CHAPTER - IV

STATUS OF ISLAM IN MODERN MUSLIM WORLD

(i) SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE

(ii) MODERN MUSLIM SOCIETIES IN MAJOR MUSLIM COUNTRIES

(iii) PSYCHOLOGY OF THE FOLLOWERS
(1) **Socio-Political Change**

An age of religious establishment has its own peculiarity. Whenever a new religion was founded, it was always related to its social background. A break-through in the current order of society, or an overture of social dogmas or exaggeration in following social customs. Whenever the extremes were reached, there was an emergence of something new, a religion, a doctrine, or a new wave theory, engulfing and commanding the attention of the locate.

Though the present age is full of extremeties and contradictions, it cannot offer the situation for any other religious doctrine, though, there may be some isms, which have flourished for sometime. Unless there is the quality of spiritual dimension, unless a doctrine has the inherent hint at the permanence of soul or spirit, no dogma, degree of theory can reach the standards of religiosity. Religion is essentially not limited to this life here on earth, it is basically spiritual, and above mandane affairs of life. It presupposes divinity and also the possibility of dialogue with it, which we call prayers.

Prayer is a universal phenomenon. Even in primitive tribes of totemism and henotheistic practices, prayers play an important role. With the advent of sophistication, some vulgar practices have been replaced by refined ones. Thus, even if modern age may claim to have nurtured many novel doctrines, it cannot dream of setting up a new religious system. The very fibre of modern society makes it impossible. As it is, all that a religion has to say, has been exhausted, and is repeated in some other religion. A
particular religion is not fundamentally different from any other religion of the world. It may differ in details, not in dogmas. A comparative study of all religions especially the eleven major religions of the world would lead to the consequence that there are happy signs of all men attempting to gather under the one single banner of world citizenship though they may adhere to their own individual faiths. At present, the world sociologists are deeply concerned over some serious facts of the present age. The cause of concern is genuine and the degree of seriousness is alarming. Unless a drastic reform is introduced in some sectors of social life, the drift of society ashore, will drown it in the whirlpool of materialism. Then there would be no retreat, as the last trace of religiosity would have been lost, predicting from the present waywardness. Religion is the binding force of society; it is the rectifying factor and guide, as has been remarked by considering some of the virtues treated in Quran.

It is the grip, the anchor, the reins which holds society stable. Religion, thus is the stabilising force, more so is Islam, because more than anything else, it has concentrated on the way of life, here on earth. Earnestly, this is the case, though of course, it has elaborated upon the concept of life after death. Though, one of the serious facts of this present age is that, the old norms have failed to convince and hold our youth. Once more, as it were, we are face to face with spiritual bankruptcy, a total cultural blankness. This state is reached partly because of the wrong and undue insistence upon Western values, or simply aping them. After the 18th century, that when the age of Enlightenment
had already awakened the Western Europe and North America. The old prejudices were shaken off, and were replaced by irreligiocity and freedom from tradition.

Having reached its esteemed place amongst the major religions of the world, it can claim a grand following of about one billion, spread throughout the world. Many of the Asian and African countries are nearly or totally Muslim. It is, therefore, quite natural that they have not yet abandoned the medieval practices which may or may not be directly relevant to Islam. Islam was embraced by the people of various continents with their own native culture, customs and traditions.

There are the more backward tribes and other peoples in different Muslim countries. With more urbanisation and consequent pressure for change, sociologists call it a process of Islamisation. Though, there is no constancy or permanence in time, it is simply another name for alteration. But that is not the case, time is combination of both, change and permanence. Yet, the change that has been found on religious fronts are disappointing. Modern age in general, has wrongly chosen the path of destruction. This is a glaring example of the misuse of freedom of will. It is rather unjudicious. Instead of clinging to religious faith and the simple codes of conduct, modern age is now bent upon self-destruction and driving mankind to death. It is producing heaps of evidence against the utility of the human race in the divine tribunal. There are some destructive forces at work, inspite of the religious sections and taboos. Islam has sincere claims to make. It promises the
society a stable life, and save it from future devastation. The crises are more ethical and moral, than anything else. Once there is laxity in the following of social norms, those are ample, shaky grounds for many a social vices, to thrive. Such vices grow in the society which has little respect for any religious values. The virtues enlisted in quran are very simple to follow, and yet they have been given up. That has resulted into the complicated and tedious lives, both materially and psychologically. Modern Western society in particular, is crazy towards orient standards. It is owing to them, as a matter of fact, the oriental culture is often presented and revived from time to time. The West is now at the apex of its material achievements. Any change now, would be downfall. Their obsession for peace which they rightly believe, they pine in the East, and Eastern Religions. Their L.S.D., drugs cocaine, sleeping piles and various other tranquilisers have given only temporary escape from reality. Though Karl Marx called religion the opium of masses, it was not one of the material ones. Its ecstasy lends peace to the tortured mind, and there is no escapism from reality. The situations are visualised in different perspective, and their centralisation of one particular issue is different in religious solace. Hence, religion as such, does not hinder the progress of society, but solidifies its structure. Though, it is human weakness to be able to stand up to the codes of quran, the scripture is often held in criticism. At times, its principles and laws have been distorted, ignored or violated. Though an unbiased study of quran would reveal its genuine concern
over social welfare. Truly, both ethics and religion have been proportionately advocated in Quran. Ethics merely states the code of conduct, Religion bades their following. No Muslim society ceases to be so just because it has outwordly adjusted itself with the external world. There is no inherent change in the fundamental principles of Islam, there can never be such a basic change in the constitution of such a major religion.

The religious authority is too awe-aspiring, too dignified and respectful to be trifled by any trivial comments. However, it cannot have place for anyones whim, obsession or prejudice. "The creed of the slaves is that defective is the Book", rightly observes Iqbal, "For it teaches not the Muslims the ways of surveilllity". There is like justification when Quran is attempted a different kind of interpretation in order to make some such perversions, acceptable. The caste, which is the other way about, that is instead of following the dictates of Quran, it is Quran which takes their dictation. Thus, Quran has been disgracefully lowered, so that it suits the standards of social degradation, where the only legitimate topic of discussion is that pertaining to the problems of material well-being economics and political power. All idealistic talk has been shifted on the shelves of librates, for reference works. Thus, the issue at stake is not the salvage of Islam as such, but the salvage of modern age in general. A sobre and mature religion like Islam can well take care of its survival, as it has done in all ages. It appeals alike, the unlearned unlettered men of huts, or the intellectuals of ivory towers. Islam has respectfully secured its place in
society. It, on no account will ever thrive upon the mercy of its followers. Granted that followers are flesh and bones of a religion, it is the spirit of the religion itself which breathes life into them. Till then, there is no importance of the mere class of followers, simply indicating huge numbers. A religion, whatever it has lacked such spirit has failed to survive over a period of time. Islam if it had failed to throb in the very nerve of the social structure, would have long given up its claim to stability.

A religion is one of the institutions of society. "Every religion is a cultural product, and like all cultured products, it must grow and develop if it is to survive as a living cultural organism."

Though there may be some staunch Muslims who believe in the "follow, do not innovate" doctrine, Muslim society, at large, has moulded and reformed some of its doctrines. This change has, in no way, degraded Islam. On the contrary, it has made Islam available to all like, irrespective of historical period, or social context. Islam has never opted for rigidity. As it was necessary that the social order be maintained, the above quoted maxim of total submissiveness was relevant when men were not lettered. Today, in the period of enlightenment when the entire literature on any subject is available to the scholars, it can properly be maintained message to convey. To blur that Quran had much sobre/its image with the hazy concepts like

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that Quran had much sound message to convey. In the early concept of fanaticism, would be wrong. Quran as has been previously maintained in this chapter, has always stood for rationalism. It has advised the followers to avoid extremes, especially in the following of certain virtues like mercy, forgiveness and sympathy and to use one's judgement before performing any action. There cannot be a sounder evidence of the benevolent and rational character of Islam. Iqbal was one of the prominent Muslim intellectuals who propounded creative interpretation which is called the principle of Ijtihad, signifying movement. He looks upon God as co-worker. He argues that if the man does not become the initiative, if he does not evolve the inner richness of his being, if he ceases to feel the inward punch of advancing life, then the spirit within him hardens and he is reduced to dead matter. Now, this argument for change is appealing. Even if Iqbal is considered to be the person who hesitated an approval of concrete reform, was the person nevertheless, who hailed the Turkish reformation held it in high esteem.\(^2\) The conviction that such thinkers carried, was that the evolution in modern direction was in keeping with the basic principles of Islam. As is evident from the cryptic nature of Quranic quotation, it left sufficient scope of various interpretation. Modern context can furnish ample ground for their veracity.

\(^2\) Iqbal, Six Lectures on the Reconstitution of Religious thought in Islam (1930), P-136.
As for the circumstances favourable for any reform, Muslim society has remained rather slow and obstinate. The obstinacy of the dogmatic followers was understandable, since any reform in society will naturally be reflected in the scriptures. That was considered to be blasphemy. No orthodoxy would venture any comment or any contrary opinion upon the unquestioned authority of Islam. Times, however, have changed in favour of healthy, natural room for controversy. Though it must be kept in mind, while fumbling with the interpretation of any religious authority, that the principles upon which they are based, are above controversy. Even then, there are noteworthy reforms in political, social, religious and economic spheres. Not that political reforms have been very smooth. As it is, there was the problem over the concept of Islamic State, which cannot have an existence in the original form. Truly speaking, most concepts will have to remain satisfied with the modern referents, if they must exist. Even Saudi Arabia cannot properly be called an Islamic State. Legal imposition of Sharia does not make a state Islamic. An Islamic State has no room for hereditary, legacy to Caliphate, nor was there any constitution, other than Quran and the Hadith. It is a peculiarity with this religion that it does not make a distinction between codes of conduct for different sections of life. The hackeneyed practices, occupy a permanent place in social life, and thus, a practice, not even applauded in Islam is accepted. For example, the recent happenings in the Muslim societies other than India, are alarming. They practice barbarism under the name
of Islam, and tarnish its humanistic image. In order that they
may be honoured with the pseudo titles of Islamic State, they
have imposed ruthless penalties like chopping off hands as a
punishment for stealing, and stoning to death, or lashing for
adultery and illicit relationship. This is a cruel joke with
the Muslims, in the name of religion. It clearly takes no account
of the earnest appeal made in Hadith to rationalism. It has been
clearly maintained there that any virtue may be interpreted
only in the light of reason, and only after considering fully
the relevance of a particular action, should it be carried on.
Moreover, Hadith has clearly pointed out that if the person who is
affected by the action should be punished or rewarded for his own
good in particular, and consequently, for the social good. A
person committing a particular crime, say theft, should be given
all chances of sympathetic consideration before chopping out his
hands. In most cases, such persons are often the victims of
circumstances of psychic disorder. However, there are some judi-
cious Muslim societies, quite a number of them, who constitute
the civic courts for such minor offences. Awkwardly enough, there
are some notorious politicians, who satisfy their sadist instincts
through murder and genocide. Personal vengeance and some such
filthy acts of criminal nature are often attempted justifications,
by seeking Quranic sanctions. Enlightened masses, however, do make
distinctions between the genuine religious purpose and selfish,
dire motives. It is a great and grave challenge to the scholars
of Islamic studies, to rectify the literal and soulless translation
of Islamic strictures, without referring to its clear reference to reason. After all, the religion is for the upliftment of man, and certainly not for disrespecting his power to rational and consistent thinking. To deny such a fundamental quality, is to defy the very definition of man. It is rationality which qualifies a human being, and happily enough, Quran has taken a serious note of it. Ambiguity has been retained, without a clear reference to the full consideration of reason, so that the leaders in power, both, religious and political could enjoy their unquestioned authority, uninterpreted. Modern age has now realised the need to re-interpret the decayed slogans, if Islam is to be respected in the systems of changing values. Islam never preached rigidity genuinely. Any stress on the dictum, was only the necessity of time. Had it not been the case, Islam would certainly have remained the religion of the backward, the down-trodden and the uneducated. On the contrary, we have the enlightened elites of the various sections, not only embracing Islam, but hailing it as the most practicable and humanistic religion of all times. Not that Islam thrives upon such conversions or begs the applause of the intellectuals. Even without any external sanctions to its universality, it would continue to remain so, such basic is its structure.

