CHAPTER LI

GENERAL PROCESSION OF ISLAM

INTRODUCTION:

There is found a 'system' running throughout the Universe—a system in all the planets—vis-à-vis a system in the planet which is called earth and also a particular system is seen dominant from the minitute creation of the earth to the highest creation—man. ¹ System is the pivot on which the Universe is standing and revolving on its particular axis. Had the Creator of the Universe removed 'the system' which He designed for the smooth running of this globe, the entire creation would have met a deadly crash and man would have simply watched sitting in despair as he sits frustratingly before the buzzing fly, which instantly comes, sucks the sweetness from the sweet, he carries in his hand and disappears from his sight within no time and he cannot be even able to throw a small stone on it either to stop it from sharing his sweet or to cause some harm to it for going against his will.² All the science and technology cannot save or protect even the proportion of any minute creation of Allah-Almighty, if He relaxes 'the system' working in it; / it is observed, that 'the system' which God has incorporated in everything of the world is prominent, central and essential to its life and death, concord or discord, harmony or disharmony, deterioration or elevation or progress or retrogress.³
Such being the case, a question may be raised about man and 'the system' designed by God for man, since man stands in the highest pedestal in all His Creations. The whole of the Quran and the life of the Prophet Mohammed (upon whom be peace) offer the complete and the most appropriate answer to such a question.

'The System' or 'the way' destined by God for man is termed as 'the din' 'al-din' in the Holy Quran. It is also enshrined in the Quran that 'the din', or the code of life laid down for men is 'Al-Islam'. Let us see how far the Muslim community in Britain is in accord with this 'System'. But it remains the fact that for following any system, its understanding and perception is essential. Hence, first and foremost point is to find out the perception of the community about this system. This chapter would explore how far the Muslim community in Britain has a clear, complete and concrete understanding of the system i.e. Islam in general. Since, the area rather the point (understanding of Islam) is wide and deep, the chapter is divided into three sections. In Section 'A', it is explained what concept do the Muslims in general have about Islam, how far the concept is put into practice and what native and regional points have been deliberately or inadvertently interpolated in Islam? How the national identity has been confused with the Islamic identity? In Section 'B' the universal nature of Islam and the spiritual vacuum of the West and the secular form of the Western society has been exposed. In Section 'C', the conclusion is
presented.

SECTION 'A'

ISLAM - CONCEPT AND PRACTICE

At the very outset, it was deemed necessary to trace out the concept of Islam of the respondents whether it is clear or ambiguous or shrouded in misunderstandings. To explore this most sensitive, critical and at the same time basic area of understanding, three general questions were put forth in the first section of the questionnaire served to the respondents. Moreover, four main questions were asked during the interview with the elderly Muslims (between 30 to 45 years) and two main questions with the young generation (between 15 to 30 years).

However it is found out that the findings, rather the results from the responses of our respondents vary a lot; on paper, (in questionnaire) I found some answers and in interviews I heard different things. This confusion became more acute when I surveyed the findings of other researchers. Any way, this whole discussion is presented in the following pages:

In the questionnaire the very first question asked was to find out whether the respondents regard Islam merely a 'religion' in the distorted sense or 'the din', as described in the Quran. It is found out, that the majority of the respondents regarded Islam as 'the din', whereas what I
personally observed during my stay and conversation with the community was just the contrary to the answers of the questionnaire (i.e.,) merely a religion of some rites and rituals. The following table No. I shows what the respondents theoretically claimed:

Table - I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you regard Islam?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madhab</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Din</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table clearly illustrates that out of three hundred respondents, 180 respondents see Islam as 'the din', 95 respondents see Islam as a Madhab and 25 respondents showed indifference to an extent of saying that they know nothing about Islam. What is striking in this context is that the majority of the respondents who regard Islam as 'the din', themselves do not know properly what answer they have given and for what reasons? This point is dealt with later in the interview schedule, where their answers contradict their responses in questionnaire.

Before proceeding further, it is not out of place to clarify here that the said question was asked intentionally to discern the most common misunderstanding of the contemporary age -
i.e., of confining 'the din' 'al Islam' only to the formal performance of the five pillars of Islam or to some customs and rites which have no sanction of Islamic Shari'a. The term 'religion' or 'madhab' is generally used to connote Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions and it cannot be therefore used for Islam. Islam unlike other religions does not stand on some particular issues, rather it is the complete code of life. "Suffice to say that Islam is not a basket with many and various items for one to pick and choose whatever one likes. It requires to be practised in toto."

It is also found that the native customs and traditions have been fused and intermingled with the Islamic teachings and are often interpreted as having Islamic sanction though they go against the Islamic spirit. As another researcher on the teenage Muslim girls in Britain observed the same: "There is no clear-cut distinction in the minds of either parents or teenage girls between religion and custom."

