but the āyatīnā touch upon the ordinances of creation which are to be taken from the Book of Nature, and by sadīda and ṭasībīt it is meant that after having acknowledged their divine origin one must study them restlessly so that no time is left for sleeping \(^2\); and that he who studies is either afraid that, if he should not do so, divine punishment would come down upon mankind on account of neglect, or desirous that divine blessings will be acquired through his inventions. In view of this God says, that, if the divine āyat are observed, you do not know what pleasant sensations for the eye, i.e. blessings, you might not receive from God\(^3\). Another vindication of its scientific character, so the same writer asserts, is the fortunate circumstance of Koran’s being the only heavenly book in the world whose text has been guarded from revisions and interpolations later on. From the contents of such a well-preserved Scripture a Westerner might confidently adopt a great deal \(^4\). In Egypt Ṭanṭāwī Dijwāhiri has become a regular champion in exhibiting science-promoting trends in the Koran. According to him, the enigmatic ṣurāf mungaiti’ 💣, ṭs and so on, are put down with the divine purpose that people be shown the necessity of reducing words into letters, since there is no other method of learning a language. Similarly sciences and crafts go back to their roots: how can, for instance, somebody operate with bronze without knowledge about the properties of copper and tin? \(^1\). Then, it must be encouraging to hear from the same apologiste: “Muslims should be aware that they — and not America — have laid the foundations of the science of spiritualism, because God told us in Sūra 2 (vs. 67/72 f.) to strike the man who was slain that he be restored to life and may communicate who killed him” \(^8\). But equally with the two fervent defenders just mentioned, the most other modernist exegetes stand in the breach for the scientific purport attributed to the Koran, though they appear less frequently in this rôle. Azād e.g. exclaims with an undisguised pride at S. 10: 40/39 (“No, they \(^8\) charged with falsehood that of which they had no comprehensive knowledge and the ta’wil \(^4\) of which had not yet come to them”): “… and consider how in a few words the Koran has laid the foundation for the whole development of human research and intellect... (by establishment of the truth:) There is no call to reject something on the mere ground that it is too difficult to be compassed. And how could such enormous intellectual progress have been made (as has actually been done in the course of time), if men of knowledge and research

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\(^1\) Nocturnal devotions.

\(^2\) In an analogous manner al-Mashriqi remarks on p. 190 of Hadīth al-Qur‘ān that in S. 48: 29 (“... their marks are in their faces from the effects of sadīda”) it is not stated ‘on their foreheads’, like the mawlawīs' perform sadīda with rubbing the forehead. No, it is recognizable ‘in their faces’, i.e. in their pale complexion, due to unbroken study of the Book of Nature!

\(^3\) Hadīth al-Qur‘ān 79 f.

\(^4\) Tadhkira ii, 20 f.

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\(^1\) al-Dijwāhiri ii, 11 f.

\(^2\) al-Dijwāhiri i, 84 ff.

\(^3\) I. e. those who were in the wrong.

\(^4\) ‘Interpretation’. The commentator, however, renders this word as ‘result’. Equally, the gift of ta’wil al-āḥādith, ascribed to Joseph in S. 12: 6, would not signify ‘the ability to read dreams’ (the usual version), but ‘the knowledge of discerning aim, result and issue of affairs’ (Tāriḫu‘man ii, 265).
(had not observed this maxim and) had rejected things not yet understood?" 4.

In this field of apologetics the nineteenth century theory of evolution 8 is a much repeated theme. The announcement of an increasingly better and braver world was the gospel of the West for some decennia before World-war I. But among the awakening nations of Asia and Africa its resonance is heard right up to the present day. The duration here of such utopian ideals is not a matter of surprise, since such perspectives find, of course, more credence in countries lately freed from colonial domination and still capable of being spell-bound by the wonders of modern technics than in the bombed areas of a crippled Europe. Accordingly, also in quite recent commentaries Darwinian trends are traceable. In the fourth volume of his study of Koranic Ideas, published in 1949, Parwez makes the following classification of history: 1) The age of childhood, in which people used to credit incidents with an unknown cause to supernatural intervention; 2) The period of youth, in which prophets appeared; however, man did not yet possess the divine guidance in its original form; 3) The age of discretion, starting with the Koranic revelation; had religion been based upon emotions before, from now onwards the 'invitation to God' (da'wat ilâ Allah) was founded upon reason. See S. 12: 1089. By Muḥ. Ṭaḥā 4 a depiction of man's religious and social evolution is detected in S. 79: 1-5 5, and the next stages of his development can be discerned:

1 Tarjuma II, 181.
2 By "nineteenth century" we do not mean to say that evolutionism has been rendered out of date by recent discoveries. On the contrary, lately a scientist declared with conviction: "It is no longer a theory, it is a fact". But nowadays there is an old-world ring about the optimistic deductions the public drew from it in the beginning, believing that a golden age of an uninterrupted progress had come.
3 Maʿārif IV, 793 ff.
4 Pārāʾ Am 17 ff.
5 Presumably five classes of angels are described in those verses.

In a social respect.
Vs. 1 1 After the troubles and bodily inconveniences of childbirth a new human being comes into the world.
Vs. 2 2 When the time of childbirth has come, all connections with the womb appear to be broken very smoothly so that the act of birth passes off easily.
Vs. 3 3 When the child grows up and the period of youth has come, one begins to realize that, so to say, the years of this period of life glide past gently, and at that age sorrow and grief, inherent to life, are scarcely felt.
Vs. 4 4 At this age life reaches its zenith. One has his family, his regular habits, receives a liberal salary, enjoys a good health and takes the best of cultural and social life.
Vs. 5 1 Finally, the day of old age and the experiences of

In a religious respect.
At first human faith has to stand the attack of worldly pleasures and carnal lusts.
When the first endeavours are successful and one has a hold over the flesh, one easily gets rid of the clinging connections with the world.
When the pursued objects are attained, gradually things become easier. Trust in God and devotion increase and scope is given to one's natural gifts; a clear way is shown, few obstacles remain and swift progress is made.
When this point is reached, one excels and ranks first among contemporaries. Worship becomes still purer, good works still finer.
Finally, the worshipper chosen by God makes the requisite
life lead man to meditation, dispositions for himself and
and with complete surrender, others, and through divine
bending a keen eye upon life grace he attains the stage of
after death, he prepares for
the hereafter, absorbed in
thought.

Furthermore, Koranic passages point out a similar evolution
regarding the cosmos: “Creation of heavens and earth took
place by means of a matter, indicated by the Koran as dukhān
(cf. S. 41:11/12). This gaseous mass, produced in the beginning,
was (as first) undivided. Thereupon its components were
disunited and from that the celestial bodies came into being
(cf. S. 21:31/30). The whole universe has not been brought
about all at once, but creation passed through successive
periods. There were six of them (cf. S. 10:3). Planets were
completed in two periods (S. 41:11/12). The earth was created
in two periods (S. 41:8/9). The genesis of plants and highlands
and the completion of vegetation likewise occurred in two
periods, and thus (so in the creation of earth) there were four
periods altogether (S. 41:9/10). Creation of all organisms
(i.e. of plants and animals) took place from water (S. 21:31/30).
Man passed through a series of developmental stages (S. 71:13/
14)”¹. A detailed report of man’s evolution is supplied by Par-
wez ². Starting-point was the stage of inorganic nature. Life
was still unconscious (cf. S. 2:26/28). Life woke up through
besprinkling with water (cf. S. 21:31/30; 25:56/54). Through
mixing of the essential parts of water and earth protoplasm
takes shape as a cell, which matter the Koran indicates as sin
lāqib (‘sticky clay’; cf. S. 37:11). The stage of life-cells is
described in S. 6:98. Next comes the sexual reproduction of
life-cells (cf. S. 35:12/11), etc. In the opinion of al-Mashriqi
man’s evolution does not stop when his creation is finished,
but will go on ending in his ‘meeting the Lord’ (in this con-
nexion the words of S. 13:2, bi-līgā’ī rabīkum are quoted). And
the writer continues: “. . . at this stage of the development of
this ‘Man’, the Supreme Divine Intelligence that originally
created this Universe . . . bursts into a Universe-wide Handshake
with Man . . . the Divine Trumpeter announcing that the Pur-
pose of Creation had come to a successful End . . . the Two
Portions of One Soul that had separated numberless millions
of years back had at last united to become One still Everlasting
Eternity” ³.