Though, certainly, this is the age of transition, and Islam is

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passing through an interesting phase of social change. Islam has always shown stresses of urbanisation. This is because it originated in a non-agricultural, commercial society. Hence, it does not get involved into the mythical and ethereal aspects, like those religions which originated in peasant society. Most of the theoretical formulations of early Islam were more business oriented than anything else. This characteristic is evidently reflected in the contractual nature of marriage and divorce. A drastic reform in marriage has been introduced socially, especially, the recent insistence on monogamy, and the general cry for a permanent marital institution, than easy divorce. A religion which originates in commerce is more practical and more applicable to social problems than a sacramental doctrine. But then, it being flexible, it is equally exposed to change. Any insistence on its permanence would give rise to funny deductions, which are often irrelevant to modern technically complex social structure. Islam has the advantage over other religions in retaining its urban structure, and thus remain relevant even to the modern age. Max Weber in his article "Major Features of the World Religion" observes "religiosity of bourgeois strata seems to originate in urban life. In the city a religious experience of the individual tends to lose the character of ecstatic trance, or dream and to assume the paler forms of contemplative mysticism or a low-keyed, everyday piety. For the craftsman, steady work with customers can suggest the development of concepts like 'duty' and 'recompose' as basic orientations towards life". It is a general observation that Islam
adheres to piety and strict adherence to laws. There are quite a number of progressive laws, rarely found in a religious system, for example, the law of inheritance, and the right of women to own property independently. They have a voice in the contractual nature of marriage. They could propose marital conditions before entering into the relationship. Though polygamy was in yoke in early ages, it is almost obsolete now. This reform is autonomous and self-oriented, thus vindicating the commercial and urban characteristics of Islam. Even divorce has now been exercised in favour of womans' rights.

There is marked change in the policy of taking interest on capital and investment. Another important reform in the problem of divorce marks an interesting and healthy attitude amongst spouces. As it is clear that the Muslim Law which permits four wives to man has not found much reverence in modern age, mainly because a self-respecting enlightened woman would normally consider it as self-mutualizing to grant such a concession; so is the case in divorce. A conscious man with self respect, thanks to the age of education and enlightened world never tolerate his previous spouse having matrimonial relations with another man, before he accepts her once more, whatever may be the reasons for his repentence. However, some Mohammadan scholars have avoided the religious complications by introducing convenient modifications that the divorce uttered in fit of anger, and then repented, may be pardoned for a time.\textsuperscript{4} The wife then need not marry another man before she

occupies her prior position in her spouse's life. A welcome change of attitude has grasped the Muslim societies at large, inspite of the Quranic promises that the Lord will feed the children, and hence parents should never take recourse to abortions or use of contraceptives for family planning. It is more of a reaction to adjust with the tense economic condition and hygiene problems, than as a revolt or lack of reverence for Islam. The illiterate lot of Indian Muslims, for example, produce many offsprings in the name of religion, but fail to apply industry for a decent living. Lacking formal education, they end up as labourers or rickshaw drivers. In turn, these very lot creates their prototype, and thus, the vicious circle would never end, but for the family planning acceptance. It is a sheer necessity of times, if population explosion is to be checked. Hence, any reform in this direction is a welcome one, and must be fully appreciated, instead of discouraging the Muslims by pointing out religious retaliation. On the contrary, if anything be remembered throughout, is the respect for reason and judgement, which Hadith has so unambiguously referred to. Egypt has set an example, by bringing out a legal consultation which permitted deposits of money in the saving banks where they earned interest. Despite some initial resistance from the dogmatists, the practice has become popular because it is practicable. Other Muslim societies would soon follow the lead. Being egalitarian in principle and spirit, Islam has retained in its value system equality and fraternity. These, and such others
are the ideas with which Islam has never tampered or compromised. However, it suggests suitable interpretations, so that the two do not conflict, for example, the right to private property may lead to class-conflict, and thus disturb the value of fraternity. In order that all values function in symphony, extremities should be avoided with the help of reason. Modern Islamic followers would benefit from the experience of the ancient Muslims, and would rather enjoy a balanced life by judicious redistribution of wealth. It would be preposterous to expect set answers to all our problems. Religion is not a computer; it would lose its relevence if it is so considered. If progress is in tune with faith, values and intellectual vigour and sincerity of purpose, Islam can legitimately vouchsafe the standards of modern society. The entirety of problem-section cannot be searched in Islam. Whateoever and to whatever extent they are sensibly applicable the scriptures may be consulted. In rest of the cases, which are naturally peculiar to the particular context, it behoves that man uses his own sense of judgement, his own discretion. He should, under all circumstances, satisfy himself that his actions and decisions would not hurt divinity. It is the basic rule for every Muslim, who has faith in Islam, Islamic Jurisprudence in the constitution which is the result of the experience of the men of religiosity and authority who compiled the typical problems and tackled them most rationally, where they thought Quran was silent or cryptic.
It follows quite logically that the problems peculiar to current context may likewise be approached rationally. The over-enthusiasm in some of the Muslim societies has blotted modern scientific and technical progress with unpleasant consequences. To ensure their own place in the changing world, adaptation to the change was necessary for the Muslim societies. The only other alternative would be to remain materially and socially backward. Needless to comment that such a progress need not have implied moral regress. Unfortunately it has occurred in many a Muslim societies. The stone was set rolling by Turkey. Though it was this land that accepted in practice, the impact of West and changed its own social costumes, it had only served as the mouthpiece of the cry of other Muslim societies. They too, were suffocated and pent up with irrelevant and out-dated social practices. With the sophistication of mass media of communications, they could evaluate their inconsequential position in the competitive world. Moreover, Turkey discovered some enlightened sociologists and theoreticians like Zia Gokalp, Namik Kemal and Ataturk. Zia justified the choice of western civilisation as natural, because that was according to him, a continuation of the ancient, Mediterranean Civilisation, whose founders were their own early forefathers. As such he had no qualms regarding Turkey, being turned Western. On the contrary, he firmly argued that such a state would not necessarily mean anti-Islamic. He cited the examples of Jews and who Japanese share the same civilisation with European nations, although
they differ from them both in culture and religion. Being most influential, he laid the spiritual and social spheres, he was an apt person to lay the theoretical foundations of the modern Turkish State. Though, of course, in practice, it was more imitation of West, than adopting it for social welfare. In the process, Turkey adopted a new face socially, materially and politically. An internal breach was created between the people and the ruling class, since the change introduced was so sudden. The new society was faceless. It lost the distinguishing characteristics of its rich, cultural past, and could not genuinely cast itself in Western World. This resulted into a chasm between the common masses and the ruled class. The imitation thus was devoid of all critical apprisement, originality of outlook and high-mindedness. As a result, Turkey is now struggling as a third-rate power, awaiting favourable glances from the West. There was Namik Kemal who circulated the concept of liberty. Yet it was the zeal and concern of Kemal Ataturk which translated Zia Gokalp's philosophy into action, till he has completely succeeded in bringing about total social change. During his period, the remarkable change was that Turkey was reorganised as a secular state. A religion, which claimed divine kingship to the throne, thus was unseated. For the first time ever since its inception, Islam, for that matter any religion, was treated as a totally

5 Niyazi Berkes - Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization (1959), pp. 266-275.
personal affairs. Politics had no authority over it. Nor could religion interfere with the working of the state. Thus, it was an end of Caliphate and Islamic Law. Instead, the Turkey was cast into different legal systems (like criminal law, trade law) after the pattern of Switzerland, Italy and Germany. The Muslim personal law was subordinated to the civil law of Europe. Religious instructions were not a part of the school curriculum. Women were asked to drop pardah, and could take education along with men. The education was imparted through Latin, instead of Arabic. The national costume was made compulsory, which included hat on the head, instead of headgear. Armstrong flays that Ataturk had destroyed the whole religious basis and outlook of the Turkish State and peoples.7

However, the personal impact of Ataturk had done the deed, and Turkey was westernised. After his death, there are some indications that point out the deep-rootedness of Islam in its people. Had it not been so, Muslims would have turned non-Islamic, like Spainards. It is an unbiased observation that the reforms introduced by Ataturk were merely an echo of what had been passing in the minds and hearts of the national leaders of all the Muslim countries. It was an unprecedented experiment of the unique type. Its success was complete. Today, Turkey carries the deep-rooted impressions of Ataturk's reform, without any fundamental rivalry with the traditional Islam. The change

7 Armstrong, H.C. Grey Wolf (1932), P-287.
introduced, has been retained, only proving the fact that the clock cannot be put back. The natural tendencies are too strong to be refuted theoretically. A political power may show temporary success, but then, the security of Islam is not guaranteed, unless the followers are aware and conscious of their own position in history and the modern world.

The condition of Muslims in India has remained ambiguous ever since India was under British Rule. Muslims in India considered it as their prime duty, their fidelity to Indians. The terror of British Masters, however, created awe, and this community suffered a set-back on all fronts. At times, they were considered responsible for the internal conflicts in India. Sadly enough, this blot is yet to be wiped out, even after Independence. However, the secular state of India has not interfered with the practice of any religion. It is now up to the modern Muslim youth to brighten up the tarnished image of Indian Muslims, as a defeated, dejected and insignificant group, which cherishes 6th century ideology in the twentieth century. There may be an over-enthusiastic attempt at modernism, and it is peculiar to Muslims who do not form majority. There is a tendency to drift along with the majority and remain in the general current. For which, there is no justified argument, rationale, or re-interpretation of Islam. There have been major changes in Indian Muslim societies in the customs of marriage, divorce, trade and commerce. They have a slow and definite strok towards secularism. Their outlook is coloured with future speculations regarding the significance of
religion's dogmas, no matter how quiet or hesitant they are regarding this confession. Their personal and social lives supply ample illustrations to vindicate their change of percepts. The concept of religiosity is in the process of gathering a new meaning which is functional. It should prove to be a welcome sign, for then the religion would be placed on the soundest grounds of reason, with no room for any future refutation. At present, the religious factions have ended up into the narrowing down of the extent of formal religious parameter, within its arena, however, most activities have flourished. Thus, a pragmatic concept of religion is gradually finding ground in Egypt, Iran and somewhat in Pakistan. This is in wide constrast to Ataturk's coercive westernisation in Turkey. Further, there is an unjustified apprehension that the secularisation process would weaken the minority muslim community. It constantly faces the danger of self-erosion.

They fear the loss of group identity. This apprehension however has yielded positive results, at some social dimensions by enjoying full attention and intense action. But it is always a healthier practice to progress, not due to apprehensions but due to need and the very necessity of it. The Islamic code could be modified in accordance with the principle of reinterpretation, Ijtihad which is an integral part of the grand Islamic tradition. It is useless to have nostalgic obsession with the pious and glorious Islam of the history. As the history of Turkey has already eroded the age-old impression that a religion could never become mundane, that it could never be unseated from its spiritual
status. There is no guarantee that the unquestioned and total supplication was truly, an expression for the divine reverence. At times, religion is thrust upon a bewildered community, if it has to be brought up to the level of decent living. The minor misconcepts in the body of a major religion are commonplace. They could be straightened up by the intellectual Muslims of Indian society.