It is my own experience rather my careful observation while visiting some families and talking to them in order to understand their level of perception of Islam and practice, that they have restricted Islam only to certain issues like not bringing haram eatables, condening alcoholic liquor drinking, instructing the female members to take scarf while going outside the house and other similar things. The climax is, that they
are not aware of the basic Islamic foundations on these issues and this process has been going on from one generation to the other in the same cycle. "The religious instructions are of purely ritual nature. The children are taught to say their daily prayers and learn to read the Qur'an in Arabic with no translation or interpretation. Their only understanding of religious principles is derived from what their parents tell them in regard to specific kinds of behaviour; for example the prohibition of alcohol and pork, the seclusion of women and the separation of sex schools." 9

However, to discern more deeply, two more questions were asked to get a clear idea about their general understanding of Islam and to test their first answer. Hence, the second question was asked about the scope of Islam which was more thought-provoking and demanded clear understanding of Islam. As it was concerning the scope of Islam - hence it was asked whether it is limited and restricted or pervades all the aspects of life. The question was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE - 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Islam embrace in your view?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private aspect of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public aspect of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is thus evident from the above table-2 that majority of the respondents perceived that Islam embraces both public and private aspects of life. 19 out of 300 respondents believed so. 85 respondents confined Islam to private aspect of life and 90 to public aspect of life. However, 11 respondents showed complete ignorance in this matter. Those who believed that Islam is restricted to the private life of man, mean to say, that performance of five compulsory obligations of Islam, certain rules concerning marriage, divorce, dietary and clothing etc., are the subject matter of Islam. Islam in their view has nothing to say outside these private matters, particularly in an alien situation such as the situation in the West. In other words, Islam has no political or social, or economic system. This is how they place artificial boundaries between life-spiritual and life-mundane. It is for this reason that they are found such inclined towards Secularism and Westernization. Such a type of thinking keeps them aloof from the political and social condition of the place. They show no concern towards the political, social, moral and economic crisis of their society. They think that Islam has nothing to do with these aspects of human life. As far as those who confine Islam to the public aspect of life, it is found out, that they have absolutely nothing in their mind as to what they themselves understand by their answer. The majority of course expressed a clear vision of Islam. Again, what is more striking here is that from their
life-style one can sharply point out, the compartmentalisation they have made in following Islam only in the private aspect and ignoring it in the public aspect of life.

The most conspicuous difference between the Islamic ideology and the contemporary ideologies thriving in the East and West is, that Islam does not in a least degree tolerate any sort of division between the religious and the temporal aspects. The principle of separation between the Church and the State advocated by the West runs totally against the principle of unity between the religious and the temporal advocated by Islam. "Islam as the way of life was revealed by God in the Qur'an and was implemented by the Prophet Muhammad upon whom be peace, in the society at Medina between 622-632 A.D. Thus the prototype of the perfect society was experienced in history under divine guidance and prophetic leadership - an example set for posterity .... Throughout the Islamic history few have dared to call into question this ideal or to try to adjust it to the prevailing reality in which the Muslim community was ruled by those capable of usurping power through military might, frequently reducing the legitimate religious leader to a figure head or a mere puppet. The abolition of the Caliphate by the Turkish regime in the twentieth century did not diminish the commitment to the ideal nor did it provide a consensus of Muslim opinion to adjust to existing reality."
However, those who have been influenced by the current waves of secularisation and westernisation have deliberately confined Islamic teachings/private aspects of life and have completely given up the 'ideal'—the unity between private and public aspects at both the individual and social level. Although the "contemporary Islamic literature continues to advocate the restitution and maintenance of the ideal of the unity of the religious and the temporal, a large number of Muslims throughout the world continue to lead secularised lives."  

The same can be said about those who have expressed the view that Islam embraces both private and public aspects of life. They do not however tend to submit their whole lives to their convictions, but feel content only with paying the lip-service.

I came to know from my visits to the families and by listening to their concepts and convictions about Islam that the majority who believe that Islam embraces both public and private aspect of life, themselves are totally ignorant of the fact that Islam has in its fold an ideal political, social, moral and economic system. They even know nothing about the basic teachings of Islam on the foundations of which, they are supposed to solve the problems of their day-to-day life.