Reading such fantastic interpretations one is induced to
make the sarcastic comment: “But how will this end, if later on
scholarly views change?” By some of the modernists the point
has been foreseen. The inferences made, however, differ. Parwez
testifies simply: “The Koran will not follow human hypothesizes,
but man’s research-work is to follow the Koran. If a certain
research lines up with the exposition of the Koran, it will be
a cause of due pride and great joy for the research-workers . . .
But if the result of their research does not agree with the Koran,
they should continue their work” ⁴. Azād gives evidence of a
better judgment. Having discussed Koranic conceptions of
creation, he continues: “These indications (about cosmogony)
seem to corroborate theories of to-day with respect to the
first creation of the heavenly bodies and the origin of the

¹ Tardjuman ii, 175. At times Christian theologians may equally exhibit
the desire to ascribe advance knowledge of modern biological views to
their Holy Book. So P. J. Roscam Abbing, a professor of one of the Dutch
universities, writes: “Genesis I indicates that God created by degrees and
by steps. He created the new by means of the old. In this way man is a
’sudden mutation’ (sprognmutatie) of animal organism, effectuated by
God” (De Mondige Gemeente, 1958, 34).
² Ma‘ārif ii, 6 ff.
³ The Human Problem (1955), 15.
⁴ Ma‘ārif ii, 5 f. Also the conviction of Ahmad Khan (cf. MW, Oct.
1956, 331).
eral globe; and if we wished to do so, we could give detailed excursus and explanations on the ground of available data. Yet, it would not be advisable to do such a thing. However documented theories may be, they are theories and theoretical speculations can never pronounce upon reality with absolute certainty. Moreover, what is actually the use of interpreting those short and ambiguous indications of the Koran? Suppose that at the moment we explain diffusion of gas (in the process of evolution) in the light of theories current in these days. But what will happen tomorrow? If instead of them other theories turn up? It is obvious that this question pertains to a world of secrecy impenetrable for our knowledge and comprehension. Besides, it is not the intention of the Koran to explain with these indications the origin of the universe; by their means it wants to draw man’s attention to God’s might and wisdom.¹

Finally, it may even come to radical rejection of all efforts to unearth scientific views in the Koran, and the implicit deploring of the lack of Muslim historic criticism of the Koran. Thus Nasib Amin Faris declares: “Muslim writers and apologists read into the Qur’an... those ideas of modern Western culture which have found their way to their mind. But in doing so they have invariably violated the norms and dictates of strict historical interpretation.”²

**Practical Issues**

As we may well understand, the modernists are uncommonly concerned about questions of general welfare. All of them are

¹ Tardjuman ii, 175 f. Exactly the same is asserted by the Egyptian Amin al-Khalli, when contesting the so-called scientific exegesis of the Koran (cf. MIDEO, 1957, iv, 278). And in a like direction goes the argument of another Egyptian scholar, to wit al-Aqäd: “And it (Koran) animates man to reflect upon the world of soul as well as the world of nature... (but) it does not interfere in disputable and hypothetical questions” (al-Fatifta 12).

² The Isl. Lit., July 1956, 12.

alarmed at the arrears of Muslim nations in the fields of politics, economics and social development. Problems of a speculative or doctrinal nature are mostly felt to be irrelevant to the situation, and — if broached — they are usually prompted by items of social or public affairs.

A characteristic symptom of this mentality is e.g. that Mohammed is far more valued as a fighter against social abuses than as a reformer of religious fallacies. The greatest tribute one can pay to him is to describe him as a world-reformer. And Parwez is so successful as to derive this function directly from the Holy Script. The qualification al-mudaththir (‘he who is wrapped up in a cloak’), attached to the Prophet in S. 74: 1, he connects ingenuously with the verb tadhib, meaning ‘to arrange his nest’. In English, he states, this is called ‘to set one’s house in order’. Hence a good administrator is termed a ‘disbr al-mal’. In this connection al-mudaththir is to be taken to signify a ‘world-reformer’. After this word follows the imperative ghum (‘Rise up’). Consequently, the Prophet is here incited to start preaching a world-revolution.¹

By our spokesmen the conservative ‘ulama are accused of doing merely negative work on account of their making suspect all that is new and their inveighing constantly against Western-educated youth without any inquiry into the actual cause of the latter’s irreligion. Under these circumstances the modernists set themselves to demonstrating the incongruity of Islam’s present form with the original. Foreign elements which have crept into it from the outside are said to be accountable for and as extremely corruptive factors are stigmatized: 1) other-worldliness, copied from the Christians; 2) ritualism and priesthood, adopted from the Jews and 3) ancestral worship, derived from Irian Magi.²

¹ Saltan 265.
² Saltan 205.
Firstly, illustrative of the dislike to other-worldliness \(^1\) is the vigorous fight, put up against the view that this world is merely a vale of tears and all is to be expected from the hereafter. A fundamental text in refutation of it is: “And He has made subservient to you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth” (S. 45: 12/13) \(^2\).

al-Mashriqi counts it a ridiculous idea to think the djinnât (see S. 85: 11) to be pleasure-gardens in which ‘good’ people are seated at rivulets in the companions of sweet hari-girls: Djinnât is world-dominion and is unrelated to a hereafter! \(^3\). And Mażhar al-Dīn Siddiqi observes, after having cited S. 17: 20/19: “… those who work and live for higher things and disregard immediate difficulties and losses for the sake of nobler and more lasting benefits make their mark on history. This is the true meaning of Akhirat (hereafter), for there is a hereafter in this world also” \(^4\). On the ground of S. 16: 113/112b. \(^5\) Parvez puts forward: Hunger and indigence are judgments from heaven; ‘honourable sustenance’ (cf. S. 8: 4, 75/74) is for the faithful \(^1\). In the words: “… who wander about in the earth seeking to secure the favour of God” (S. 73: 20), al-Maghribi reads an eulogy of trade, “as it constitutes one of the mightiest factors for the strength and self-preservation of the nations” \(^2\). “The Koran”, ‘Ali Vahit proclaims in one of his sermons, “does not praise gold and silver, but iron \(^3\), and wants to turn our attention to the seas and ships \(^4\). It requires us to work for our country like lions” \(^5\). The salāt \(^6\) in S. 9: 100/99 and 104/103 which the Prophet has to carry out for the Beduins, are to al-Mashriqi’s mind ‘applauses’, intended as incitements to step out of the darkness of ignorance, etc. \(^7\). Shukūr (‘grateful’: S. 14: 5) is, in the opinion of Āzād, “he who values as well as uses in a proper way the endowments granted to him by God” \(^8\).

As an example pertinent to the fight against ritualism and priesthood, the following sarcastic address of al-Mashriqi might serve: “O muftis of to-day, to whom people go for fatwâ’s (notifications of the decision of the shari’ā in or respecting a particular case) and who stew their fatwâ’s like the heaven which showers down a pouring rain, to hit whomsoever they wish, and who consider themselves to be superintendents on earth, directed to pour out God’s wrath on men by means of their deceitful pamphlets… According to you people become

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\(^1\) Maʿṣūrī, 1, 127. Justifiable poverty is, as Ahmad al-Dīn remarks at S. 2: 274/273, if one gets into financial difficulties owing to college expenses, training for a trade, spending time for work of charity (Begûn 388 f.)

\(^2\) Tafsîr Dîrac Tabârâka 189.

\(^3\) Allusion to S. 57: 25.


\(^5\) Quoted by H. E. Allen in his The Turkish Transformation (1935), 216.

\(^6\) According to al-Ṭabarî here prayers are meant to invoke God’s forgiveness.

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\(^1\) Maʿṣūrī, iii, 604.

\(^2\) Tahiruni, iv, 133f.

\(^3\) Tarrow, 284. Equally Ibrahim al-Djibâlî derives from S. 31: 11/12 (“We did give wisdom to Luqmân, saying: Be grateful to God”) the lesson that the best expression of gratitude is to make an intelligent use of God’s gifts of grace (Maṣūla al-Azhâr, 1937, 319).
Muslim through their beard, clothes and turban, and become disbelievers if they do not wear your clothes and turban.”