The Indian Muslim community for secularism was optional and not forced. Hence there is a great deal of spontaneous following of Islam. May be an Indian Muslim has been coloured by the ethics and culture of his surroundings, and as a result, he may be practising some rituals as are not mentioned in Quran like the gay celebration of Moharrum. Some such lacunae are of course not encouraged, but they are tolerated at individual levels. By and large Muslims in India have complete freedom, which they choose to utilise in becoming westernised, semi-westernised, or more correctly, arriligious. This is a sad picture of any religion where political interference is absent, or it is a secular state. However, the responsibility of directing the freedom of will in the right direction is the main concern of modern Muslim elite. It is this class which is rightly entitled to take the initiative in this matter. It is the solemn duty of the religious as well as the intellectual leaders of the Indian Muslims. That the religious leaders have also played their esteemed role in keeping Islam integrated, is a fact. Many leaders of Jama'at-i-Islamia like, Maulana Maudoodi and others have greatly helped Islam retain its form despite enormous
western influence throughout the oriental regions. This body constantly reminds Muslims of his fundamental duties, lest they should lose all contact with tradition. At times, meagre knowledge of Islam puts Muslims in an awkward position. They are not fully equipped to defend their own faith, nor are they prepared by the western bombardment of materialism. The latter position is never sought for by the natural orientalist. For the former, he has to be an aware, enlightened citizen of the world.

Pakistan stands in more or less similar position where the attitude to change is concerned. However, political influence does play a vital role in the enforced practice of religion. Pakistan has now taken up the responsibility of serving as a platform for Islamic reformism.
In their zeal to regain ancient form of Islam, some Muslim societies have taken recourse to extreme means. This must be condemned by all means. "Nations are not destroyed by God only because of unbelief, if they otherwise follow just and progressive laws. Muslims are merely potentially and by no means necessarily, the 'best among the peoples'". 8

After Indonesia, Pakistan forms one of widest Muslim communities. Indian history has a chequered picture of the down and fall of political power, so has Pakistan. Consequently, Islam met an ambiguous treatment at the hands of the foreign masters. Now, in independent India and Pakistan, the basic difference of approach to the problem of change by the modernist and the Ulema has had a paralysing influence on law, constitution and institutions in modern Pakistan. Modernist have been finding it hard to free the people from the shoulders of undue traditionalism, more so in Pakistan. It will be quite some time and trial before Pakistan comes to terms with modern world and accept it as reality. However, the recent non-Islamic fervour is equally disturbing.

"The dopatta is slipping from the head of the slim news reader who looks prettier in rouge and lipstick on colour TV.

The petite assistant editor of "The Muslim" shakes hands with you at a reception hosted by her newspaper for Indian journalists. She tells you in so many words that women do better than men not only in journalism but in other jobs too because they are more dedicated and more serious than men.

8 Quran 13.12.
The bare-headed, ivory-complexioned college girl strolling about the casual wear puts you on the right track when you get lost in Lahore cantonment.

Inside Lahore's Badshahi mosque the Mujavirs—or whoever they are—having their siesta. They push aside the pullows as they see the intruding visitors from India.

In short the Islamic fervour this correspondent saw in Pakistan in 1981 is tapering off.

The short-haired air hostes, who greeted you with a melodious "assalam Alikum two years ago, just gives you a polite smile as you board the PIA aircraft.

The waiter at Islamabad Hotel welcomes you to the coffee shop with a "good morning" as he presents the menu card. No "assalam Alikum".

New Ministers of civil servants preface their interviews with Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim (in the name of God, the most merciful and the most munificent) as they address the press. Like Gen. Zia-ul-Haq did when he began his press conference in 1981, during the External Affairs Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Islamabad for talks with his counterpart, Mr. Agha Shahi.

Foreign Minister Sahabazada Yaqub Khan met the press twice but not once did he invoke God.

The personable secretary of the ministry of information and broadcasting, Lt-Gen. Mujib-ur-Rahman Khan, who hosted a dinner for Indian journalists, uttered no qalma before he lifted his fork and knife.9

9 Times of India, 25th June 1983
The laxity in behaviour has crossed the all standards of decency. A Lahore Gazetteer brought out astounding statistical results were public behaviour is concerned. It noted that there were only 14 cases of kissing and embracing in public during July-1981. This number suddenly galloped to 116, in July-1982.¹⁰

The religion at this stage requires genuine and intense attention at the hands of experts and scholars.

Undoubtedly, it is high time that the developed countries drew curtain over the melodramatic behaviour in the name of Islam. It is a pity that such a magnanimous religion yet awaits full justice at the hands of enlightened muslims. Non-Muslims have done a great job in bring/Islam to lime light.¹¹ However, their attempts sometimes are looked upon as prejudiced or biased, no matter how sincere the author has really been. At times, he has genuine limitations of not being fully acquainted with Muslim ethic or Arabic, in which Quran is composed in a mystic style.

There is an aweful confusion concerning the theory of change amongst Muslims. It works on two different levels. Change is required for cultural adjustment on the one hand and for the general progress and betterment of the community on the other. Muslim communities of India and Pakistan have found the first kind of change rather challenging, and hence they take up some explosive issues ensured by 'Ulema' and resist. The result is conflict of cultures. This issue, of course, is also political and hence it

¹⁰ By a correspondent - Adam Sumero, Chitralekha, P-13, Vol-IX-82
¹¹ For details see, Dr. Radha Krishna, Eastern Religion and Western Thought (Oxford).
is many dimensional. However, no other community has reacted so fiercely to the change of times. Hence the observation "Few culture areas have been subjected to so much and so violent change as that of Islam; none perhaps has so consistently referred to accept the ontological reality of change". 12

It is significant that Pakistan chose to call itself an 'Islamic State' in its first constitution and the amendment to its second constitution. A tactfull collaboration of religio-political groups led to the amendment. An Islamic State by definition is committed to the administration in accordance with historical process of law developed by classical jurists. However, a Muslim State, can be a secular or secularized state, just like Tunisia, which declares itself as Arab Muslim State. The majority of the citizens of such States are attached to Islamic Culture, history and the ethics of Quran. The inevitable change in religions and social life of muslims has perturbed Islamic States more seriously than Muslim States. The categorical rejections of the divine state theory, or to put naively, the admixture of religion and politics is evident elsewhere in the world. Its silent echoes are audible in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. For a considerable long time historically, Turkey has remained Muslim State, and not Islamic State. Religio-political theory is to be rejected because of its "brutality which thrives upon the confusion as to the proper limit of authority."

12 G. E. Von Grunebaum 'Modern Islam', P-209
Bangladesh, was the consequence of India-Pakistan war in 1972. Ever since, it has remained an independent country. However, it has mated the ill-fate ever since its inception. Its father founder Mujibur Rahman was brutally and inhumanly murdered and there was a take over by military coupe Abdul Sattar came to power, who tried to put straight the disturbed country. But the following president Ziaur Rahman was a more accomplished politician and administrator who played astute, balancing game. He was able to remain efficient both, at home and abroad that is, internal and foreign politics.

This chequered history of Bangladesh had dire consequences on social structure. Before the country tried to adjust its newborn eyes to the realities of the world, it was busy adjusting its own internal changes, which push back stabilisation. Poverty of Bangladesh has remained proverbial and politicians are more concerned with their personal gains than care for the progress.

"General Ershad seems to lack General Zia's political sophistication but his handling of foreign policy for one has not been unstatesmanlike. Not only was his performance at the recent non-aligned summit well received, his handling of bilateral relations with the countries which matter the most for Bangladesh has been competent. For historical and geopolitical reasons, two such countries have been Pakistan and India. Bangladesh's relations with both can be said to have improved. General Zia of Pakistan is now scheduled to visit Dhaka while General Ershad's state visit to India late last year placed bilateral relations on
a sounder footing. For the economic compulsions of a grossly poor country, Dhaka's relations with some rich Islamic nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, have also begun to matter crucially. This relationship too has progressed satisfactorily during General Ershad's reign, though certain domestic difficulties may have been compounded on account of this progress.

Domestic performance must remain the litmus strip with which to test a head of state's competence. Here the General's record is mixed. His sudden proposal and rash steps to Islamicise Bangladesh seem to have been prompted partly by external economic causes and partly by his own need for a political constituency. A storm protest made him eventually ease his foot on the acceleration but he has by no means given up the idea. His responses to political furore have been erratic at best. He has used the strong arm injudiciously though he has now announced that the ban on political activities would be lifted "in a limited way" from April 1. His government's ban last year on a wide range of useless and harmful drugs was hailed by many as a progressive measure. On the other hand, his desire to involve the military 'constitutionally' in state administration has aroused suspicion about his personal ambition. In his address to the nation on the eve of National Day (March 26), he reaffirmed his plan to hold elections in phases to "give back democracy to the nation". He may be more serious about keeping promises than another General in the western part of the subcontinent; but reports say he may be toying with various models of guided democracy, particularly the Indonesian model. His proposals to check the mushroom growth of political
parties, to ensure a powerful opposition in the national assembly and to decentralise rural administration look good on paper but the response of major political parties has been cynical. In short, Gen. Ershad is on slippery ground at home. His ability to say on his feet remains to be proved.

A country infamed for its thorough puritanion and devotion to traditional forms and ideals, succumb to the enticement of modernism. But before it adopted it in its extermeties, it had initially resisted it cruelly enough to foresake its own benefit. This obstinacy to its dogma cost it its rightful legacy to new advantages of modernism. As a result of such unwanted attitude, Afghanistan was negligent to its own development. Its geographical position demands such attention all the more. Its ignorance of modern technique till this century has expanded it critically to Russia, Great Britain and other new forces. Zafar Hassan, has given a picturesque account of the state of affairs when he writes-

"Except Kabul, there were no schools. There were no rails in Afghanistan. Communication was in miserable state. In the whole country, there was only one civil and one military hospital in Kabul. Incompetent men occupied the highest posts in the administration and no questions were asked about their merit or qualification."

Recently, of course, the conditions are better, yet not quite up to the mark. Afghanistan has now welcomed Western lifestyle in its entirely condemnable form. During this twenty seven

14 Zafar Hasan Aibak - Aap Biti (1964), PP-54-55.
it has changed beyond recognition. A report of European in Ritchie Calder is quite informative. "Three years ago, that women would have been in purdah. All that has changed. There are plenty of women in the theory at the festival still with the hood of segregation. They have not quite got used to the idea that they are now free to uncover their faces. But the vast majority are now unveiled. It will be difficult for people outside Afghanistan to realise what a revolution this has meant in the lives of Afghan women. Thirty seven years ago King Amanullah was driven from his throne by the "Mullas" because he allowed his queen to appear unveiled.

"It would be almost fair to claim that the release of Afghan women from purdah began from mother and child health clinics. Today there is co-education in the University where girl students used to arrive in their Chadars and had to study separately from men."

However, the far-fetched effect or westernisation could never have been foreseen. It was too complicated for any logical prediction. The reason is simple. Afghanistan engaged its modern knowledge against its own people, and thus, ended up in constant civil wars. In 1978, Sir Daud Khan's leadership was challenged till he was dethroned. In his stead, the communist spirit within Afghanistan found place, till Russia overtook this tiny nation in its huge fold. The policy, though internationally condemned, the fact remains that Afghanistan is under Russia control though

a small group of Mujahidins are trying to fight tooth and nail to drive out foreign rule. The success of Muslims is for the future to decide. However, the cause which led to this surfdom is clear, its unceasing attraction to West, at the total neglect of Islamic culture, the present president Babark Karmal too is playing in the hands of Russia.