Consequently, they fail to give proper answers to the questions raised by their children which lead the children in the midway of confusion and tension. It is also found out
that those who have worked on Muslim community in Britain themselves do not know that Islam pertains to the day-to-day behaviour of Muslims as well and that Islam has provided clear-cut injunctions even for the disapproval of music, dance and inter-mingling of sex etc. From the following quotation of the researcher on Muslim teenage girls, a clear idea of all the three groups of people (old generation, young generation) and the researcher herself who is also brought up in Britain in a Muslim family, and their understanding of Islam can be easily judged: "Since, religion is not always associated with their every day behaviour, the question of morality and personal freedom becomes obscure in the minds of the girls. The injunctions against drinking alcohol and eating pork or haram meat are clear as in the injunctions against sex outside marriage. But what of going to the Cinema or dancing? Playing a musical instrument, participating in sports or performing in school plays?" It is an apt example to show how ambiguous ideas and concepts they have about Islam and what an extremely narrow image they have of Islam. Yet the majority claim that Islam is 'the din' and embraces both private and public aspects of life.

There was however one more question which was also as crucial and controversial as the previous ones. It was primarily asked to find out the Western impact on the ideas and behaviour of the community, for it has been a general trend
amongst the Western scholars or orientalists to instil in the minds of their readers that the age-old principles of Islam are not suitable for the modern age. The question was:

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think Islam is</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicable in the modern age</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpracticable in the modern age</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of 229 respondents think that Islam is practicable in the modern age, as against 61 respondents who believe that Islam is not practicable in the modern age, though 10 respondents keep silence on the issue.

The same kind of problem arises of exactly assessing or finding their general understanding of Islam, since in the third (test) again, they (the majority of 229) have shown, that they do have a clear and complete picture of Islam, though my observation, interviews and the findings of the other researchers go contrary to it.

In all my talks with the respondents, the majority of them expressed how difficult it is for them to practice Islam in such an alien environment and how they have therefore
adopted some of the elements of the Western culture. In all walks of life, right from the following of five compulsory duties of Muslims to the other areas of dress, purdah, diet and other areas of social, educational and cultural concern, they are found influenced by the Western way of life. When it is argued as to why they should go to such an extent in adopting the Western norms and behaviour, their main point has been that while living in an alien atmosphere, one has to adopt certain things to lead a peaceful and a happy life and that to follow all Islamic injunctions in a Western society is either an extremely difficult task or a highly impossible object, since Islamic teachings do not suit the temperament of the modern age.

The most crucial point to understand here is that most of them quite unhesitatingly argue that since they are staying in the Western society, they are compelled to assume some of the ideas, the ethos and attitudes of the West. The point is, if they strongly believe that Islam is practicable in the modern age, why cannot it be practised in the Western society? If they really understand the fact that Islam is so designed by the Creator and Master of the Universe as to suit all the ages and all parts of the world their plea of the Western society sounds unreasonable and illogical. It shows that though they think that Islam is practicable in the modern age, they do not have the necessary knowledge of Islamic ideology to see its practicability in all ages.
The complex situation of the Muslim community and its understanding of Islam can be ascertained through their waver ing attitude towards observing prayers and in unrelentingly adapting Western customs. One of the respondents of a researcher on Muslims in Liverpool said that his employer owned a dog which was always left to roam around the place of work, and since he was fond of dogs himself it was not unusual for the dog to come in contact with his clothes. This rendered his clothes unclean for prayers although there was no apparent dirt involved. There was no place for keeping a 'clean' change of clothes according to him, at his place of work. It serves as a pointer to show their negligence towards one of the compulsory obligations of Islam.

A growing tendency has been observed in the community about indulging in the un-Islamic mode of life while rationalising and justifying it. One of the respondents of a researcher on Muslim teenage girls expressed on the mode of living of her children that "there is a limit to the restrictions you can impose on children. If they live in this country, they have to follow the customs to some extent, so what can one do? All you do is pray that the children will turn out all right living in an alien environment like this, where there is no religious guidance, not even an amin." This type of mentality is found to be dominant in the major section of the community.
So far, it is tried to present the picture of the perception of Islam in general of the community through three main questions of the Section 'A' of the questionnaire. Before proceeding further with the questionnaire it is necessary now to present the response I got for such similar questions during my formal and informal interviews with the old and young generation to show their ambiguity in their understanding of Islam. Firstly, the questions asked to the old generation are presented and the gist of the answers is given which is followed by an analysis of the answers. The same procedure was followed in case of the young generation. The questions comprised of both formal and informal interviews and only the main questions of the informal interviews are given, since the supplementary questions made during the informal interviews were directed only to get the answers of the main questions. It should also be clarified that out of 27 interviews (both formal and informal), 10 interviews were taken from the old generation and 15 from the young generation. Out of the 10 interviews with old generation, the answers of 8 respondents were almost the same with hardly any significant difference and the answers of two respondents were quite different from those of 8 respondents. Hence, to avoid the repetition, the gist of the answers of the 8 and the 2 respondents is given respectively. The same procedure is applied for the young generation, since out of 15, 12 respondents gave nearly the same answers to the questions asked and the answers
of the 3 respondents were different from those of 13 respondents.