The ‘anciental worship’ to be combated is in fact the evil of taqlid (traditionalism), i.e. of walking in the forbears’ ways. According to Parvez, at the root of it lies a struggle, fought for the preservation of self and against an inferiority complex, nourished by fear. All the time it has been a hindrance to the message of truth. See S. 43: 22/23. In connection with S. 9: 6, Ázād notes that such a thing happened “in order that the man, arrived at a safe place, could contemplate freely and independently which way he would like to take. Hence it follows that as to religion mere taqlid does not meet the case. Understanding and confidence too are required. Otherwise there was no need of affording an opportunity to listen to the Koran and to meditate on it.”

To be enabled to get rid of transmitted but antiquated institutions and rules and to adjust Muslim life to the requirements of the age, necessarily requires the attribution of a high degree of flexibility to the injunctions dictated by the Koran. To this end the following argumentation is given: “It is obvious that — though human nature may be invariable — alterations appear in respect of human wants on account of the process of time and changed conditions. Nobody can deny the fact that there exists a manifest distinction between the social problems of the Arabs of thirteen centuries ago and those of our days... The principles for the solution of present-day social problematics are found in the Koran and they are to be worked out in detail according to the needs of the age. By way of illustration one might conceive it like this: When having fixed certain restrictions and rules for football, it is left to the players to score goals on their own insight. For the ‘play of life’ the Koran calls those rules ḫudūd Allāh (cf. S. 58: 5/4 and 2: 183/187). It delimits the way of life by those ḫudūd while man, going on the road traced out, is given free play to solve on his own questions and problems of his time... If, for instance, the Koran forbids ribā, it does not furnish details, reckoning with all possible shapes of interest, usury may assume in later times”. Similarly, Khalifa ‘Abd al-Hakim contests the view that Islam offers a fixed and uniform pattern of culture, right for every epoch and place. Already at the time of ‘Umar civilization had been changed since the days of Mohammed. An Englishman who becomes a Muslim, retains a culture different from that of a Pakistani Muslim, etc. “The train of Koranic thought is this that every culture bears a certain pattern for a certain period. When that pattern has had its day, it does not return”. The text, cited in support of this thesis, is S. 7: 32/34 (“And every nation has its set time. So when their time is come, they shall not retard it an hour, nor shall they advance it”).

**Political Thought**

Islam never developed the idea of ‘the State as an indepen-

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1 Maṣāfir, vi, 648 ff. For a similar view, expressed by an Egyptian modernist see Qāsim ‘Amīn, Tahār al-Muḥāsa (1899), 157 (cf. J. Brugman, De betekenis van het Mohammedaans recht in het bedoelde Egypte, 1960, 84).

2 Maṣāfir, vi, 648 ff. For a similar view, expressed by an Egyptian modernist see Qāsim ‘Amīn, Tahār al-Muḥāsa (1899), 157 (cf. J. Brugman, De betekenis van het Mohammedaans recht in het bedoelde Egypte, 1960, 84).

3 ‘Abd al-Hakim, ‘Abd al-Hakim, “The train of Koranic thought is this that every culture bears a certain pattern for a certain period. When that pattern has had its day, it does not return”. The text, cited in support of this thesis, is S. 7: 32/34 (“And every nation has its set time. So when their time is come, they shall not retard it an hour, nor shall they advance it”).
dent political institution". Modern society, however, requires it! Muslim modernity is extremely puzzled on the issue what the right form of government should be and no question is more discussed in its periodicals. Europe offers various patterns. Which one to choose? Or rather, which one serves best Islamic exigencies and is at the same time feasible in the world of to-day?

In the solutions offered and suggested it is not easy to discover any agreement. Muh. Rashid Riḍā thinks the traditional system of government still the best and says about it: Its way of acting is consultation (cf. S. 42: 36/38); its head the highest imām or caliphate for the enactment of its law; the community has full power both to appoint as well as to dismiss him. al-‘Aqṣād declares that the Koran enjoins a democratic polity and rejects an absolute monarchy. "But", so he proceeds, "it does not go without saying that it is here a question of a rule by majority. For at every turn the Koran establishes that insight, ability, reliability and knowledge is not a matter of most votes carry the day". See e.g. S. 6: 116 ("And if you listen to most of those in the earth, they will lead you astray from the path of God") and S. 25: 46/44 ("Or do you think that most of them do hear or understand? They are only like the cattle; nay, they are straying farther off from the path")

al-Maṣhīrī, on the other hand, is an advocate of a benevolent autocracy, and he deduces from the command: "Obey God and His messenger" (S. 8: 20) as application for the present that at every moment a leader of the Muslim community should be available for the enactment of the laws of God and the

Prophet. Ţanżāwī Dżawhari suggests at S. 4: 62/59: Let there be in every Muslim country a General Assembly. This parliament is free to take decisions in the interest of the country in question. Besides it, also a Special Assembly should be set up, consisting of delegates from the sundry General Assemblies. They ought to elect by ballot somebody whom they charge with the caliphate. S. 4: 62/59 leads Parwez to speak of 'subordinate authorities' (the awwalāy ‘ul-amr), and a 'Central Authority' (Allah and His messenger), a kind of Court of Appeal to which one can submit controversial issues one has with the subordinate authorities. Furthermore this modernist urges the necessity of an enforcing authority for a state. Otherwise laws would be no more but a collection of words and sentences. Hence the prophets received, together with the provisions of law, authority by which those laws could be made to function (cf. S. 57: 25).

Yūsuf 'Ali wants to leave the greatest possible liberty of choosing the appropriate form of government and he states: "The religious polity of Islam is not committed to any particular form of sovereignty, such as kingship, Aristocracy or Democracy." (As underlying principle of this view-point the assertion of Chiragh 'Ali would be valid: "The Koran does not interfere in political questions, nor does it lay down specific rules of

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1 Tadhbir, iv, 170 ff.
2 al-Djawahir, iii, 56.
3 Maṣirī, iv, 624 ff.
4 Cf. also Maṣirī, iv, 433: "Provisions without means of power remain only moral rules, as mulla's in their addresses, poudits in their upadesh (preaching) and padre's in their sermons habitually demonstrate".
5 Maṣirī, iii, 610. In a note there is remarked: "In the world authority manifests itself always through steel, no matter whether it is the sword, spear, armour or helmet of former times, or the tanks and airplanes of today. On that account the Koran employs the collective noun 'steed' to denote the concept of authority".
6 Isl. Culture vii, 15.
conduct in the Civil Law”\(^1\). Finally, it is Muḥ. Mazhar al-Din Şiddiqi who pushes things to extremes, when declaring in regard to legislation and in reference to S. 4: 169/171 (“O people of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion”), that it is quite beside the mark to assert that a law cannot be an Islamic law as long as it has not got a religious base. Neither in former days nor in the modern age has the greater part of laws been deduced from religious principles\(^2\). Here, indeed, one is very close to the conception of a secular state.

However vague, sketchy and incongruous the political theories may be, there exists an unmistakable consensus of opinion regarding the inadmissibility of communist ideology. “Islam endorses whole-heartedly”, as Parwaz is ready to admit, “a socialism which works against misery of the poor and the weak, but it can certainly not advocate a socialism which denies the existence of God and bases equality of men on equality of the belly”\(^3\). Āzād points to a like direction and says that the Koran, contrary to Communism, deems diversity in standard of life a natural fact. Otherwise man would not have any stimulus to develop his natural abilities.\(^4\) And al-‘Aqqād postulates that the Koran does discern diversity in talents (and accordingly in responsibilities), but does not accept inequalities in social intercourse and racial relations\(^1\).

In refutation of the claims of Communism, writers like to demonstrate that the Koran as well is of an anti-capitalistic tenor. For this the most frequently cited locus probans is S. 59: 7, rendered by Muḥ. Mazhar al-Din Şiddiqi as: “What God has bestowed on His Apostle, and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer in order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you”\(^2\). One of the texts Parwaz adduces against Communism is S. 9: 112/111 (“God has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this, that they shall have Paradise”), and comments on it: This is the agreement upon which the social structure of Islam has been established. There are two partners: God and the faithful. There is something that is sold and there is a selling-price. In the agreement it is settled that one personally entrusts one's property, i.e. the goods earned and one's natural abilities, to God, i.e. the millāt (religious community) which is responsible for putting God's law into operation. In exchange for it, the millāt provides Paradise which not only embraces the hereafter but this world's life just as well. It is realized, if e.g. somebody who earns five rupees but needs ten for his daily requirements, receives five above them, whereas somebody who earns ten rupees but needs only five, gives the remaining which the Koran calls al-ṣaw‘, to the public weal. The only thing one is allowed to consider

\(^1\) The proposed political, legal and social Reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Muhammedan States (1883), 17. For a similar argument see also Muḥ. Uthmān who, referring to S. 5: 101 ff., concludes that it is up to man to fix the most appropriate form of government (Thaqīfāt Labore, Nov. 1959, 8 f).