It appears that Yemen too will follow the same fate. It will be pawn in the hands of some vested interest, and head towards self-annihilation. Its recent history is full of venomous internal politics. Its conflicts and its causes for internal disputes are meaningless. Yemen has no definite destiny to reach. Though some hopeful observers like W. Erich Bethmann had some time before twenty years predicted Yemen has before it a fundamental choice to make.\textsuperscript{16} The alternatives are fast pressing, and if Yemen does not yield to the western wave, it will fortunately gave it face. Though, of course, the recent times have proved the situation far from such fanatics. The reality is that Yemen is fast becoming westernised, with immediate prospects of turning Islamic in near future. It is undoubtedly based on the changes quite irreligious. Soon it will find the communist grip strengthening on it, and strangling its existence.

At present North Yemen Republic is backed by America while the South Yemen peoples democratic is a tool of Russia, and both are constantly at war.

\textsuperscript{16} Erich Bethmann, Yemen on the Threshold, PP-71-74
Amin Saeed: El-Yemen, P-281
The other Muslim countries like Egypt faced the ups and downs in social life which is the result of shifty political policies. In general, the purely materialistic ideas and urges and the Western cults of nationalism and socialism have gone straight to the head. Their pride prevents them from accepting even the general and fundamental aspects of the revealed faiths.

An enlightened modern Muslim scholar no less than Dr. Taha Husain observes -

"Egypt has become a part of Europe. Dr. Taha Husain observes "All these things indicate that today, we seek an ever increasing contact and identity with the West till we become a part of it, apparently a well as truly, in form as well as substance."17

Taha Husain urges his countrymen to emulate Western Civilization and to act as partners of the Western people in their social and cultural heritage. He writes -

"We should follow the way of the Europeans and adopt their habits, customs and manners so that we may be their equals and partners in all the aspects of civilisation, good as well as bad, sweet as well as sour, desirable as well as detestable. We must convince the European that the look at life from the same angle as he does, our evaluation of things is not different from his evaluation, and we hold the same opinions about them as a Westerner holds."18

There is nothing very special about these Muslim countries

17 Mustaqbil-us-Thaqafat Fi Misr, P-36
18 Ibid, P-44.
Iran has likewise followed the suit. After the Turkey pattern, it tried to alter its cultural and intellectual structure by adopting a series of far reaching 'reforms'. The process was set into motion by Emperor Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925-41). The consequences were anticipated, and the plans were cleverly conceived so as to yield coveted results. Muslims of Iran have faced unprecedented and speedy changes in their culture. If they had forgotten their own cult and creed, and had almost fallen into Western labyrinth, they were cruelly awakened from their exhostotic slumber and rudely reminded that they were Muslims belonging to Islamic faith. The duration of this era of force and terror is for the future predictions. Though it yet remains for anyone to deduct that a religion where is compelled by one political power, may easily be expelled by another. However, the plight of Muslims is regrettable. They could not be fully enlightened in the pious sense of the word, because they were glared by Western illumination. Now there is an attempt to lure them back to abyss of ignorance. If a religion gets back popularity by forceful means, then it is a blot on our civilization. But, in the age where atrocities of extreme orders are performed without slightest prick of conscience, this crude way of respecting Islam is pardonable to some extent. At least there is the awareness that the way in which the societies have been fast losing faith in anything spiritual, is alarming. It will lead to devastating results of not only irreligiosity, but to a selfish and barbarous society. For, it is due to some religions fundamentals that the noble ideas of

19 George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, P-180
sacrifice and charity have flourished. If the roots are destroyed, there is no hope for any verdour. Life will bare a horrible face of greed, want, selfishness, corruption and bloodshed. We have witnessed these and other wretched aspects of human behaviour in our own century. The consequences are logical. The very fundamentals which gracefully carry the society are collapsing increasingly.

Inspite of some unwarranted religious beliefs and practices, some movements for Islamic revival and unity are to be appreciated and should be given the widest publicity and a prominent place in literature.

King Raza Shah was deposed on 1st April 1979 and the seeds of Islam revolution thus, were fructifying. Ayatullah Khomeini, who was in exile for long Paris was successful in instigating the people of Iran against the westernised Shah.

Khomeini could not stop the world wide condemnation which he acquires due to mass execution of the intelligentsia and trained warriors.

Khomeini's concern over Islam is highly controversial. He backons people to shed blood in the name of Islam, whereas he himself indulges into the unpardonable non-Islamic practices. During the latest battle at Sabbil Zehab, Iraqi forces found prints of the Holy Quran containing Khomeini's photograph printed on the inside of its first cover, a phenomenon strongly rejected by the Islamic religious traditions and teaching which prohibit
any addition to the Holy Quran other than the Lords quotation. The general sentiment that he is a leader imposed upon the people, is not totally misplaced.

He has proved inefficient in checking loss of lives and property in the name of war. The recent Iran-Iraq war has also proved expensive and non-conclusive.

Indonesia is one of the biggest Muslim countries in the world to day. It is no exception to its lukewarm attitude to Islam. Its craze for modernisation has resulted in its present state of affairs. It has not headed the blow it received from the bloody tussel of Dar-us-salam. Like Turkey, contemporary Indonesia has almost lost all Muslim appellations. This is also a secular republic though in 1945 and 1950, Constitutions declare that the state is based on belief in God. Yet, no government official of whatsoever rank was required to be a Moslem or to take an oath of office in the name of God or Mohammad. Both these constitutions guarantee freedom to one's faith, Islamic or non-Islamic. Some non-Islamic segments provocative attitude has initiated the longest and the costliest guerilla war. Though the government has its own reason for secular state which it calls the existent of other cults, it quietly leaves untouched the essential factor. It is the very difficulty of the government to translate the precepts of Quran in modern systems, both legal and social. The justification for secularism is thus, the need of time. Most of the Indonesians of today's Muslim community are enlightened

intellectuals who vouchsafe secularism.

"...And secularism for Muslim state is Western". At present, the legal, political and social institutions are coloured by the prominent concepts borrowed from the West. There was also a temporary communal surge, when under the leadership of President Soekarno, some communist elements in army attempted the seizure of power. Of course, there was a remarkable resistance from young Muslims, and communism remained ineffective by and large. Like any other Muslim legal system, Indonesia will also be required to react to the challenges vested.

The human rights group of Indonesia has recently propped up the problem of political disappearance for power. A report from The Times of India sheds light on its recent situation.

"A belated report by an Indonesian human rights group which has popped up without notice in book stores here mentions for the first time "political disappearance" in the South-east Asian country.

The report by legal aid institute also mentions openly for the first time the question of East Timor, urging Jakarta to respect human rights in the former Portuguese colony annexed by Indonesia in 1975.

The institute's 220 page report for 1981, which came out a year late, says that Indonesia suffers from political repression, a lack of social justice, infringement of universal liberties, a muzzled press and worker exploitation.

The book by the 12-year-old institute, now Indonesia's principal human rights group, appeared without publicity on bookshelves just a few days after President Suharto's re-election early this month.

The report, the third and most comprehensive evaluation of human rights in Indonesia backs up its accusations with a 50-page chronology of alleged violations in 1981. It does not specify how many people vanished for political reasons but speaks of 'political disappearance' after the March 18 hijacking of a Garuda Airlines DC-9 in Bangkok by five young Muslim extremists.

Imran Mohammad Zain, leader of the radical band the hijackers' belonged to, was condemned to death. The Legal Aid Institute estimated that at least 400 Muslims from various groups have been detained.

"We appear to be facing a new form of judgement, political disappearance, the institute said, "We are in danger of going from that to political murder".

The institute also protested against what it called the arbitrary detention of Muslim separatists in Aceh, north Sumatra, and Irian Jaya, the former Dutch Colony integrated into Indonesia in 1963. It said the prisoners "must be able to be judged and freed if their guilt cannot be proved".

In a brief assessment of the situation on East Timor, the institute acknowledged that it was difficult to know exactly what was happening in the province with access guarded tightly.22

22 The Times of India, 30th March 1983.
"The Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, has told his party's general assembly that the government was reviewing the legislation to be implemented to preserve Islamic values in the country.

Dr. Mahathir, who is also the party president responded to a resolution adopted by the convention of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) asked Government to enact laws to safeguard the sanctity of Islam and prevent misuse of religion by any one.

The resolution was adopted unanimously in the context of the severe criticism of the opposition Pan Malayan Islamic extremist teachings.

Members said that "deviationist teachings" were sought to be spread among the Malays (all of whom are Muslims) particularly in some of the Eastern and Northern states of the peninsula.

In line with the leadership changes of last year, the youth-wing of the party also chose a new president--Mr. Anwar Ibrahim, a comparative new comer to UMNO politics and a protege of the Prime Minister.

On the Islamic issue, which drew a large part of the assembly's attention, Dr. Mahathir in his presidential address said the party had a three fold task; "to bring about a change of attitudes among the 7.5 million Malays, to meet the modern needs of Islam and to enhance Islamic practices and ensure true adherence to the religion." This means that Malays must be hard-working, knowledgeable and efficient in all fields", he said.
Dr. Mahathir pointed out that the government had planned three major projects -- to set up an international Islamic university, to establish an Islamic bank and to introduce the study of Islamic civilisation in the country's universities.23

There is nothing very special about other Muslim countries. As in Turkey, India, Pakistan and Indonesia, the leadership everywhere shows a determined step in the direction of Western intellectualism, with all their political, economic and cultural attitudes. The impression that the political leaders give is that as if they are at dagger's ends with the fundamentals of Islam. They would do better should they listen to the conscience of their people. People at large are religious minded. Supplemented by political leaders, they would gladly accept a reasonably religious life, rather than present day laxity. They are inwardly aware of its futility in the long run, but for the lack of any grip or support from above system, they just drift in the common current without conscious resistance. Muslims are a unique people, well-known for their spiritual stamina and undeterred faith in God. However, these very rocks of religion are systematic shaken by some vested interest. If unchecked they will succeed in their sordid game of ruining the spiritualism from the face of this earth. It is no use simply drumpeting the glories of Islam, and priding over its huge following. It is time to girdle the loins and put in some concrete effort to save human beings from transforming into living machines or dreadful vultures.

One more country which is newly emancipated Arab country is Tunisia. Naturally enough, it followed Turkey example, being established as late as 1956. The ruling parties' interest lies westward, especially France. At first instance polygamy is totally abolished. Women have been given equal stand with men. They can vote, and even contest for the political membership. Women are abounding all spheres of public life. Tunisia has gone a long way in tracing the path of Kemal Atatürk, and its changes are fast and distinct. 'Pardah' is fast disappearing and it is almost given up in urban sections.

The argument of President M. Habib Bourguiba remains that he always desisted using compulsion to bring about the change. He preferred worn-out garments to fall off naturally, and subsequently. He never believes he is an atheist, and at the same time, shows full reverence to Islam. He argues that the reforms may not exactly conform Quran, nevertheless, they are not in contradiction with anything divine, ultimately. As such, it is quite acceptable that modern Tunisia has entered "progressivism". Succeeding with the total abolition of polygamy, it prevented public waqfs and their assets became the property of the state. No amount sympathetic interpretation can accommodate the justification of code of personal status as that with the traditional Islamic Law. Here is a summary of the speech delivered by President Bourguiba at the International Cultural Seminar held at Tunis in March 1974, in which some significant and curious suggestions were given to Tunisian intellectuals. Es-Sabh (Tunis) March 21, 1974.
(i) The Quran is full of contradictions which the intellect is no longer willing to accept. The President quoted these two verses to illustrate this point:

Say: Naught befalleth us save that which Allah hath decreed from us (IX:51); and Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts (XIII:11).

(ii) The Holy Prophet was an unsophisticated man who often travelled to countries lying beyond the desert land of Arabia. He used to listen keenly to parables and other traditional legends that were popular at that time but had no foundation in history and transferred these to the Quran, as for example, the Rod of Moses (which the mind cannot accept after the discovery of Bastour, and Ashab-i-Kahf (the people of the Cave).