The questions asked to the old generation were:

1. Do you think whether your life-style is influenced in Britain? If so, in what way?

2. Are you in any way confronted by the social environment to practise Islam?

3. Do you face any kind of difficulty or difficulties to bring up your children along Islamic teachings?

'Informal Interview' (main questions)

1. Do you think whether the present society or the atmosphere around you and your children is harmful to the Islamic upbringing of your family and children? If so what measures do you suggest to preserve the Islamic environment for your family?

On the above four questions, the gist of the answers of the 8 respondents may be put thus:

'It is highly impossible to remain uninfluenced by the Western society here. One is compelled to adjust his life-style to the Western environment, otherwise one is branded with different names like "uncultured", "uncivilized", "uneducated", "orthodox" so on and so forth. It is extremely difficult here to practise the Islamic injunctions, rules and regulations in toto, since the environment is alien to the Islamic culture. It is all the more difficult for the children growing here, because they are receiving Western and secular education in their schools
and the T.V., inside the house and the society outside influence then by unIslamic thoughts and values. The environment of the society is so very harmful for the Islamic upbringing of the family and children that it is hard to imagine. Yet there is no chance to preserve the Islamic environment in the family, since the influence of the Western teaching is from all sides — from what they learn in schools, what they see on the roads and streets, what they observe in the T.V. and Press. In such circumstances, the formal teaching of the mosque-madrasa and our casual instructions can hardly do anything, except causing confusion, confrontation, tension and frustration.

A careful analysis of the summary of the above answers brings the following points:

1. There is ambiguity in the understanding of Islam. They are not firm in their ideas and concepts about Islam. They do not have unshakable faith in the Islamic teachings, for they get easily influenced by the Western environment.

2. Their knowledge of Islam as 'the din' and complete code of life and most practicable in the modern age is very weak. It is the reason that they get tempted towards Western atmosphere and feel helpless about their children too.
3. They have no clear vision of the Islamic culture, its uniqueness and dominance, for they get entangled in the trap of the Western culture in various degrees.

4. They have no sound planning for the young generation growing in Britain. They do not mention any preventive or defensive measure to preserve their children except referring to the mosque- madrasah.

The gist of the answers given by the two respondents on the above question can be described in these words:

'The West, its ideology and culture stand just opposite to the Islamic ideology and Islamic culture. It is the reason, that the life-style of a Westerner, his thoughts and actions run contrary to the Islamic thoughts and actions. Hence, the life-style of a Muslim, his thoughts and mode of behaviour must be different. We should endeavour to influence the Western society, instead of getting influenced by it. No matter, the alien social environment around us, put hurdles on our way, yet we should not submit ourselves to the existing environment since a Muslim is one who entirely submits himself to the Islamic teachings, way, not least to the prevailing ideas or existing atmosphere. There are innumerable difficulties and obstacles on the way of bringing up the children on the Islamic code of behaviour, yet we should not give up the battle, rather we should struggle
hard to mould their thinking according to the Islamic spirit. The Western society and its atmosphere is undisputedly harmful for bringing up of the family and the culture along Islamic lines. However, the most important measure to preserve them from such an environment is to present before them the real, complete and lively picture of Islam and make them understand the basic difference between the Islamic culture and Western culture and also keep before them on what grounds Islam raises its voice against Westernization and secularization. Thus it is through teaching them with love and affection and profundity of thought and also by setting an example before them that we can not only preserve them from the alien culture but can make them strong tools for the Islamization of the Western society.

An analysis of the above answers gives the following points:

1. They have a very clear vision of Islam, its teaching and its culture.

2. They also find the potentiality in the Islamic teachings which can bring change in the life of man and society.

3. They have adequate knowledge of the Western trends, ideas and concepts and are quite aware of its shallowness and emptiness.
They are fully alive to their responsibility towards their children and hence believe that God willing, they can teach them with all proficiency so as to mould their thinking in accordance with the Islamic dictates.

Following questions were asked to the young generation:

1. How do you feel about the British way of life?
2. Who is your favourite hero as an ideal in your life?
3. What do you think of the display of affection in public? Is it immoral or natural?

(Main question) Informal interview

1. Do you think that Islam encourages you for your progress of life, personality and a bright family?

The gist of the answers of the 12 respondents can be put as under:

The British way of life is quite easy-going. Since the society is permissive, one can do whatever he likes and be merry and content. (For the second question, most of them told the names of the top musicians in 'pop music' 'disco' and such others like the singers of their native place or here or herinas. Some named the Cricket and Football champions. About the display of affection in public, they say that even though it looks bad, one cannot avoid it. Since the society is permissive and
sexology which is being taught in the school from the very early age gives rise to such passion and curiosity that one feels that it is foolish not to enjoy the sex, in public or in private.