\(^2\) Thaqīfāt Labore, May 1958, 47.

\(^3\) Mo‘ārif i, 123 f. The author refers for the latter thesis to S. 16: 73/71 (“And God has abounded to some of you more than to others in means of subsistence”). This, however, he continues, does not imply inequality of opportunities for those who forge ahead. See S. 41: 9/10 b. which he renders as: ”... and for the four seasons He fixed (the means of) livelihood which are equally (within the reach of) anyone who is in want of them”.

\(^4\) Tarādimun ii, 136. This commentator refers to S. 6: 165 (“And He it is who made you viceroyents on the earth, and raised some of you above others in rank, that He might try you by what He has given you”); S. 16: 73/71 and 43: 31/32.
private property is that which pertains to necessaries of life, like clothing, domestic utensils, furniture, cattle 1.

Also in a more metaphysical way words are crossed with Communism. Against Marxian materialism Parvez sets Islam's philosophy of life which values spirit as the decisive factor and he states: Islam sees matter as a manifestation of the spiritual word, the 'ālam amr 2. So it is spirit in a tangible form. And it was with a well-defined purpose that God created the universe. That involves implicitly that things do not happen by chance but under direction. Man receives direction from the 'ālam amr. It is called 'revelation' and determines permanent values. Among these there is for the Muslim society ḥasan (‘doing well’), implicative of 'adl (‘justice’). Ḥasan is a derivative of ḥasan, an equivalent of tawḥid (‘proportion’). By the system of Darwin that which is not the fittest has no right of continuance. But by the polity of 'adl and ḥasan that which is not the fittest shall be made the fittest through adjustments of shortage and surplus, so that proportion shall be restored 3.

The Western world with its humanistic traditions takes tolerance and freedom of thought and opinion for granted. Hence it stands to reason that the modernists are trying to mitigate the djihād-doctrine as much as possible. One is warned not to apprehend it as ‘a fight for war-booty, or acquiring dominion’... God wills (only) that righteousness, fairness and truth shall be established on earth 4. And when it is ordered in S. 9:29 to join battle with the Jews and Christians, it should be regarded as ‘an isolated case’, applied to people past recovery “who had turned away completely from the religion of truth taught by Moses and Jesus” 5. The very reason why in S. 22:40/39 ff. Muslims are permitted to wage war is that religious liberty would be guaranteed. And if a nation should have the intention of ruining a sanctuary of Hindus, Christians or Jews, the Muslims as soldiers of God are in duty bound to prevent it 6. Virtually djihād carries, as is claimed in multifarious ways, a most constructive purport: “The believer’s total life is djihād to bring his human worthiness and spirit on an increasingly higher level” 7.

So it is a sad misunderstanding to suppose a spirit of intolerance to prevail in the Koran. The contrary is true. No better proof than the verdict: “There is no compulsion in religion” 8. Other texts adduced are S. 109:6 5; 9:6 6 and 2:3/4 7. On S. 10:108 b. (“... and I am not a custodian — wakil — over you”) ʿAzād makes the comment: “I.e. I (Mohammed) have to sound a warning note; not this: I am placed over you as a superintendent to dominate you... If the world would understand the spirit of this message, how could men continue com-

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1 Tarjumān ii, 121 ff.
2 Maʿārif iv, 443.
3 Maʿārif iv, 489.
4 S. 2:257/256. This is, indeed, for Muslim modernity the most favourite saying of the Koran.
5 "Auch aus dem Koranvers 'Euch eure Religion, mir meine!' liest er (Muṣṭafā Kāmil) einen Appell zur Toleranz heraus" (F. Steppat in N 7 iv, 1956, 4).
6 "In this verse (‘And if one of the idolaters seek protection from you, grant him protection’) the Qurʾān commands the highest form of tolerance in the shape of the protection to those who do not believe in Allah!’ (Nūr Ahmad in Th. Ist. Lit., March 1957, 43).
7 Viz. the words: ‘... who believe in what is revealed to you, and what was revealed before you’, which are said to be ‘a purification of the mind from prejudice against (other) religions and founders of religions (Q. i, 21)."
batting each other only on account of disparity of views on faith and works?... Consider, what is the very cause of all religious quarrels? This, that men do not distinguish between \textit{tadhkîr} (‘drawing attention to’) and \textit{taqwîl} (‘bossiness’)
1. And that Mohammed’s private dealings were in line with this Koranic teaching, one may deduce from the fact that he, though “strictly opposed as he was to the religion of the idolaters, had married three of his own daughters to them” 2.

Then, according to ‘Abd al-Qâdir al-Maghribi, the Koran also pleads for liberty of the press. This can be read out of the words: “... and let not scribe or witness come to harm” (S. 2: 282 b). That would imply: “Do not permit journalists to be obstructed in the execution of their duties” 3. And one of the Koranic arguments brought forward by another apologist concerning freedom of opinion is S. 16: 126/125, “Summon to the way of your Lord with... debates with them on what is the best” 4.

A delicate point as to the subject of tolerance is the poser, broached by Muḥ. Dja’far Phulwârī: “Can a fiduciary position be given to a non-believer?” 5. Treating the problem the author starts with a reference to S. 3: 114/118 (“O you who believe! do not make friends from among others than your own people”). In view of this verse one might be warranted to answer in the negative the question: “Could a key-position in an Islamic state be entrusted to a non-Muslim?” Yet, there is an episode in the history of the Prophet deserving of notice. At the Assembly of ‘Aqaba, al-‘Abbâs b. ‘Abd al-Muţalîb acted as protector of Mohammed. At that moment al-‘Abbâs was still a non-believer. Nevertheless, as is to be concluded from this, he appeared well informed on the secret \textit{hidjra}-intention of the Prophet! Therefore, the inference can be drawn, that the command of S. 3: 114/118 must be held for a general rule, to which exceptions are conceivable, inasmuch as not all unbelievers are alike. Notwithstanding wide divergences of religious issues, one should never forget that they too are human.

\textbf{Social life}

For Muslim modernity society must be in the sign of progress. Untiringly improvements should be pursued. For that, Darwînî evolutionistic thought is put into a utilitarian frame: more and more the useless becomes superseded by matters of value. Thus, as is claimed by Azâd, the Koran is denoting the permanence of the most useful (\textit{anfa‘}), not the survival of the fittest (\textit{aqâb}), since in its view the fit is above all the useful 1. When in S. 11: 2 Mohammed is said to become a \textit{bashîr} (‘proclaimer’) for his community, then that can only mean that he is urged to supply the means for mankind’s march of civilization 1. Over against the Christian dogma of God’s love manifested in Christ, Aḥmad al-Dîn sets: “God’s love is that of a wise man... Thus He procures expediends and ways as circumstances may require: means for reclamation of criminals, remedies for the sick, food for the hungry, \textit{et al}. He prepares everything. For the righteous He gives the resources for a better future. His wisdom is identical with His mercy, His penalties identical with reformation. Hell is a hospital...” 3.