(iii) The excessive veneration of the Prophet by the Muslims has gone so far that they have exalted him to the position of God, a proof of which is that they always call him Mohammad, Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon whom and his descendants, i.e. God may send His blessings on to the Prophet which is the equivalent of regarding a man as God.

25 There is contradiction pointed out by President Bourguiba between the two verses is either due to his ignorance of the Arabic or because he never got an opportunity to study the commentary of the Quran or enquire even from an ordinary scholar of Islamic theology. Quoted by S. Abul Hasan Ali NadWi: Western Civilization, Islam and Muslims, PP-137-142.
At a meeting of advisory committee of the University of Madina, the scholars were rigidly and rudely shocked at such blasphemy. Their reaction was serious, which expressed that such views cannot entitle a person to be called Muslim. The speech met indignation at the hands of many journals. It has clearly been public that such leaders have controversial views on Prophet and Islam, together with the dreaded fact that they have been systematically carrying out their profane motive to its goal.

Algeria's hard won independence through the Algerian Muslims' love for martyrdom and the inherent spirit of Jehad. However, the present Algerian Muslims are conveniently following the same systems of secularism, materialism, socialism and Western civilization. A report in the Jewish Observer of London dated August 31, 1963, is an example of the sincere reaction.

"The religious leaders of Algeria have declared that Islam and Arabic language will be supreme in their country. In a statement they have severely criticised the national leaders who in keeping with the general trend are in support of modern socialist state in which religion will not be allowed to preoject itself in the affairs of the State.

"The Ulema stressed that the Algerian War of Independence will be remembered as betrayal of the martyrs who laid down their lives in the cause of national liberation and an utter failure so far as its purpose was concerned if Islam was not recognised as the

26 Western Civilisation, PP-143-44.
official religion and Arabic as the official language of the new State.

"The cease-fire agreement of Irian specifically provides that religious freedom will be guaranteed to all citizens equally and both Arabic and French will be the state languages. It was also agreed that the Constitution will be drafted by the representatives of the people who were to meet on September 9, but owing to the differences between the Army officers and political leaders the proposed meeting could not take place.

"Now for the first time since the liquidation of the French rule the Algerian Ulema have stated categorically that freedom and economic progress could not be the sole objectives of the revolution. In their statement they say, 'Every independent nation possesses an individual existence. Were it not so, all the nations would get mixed up with each other, as the fish did in water, and there would be nothing to distinguish among the Algerians and the French and the Spaniards. It would mean the transformation of Algeria into an undisguised international state. We are opposed to it from the first to the last. We are Algerians; we have a distinct, independent, national personality, and this is the verdict of our Islamic faith, our language our tradition and our history.

"The Ulema have denounced the move for the separation of Islam from government and politics as a betrayal of the revolution and an assault on Islam in the home of the Muslim mullet itself and an insult to the entire Algerian people."
In order not to appear so Kafirs as is the picture truly, some leaders of Muslim societies make unsuccessful attempts to disguise their antagonism, by making some displays in favour of Islam. More often than not, Islam is used for political goals as it is the unquestionable way of taking masses into confidence. However, their idea of Islam consists in keeping the religion aloof of government, a religion strictly confined to its beliefs and morality. Islam has no doubt, met radical interpretation at the hands of these westernised leaders. Modernity, in order that it is accepted without confrontation by masses is guised as idealised Islam.

The double edged policy of the immature leaders cannot last for long. The hypocrisy lies in presenting Islam in a form which it is not. Though some reforms are of course a welcome sign, yet, they cannot carried out at the state of ethical blankness. The progress today is lopsided with the balance religion and morals showing an alarming pointer. It is difficult to give an examplary Muslim leader, who had the insight, maturity, so as not to be dogmatic nor, a revolutionist of the extreme kind. Whereas leaders are extravagant in ideologies, the bulk of the Muslim people everywhere are not willing to forsake their faith and historical legacy. In order to deal sternly with any meak resistance of the low masses, the leaders use coersion and brow about the desired reforms. Thus, the chasm between the leaders and the masses becomes wider. It will become unbreachable forever if proper measures are wanting. The only same approach would be to recognise fully, the voice of
the people, and to respect the faith they cherish for Islam. It is something which no iron hand, no matter how formidable can crush or curb. Any number of catch words will fall short the superior standards of Islam. At any moment of destiny and at every critical turn-out of history, or even political emergency or forgery victimisation or hyjack incidences, any human hands are raised in the name of divinity, for mercy for help. The helpless soul is prove to fall back upon the soul-stirring concepts of religion. However, this faith should not be that of an opportunists. Nobility marks a noble sound, and hence it upon all to respect the faith which gives solace to the soul. The very concept of gratitude demands that religion should be treated with all the reverence.

It is a sad realization that such valuable potentialities of Muslims are wasted by their leaders. The Western form of life cannot suit the Muslims anywhere in the world. It is artificial adoption and hence, it meets periodical oppositions. A muslim cannot accept the concept of free intercourse between men and women. The laxivious and lewd character of the Western is condemned by Muslims. The cheap methods of advertising the nudity of woman, the sexual laxity, drinking and gambling are only few instances which are against the conscience of a Muslim. If forced into a different culture, he will ruin his mental and physical person beyond recovery. The only hope lies in turning back to one's own culture, ethics and religion.. It is absured to imitate West; the sooner the leaders realize it, the better they will serve
the cause of Humanity in general and Islam in particular. The masses look upon the responsible Muslim elites to guide Muslim societies through their crises. Certainly this is a critical stage in history which is unprecedented. It calls upon the genius and the selfishness of a devout Muslim, whose unbiased and objective account should be palatable even to a Westerner.

Socio-political change in Arabia has conveniently laid aside the fundamentals of Islam. Muslims in name only, these new rich Arab magnats have indulged in a life of unpardonable practices by Islamic standards. Their attitude to women and sex has crossed all barriers of human decency. They exploit poor young girls, especially of India, and use them as the mere objects of lust. They drink heavily, live lavishly and spend aimlessly on their own physical wants, about which they have no qualms.

Tragedy of one kind or another has awaited the Arabs at every turn ever since they re-entered history as active and independent participants at the end of World War-II. The steady expansion of the boundaries and the power of Israel has been only an outward expression of this tragic fate. Its inner complement the never ending conflicts among them - has been, if anything, more corrosive and debilitating.

Despite all this, however, it appeared in October 1973 that the Arabs might be able to master their destiny and, indeed, became a factor of immense importance to the whole world. But this was

not changed its course. The Arab 'Century' has turned out to be among the briefest in history. In modern times only Hitler's Third Reich had a similar brief span of glory. Just as the Germany turned out to be the worst victims of Nazism, it is possible that the Arabs may turn out to have been the worst sufferers as a result of the black gold rush of the seventies. It has certainly disrupted their society as nothing else ever. Unearned wealth corrupts and debilitates. And never before in history have any people seen so huge a flood of unearned wealth.

Girilal Jain observes correctly:

"The power was, of course, illusory - like a mirage in the desert. The wealth came from under the earth and power, in order to be effective, has to be securely based on the ground. There was no such base in the Arab case. The Arabs had not discovered the oil; they had not drilled it, they had not marketed it. The Europeans and the Americans had done it for them... While they were, as usual, thoroughly divided, Israel stood there amidst them, like a monolith, arrogant and defiant Arafat and his colleagues fulminated against them and cursed them in anguish but in vain. Despite all their passionate speeches in support of the Palestinian cause, no Arab government was willing to take on Israel. The result is there for everyone to see. The Israelis have got away with their flagrant invasion of Lebanon".

Most oil-rich Arab countries do not possess the necessary skilled manpower. So they have imported it on a colossal scale. But to do what? Build palaces, of course. But even places are
better than the so-called industrial plants which cannot cater for the domestic market because it is too small and cannot compete in the world market, because the production costs are too high. 28

Unfortunately for Arabs, they are not even technically equipped to defend themselves. All their expert knowledge is borrowed. Arabs have no original history in technology. Even their military force has to be peopled by Pakistanis, since Arabs are not fully enlightened upon the workings of the sophisticated armaments (but practically useless) which they were bought worth billions of dollars from America, Russia and other European countries. The West was also sold them development plans which have devoured hundreds of billions of dollars mostly to add to the process of social disruption in the Arab world.

Upon such nations then, the nature avanges with double the stroke. Arab nations are gradually but definitely losing their oil market in the world transactions. Crude oil has hopelessly lost demand in twenty percent in an year's time. Technical nations like Israel and Japan have already stroke remarkably along the path of solar energy. Their further success would leave Arabs nowhere, since they have nothing to rely upon but crude oil. The tactful Russia has already bargained it for lesser dollars, knowing the tides of time. 29

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28 The Rise and Fall of the Arabs, Times of India (Sunday Review), May 29, 1983.
29 Chitra Lekha, 28 March 1983, PP-35-42. (Guj.)
In such an eventuality the future would be unpredictable. But whatever the course of developments, the Arab 'Century' seems to have come to an end.

**Islam in the Soviet Union:**

In 1917 (i.e. before the revolution) there were 40 millions of Muslims in Soviet Russia, distributed in Azbikstan, Kazakhistan, Azarbaijan, Jajistan, Turkmania, Tataria and Dagistan.

On 10 December, 1955, former Soviet Prime Minister Khrushchev said in Srinagar that there are now 15 million Muslims in the Soviet Union. If Khruschev's figure is correct, we are moved to ask the grave question: Where are the other 25 million Muslims? Leaving aside the natural increase in population during last 38 years at the rate of 1.5% per annum (which comes to 23 million) and giving due allowance to natural mortalities? Have they been physically exterminated or compulsorily registered as atheists?

Majority of the Muslims belong to Hanafi, Islam has followed a constant path of decline in this part of the world. It will cross the fatal mark of total annihilation if it continues to remain neglected by the propounders of Islam.

An account of Dr. Baymirza Hayit\(^{30}\), the Muslims in the Soviet Union is quite informative. He accounts that from 1928 onwards, all the influential Muslim personalities such as Muftis, Kazis, Ulema, Imams etc. were imprisoned, all the Shariat courts were

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\(^{30}\) A Turkistani Muslim scholar now settled in Germany. Radiance, March 27, 1983, P-9.
abolished, mosques were either demolished or converted into prisons, tourist hotels and stores. More than 14,000 religious primary schools and about 500 Madrasas were closed. Printing and publishing of all religious writings was prohibited by the government. From 1929 to 1936, the police seized every copy of the Quran it could get its hands on and these were burned. 

The present day methods of combating Islam include principally anti-religious lectures, anti-religious publications, question and answer, everything with atheists, film shows the public slandering of those Muslims who go to the Mosques, campaigning against fastings and religious celebrations within the family as well as the education of young people to the advantage of atheism.

Particularly characteristic was the establishment of the first university of atheism at Ashkhabad in 1959. At present, in Uzbekistan above there are 14 such universities, to train atheist propagandists against Islam.

The alarming statistics shows that there were 24,000 mosques in Soviet Union before 1940. Gradually, the number reduced to 12,000 upto 1960, and at present the number is hardly 300 and that too in a state of ruins.

The truth is that the non-Russian peoples ruled by Russia enjoy neither freedom, nor equality nor any form of rights. Soviet propaganda in the Orient Spread lies about the freedom of the people and of religion in order to win over the Muslims of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Arab countries. We saw that the Muslims of Turkistan hate the Russians and that independence

31 Oizil Uzbekistan, 6th April 1963 (Soviet Newspaper).
movement is very strong. The religious administration in Tashkent is not a body, which supports religion and takes over responsibilities for religious education, but is simply a government office enabling the Communist Russians to control religion.