For the last question, they say that today the progress of men depends on how he is following the Western 'isms' in thought and action. The teachings of Islam are obstacles on the way of progress. It is extremely hard to save time for observing prayers five times during a day on the scheduled time, in this busy world. Not only prayers but almost all the Islamic injunctions seem unpracticable in this contemporary age where there is keen competition for materialistic progress. Today, one who has built his personality on the Western foundation of the Western culture outshines in the society. Islam has nothing to impart to make an attractive personality aspired by the youth of this day. As far as family is concerned, Islam does not allow women to mix freely in the mixed-society and advocates purdah (veil) for her and for the children. Islam keeps so many restrictions on them that they should be obedient and affectionate to parents and elders. All these teachings are out of date today. One should be given complete freedom to follow his taste and ideas. Hence a family based on Islamic ethos and teachings has no charm and attraction today.

An analysis of the gist of the above answers show the following points:
1. They have no clear perception of Islam. They see Islam as an out-dated and out-moded religion.

2. They are quite moved by the British way of life which follows no rules, no regulations and is based on whims and fancies.

3. Their interest lies only in the music, sports and such other frivolities.

4. They do not even tend to judge things on the moral ground, rather they measure each and every activity with reference to the Western standards.

5. They have a very short-sighted image of Islam and for the same reason they fail to realise the strength and force Islam possesses in it to elevate the personality of men and also to illumine the family.

The gist of the answers of the three respondents can be framed as under:

'The British way of life virtually stands just opposite to the Islamic way of life. Islamic ideology rests on morality, chastity, propriety and brotherhood, whereas the British way of life is free from all these attributes where one can take flight in fancy crossing all the bonds of morals.'
The world especially the West is in need of such uncompromising champions of Islam like Maulana Maudoodi and Sir Allama Iqbal. They are the brilliant stars of the contemporary Islamic Movement (whome the respondents) adore and respect. The display of affection in public, is immoral and un-Islamic. Islam does not discard sex nor does it forbid to acquire the required knowledge of the human biology. But Islam does not approve sex before marriage. It is Islam alone which can lead man to the greatest height of progress. The apparent progress which is discerned in the man who is sticking to the Western culture is virtually a retrogress as against progress. A handsome personality can be built only on foundations of the principles of life which can be in reality found in Islamic ideology. Peace, happiness and content can be found only in a family based on the Islamic teachings where the Islamic environment is preserved. A house with all the machines, cushioned sofas and double-carpet with broken lives and separated hearts can never be called a happy family.

A careful analysis on the gist of the above answers show that:

1. They have a deep and complete understanding of the Islamic teachings on one hand and proper knowledge of the basic principles underlying the Western way of life.
2. They are quite aware of the Islamic Movement, its basis and foundation and feel that more such leaders like Maududi and Iqbal should come forward to pose challenge to the West through their scholarly writings.

3. They prefer to judge the things on the Islamic scale of morality.

4. They have a very broad vision of Islam and hence believe that progress of man depends on his following of Islamic teachings.

Thus, from the above interviews and their analysis, it is found that out of 10 respondents from the old generation, two respondents are found to have quite a clear perception of Islam in general, whereas 8 respondents are found to be confused, perplexed and inconsistent in their thoughts. Similarly, out of 15 respondents from the young generation, three respondents showed the clear vision of Islam as against 12 respondents whose understanding of Islam seems to be narrow, limited and short-sighted.

SECTION 'B'

Universality of Islam - The spiritual vacuum of the West

The Islamic ideology is the ideology for the whole human family. It is such a wide and an extremely extensive umbrella made by the Creator, Sustainer and the Sovereign of the
Universe, that it takes the whole humanity under its wide extensive shade with no discrimination whatsoever. However the Universal nature of the Islamic ideology has been well described in the Chapter II. Hence, it is needless to repeat here. What is required to present here is that whether the Muslim community thinks Islam as the religion of a particular community, a particular nation or for the entire human race? Further it is also required to find out how strongly the community feels that the spiritual vacuum of the West should be replaced by the Islamic ideology. Hence, in this connection the very first question asked was:

**Table 4**

Do you think Islam is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Only for Muslims</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the whole mankind</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question was quite simple. 262 respondents regard that Islam is for the whole mankind whereas 14 respondents think Islam as only for Muslims, the remaining 24, skipped the question.