\footnote{1 \textit{Tardjumân ii, 173 f.}} \footnote{2 Mîrzâ Abu ‘l-Fadl, \textit{The Life of Mohammed} (1910), 201.} \footnote{3 ‘Alî Hâimîb al-Tafsîr 87.} \footnote{4 Muḥ. Muḥyî al-Dîn al-Maṣîrî in \textit{Madjalla al-Aṣghar}, 18 Sept. 1955, 162.} \footnote{5 \textit{Thaqafat Labore}, March 1958, 48 ff.} \footnote{6 \textit{Tardjumân ii, 278 f. (comment on S. 13: 18/17).} \footnote{7 Mîrzâ Bashîr al-Dîn Mâhmûd Ahmad, \textit{Tafsîr al-Qurʾân} iii, 143.} \footnote{8 Bâyân 453. Or, to put it in the poetical language of Muḥ. Iqṣâ‘î: “Hell is a corrective experience which may make a hardened ego once more sensitive to the living breeze of Divine Grace” (\textit{Reconstruction}, ed. Lahore 123).}
To succeed in ameliorating social and human conditions one should act from a typically bourgeois morality, of which moderation, utility and common sense are the main constitutive elements. "Islam", so Mawdūdī expounds, "does not suppress any human desire, but it keeps every passion within a fitting and rational frame. It does not reject soaring ideas, yet it lends their flying a better sphere and a more precise direction". God charges His worshippers with the 'mean' (al-wasat) and asks obedience of what they are equal to. Regarding the Koranic statement: "Fair-seeming to men is the love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver" (S. 3: 12/14), we are told: "These are favoured and delightful pleasures. For all that they are not presumed impure or repelling, nor is there the idea of coming to think them impure and repelling... Such is a distinguishing feature of Islam, namely to consider human nature and to take it as it is".

Human worthiness is zealously upheld. Slavery, as is asserted by Parwez in imitation of Aḥmad Khān, has already been abolished in principle by the wording of S. 47: 5/4 ("... take prisoners; and afterwards release them out of kindness or in return for ransom"). And the Koranic provisions concerning slaves are merely relevant to those who had been enslaved before.

Further, as a rule, a better status of the Muslim woman is sought after, and in that light Koranic sayings are interpreted. In the opinion of A. de Zayas Abbasī the phrase: "And men have a standing above them (women)" (S. 2: 228 c.) "refers to the obligation of women whose menfolk provide for them, to adapt their style of living to the economic capacity of the wage-earner... This is the single degree of advantage which the Holy Qur'an, in all justice, grants the Muslim men over their womenfolk". Aḥmad al-Dīn limits the purport of S. 2: 228 c. by declaring that it does not apply to married people but to men only; so it has simply a bearing upon the position of men in councils and committees. Equally S. 12: 28 b. ("This is a trick of you women; surely, your tricks are frightful") is to be understood in a restrictive sense. The judgment, as Āḏād notices, touches merely upon the Egyptian women who are addressed, not upon women as such. And it is inadmissible, as the commentators use to do, to quote the text as an argument for the contention that women, in comparison with men, are more crafty and immoral. The Koran (see S. 4: 36/32 and 33: 35) does not distinguish between man and woman.

Similarly, abuses sanctioned by or founded upon texts from the Holy Book are denounced. Thus one is not entitled to cite, in support of child-marriage, S. 65: 4 in which it is stated that the 'idda (appointed term for divorced women to wait before contracting a new marriage) is only three months for of civilization at the time of Revelation the Koran was forced to acknowledge the institution as a reality (Thaqāfat Lahore, Oct. 1958, 5).

1 Tafsīrat i, 29.
2 Q. ii, 50. Comment on S. 2: 203/207 b. ("And God is element to the worshippers").
3 Q. iii, 56. Next, the author notes gladly that modern psychology has found harmful issues resulting from repression of inner impulses.
4 See the present writer’s The Reforms 28 f.
5 Majmāʿ i, 505. Of quite a different opinion is Muh. Hanīf Naddawi. He admits frankly that — however reprehensible the institution of slavery must be held, especially nowadays — the existence of regulations for slaves in the Koran cannot be disavowed. Consequently, it is an extremely weak and unbiased excuse to declare that actually the Koran regards slavery as not permitted. Nowhere is this confirmed. In view of the stage
such as have not menstruated too'. That does not relate to children but to certain morbid symptoms and to women who on account of a bodily defect do not have their courses. In connection with the so-called *ḥiḍāyah*-verse (S. 33:53) the definition is given: ‘*Ḥiḍāyah* is the psychological ‘veil’ of reserve which each Muslim must set up between him (herself and his) her fellow human beings, and which constrains each individual Muslim to the self-imposed observance of the rules of decency, propriety and self-respect’. After a fierce condemnation of the easy divorce proceedings made up of ‘three times calling *ṭalāq* and there you are!’, Parwez points out with the help of S. 4:38/34 f. how according to the Koran a lot of requirements are to be met for ultimately attaining a divorce. Firstly, with softness (‘admonish them’) and hardness (‘beat them’) a reconciliation must be striven after. Next, after a report of a third party (‘then send a judge from his people and a judge from her people’) a righteous verdict must be passed in order to see whether a *modus vivendi* can be found (‘If they wish for reconciliation’), or a divorce remains the only solution left.

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1. *Sālim* 70.
2. A. de Zayas Abbasi, *The Isl. Lit.*, Nov. 1953. Mub. Dijāfar Phulwārī shows the improbability of a customary wear of a *burqa* (veil) in Koranic times, when making the matter-of-fact observation that there would be little sense in commanding men to cast down their looks (see S. 24:30) in the presence of women, if the latter were already wrapped in a veil (*Thaqīfīfat Labore*, Jan. 1960, 37). Mub. ‘Uthmān, an other contributor of this Lahore periodical — though himself an adversary of *pārā* — believes the *ṣaylīth*, recommended in S. 33:59, to be head-covering wraps (ghāḇīḥat), not a coating around (*lāpet*). But, so he adds, the verse has only a temporary rule in view, necessitated by the calumniations of the wicked *hypocrites* and Jews to which virtuous Muslim women were exposed. In such a case it was expedient to avoid every occasion to rumour (*Thaqīfīfat Labore*, May 1960, 11).
3. *Sālim* 61. Above that, the writer claims, in view of S. 2:228 (‘... And the same is due to them as from them’), the wife, just as well as the husband, may ask for divorce (*Sālim* 67). Pointing at S. 65:1 (‘Do not drive them out of their houses, nor allow them to depart, unless they have committed an open indecency’). Mub. Abū Zaid declares violation of the rules established for married life the only legitimate ground for divorce (*al-Hidāya* 445).
5. The *loci* usually quoted by Muslim advocates of monogamy: The impracticability of the required equitable treatment of several wives would implicitly entail the rule of monogamy.
8. *al-Hidāya* 64.
Besides its matrimonial morality the Koran gets Muslim modernity into trouble by food regulations which have lost all meaning for present-day society. Through a subtle reasoning Ahmad Khān tries to suggest the lawfulness of eating strangled hens which is interdicted in S. 5: 4/3. To this end the verse undergoes the following philological treatment by him: “Now I declare that to my mind in these four words 1 ‘t’ represents the ‘t’ of a feminine adjective, while each time the noun babima, meaning ox, quadruped or herbivore has been left out. In other words, this verse prescribes: Forbidden to you is the quadruped which is strangled, beaten to death, killed by a fall or being smitten with horns. Birds do not come within this regulation” 2. Āzād eases the problem by appealing to S. 10: 60/59 (“Say: Have you seen what God has sent down for you of sustenance, of which you made thereupon unlawful and lawful categories?”). Taught by this as Peter by the vision of Joppa (Acts 10: 11 ff.), he concludes: “According to the Koran all things created for food and drink are pure (halāl) in principle and not tabū, i.e. all that is eatable is pure. If the Koran forbids something to be eaten, it is because of being harmful and rotten. This verse is a clinching evidence against all those severe jāb-scholars who simply on the ground of private opinion and inference label lawful things as unlawful, as well as against those people who deem denial of lawful things a deed of piety rendering access to God” 3.