Indeed, the campaign today against Islam is in no way weaker than it used to be. The periodical Partynaja Zhizni is informative about the methods used: "Do not defend yourselves, but attack! Remnants of religion and superstition possess great powers of existence and continuance. They stand in the way of many people becoming active builders of communism. For that reason, the (Communist) party has always waged an ideological struggle against religions".

Soviet Russians anti-Islam policy is at present directed particularly against Turkistan because the Islamic spirit is especially alive there. Assault against Islam is part and parcel of Soviet Russia's colonial policy in Turkistan, regardless of whether brutal force or the art of propagandist persuasion is applied. The end of the fight between the Soviet and Islam is nowhere in sight.

The Islamic practices too are fast deteriorating in Russian Muslims. The mosques are peopled only by the retired aged military officers, while the young lot drowned themselves in intoxication of 'Vodka' with which they shamelessly wipe their faces and utter 'Amin'.

Mufti Ziya-ud-din baba Khanof, a religious head at Tashkent has gone to the extent of issuing Fatwa regarding Paradah as non-Islamic with the rationalisation that it is uncomfortable to women. 33

Islam in Modern China

Islam began to be established on a larger scale, on Chinese territory by several thousand Arab soldiers who settled down in the Northwest after having helped the T'ang troops to put down the rebellions started by An Lu-shan in the 8th century. At the beginning of 9th century, Islam penetrated into the Southwest, when 'Abbasid and Samarkani soldiers, allied with the Tibetans, surrendered to the T'ang and settled down in the present Yunnan province. In the 13th century, they were augmented by many 'Arab and Tartar invaders who came' into Yunnan with the Mongols. At the same time the so-called Semu people, the majority of whom were Moslems, began to settled down as permanent residents at all the important cities and towns in China proper. Islam was also firmly established in Canton, Ch'uanchou, Hangchou and Yangchou during the T'ang Sung-Yuan times (618-907, 960-1279 and 1280-1367 AC respectively). In these coastal cities, there were large Arab and Persian Moslem communities and they had their own living quarters, mosques and trading centres. Although Chinese Moslems, in the course of time, became Sinicized through intermarriage and adoption of Chinese customs, they will still have remained not only a religious

33 Al Arabi, (Kuwait Newspaper) by Fehmi Horedi, P-3.
group but also an ethnic minority but enjoyed a peaceful life. This was the golden period of Chinese Islam, which ended with the Manchu rule of China. This gold age lasted almost one millennium, 651-1648 AC.

But after the downfall of the Ming Dynasty, owing to a policy of racial discrimination and political suppression by the Manchu and Han authorities, the Moslems in Shensi, Kansu, Yunnan and Sinkiang provinces staged at least ten important rebellions between 1648 and 1878 AC. It is claimed that as many as 10,000,000 Moslems were killed as a result of these upheavals. The establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, however, promised new hope for the Moslem minority.

Although the Chinese Moslems were persecuted by the Manchus and Hans, there was at the same time a renaissance movement under way. It was begun by Chang Chung, Ma Chu and Liu Chin, who were Moslem leaders and scholars of the 17th century. They translated into Chinese the teachings of the Quran the deeds and words of the Prophet (PBUH), and the rules and customs of Islam, on the one hand, in order to educate the Moslem community and on the other, to introduce their religion to the Chinese.

Islam under Nationalist Government

The Revival Movement And Its Early Accomplishments

In 1912 the Republic of China recognized the Chinese Moslems as the Hui race which was one of the five races-- the Hans, Manchus, Mongols, Moslems and Tibetans -- comprising the Republic. This racial policy was partly in agreement with the Doctrine of Nationalism of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. With this new status the Moslems became
very enthusiastic in pushing forward their revival movement and expanding their activities into many fields.

Newspapers and religious periodicals, together with the translation of the Quran inspired many brilliant scholars with Islamic zeal. All these accomplishments should be attributed to the leadership and wisdom of Shaykh Abd al-Rahman.

Spiritually and personally influenced by Abd al-Hamid II (1842-1918 AC), the 26th Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, the Chinese Shaykh also preached Pan-Islamism in China. Although this movement had a great impact on the attitude and activities of many of the younger Chinese Moslem leaders, the majority of the Islamic community was primarily concerned with causes of the Chinese Republic. The role of the Chinese Moslems in Nationalist China (1928)

China was unified by the Nationalists in 1928 when the Northern Expeditionary Forces reached Peking under the command of General 'Umar Pai Ch'unghsi (1893-1965) and Arab descendant.

Like 'Umar Pai, all the Moslem political and military leaders in the Northwest, such as Ma Fuhsiang (d.1932) and Ma Ch'1, were staunch supports of the Nationalist government in the cause of unification. The unanimous stand of the twenty-six Moslem generals may have been one of the main factors in the release of Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-shek from the 1936 Sian Coup.

In 1949, about 40,000 Chinese Moslems escaped to Taiwan. They preserve Islamic traditions, customs and ceremonies as usual, and they formed the nucleus of Chinese Islam in Taipei. In 1960, they built a new mosque where the Chinese National Moslem League is located.
Islam Under Communist Government

Chinese Moslems attitude towards the Communists before 1949.

Chinese Moslems have in the past cooperated with any dynasty or government as they were allowed religious freedom. They also fought against any government in order to preserve Islam. Before 1949, the Chinese Islamic community, for the most part, remained loyal to the Nationalist government. Moslem generals led their troops in many battles against the Red army and scored at least four big victories during 1935-1947 in Kansu, Ninghsa and Shensi. But when the Nationalist lost the war against the Communists, the Moslems also had to surrender the Northwest. Mao Tse-tung formed a provisional Moslem Soviet government in the Northwest and even recruited whole regiments of Moslems, granting them full freedom of religion. Since the moslems living in the occupied areas have been influence by the Communists, their cooperative attitude, however did not change their religious faith. According to Nyn Wales, "They were prepared to march under the Red and the Crescent, but had not yet embroidered the name of 'Karl Marx' on their prayer rugs."

The role of Chinese Moslems in Communist China

Since the early years of the growth of Communism in China, Moslems have been active in the party.

In 1953, the China Islamic Association, a national organization, was established. It has recently issue two editions of the Quoran and an annual called Chinese Moslems in progress or Moslems in China. Since 1955, the Association has sent Hajj (pilgrimage)
missions to Makkah every year. In the same year, the Chinese Islamic Institute, the highest instruction of Islamic Studies in China, was founded. According to its reports, the mosques, numbering more than 40,000 in China, seem to have been maintained in good conditions. By 1957, twenty-four Moslem-inhabited autonomous areas were set up. Although the Moslems constitute only 1.66% of China's population, in the first National people's Congress, they were represented by forty-one deputies or 3.34% of the total.

But the available information suggests that the situation of Islam in Communist China is not uniformly bright. Since 1949, many mosques in rural areas have been used for other purposes, such as slaughter-houses, the use of old textbooks on Islam has not been allowed in all Moslem schools, all the Ahungs now have to participate in the Agrarian Reform Work Corps, assisting Moslem peasants in their struggle against the landlord class, or otherwise be replaced by Communist-trained Moslem cadres. All the Ahungs also have been forced to interpret the Quoran from the Marxist-Leninist point of view, and numerous Moslem youths working in producing centres have been compelled to take the same meals as non-Muslims.

Even more unfortunate was the fate of all religions in China, which reached its saddest point during the infamous 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution under the merciless rule of the "Gang of Four" led by Chiang Ching, Mao Tse-tung's widow. During this period, thousands of Moslem leaders and scholars were persecuted and jailed.
As a result of the collapse of the 'Gang of Four' in November 1976, the Chinese Communist government revised its Constitution in 1978, of which the Article 46 reads:

Citizens enjoy freedom to believe in religion and freedom not to believe in religion....

Since then the Moslems in leading cities began to go to the mosques to say prayers without police interference.

During the last three years, the Chinese Communist government has spent tremendous amount of money to have some of the old mosques in Peking, Nanking, Shanghai, Canton, Hangchow, Sian and other cities beautifully repaired or rebuilt. In Peking there are now many Moslem restaurants open to the public. Of all the religions in China, Islam seems to be the government favourite.

The future of Islam in China

It seems that as long as the Islamic World is strong enough to play politics between the East and the West, and as long as the Afro-Asian Islamic nations possess the 'surplus values' that attract the wooing of Communist China, and as long as the Moslem "shahadah" that is, "There is none worthy of worship, but Allah and Muhammad is the (final) Messenger", has not been supplanted by the Communist profession of faith, Islam will be respected and its believers will be tolerantly treated by the Communist Chinese.

It seems also that the Chinese Moslems will continue to consider themselves as racial minorities and, at the same time, they will struggle to preserve their Islamic faith. In principle, as Communism will not co-exist with religion in the long run, there will
remain always a danger to Islam that sooner or later it will be persecuted in China.

We may conclude:

1. Islam will remain strong and sound enough to survive the difficulties and hardship that the Communists have imposed upon religions in China.

2. The Chinese Moslems, who are mutually related in blood and religion, not only form an ethnic minority but also a religious group, and therefore, they are different from the Han Chinese. It also appeals that continued recognition of the Moslems, by the Communists, as ethnic minority, will aid in maintaining their racial solidarity which will, in turn, result in strengthening their belief in religion.

3. The size of the Chinese Moslem population is neither 48 million nor 10 million but it should be no less than 40 million in a conservative estimate. As far as their political rights are concerned, they are far from being proportionately represented in the National Assembly in Nationalist China, or in the National People's Congress in Communist China.

4. The Chinese Moslems in Communist China may be members of the Communist party but they most likely would not give up Islam for Marxism as their spiritual faith.

5. The difference between the policies of Communist China towards the Moslem communities in leading cities and those in rural areas, will be, in the course of time, narrowed, until one day, we hope—*insha' Allah*, all the 40,000 mosques in China may
be open again to the public.\textsuperscript{34}
(iii) Psychology of the followers

Muslim community spread all over the world has various colours. Muslim population in the world will cross one billion mark by the end of this year, according to the World Muslim Gazetter. A Muslim people of Asia, in particular India, will vary in detail in respect of some socio-religious customs and ways of life. Yet, it is the glory of Islam that such diversities have proved trivial in

The gazetteer published by--the Jedah-based "Motamar-Alam-i-Islam" quoting 1975 statistics said there were 890 million Muslims in the world, which constituted about 23 percent of the world population.

It said after Christianity, Islam is the second largest religion with followers numbering one-fifth of the total world population.

The survey, conducted in 172 countries said the population increase in most of the Muslim countries is more than two per cent a year. Many Muslim countries have not accepted the family planning programme as they consider it against Islamic tenets.

The survey showed that India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, China, the Soviet Union and Nigeria had more than 500 million Muslims.

Indonesia tops the list with more than 140 million, India comes second with 130 million, Bangladesh and Pakistan are placed third and fourth with 76 million and 75 million respectively.

Vatican has only 25 believers of Islam with the Muslim population in Tonga and Sen Markes is 75 and 100 respectively.

The gazetteer says 52 countries mostly Latin America have less than one per cent Muslims. These countries include Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Cuba and Columbia.