The main point here to note is that most of them do often refer to the artificial division of the world into the Eastern and the Western blocks, Capitalist and the Socialist blocks.
and thus point out how the world is divided into the two so-called World powers—America and Russia. But, it is not to suggest that they do not believe in the Universal nature of Islam, that Islam is meant for both the East and the West and that the supreme authority of the world rests in the hands of God not in either of the nuclear powers. They also believed the fact that Islam virtually stands for the reconstruction of human life on the moral ground as against the materialistic principle. "Islam is opposed to the materialistic way of life and wants to reconstruct human life on the basis of moral principles and eternal values given by God through His revelation." 16

Nevertheless, it was deemed necessary to frame one more question as to find out whether the community perceives the spiritual hunger of the West and that what the community feels that it can offer? The primary object of putting such a question was that though, in general, the community thinks highly of the scientific and industrial progress of the West, it is not satisfied with its moral degradation. Hence the question asked:

2. Do you consider the West is looking for spiritual, rational and Universal form of religion and that Islam can offer it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of 168 respondents feel that West is in need of an ideology which should fill its spiritual vacuum for the lack of which it seems weak and sick even after possessing the insurmountable nuclear energy. However 88 respondents do not find the spiritual thirst of the West. The remaining 32 show their total ignorance about the question.

It has been, however, increasingly realised by the community, (as is evident from the above table) that it is high time to save the young generation from drowning in the hollow pit of the pop music and pop art of the West. "So what can we provide them with that will at least save them from drowning into this world of pop art and pop music, groovy clothes and groovier hair styles, smokes and snuffs that fly them high, this world that is turning God's great gift, the desire for procreation, into a source of gay, free, swinging and unprincipled way of life akin to animals."

The central issue in this given situation of the West revolves round some basic and fundamental principles-belief in one God as the Creator, Sustainer and the Master of the Universe; man a servant of God; belief in the Hereafter i.e. life after death; fear of the Day of Judgement. These are the basic concepts which underly the Islamic ideology. It is therefore the main reason that the follower of Islam gets no chance of escaping the ever-vigilant eyes of God, to transgress the moral
boundaries set by Islam or to obey God in some private aspects of life and to follow Satan in all the other aspects of life. The Islamic culture and civilization which stand on these fundamental principles therefore appear to be distinct from the Western culture and civilization.

The Western culture and civilization which stand on the principle of the divorcing of religion from the private life and the materialistic perception of the world unwarrantly give rise to a permissive society.

Here the Islamic teaching is found to be the only effective force to pull it out from the surface. The ideas of "Islam are very pure—ideas of one God, the very abstract vision of the Universe, the very practical manner of how you should live, of how you should treat people, the way that the law is related to religion and all these matters...". Hence, it has been felt that the culture-starved West should embrace such ideas and principles to save it from the moral and spiritual crisis. Nevertheless, it has been observed, that the dance, music, art and pornography have affected the youth as opium which have drowned them in more sexual lapses. It has become extremely difficult for a conscientious Muslim family to go out together. A Pakistani woman, presently staying in Saudi Arabia and has not either read or seen the Western society or even not moved in the Westernised circle of the East, on her
visit to England told: "Oh! God forbid, I was appalled seeing the things just reaching here. I prayed, that my children should not look at them for which I would thank God offering prayers". Similarly a father told Haddad Hameed "When we go for a walk, I deliberately steer my children away from book stores because I don’t want them to see pornographic material. This makes us feel bad as Islam encourages learning - but this, this is evil". 19

Paul Reeler, a Westerner himself, perceiving the acute difference between the Islamic art and culture and that of the West, remarks “Flowering as it does, from a profoundly metaphysical centre, the Islamic art and culture emulates with supreme clarity and elegance the principles of unity in multiplicity, and thus directly challenges the unstructured, non-structured, non-metaphysical basis of most modern Western 'abstraction' and decoration .... I feel further that Islamic art and culture is of central importance at the present time, principally for two reasons. The first is that it is centred on Unity, a principle that is of the utmost importance for the whole world today and the second is that it acts, and has acted in the past, as a bridge between the far Eastern traditions and the West." 20

However, through the responses of the questionnaire and a few answers of the interviews, it cannot be concluded that the community virtually looks forward to the moral rearrangement of the Western society mainly for two reasons. Firstly, it is found out from the further study of the responses received from the informal
and formal interviews that though they realize the spiritual shallowness of the West, they believe that its technological progress and comparatively better economic condition overcome all its limitations and weak points. Secondly, it is found that they do regard the universality and the dynamic force of Islamic ideology in their subconscious, yet they believe that the problems and complications that arise due to the present backwardness of its followers on the technological and industrial domain are so great and complex that the Islamic has preoccupied itself in solving these puzzles of economic issues and hardly devotes its attention to its responsibility of the Universal Mission.