Then, the prohibition in S. 2: 276/275 with respect to taking rihā (interest) which is rather awkward for modern trade and industry requires a re-interpretation or at least a fuller elucidation. Āhmad al-Dīn urges to pay heed to the verses 273/270 ff., preceding it. There alms-giving to the poor is discussed. Hence it follows that the rihā-interdiction bears only upon taking interest from money lent to the poor. For the rest: “If an artisan or homo practicus says to a moneymen: Take me on and give me a suitable pay, then it is a lawful arrangement, when entered into by mutual agreement. Conversely, a moneymen might say with as much right to an artisan: You are a director of a concern. With the aid of my money I give you work as if you were an employee. If you return later on as much as is reasonable, you may use it for your business” 4. Likewise Ya’qūb Shāh holds the view that the condemned rihā refers to poor people who on account of want of vital necessities of life are compelled to borrow money on interest 5. This is emergent and ‘consumption interest’, and with good reason it was interdicted. But one has no right to declare without comment certain forms of interest to be forbidden which did not yet exist in or before the time of Revelation. Thus the ‘productive interest’ in behalf of large concerns is quite justifiable. Notice also S. 2: 216/219, where is spoken of matters whose loss 6 (ithm) is greater than their profit. From this Āzād draws the conclusion: “One should keep balance between loss and profit. One ought to let that go whose loss is on the increase, even if at some moment there is a little bit of profit. And one ought to choose that whose profit is on the increase, even if losses are bound up with it” 7. After this quotation of one of Āzād’s Koranic explanations, Ya’qūb Shāh goes on to state: “In accordance with these principles productive interest is to be tested. If the profit of something becomes gradually greater

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1 Bayān 393 ff.
2 Tabādil al-Ākkālīgī ii, 228.
3 Tārīḫunān ii, 162 f.
4 Āta Allâh Pālāwī demonstrates that the prohibition of asking for rihā only bears upon persons who have a title to alms (jadaqāh), and bases this supposition mainly upon S. 2: 277/276; “God brings rihā to nought and He causes alms to prospe” (Thaqāfījī Larbū, Oct. 1958, 27 ff.).
5 The author attributes this signification of ithm (sin!) on the authority of Mawdūdī and Āzād.
form God's greatest gift of grace. But when this gift takes the shape of an inundation, is then the limitation of it to be branded as a religious sin?" He draws attention to the rule of S. 2: 216/219 ("Their evil is greater than their profit"), and argues that this does not only apply to intoxicants and gambling. Moreover: the Koran enjoins as for our conduct to keep balance and to practise equity (cf. S. 55: 7/8 and 5: 46/42 b.). And for balance and equity extremes are to be avoided. Among the practical measures for a reduction of the birth-rate the author mentions also the checking of polygamy as an advisable means.

Lastly, modern Muslim Koran interpretation sets itself the task to prepare the ground for cultural activities. Chiragh 'Ali writes a paper to prove that the prohibition of making images lacks any Koranic foundation. To this end he cites S. 34: 12/13 which says that dżins constructed for Solomon what he pleased of palaces and images. In other words, Solomon commissioned the making of images. And he could know what was permissible, since he was a prophet! While in the hadith-literature (Bu. Bayć B. 104; Mu. Libć 100) the interdiction of making images is chiefly based upon the Koranic conception of God as the great Muḥsamur (Fashioner; cf. S. 59: 24) — and man should not imitate the godhead! — it is precisely the same Koranic datum which is seized upon by Muḥ. Dja'far Phulwārī who on other occasions also does not fear to touch on ticklish matters, remarks on it: "There is no doubt that children

1 Thaqfāt Labore, March 1958, 16 ff.
2 The reason why in S. 2: 276/275 commerce is stated to be lawful and riba forbidden Shaikh Maḥmud Ahmad ascribes to the circumstance that the former requires labour, the latter does not (Thaqfāt Labore, Oct. 1960, 22 f.).
4 With good reason; see A. J. Wensink's art. in EI on Sūra: "... the prohibition of images... is erroneously traced to the Ḫurān".
5 Tahdīḥ al-Akhbār iii, 125 f.

than its loss, why are people who lend money to it on interest to be stigmatized as inhabitants of Hell?" Finally, the writer mentions that in the present state of mundane affairs no Muslim nation can do without loans, and in view of this one should recall the words of S. 2: 181/185b.: "God desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty."
incitement to take on the *sikha* (dye) of God (S. 2:132/138), i.e. to acquire the divine attributes.

Then, a much disputed cultural expression is music. But according to Muḥ. Dja'far Phulwārwi one does not need to have scruples about it. The Koran makes mention of it in a positive sense, stating in S. 43:70 and 30:14/15 that the inhabitants shall enjoy music and song (*hubra*). He admits that one of the meanings of *hubra* is ‘gladness’, and that generally these passages are understood as announcing people’s happiness in Paradise. To reinforce his argument he refers to the explanation of the Tādż al-‘Aris (iii, 118) where it is said that *hubra* denotes listening to music in Paradise, as well as to an exegesis of Zadjjdjādj who states that it is a term for every fine and edifying song. Above this one should bear in mind that “even supposing that the Koran does not mention song *expressis verbis*, it is not necessarily a negation of its being a gift of grace. Countless gifts of grace in this life and the hereafter are recorded in the Koran, but nowhere is there an explicit mention of a flowered. Would that mean that a flowered is not a gift of grace?!” A *locus probans* in his opinion is also S. 41:31 b. (“And you shall have therein what your souls desire and you shall have therein what you ask for”) which warrants the supposition that one may assume the existence of a Paradise for the ear too.

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1 *Thaqāfat Labore*, March 1960, 17.
2 Invention of the devil in the eyes of Muslim legalists and also an indispensable part of a *dārī’s* equipment.
3 *Thaqāfat Labore*, April 1958, 51 ff. The same author derives a new argument from the example set by David, the prophet, who all the days of his life sang and executed music (*Thaqāfat Labore*, March 1960, 17).

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VI. CONCLUSION

By Western scholarship modern Muslim argumentation is in general cried down as ‘mere apologetics’. Certainly, the good intentions of the authors are acknowledged, but little value can be attached to it.

For this, at least two reasons are accountable. Firstly, Orientalists base such an opinion too exclusively upon works of Muslim modernity, written in European languages, and in particular Amir ‘Ali’s renowned *The Spirit of Islam* (1922) is taken as typical. These writings, however, are unfit to serve as specimens, because of the simple fact that the authors are too much conscious of being read by Westerners, and are constantly jealous of the good name Islam must maintain. Consequently, the expose’s are *a-priori* of an apologetic nature in a much restricted sense of the word. To the Western reader’s mind the arguments put forth seem overdone and carry little conviction. In contrast with this, the views expressed by apologists in their home languages (Urdu, Arabic), are far better balanced. Here no anxiety with regard to Christian readers prevails. Moreover, the instrument of speech employed lends itself more readily to formulate specific Islamic ideas with all the subtle shades they imply. Secondly, as a rule Western Orientalists do not realize apologetics to be actually implicative of religion as such. Virtually, religion represents the human response to transcendent realities. A response like that is *so ipso* bound to the limitations of man’s inherent faculties. Faith, therefore, has to make use of ordinary language and has to follow the rules of sound reasoning and denotation. And speech as well as thought are products of the age. So religion must accommodate itself to the spirit and conditions of the moment. Otherwise,
it does not function really. And from that dire necessity to communicate with ‘the world’ follows naturally the demand for apologetics...

Yet, one should be careful as to apologetics: different degrees of value and plausibility are found in it, so that a normalization appears to be incumbent. For our purpose we deem it relevant to differentiate between apologetics pertaining to primarily intellectual problems and apologetics regarding existential needs and moral issues.

Intellectual apologetics, if efficacious, yield a way of defence through the manifestation of a deeper evidence than that observed by the opponent. In that manner the challenge directed to religion is answered with the counter-challenge: “You are mistaken, for in fact you don’t see the point” A fine paradigm of such ‘rectifying’ apologetics is offered by Paul’s argumentation in the first epistle to the Corinthians, ch. 15, vss. 35 ff. The opponents are Greeks who could not imagine the resurrection of the body. The apostle begins by thinking and expressing himself in terms of the adversary. He reminds them of empiric facts they themselves could observe, viz. that in nature decomposition and continuity need not be mutually exclusive: “The seed which you sow can have no new life given to it, unless it die”, i.e. the sprouted plant is a new creation after the seed’s decomposition. Having made a statement on common ground with the questioner, the Christian apologist points out deeper evidence: “It is virtually God who gives it a body just as He ordained it from the first”, i.e. it is a divine law of nature, no separate decision of God is required for each case! This counter-offensive intends to explain: Reality is not, as you may think, the result of blindly acting laws of nature, but the work of a Creator who established natural laws through which both seeds and people who have died acquire new bodies, appropriate to them (In a debate with Meccan sceptics on the same question of the possibility of bodily resurrection Mohammed assumes the existence of gods besides Allah as a common ground to start from. Suppose, so he asserts, it were as you imagine, the whole creation would necessarily be overturned by the competition of such powerful antagonists. Cf. S. 21: 21 f.).