Albania, with about 22 million Muslims constituting more than 75 per cent of the population has the highest percentage of Muslims among the communist countries. The other communist nations which had a sizeable ratio of Muslim population are the Soviet Union has about 60 million Muslims and Bulgaria more than point two million. China is the other communist country where the number of Muslims exceed 65 million.
uniting them all, under one bannor of religion. No matter how strong the Western influence, the footsteps of the wayward Muslim is always homeward, such is the grip of religion. It takes him by and large, his entire self and existence. Unawares, he is lured by some catchwords offered by westerners. Soon he will realize their futility and them their only refuge, which is Islam, will gladly prove their saviour. Such and similar hopes are heartening, and welcome. Efforts to restore Islam its lost glory are at work, though their space is marred by political interference. Islam is often a toy of politicians, and this is a highly wretched practice. Even if political/choose to remain aloof and declare their states as secular or secularised, it is people whose attitude makes all the difference. Beyond doubt, people are happy with change. They have more than welcomed it. It has become a part and parcel of their lives. Modern Muslim prefer western standards and western mannerisms. Further, still, they are considered a mark of sophistication. They prefer education in convents and public school, to their own traditional one. They encourage their children to adopt western style of greeting and addressing and have almost given up the traditional, as old-fashioned. Such changes, although fashionable in affluent classes, new rich classes, middle classes and lower middle classes, the weaker class is not free from its attraction. At times these masses engage themselves in futile competition, only to stake their meagre savings and peace of mind. Muslim themselves are responsible for their pathetic situation. Instead of setting in example by rightly following the tradition and aptly
choosing that which is the best, they have foolishly adopted every­thing other than religions.

The foremost reason of course, is the yearning for freedom from disciplined way of life, which Islam, prescribes. Certain practices may have lost relevance, but then, only those could have been replaced for better ones, instead of the present western stylistism, through and through. In the countries where Muslims are not politically committed to religion, their lax lives are a plat­itude. Perversion has crept in the serene institute of marriage. It is shamefully used as a means to wealth even by men and women of wealthy countries. The Prophet's concept of marriage has been wipped out, and pomp and show is being replaced for simplicity. As a recent news item reads -

"An increasing number of young Arabs are reportedly marrying foreigners to escape the dizzy dowry system.

Unlike countries in the Indian sub-continent, it is the boys who suffer from the dowry system and the conditions imposed by the prospective brides in the Arab world.

With the dawn of property in Gulf states, dowries have been rocketing ranging from about $1,500 to as much as $45,000. Wedding ceremonies can add anything up to $40,000 to the expenses, according to reports in the Arabic press.

This compels theyouths to obtain loans or borrow money from their relatives. The post-marriage period is devoted to paying back the debts instead of enjoying married life.\(^{36}\)

\(^{36}\) Al Jamhoria, Cairo, 17th July, 1982.
Strangely enough, there is no prick of conscience, nor any kind of religious fear amongst them. Nor are they hesitant to be entitled as western Muslims. Of course, there is no attempt to condemn such a class, but there is a request to this class to remain exemplary, to become leaders rather than followers. History is the witness that it is only the strong who can foster speedy change and reforms. Evolution from the bottom is also specific and natural, but here, it will be slow, and perhaps, impossible. The only reason for its impossibility is the present practices prevalent in modern Muslim societies at large. The best that was in Islam, unfortunately, is lost. The worst that was in west, is also being passed for the best, and adopted influentially.

As regards the following Islam in its traditional form, there are various practices prevailing. The impression that an observer may collect is that, religion, if it hinders comfort, causes inconvenience or disregards modern lives, is often forsaken without much fuss. However, it would yet require much boldness to accept openly, this fact. It is an open secret for all Muslims that they speak of Islam with all the relevance, concern and awe, that is due to it. Privately, however, they vary in its application. No amount of theoretical argument will refute this matter of fact state of affairs.

For instance, the acceptance of very fundamentals of Islam have also met different treatment. Faith for one, is the only strong ground upon which this religion has managed to stagger and grow firm despite diversities. Even today, it is not easy to find
a single Muslim who truly denounces faith in Allah; and faith in Mohammad. There is no controversy over any theoretical acceptance of one God, and the prophethood of Mohammad among Muslims. Even if fear of social sanctions or blasphemy may be reasons behind this, the fact remains that Muslims are faithful people basically. It is difficult to find such devote sincerity to faith, such unquestioned submission to Almighty in other religions. Unfortunately some Muslim societies elsewhere on this globe are wrongly exploiting this noble quality of Muslims, for their own selfish ends. This is true especially of political leaders. For the ignorant masses are still keen to put everything at stake for the sake of their faith. Instead of channelising this zeal for social progress, it is used unashamedly for the regress of Muslim community. However, diffusion in faith has resulted into some undesirable forms of devotion and submission to some deity, even Sufis and saints. At times, faith even degenerates into superstition. An apt example of ominous beliefs and superstition was recently supplied by the leading newspapers and magazines and air communications.

It runs thus: It was a day of Twenty Fifth February in Karachi when most of it was under curfew, which was laid on account of Shia-Sunni conflicts. In a particular Shah family near Kashmir border, an eighteen year old miraculously started predicting future happenings which came true. As a result, the girl Naseem was worshipped like a Hindu Goddess by people all round. She claimed to have visited Imam Mehdi of Shia cult whose strange disappearance is associated with his eternal life. Imam Mehdi once bade Naseem to
perform holy pilgrimate to Karbala, with the entire family. The queerest part of the order was that the family shall cross the waters unaided. They must just jump in the sea, and Allah will given them through safely to their destiny. Naseem informed her father at his air-force quarters and her uncle at Queta Army Office about her dream experience.

Having full confidence in her word, the two brothers began planning their eternal journey by selling off their belongings. The whole caravan of about forty-two believers reached Karbala and performed several religious duties and Namaz on the banks of the sea, on 23 February. One by one, the male members began taking dips in the sea. The caravan consisted of members aged between seven months to eighty years. Women and children were sailed off on the back of the boxes. It was a high tide and a full moon night blowing blizzards. The boxes began cracking against the rocks and the waves. Similarly, men began gasping for breath in the water. Some of them even returned ashore, looking aghast at the catastrophe before their eyes. Early morning some dead bodies were found floating along the shore, and few men sitting in pondrous moods.

Those who survived the enterprise deferred to comment upon it. However, the police thought it better not to legalise the attempt at death under suicide act. On the contrary, a Saeed Anwar Shah was head lamenting that those drowned have reached their destination of which the unfortunate like them are spared.  

The internal conflict between Sunnis and Shias depict a sordid picture of perversions long nurtured in the name of religion. The Sunni-Shia schism in the body of Islam is, of course, not new. It is almost as old as Islam itself. But it has been greatly aggravated since the Shia fundamentalists seized power in Iran four years ago. Amir Taheri, a leading Iranian journalist, now in exile describes the gravity of the situation as it exists today.38

"It is not often recognised that all attempts at fundamentalism and revivalism aggravate tensions not only between different communities -- as in India between Hindus and Muslims and now between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab -- but also between different sects within the same community. Muslims in India too have sought to fight sectorial wars since many years especially in Lucknow".

We could have learnt from Pakistan's experience. The partition of India and the establishment of a separate Muslim state on communal religious grounds was, as we all know followed by an anti-Ahmediya explosion in Lahore in 1953 leading to the enforcement of martial law. The Pakistani elite was still strongly under the secular Western influence and was able to contain the Mullah-led campaign of terror and violence against the Ahmediyas. But the problem would not go away. It came to haunt Pakistan in the seventies, forcing so secular a leader as Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to agree to a legislation which put the Ahmediyas outside the pale of Islam. The story did not end there. Success against the Ahmediyas whetted the appetites

of the fundamentalists who pressed their demand for making Pakistan into what they regard as a truly Islamic state. They played an important role in the overthrow of Mr. Bhutto in 1977 and they are an important source of support for General Zia-ul-Haq.

These developments are not accidental, though in Pakistan's case events could certainly have taken a different turn if the coup against Mr. Bhutto was led by a general in the Ayub mould and not by General Zia, a mullah in Khaki. It is unavoidable that revivalist fundamentalism must aggravate tension between different groups in a community.

Fundamentalism is a two-front war, war on co-religionists who are believed to be guilty of heresy and therefore threat to the faith from within and war on the infidels from outside. The two fronts are interrelated. War on one front cannot be waged without doing so on the other. We have seen the same story being repeated in the secular variant of Christianity known as communism. Stalin imposed orthodoxy at home as he waged an ideological battle with the West. And the decline of ideological fervour at home has inevitably produced a policy of detente towards the West.

In Iran's case, there is another factor which deserves attention. Ayatollah Khomeini is not a disguised Iranian nationalist. But Shi'ism has helped Iran for centuries to retain its distinct identity: Greek orthodoxy served the same function in Czarist Russia. As the armed prophet of Shi'ism Khomeini thus promotes Iranian nationalism against the predominantly Sunni Arabs who imposed Islam on Iran. He speaks in the name of Islam and not of Shi'ism and his success,
which seems unlikely, may well create for Iran the kind of problems which the triumph of communism in China did for Stalin.

The Muslim world is threatened with its worst sectarian strife for centuries. Throughout parts of Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other areas, battle lines are being drawn up for Islamic conflict on what could prove an unprecedented scale.

At the heart of the threat is a redoubled feud between two Islamic sects, the Sunnis and the Shi'ites. The Sunnis form the bulk of the world's Muslim population, estimated at about 800 million. The Shi'ites account for only about 15 per cent, but they are in a majority in Iran, Iraq, North Yemen and Bahrain, and they constitute substantial minorities in Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A Shi'ite force commanded by Iranian revolutionary guards is already active in northern Lebanon. In Afghanistan, the Sunni-Shi'ite feud risks weakening the resistance against the Soviet military presence.

In Pakistan, a former revolutionary guard commander, Abbas Zamani, alias Abu Sharif, is now the Iranian ambassador -- and has made frequent trips to an exiled Afghanistan Shi'ite resistance group based in Pakistan's North-West Frontier region. This splinter group is alleged to have been receiving arms from the Tehran government since at least 1981.

Differences between the Shia'ites and Sunnis date back to the 7th century, when the former split from the main body of Islam in a dispute over who should succeed the prophet Mahomet. The Shi'ites
preferred his son-in-law, Ali, married to Muhammad's daughter Fatima, but the succession were instead to the Prophet's father-in-law, Abu Bakr.

Previously, Islam had only three basic principles - monotheism, prophecy and resurrection. To these, the Shi'ites subsequently added to more, justice and 'Imama' which holds that only the religious leader called the Imam can rule the Muslims on behalf of Allah.

It is from this principle of 'Imama' that the present crisis stems. For the past five years, Ayatollah Khomeini has presented himself as the Imam and, thus, as the only legitimate source of authority in the Islamic world.

The two sects regarded each other as heretics until 1947, when their representatives signed a concordat confirming both versions of Islam as acceptable. In recent months, however, some Sunni theologians have been called for the concordat to be declared invalid, so that Shi'ism would once again be designated as a heresy.

Despite General Zia's drive for 'Islamisation' of Pakistan, the leadership both of the country's Sunnis and of the minority Shi'ites has fallen into increasingly bigoted hands and, for the first time, the religious leaders of both
sects have been openly calling for violence. The sober image of Islam is unduly presented violent.

There is no controversy over any theological acceptance of one God, and the prophethood of Mohammad among Muslims. Even if fear of social sanctions or blasphemy may be reasons behind this, the fact remains that Muslims are faithful people basically. It is difficult to find such devout sincerity to faith, such unquestioned submission to Almighty in other religion. Unfortunately, some Muslim societies elsewhere on this globe are wrongly exploiting this noble quality of Muslims for their own selfish ends. This is true especially of political leaders. For the ignorant masses are still keen to put everything at stake for the sake of this faith. Instead of channelising this zeal for social progress, it is used unashamedly for the regress of Muslim community.

Many a wars were engaged in the name of Jehad. Though, Jehad had its connotive meaning, which is far more benevolent. A personal sacrifice for a noble purpose is the genuine sense in which Jehad need be interpreted.