Both of these points have been drawn from their responses to the interviews. It has been found that out of 25 respondents, twenty-two respondents gave similar answers which bore the above points. Three respondents gave a different answer which was based on an entirely different point of view.

The main question on which the interview was based was: Do you think that Islam can render its spiritual hand to the West which is facing a crucial problem of spiritual bankruptcy and can thus stop it from committing suicide through its own accumulation of material wealth?

A typical answer can be cited here which bear almost all the common points of views of the twenty-two respondents.
The answer was:

"Though it cannot be denied that there is the moral deterioration in the Western society due to the separation of religion from the greater part of its life, it also remains a fact that despite all limitations, it has achieved a tremendous success in science and technology .... And we? We are oppressed in a multitude of problems due to economic backwardness. Then, what can we impart to a nation richer than us? Of course our religion (Islam) is rich enough to offer its helping hand to the spiritually bankrupt West, but the question is who will get up to take up this issue and devote his time and energy to it? You are busy in your problems of communal riots in India and I have my own problems both at home country and here."

Receiving such an answer, I asked: What about the people who are devoting some of their time towards the Islamic cause in the country?

He responded: "Oh! They are very few in number. Moreover, they can hardly influence the people over here, for these people (of Britain) do not take the religious issue that seriously as you generally find in India or Pakistan."

I then questioned him referring to his positive answer to my relevant question of the questionnaire:
Why did you say in the questionnaire that Islam can offer something to the West?

He replied: "Yes, that is a different thing, you know. I mean to say that Islam can impart the spiritual strength to the West. But when you consider and compare the two I wonder, what can we presently do in this connection?" A significant point which is deduced from all these answers is an emotional attachment to the Islamic ideology in repeatedly asserting the fact that Islam possesses a dynamic strength through which it can lift up a falling nation or people. But the present status of the economic backwardness of the Umrah is cooling down their aspirations. It clearly shows that though they claim their loyalty to the Islamic ideology, their understanding of the ideology is neither complete nor clear, but it is ambiguous and short-sighted. It is the reason that they tend to overestimate the material prosperity of the West and have failed to realise the dire necessity of the spiritual rearmament of the West. Further, they tend to be apologetic while justifying themselves for not performing the responsibility of the Mission on the plea of the economic backwardness of the community.

However, the rest of the three respondents showed a clear understanding of the problem. One of their answers can be given here as an example:
"Islam today has posed a challenge to the West or say to the world at large — a spiritual challenge. Even after possessing huge material wealth, the West still seem to be sick, weak, and pale. This sickness of the West can only be eliminated through its adoption of the Islamic ideology." It shows that the respondent has not only the clear perception of Islam but also has a clear vision of the problem of the West.

Lewis Peter has also remarked that there are some students who aspire for the Islamization of the West. He stated "politically there are no signs of unrest or revolutionary zeal worth mentioning among British Muslims, though you can meet students, inspired by Iran who see an Islamic revolution as a long-term possibility for England." This he stated by quoting an answer of a Bangladeshi Muslim: "Yes, here-why not? It could happen. We believe that if God is One, religion should be one." 

It should be however made clear here, that there is an extremely limited circle which have such a clear-cut image of Islam and the West, as has been clearly illustrated from the above data.

Section "C"

An overall view on the data presented in Section 'A' and 'B' would be taken here to draw the conclusion on the perception of the community of Islam in general.
At the very outset, it is necessary to point out that the responses received in the questionnaire vary with the responses obtained from the interviews. The majority of the respondents (180 out of 300) in the questionnaire expressed the opinion that the West is looking forward to a universal and a dynamic ideology and that Islam can offer it. Whereas in the interviews with 25 respondents, (most of them were the same respondents of the questionnaire) it is found out that 22 respondents believed that the Muslim community is itself engulfed in its own economic problems and the West is taking pride in its scientific and technological progress. In such a state of affairs, the community can hardly offer anything to the West which is in need of the real spiritual wealth.

This contradiction between their responses in the questionnaire and interviews is striking. The analysis of their answers in the interviews and my personal observation show that their perception of the Islamic ideology is limited. Their responses of the questionnaire were the result of their emotional attachment to the ideology. The contradiction found between their responses to the questionnaire and the interviews is due to the ambiguity in their perception of the ideology.

Though the majority expressed in the questionnaire that they regard Islam as the "seen", yet during my informal talk with most of them I found that they did not even understand the
question asked in the questionnaire in this context. When I
talked to them on this point, I found that they could not
differentiate between a 'madhab' and 'Deen'. A respondent said
that like Christianity, Hinduism and others, Islam is also a
'madhab' or 'religion'. Then he questioned me what is the actual
difference between a 'madhab' and a 'Deen'? While I was trying
to make him understand the difference, he became impatient and
interrupted me saying "don't worry." In the questionnaire I
gave you the right answer thinking that it (a Deen) is an Arabic
term and therefore it is better to call Islam a 'Deen'.