The second kind of apologetics bearing upon problems and difficulties man is confronted with, if alive to his responsibilities and to the precariousness of existence, tries “to correlate the questions implied in the situation with the answers in the message” 1. An instance of it are the words of Jesus on the pressing feeling of uneasiness, inherent in human nature. Attention is drawn to an observation everybody can make: Look at the exemplary behaviour of birds and plants! They do not worry. So it is up to you. When that has been said, a specific religious view of the matter is broached, and the subject is brought into a different context. There is more than that, so it continues. The care for food and drink is after all a matter of pagan concern. Relevant to the believer’s proper ambition is the search for his spiritual life (see Luke 12: 22-34).

If we now apply the above-mentioned standards for justifiable forms of apologetics to the endeavours of Muslim modernity in this field, we find that in so far as intellectual problems are at issue, its chief concern is concentrated on the challenge: “Your religion does not leave scope for the march of science”. The answer is, as we have seen in the foregoing chapter: “The Koran does not only admonish to the study of nature, but it also confirms scientific results, men have only reached many centuries after its coming down”. Formally this response agrees with the scheme sketched above: Challenge met by a counter-challenge. Materially, however, the statement is only partly

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1 P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology* i, 8.
provably. Plausible arguments are adducible, if one holds that the Koran does not tend to hinder scientific research, but on the contrary wants to advance it. The Koran, indeed, in support of its message also appeals to man's intellectual faculties. And its repeated urge to take note of natural phenomena (as in S. 2: 159/164; 3: 187/190; 10: 6; 16: 67/65; 45: 4/5) justifies A. J. Arberry to speak of an "acceptance of reason as an ally to faith" by the Koran. Moreover, a certain attempt at logical reasoning cannot be denied to it: a favourite method of argumentation is the deductive of an a minore ad maiorem. The continuous regeneration observable in nature is a sign, if not a proof, of man's resurrection (S. 7: 55/57; 22: 5; 43: 10/11; 50: 9 ff.). By Jesus also the same rule of logic is applied (see e.g. Matthew 6: 26), and rabbinic exegites as well could take advantage of it. In short, to our mind it is the good right of Muslim modernity to argue in view of these demonstrable Koranic trends and the vital interest for the Muslim world to get speedily acquainted with Western knowledge and technics that, if in the time of Revelation people were stimulated to study nature and its wonderful workings — though that may have been done first and foremost with the religious intent to render unbelieving Meccans attentive to Allah's omnipotence—, in the present circumstances this should be interpreted as a task the Almighty charges His believers with in order to create for their compatriots a more tolerable standard of living. But if in addition the contention is made that the Koran was far ahead of its time with regard to physics and biology, Muslim

1 Revelation and Reason in Islam (1957), 12.
2 "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?"

apologetics overshoots its mark. This is in flat contradiction with the simple and unquestionable fact, that the Koranic notions are adapted to the world-view of the first hearers of Allah's recited revelations. And when it comes to constraining correlations between the requirements of the hour with answers from the message through 'interpretation' of Koranic sayings which plainly clashes with their actual meaning, such apologetics is no longer admissible. Gradually however,— and that has been equally noted in the preceding chapter — the insight into the historical context of Koranic description of nature is increasing among our expositors. And it is really a promising sign that nowadays by scholars like Amin al-Khulli the so-called scientific exegesis of the Holy Book is refuted and rejected in unequivocal terms. Moreover, such commentators do not confine themselves to explaining that the Koran ought not to be consulted for scientific questions, but are even ready to admit that it makes use of an antiquated Weltanschauung and of obsolete social norms, in particular with regard to the position of slaves and women. Here a beginning of Muslim historical criticism of the Koran is noticeable.

As for the second way of apologetics with which it is attempted to correlate the needs of man experienced in his naked existence with Koranic guidance, we observe among several apologists a keen sense of being responsible for help to the people, perplexed by the dazzling changes in the world of to-day. And we saw in the last chapter quite a lot of actual problems are tackled, as the disputed admissibility of interest-account, birth-control and the like. By our expositors the Holy Book is not approached out of a purely scholarly interest, as is the case with a great many studies of the Bible in Europe and America. That is not timely! As a drowning person derives no benefit from swimming theories, the confused Muslim world at the moment is not served in the first place with clever essays on
the background of Koranic ideas. Accordingly, present-day Muslim interpretation follows a pragmatic line. The principle started from is the firm belief in the everlasting guiding value of the sacred writings. That is a correct starting-point, for it is the very message of the Koran to grant divine direction to man. Consequently, in interpreting such an authoritative religious book, one has—in compliance with its set purport to offer guidance for all times—to distinguish between the attempts to search for the original (e mente auctoris) meaning of the text, and the further efforts to find out the connotative sense it might have as an imperative word relevant to the believer’s attitude towards the actuality, in which he lives. The former design may interest the savant chiefly, if not exclusively; notwithstanding, his inquiry has not yet been exhaustive. On the other hand the Orientalist has every right to apply the criterion whether the derived rule or attained solution of the Muslim apologist be relevant to the tenor of the text and the leading features of the Koran. This is not always easy to decide, and in general a Muslim believer will sooner recognize a connection than an ‘outsider’. But that does not alter the fact that, while the Western scholar must take modernity’s apologetic endeavours seriously, Muslim modernists on their part should acknowledge the scientific criteria with which the West wants to operate in reviewing the specimens of their Koran interpretation.

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

A.
Abd al-‘Aziz Bāshā Ismā‘īl 89
Abd al-Hakīm 21f., 28, 30, 33, 49, 51, 64, 70, 75, 80, 82
Abd al-Hamīd Bakhtī 80
Abd al-Ra‘īq, Mustafā 74
Abd al-Subhān, Shāikh 50
Abdūh, Shāikh Muhammad 4, 24, 26, 31, 49, 61f., 67, 75
Abraham 29, 34, 36, 41, 43, 65, 71
Abū ‘l-Fadl, Mīrza 74, 110
Abū Zayd, Mīrza 18, 20, 36, 78, 83, 100, 115
Adam 27, 40, 45, 60, 82, 104f., 100
Adīvās, Halīde Edīb 43
Ahmad al-Dīn 22, 29, 35, 44, 47, 49, 52, 63, 72, 78, 80f., 87, 90, 101, 111, 113, 116
— Khān, Sir Sayyid 4, 8, 17, 19, 22f., 31, 33f., 38, 44, 49f., 63, 67, 69f., 76, 97, 112, 116
—, Mīrza Ghulām 74
—, Nur 109
Ahmadiyya 15
Albironi, A. H. 8
Alexander the Great 32
Ali, Amir 121
—, Chirāq 23, 63f., 72, 105, 119
—, Muhammad 28, 79, 83
—, Yusuf 84, 105
Allen, H. E. 101
Amin, Qāsim 103
analogia entis 57
Andrae, T. 71
angels (angelic) 14, 27, 60, 94
al-‘Aquād, ‘Abbās Māhmd 57f., 60, 80, 98, 104, 106, 113
Aquinas, Thomas 61
Arberry, A. J. 124

Aṣḥāb al-ma‘ṣūl 46
Aṣḥāb al-Kaḥf 17, 31
Ashraf, Shāikh Muhammad 43
Asiatic intellectual, mental habitudes 86
Awrangzib 2
al-Azraqī 36

B.
Barāqīq, Muhammad Ahmad 23
Bashir Ahmad Dār 42, 82, 84
— al-Dīn Māhmd Ahmad, Mīrza 35, 48, 51, 56, 111
Bergson, H. 21, 62
bhkti 82
birth-rate 118f.
Bouquet, W. 124
Brahmanism 82
Brugman, J. 103
Buddha 74
Buhl, F. 35