Alms-giving (Zakat) is also not followed strictly and according to the prescription of Quran. Granted that the general economic condition of a normal Muslim is rather backward compared to the other citizens, the very attitude of benevolence has been
fast loosing application. By constitution, man is self-preserving species, and then, selfishness gradually follows. It is religion which can check these and such unwarranted indulgencies. But, when religion itself is not headed to, the question of parting a little with one's belonging, is rather far-fetched. Such a well-planned principle of distribution of wealth is regretably, given up. Muslim community had such an ingenious weapons to fight poverty, that no communism can replace. Its restoration can be realized only when a single person willingly parts with his excesses, or religiously puts inside a part of his income for the less fortunate.

Similar is the attitude of the Muslims towards prayers. As it is, they hardly know the correct postures and recitation. Nor is there any serious attempt to learn the meanings of their dialogue with the Almighty. No wonder, Namaz has come to become mechanical. Had it been even mechanically, but regularly followed, it would have far excelled total negligence. For, there are hopes of conceiving some peaceful moments in the lives of such persons who are in the practice of prayers. The Tablighi Jamat aims at

Though puritical and revivalisation in character, the Tablighi movement has shown a miraculous tolerance and moderation in its preaching experiments. And this is why its contribution to the creation of a sense of communal solidarity among Indian Muslims, no matter to which region and indigenous tradition they belong and to what life styles they were used, is of historic import and significance and much greater than that of any other religious reform movement organised by the 'Ulema'. Operating simultaneously on both the levels of little and Great Tradition, it has proved itself as a powerful force of Islamization in recent history.
teaching proper postures and meanings of prayers. However, it can quite be appreciated that modern Muslim is time-bound, and hence may not cope up the five time namaz. Though, more often than not, thus is an excuse, the true reason being laxity. Today there is a tendency to live in the least disciplined way, and this regulation of prayers would hinder this freedom. This is pathetic, and surely, the mark of ignoble souls. At least the sense of gratitude demands that a Muslim remembers his Master for all that he enjoys. One more noble aspect of religion is fast disappearing and nothing can prevent its cessation. This picture, if it continues, will become a horrible sight, just after the westerners, who easily lose their mental peace. In search of solace, they incur unhealthy habits of wine, L.S.D. and like tranquilisers. Islam had foreseen the degradation of man, which could have been possible only for a visionary. Hence it had pointed out the death traps and shown the way to avoid it. A constant and consistent link with the supernatural would soothe a man, and would offer him a refreshment for next assignments of the day. Such well-placed are the timings. Moreover, communal prayers would inculcate a sense of equality. Since modern Muslim has ceased to believe in these and such principles, he has learnt to live a life which is self-

Contd....

concentrated. He is little concerned beyond the problems of his own nuclear family. His negligence or indifference is universal. His arguments for which though genuine, can hardly be pardoned. His merging with modern society is complete. Nothing other than pleasure, comforts and convenience can convince him. All external sanctions are effective but temporarily. Finally he remains a modern Muslim who has given up the traditional practices of regular prayers.

If this is the condition of prayers in Modern Society, the observance of fast is just an added duty, very reluctantly observed. There is a general sway of gaiety during Ramzan, and any amount of preparations await the Id. There is no limitation to the grandeur of celebrations. However, the very spirit of fasting is absent. Not that, fasts are not observed by Muslims, they are. But, there is no enthusiasm regarding the taboos which are to be observed simultaneously, with fasting. Some so-called Islamic states do ban hoteliering and cinema-going. But that is a public sanction. What is needed, is the sanction from within. The need to fast leads to perfect hygiene, is anyone’s guesses. Moreover, it would give the affluent, a time and place to think about the starvation, and thus, replace apathy by sympathy. This interpretation of fasting has no appeal for today’s Muslim. Either they observe this aspect of Islam just as a general practice of society, or they are indifferent to it. Some fashionable Muslims avoid it on hygiene grounds. Or, they may observe it, once in a while. In brief, the spirit behind fasting is lost sight of fasts, may be observed for any number of reasons, but for the genuine one.
It is one way of beseeching before Almighty, and making some meagre sacrifices in reverence to Him.

A rather vague dictum is that of Hajj. Needless to elaborate the current practice on this code of conduct. Practically, no Muslim takes it seriously, even if he happens to travel to the Holy Shrine of Mecca. The practice has become insignificant even for the wealthy Muslims of Arab countries, to whom money and proximity are at hand. This is an expensive principle to follow, and grounds for not travelling may arouse sympathy. In this age when simple principles like prayers and fastings are forgotten, the insistence on holy travels would appear meaningless.

Thus, the general psychology of Muslims all over the world is mainly responsible for the indifference that Islam has faced. It is the attitude of avoidance of duty, discipline and anything demanding some sacrifice. The tendency is to enjoy maximum material pleasures. The society is heading for hedonism.

There is a renewed effort among modern Muslim, after the discovery of the speedy systems of communication, to identify itself with the modern western society. Before it would even be realized fully, it was their own inward drive which readily lead them to the long awaited modernism.40 It is not surprising that despite all theoretical justification for the Islamic way of life based on Shariah, with all the praise for simplicity in marriage, secure status of woman, social structure and family life, Muslims

today, have fallen for the western way of life.

For instance, even if Muslim women have not totally adopted the women's liberation, they have got rid of pardah. Some remnants of communities are also following their examples. Recently, the chief of Libiya Qazzafi declared Pardah as unwarranted. The extreme sights are also commonplace. Women clad in bikinis, costumes and women exposing their physique acting as models for advertisement is a common occurrence of the modern age. It is not easy to differentiate the general locate of a Muslim town from an American town. Many recent documents of travellers are available which draw the picture of modern Muslim societies in minute details. Current stream of though is to raise the nations living standards, economic development and industrialization. Automatically in such an age of cut-throat and acute competition, religion remains an armchair luxury. The only aim before the nations is, rather should be, to give the people the benefits of current scientific discoveries and gadgets. Such a situation can be the result of secular state. There is no hesitation in Muslim countries over adopting a comprising interpretation of Shariah over some commercial issues, like banking and selling of wines. However, Pakistan's top Islamic law court has rejected the government's plea to reverse an order that only non-Muslims can deal in liquor. Yet, Muslims in India and other countries where prohibition is not in force, Muslims are addicted with slyly, or openly. At times, they take up, some such items in order

41 Times of India, February-1983 (New Items)
42 Ibid, June 25, 1982
to mark their superior position amongst their fellow men.

The common excuse often put forward by such westerned Muslims is that their choice is objective, and the criterion is merit. Far from it, such people have nothing else to save as their own, for, they have cast their lives in the categories borrowed from west. There is no attempt to condemn any culture here, the endeavour is only to expose factually, the general trend of the mind of modern Muslims. The thrust for a better, richer and fuller life is natural but, will the 'modernisation' be successful in bringing about this results, is the question.

Muslims of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in particular, have to face an added problem of poverty, illiteracy and disease. Instead of keeping aloof the prevailing customs of the majority, they tried to mingle with it by adopting some of them. Islam has totally denounced dowry whereas, this vice has crept in even the pious Muslim marriage system. Better the disposition of groom, higher are his demands from the other party. Some other noisy rites are also performed during marriages, like inviting the courteson, or going in a musical procession with the groom. The other extreme of marriage would be singing the dirge, wherein muslims have twisted the whole concept of Moharrum. Instead of spending the day in quiet prayer, they engage themselves in primitive displays of physique, like treading the fire, or poking the sword. The elaborate construction of Tazia is also futile, and bidat. Moreover, the fantasy, for idol worship is growing in Muslim communities. In one form or the other, it is observed. The offerings
at the tombs, keeping vows, offering coconuts, flowers and worshipping the 'Durgah' like an idol, handing pictures of Kaaba on the walls of the house, tomb of Prophet, doves and many other practices are taboos in Islam, though liberally followed by many Muslims. Women too have adopted a free movement in the holy premises. They could not have touched the 'Durgah' as they do now, in the strict Muslim societies. At times, these holy shrines become a theatre for 'Qawwali' and music, which is a mark of celebration in the name of some holy saints. The strange custom still, is upon death occasions. In case of a women losing her husband, she is offered some money and presented new clothes after 40 days of his demise. Meanwhile, there are many dinners thrown to the relatives, and they are invited to dine, as though in celebration. At colossal costs decorative mosques are constructed. The entire Muslim society in these countries are vitiated by these and such customs.43 The genuine observation remains that such misconcepts, omens and rites have been found in Muslim women. This is an obvious mark of the influence of other religions and customs. Maybe, they are easily susceptible and suggestible to anything that promises welfare.

Some serious-minded muslims have given this problem a thought. If Islam is to be defended as a rational religion, its task lies in

self-purity. The Muslim community need be relieved from superstitions and other mal-practices which have come to stay. The problem of restoring Islam its pristive purity was acute enough, and now, there is an added problem of reforming the community amidst these evils and false nations.

Other countries also have similar stories of superstitions and practices. Females visit the tombs, and perform many un-Islamic practices in the name of religion. For instance, the Egyptians follow an un-Islamic customs of chanting poems and carrying silver lamp before corteges at funeral. Such practices have entered Muslim lives through non-Muslims. Tendering today is that of pleasure seeking, even from religious practices. The serene and sobre spirit of religion is replaced by shallow, frivolous expressions. A religious function has served as an outlet for pent up sentiments. It is an occasion for mundane display of wealth and social position. Instead of refraining from such pervert competitions, Muslims are getting more and more occupied with them. This is a grave matter. The attitude towards Quran exposes profanity. It is the tune or the charm of its recitation that is attended to, instead of the content, they are interested in the verses of aesthetic value, such as the story of Yusuf and Zulekha, rather than the teachings of the Book.44 In some parts of the world, the birthday of the Prophet is celebrated with.

A number of dervishes and other persons throw themselves under the treading hoofs of the charging horses, and asserted that they did not feel hurt. This performance, is considered as miracle. There are many more atrocities performed in the name of religion. For example, there is a savage pleasure in arranging duets between doves or cocks and other meek animals. The sadist aspect of human personality is given full rest in such inhuman practices.

Some institutions like "Association of Algerian Ulema' 'Muhammadia' of Indonesia, 'Ahl-i-Hadith' of India to mention but few were founded at different periods of time in this century. The slogan "Back to Islam" has remained the permanent cry of the puritans and the fundamentalist reformers. Their success is anyone's guess.

What with the renewed zeal of the scientists and the technologists to wipe out every trace of ignorance, religion has definitely been put in an awkward position. Elites of the Muslim society are deeply concerned over the future of Islam, and their efforts to defend it and re-establish it as the needs of time. However, it is their firm belief that the moral regeneration of the society would not be possible, unless every simple Muslim is properly educated in the present systems prevailing all over the world.

The tie, between the traditional fundamentalists and modern elites is more severe and formidable than pretended. In the first place,

45 R.A.R. Gibbs, Whither Islam (1932), P-368, Muhammad Abduh, Al-Manaar, Vol-II, P-872, See also Vol-VIII

the traditional crystallisation of the system of Muslim Jurists (fuqaha) is something which this age cannot digest. Admitted that the Shariah possesses the excellent quality of elasticity, the Muslim jurist make it unhealthy and unduly, rigid. At the moment, it is essential that the basic factors of Islam are recovered and made available to the masses. There should be an appropriate emphasis upon that minimum requirement without which Islam cannot be upheld or professed. Adherence to its history is no solution. Modern Muslim is faced with altogether new problems, the solution of which is not to be found in the books of 'fuqaha'. Time will not wait for the book nor can its direction be averted. Hence this attitude of indifference to Shariah. There is no conscious intention of neglecting the religion, but modern Muslim has been pressed for time, money and convenience to follow it fully. He is no more anxious about its rigorous formalism and minute details like salat fasting and so on. He seems to have contended himself with the practice of the simplest form of Islam, which does not try his capacities and patience.