Similarly, the majority of the respondents expressed in
the questionnaire that they believe that Islam embraces both
private and public life of man. But my observations and
interviews contradict their responses of the questionnaire.
My personal observation in this connection can be cited here:
Usually I used to keep a few copies of my questionnaire with me
while going out with a view to giving them to anybody whom I
feel proper to give. Once I came across two girl students dressed
in the Western style completely I sent the questionnaire to the
girls through my wife who also accompanied me for shopping. They
took the questionnaire from her and asked her to collect it from
their house and gave their address. It was a surprise for me to
see them dressed quite differently inside the house. My surprise
knew no bounds when I found that in the questionnaire they said
that Islam is a 'Deen' and that Islam embraces both public and
private life of man. Another Researcher also commented:
"Domestic area reflects Pakistani culture and values and public British culture and values. British values invade the domestic arena through the media and specially through FV. Girls themselves want to maintain the separation because they feel that through such compartmentalisation they can reconcile to two different sets of values and forms of behaviours."23

This compartmentalisation is the direct result of the community's tendency towards adaptation. Adaptation as defined by Flog, Jolly and Bateson is "the response of organisms to changes in their environment."24

The community is found adapting the Western norms and ideas of the alien environment. In some areas of life its thoughts and concepts are based on the Islamic injunctions. Whereas in some other areas of life it has changed its mind to a great extent and has assumed the Western outlook.

This reconciliation of an entirely two opposite sets of values in its life, the community regards essential to move about in an alien society on one hand and to satisfy the traditional ego of its old generation or to its native people.

On this reconciliation a researcher writes: "They are reformulating the traditional, as presented by their parents generation, to adjust to their new environment."25

But a very subtle point which requires clear understanding
here is that the community as well as the researchers on the community have blurred the 'native or family tradition' with the Islamic tradition which has the sanction of Sharia. It is found that both the community and the researchers have failed to differentiate between a native custom or tradition and the Islamic rules and injunctions. They have often included the native or family customs and manners into Islamic laws and regulations. It is thus found that whenever they thought or talked about the "Traditional values", they are virtually the native or family values and traditions which are often not founded on Islamic principles. All this plainly show that their understanding of the concept of Islamic values lacks clarity of vision.

This unclear vision of the concept appears more clearly when they tend towards adopting the Western ways and manners in their life saying that they are formulating the traditional to modern, as if the Islamic traditions are too old to practise in the modern life. Commenting on it, another researcher writes: "It assumes a straight-forward clash, a tag of war, between East and West, traditional and modern, rural and urban, repression and freedom, resulting an unbridgeable gulf between the generations."26

Hence all these facts described above regarding the tendency of the community towards adaptability of the Western
style of life and the ambiguity found in the writings of the various researchers show that the community has a very superficial knowledge of the Islamic ideology in general and that many of the researchers on the community also do not possess an in-depth knowledge of Islam.

It is now pertinent to point out that my conclusion contradicts the conclusion of the researcher of the Pakistani teenage girls who believes that there is a disjunction between the concepts and behaviour amongst the Pakistani teenage girls.

Contrary to her concluding statement, I have found out that the modes of behaviour of the community in different areas of its life is the natural result of its ideas and concepts. In other words, there is a close link between its concepts and behaviour. Its actions and behaviour are rooted in its concepts and ideas.

Since the perception of the community of the Islamic ideology is not complete and clear, it has adapted to some of the Western norms and ideas in life and has thus deliberately dissociated the Islamic rules and injunctions from a great area of its life and has accepted the Western principles and values. It has a very limited concept of the ideology of Islam which has ultimately forced it to compartmentalise its life — a little submitting to Islam and a greater to the Western ideology. In this way its action and behaviour are linked to its concept of
It can be thus pointed out that a contradiction is found in her statements which she tells about the limited knowledge of the girls of Islam and her concluding statement that there is a disjunction between the concept and behaviour amongst the girls, since their behaviour is the direct result of their concept of Islam which is limited.

Hence all her statements which she has made on the limited knowledge of girls in Islamic ideology come very close to my concluding statement that the perception of the community of the ideology is limited and superficial. It is but for this reason that on one hand the responses of the community in the questionnaire represent its emotional attachment to the ideology and on the other hand its responses in the interviews reveal its ambiguous and incomplete understanding of the Islamic ideology and its behaviour also stands as a symbol of its unclear vision of the ideology and instability in the practice of the ideology.