C.
Charm 83
Chi Wang Ti 34
Christ, birth 70, Ascension 70
divinity 85, doctrines 86
Christianity 82
Christology 31
Communism 106–108
Confucianism 57
Congress, Indian National 8, 10
Cragg, K. 6
Croesus 33
Cesias 33
cultural activities, 119f.
Cyrus 32f.
INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Gándhí, Mohandas Karamchand 8
al-Ghazzali 2, 119
Gibbs, H. A. R. 16, 34
God, beauty 29, Book 55, bounty
40, commemoration 78, conception
54, 58, counterpart 55, covenant 81, 83, creative power
14, domination 14, eye 119, face
78, favour 100, forgiveness 85, 101, grace
14, 57, 59, 100, greatness
27, image 84, knowledge
14, laws 104, love 25, 111, majesty
29, make 58, mercy 40, 111, name 47, nature 55, 57,
paternal care 26, permission 19,
praise 78, promise 84, providence
14, regret 85, jamā'ah 56, Son 86, ta'wīl 56, ta'wīlīyat
56, unity 10, 41, 74, will 14, 50, 55,
wisdom 14, 20, 111, work 44,
52, 54, 73, work 52, 54, work
75, 101, wājud mutlaq 56
de Goeje, M. J. 34
Goldzweber, I. 17, 22, 52, 88
Good Friday 69
Gremann, H. 124
von Grünebaum, G. E. 35f., 104
Guillaume, A. 36
Guthrie, A. 36
G.  
Hαdād 23  
Hadīth 16-19, 119  
Hadīṣ 15, 77, 80f.
Haman 83
Hamm, K. A. 84
Hamza, Muḥammad Muḥammad 23  
haqq 56  
Hardie, J. B. 118  
hell 5, 111, 117  
Hellenism 2
Herodotus 33
Herschel, F. M. 53
hidāyāt 56
H.  
INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Kābin 44
Kāmil, Muṣṭafā 109
Kassan 85
Kashf 61
Khäksär 57
Khalaf Allāh, Muḥammad Muḥammad 6
20, 27, 36, 38-41, 44, 58, 65, 72, 89
Khalifa 'Abd al-Hakim 26, 103
al-Khulī, Amin 98, 125
Krishna 74
Künstling, D. 34
L.  
legendary 21, 41, 63
Lot 36, 386
Lucknow Pact 8
Luqman 171, 101
M.  
al-Maghribi, 'Abd al-Qadir 45, 74, 86, 101, 110
magic 22
Maḥmūd Ahmad, Shikhs 15
manīkāb 49f.
Mary (mother of Jesus) 22, 24, 65f., 70
al-Mashriqī 7, 10-13, 37, 52, 55,
73, 76f., 85, 91f., 97, 100f., 104
al-Masirī, Muḥyī al-Dīn
110
Mawdūdī, Sayyid Abu 'l-A'māl 69,
77, 81, 112, 117
Mecca 7, 28, 34-36, 46, 50, 80, 100
Medina 34, 36
miracles (miraculous, see also wonders)
3, 14, 23, 68
mu'rād 14
Mogul Empire 2
Mohammed 18, 27, 34-36, 39, 41f.,
47f., 50, 68, 72, 81, 86, 90, 99,
109-111, 123
moralism (moralties, moral) 30, 42
Moses 18, 20, 24, 28-30, 35, 42,
65, 72, 81, 109
mulājāb 16

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Jacob 23f., 34, 64
Jeffery, A. 18
Jerusalem 19, 36, 86
Jesus (see also Christ) 24, 28, 31,
34, 65, 69-71, 81, 87f., 109, 123f.
Jomier, J. 5f., 49, 61, 67
Jonah 72
Joseph 23f., 46, 64, 93
Joseph (father of Jesus) 70

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Kābin 44
Kāmil, Muṣṭafā 109
Kassan 85
Kashf 61
Khäksär 57
Khalaf Allāh, Muḥammad Muḥammad 6
20, 27, 36, 38-41, 44, 58, 65, 72, 89
Khalifa 'Abd al-Hakim 26, 103
al-Khulī, Amin 98, 125
Krishna 74
Künstling, D. 34
L.  
legendary 21, 41, 63
Lot 36, 386
Lucknow Pact 8
Luqman 171, 101
M.  
al-Maghribi, 'Abd al-Qadir 45, 74, 86, 101, 110
magic 22
Maḥmūd Ahmad, Shikhs 15
manīkāb 49f.
Mary (mother of Jesus) 22, 24, 65f., 70
al-Mashriqī 7, 10-13, 37, 52, 55,
73, 76f., 85, 91f., 97, 100f., 104
al-Masirī, Muḥyī al-Dīn
110
Mawdūdī, Sayyid Abu 'l-A'māl 69,
77, 81, 112, 117
Mecca 7, 28, 34-36, 46, 50, 80, 100
Medina 34, 36
miracles (miraculous, see also wonders)
3, 14, 23, 68
mu'rād 14
Mogul Empire 2
Mohammed 18, 27, 34-36, 39, 41f.,
47f., 50, 68, 72, 81, 86, 90, 99,
109-111, 123
moralism (moralties, moral) 30, 42
Moses 18, 20, 24, 28-30, 35, 42,
65, 72, 81, 109
mulājāb 16

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Jacob 23f., 34, 64
Jeffery, A. 18
Jerusalem 19, 36, 86
Jesus (see also Christ) 24, 28, 31,
34, 65, 69-71, 81, 87f., 109, 123f.
Jomier, J. 5f., 49, 61, 67
Jonah 72
Joseph 23f., 46, 64, 93
Joseph (father of Jesus) 70
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sūra I</th>
<th>30, 85</th>
<th>239/238</th>
<th>47, 78</th>
<th>119</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>244/243</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>128/129</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>256/256</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>169/171</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sūra II</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>257/256</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>169/171</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>261/259</td>
<td>27, 40</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>276/276</td>
<td>116, 118</td>
<td>22/19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>277/276</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>42/38</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/28</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>46/42</td>
<td>119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>60, 72</td>
<td>49/45</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34/36</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>101f.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38/40</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>Sūra III</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2/3f.</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45/48</td>
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<td>Sūra VII</td>
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<td>49, 124</td>
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<td>103</td>
<td>Sūra IV</td>
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<td>159/164</td>
<td>49, 101, 124</td>
<td>55/57</td>
<td>124</td>
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<td>Sūra VIII</td>
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<td>113f.</td>
<td>104/103</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

INDEX OF KORANIC PASSAGES

75/74   100   Sūra XIV   95/95  32
Sūra IX  48    5    Sūra XV  97/98f.  32
6       102, 109 | 24/21-27/22 | 40 | Sūra XIX |
29      108    |
43      19, 72 | Sūra XV  38f. | 16 | 86 |
50      42    30f. | 60 | 28/27 | 70 |
104/103 | 101   61/75 | 38  | 58/57 | 70 |
129/128 | 101   89    | 39  |
Sūra XX  41    |
79/77   36    |
Sūra X  48    Sūra XVI 113/114 | 47 |
2       48    67/65 | 124 | 134 |
3       96    73/71 | 106 | 27 |
3       96    103/101 | 50 |
36/35   56    113/112 | 100 | 21f. |
40/39   93    |
60/59   116   Sūra XVII 58/57 | 71 |
92      18    1    36  |
99      60    20/19 | 100  |
108     109    46/44 | 78  |
Sūra XI 38f., 41 | 61/59 | 65 |
1       51    72/70 | 89  |
2       111   76/74 | 19  |
15/12   39, 72 | 80/78 | 35, 78 | 38/37 |
45/43   85    81/79 | 78  |
79/77-84/83 | 87/85 | 103, 108 | 42/41 |
83/81   36    96/94f. | 68  |
112/111 | 107   111    | 45  |
116/114 | 35, 78 | 64/65 | 101 |
121/120 | 39    Sūra XVIII 30 | 114 |
Sūra XII | 41    12/13 | 17  |
6       93    17/18 | 31f. |
28      113   52/54 | 57  |
67      22    62/63 | 24  |
94      24    82/83 | 32  |
108     25, 94 | 84/86 | 22, 33, 90 | 56/54 |
Sūra XIII | 87/88 | 31 | Sūra XXVI |
2       97    89/90 | 33  |
18/17   111   92/93 | 33  |
38      50    93/94 | 33  |
Sūra XXVII 41
3       10    20
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sūra</th>
<th>17-20</th>
<th>31f.</th>
<th>47f.</th>
<th>58f.</th>
<th>94f.</th>
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<th>226f.</th>
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<th>268f.</th>
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<td>23</td>
<td>33/34</td>
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